

Pastoral Perspective

By Joseph L. Hogan

The Heart of GEM — The Spirit of Ecumenism

I am pleased to say that the Diocese of Rochester has been taking seriously the Decree on Ecumenism which was published by Vatican II in 1964. As a matter of fact, we are at this moment in the process of finding out just how many interdenominational associations are alive and well within the geography of the diocese.



I write today about GENESEE ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES — better known as GEM — the Association that was formed early in my administration as a united Christian social mission in Monroe and bordering counties. It is just a little over two years old and has suffered the inevitable pains of growth. But it is a child of great promise and its parents want to show it off at a public assembly on Sunday, Nov. 4 from 4 to 7 p.m. I will be there with the other family elders at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on South Fitzhugh Street, and I invite you to join me in the coming-out party.

GEM recently moved its offices to St. Luke's Church and the move has, I believe, important symbolism. Symbols are important because they give us a clue to what is in a person's heart. We smile when we are happy, frown when upset, weep when sad, and laugh when we are amused. The move to a Church

gives us a clue to what is in the heart of GEM.

Many people view GEM as just a social activist organization. It has, indeed, achieved remarkable results in awakening people to urgent needs for improving criminal justice procedures, for improving the quality of education for all youngsters, for far better housing conditions for poor people, and for the improvement of several other practical aspects of daily living.

Important as these needs are, GEM will never achieve its final goal unless its programs are rooted in prayer and our greater understanding of one another as Christian people striving together for unity and peace. That is why I am especially happy to invite the Catholic people of our diocese to join me at the First GEM Assembly. At that assembly we will be able to meet and hear the many wonderful people who, from deep Christian motives, are engaged in GEM programs and projects. We will also have the opportunity to affirm our solidarity and, in a Service of Covenant Renewal, ask God's blessing on our common hopes and efforts.

In the II Vatican Council Decree, Pope Paul and the world's Catholic bishops said very clearly, "Catholics should join in prayer with their separated brethren. Such prayers in common are certainly a very effective means of petitioning for the grace of unity, and they are a genuine expression of the ties which even now bind Catholics to their separated brethren."

Recently, Father Avery Dulles, a convert to Catholicism and deeply dedicated to ecumenical efforts, had this to say to the faculty of the newly established School of Religious Studies at Catholic University:

"The unity that God wills for His Church must also be His gift. It must therefore be sought by earnest prayer as well as by committed action.

"No Christian group today is in a position to overcome the humanly insuperable barriers among the communions. God alone, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, can effect the change of heart and the new mentality that will be needed. . . . To achieve the miracles that are demanded, ecumenism must be totally penetrated by prayer. It must be prayer in action."

I hope, therefore, that this forthcoming GEM Assembly will be but the first of a continuing series of study lessons and opportunities for prayer together. ~~the~~ our foundations for ecumenical activity will be firm and we can move on to do those works of mercy together in a far more extensive way and far more effective way. GEM certainly has an impressive record of accomplishment in its brief two years of existence. Now we must strengthen what we have begun and I think the very move of GEM's offices is a clear sign that we have taken another step in the right direction.

vatican news

Pope Warns against Secularizing Priesthood

Rome [RNS] — Pope Paul, speaking to seminarians and teachers at the Pontifical German-Hungarian College here, warned against tendencies to "secularize" the Catholic priesthood and "reduce it to a function which is predominantly philanthropic and social."

Expressing his awareness of the need to "face the new demands

of the times," he admitted that the seminary, in forming priests, "cannot remain anchored to rules which were set up to suit the life of past centuries, but which are counter-productive to modern life."

Yet, he said, "It is necessary to preserve in priestly training those rules which remain unchanged down through the centuries and

which tomorrow like today will retain their value because they spring from the very nature of Holy Orders."

In his talk to the gathering, Pope Paul observed that if today greater understanding of social problems and human life is required in training candidates for the priesthood, one must not, however, fall into the trap of

concentrating, wholly on that aspect of ministry.

"If the priest does not maintain the distinction which is necessary to be a man of God, the minister of Christ, the witness of a transcendent God and the spiritual life, he gradually becomes the salt that loses its taste, about which Christ spoke in the Gospels."

The Pope noted that "if it is necessary to create an atmosphere of greater freedom of responsibility in bringing the educational message in the seminary up to date, this, however, does not justify the attitude of those who would like to suppress every structure, abolish every rule, and allow free reign to all . . ."

Such a direction, he said, would place all trust in natural goodness, which ignores original sin and its consequences.

"It is necessary to remember this today where there are so many tendencies to secularize the priestly service and reduce it to a function which predominantly is philanthropic and social."

Pope Paul praised the "perennial vitality" of the German-Hungarian College and the Jesuits who conduct the seminary. He said both have made substantial contributions to the liturgical and pastoral movements, created communities which are flourishing in faith, and have prompted missionary vocations among the students.

Pointing to the "spiritual fruitfulness" of the college, which he said is "at the very heart of Christianity," the pontiff observed that graduates of the college include one Pope, Gregory XV, more than 30 cardinals and many archbishops, bishops and leading scholars and theologians.

The Bishop's Public Appointments



- 1—Administrative Advisors' Meeting — 9 a.m.
- 1—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Conferral of Degrees, St. Bernard's Seminary — 4:30 p.m.
- 3—Radio Message, Family Rosary Network — 7 p.m.
- 4—Genesee Ecumenical Ministries' Assembly, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, South Fitzhugh Street — 4 p.m.
- 5-6—Priests' Council, Goal-Setting Days, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua — 7:30 p.m.
- 7—Clergy Relief Society Meeting, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua — 10:30 a.m.
- 7—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Catholic School Principals' Workshop, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua — 4:30 p.m.
- 9-10—Diocesan Administration Leadership Training Program, Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse — 7:30 p.m.
- 12-16—Annual Fall Meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Statler Hilton Hotel, Washington, D. C.
- 18—Confirmation, St. Dominic Church, Shortsville — 4 p.m.
- 18—Confirmation, St. Felix Church, Clifton Springs — 7:45 p.m.
- 19—Leadership Conference of Women Religious Meeting, New York City.
- 20—Celebration of Eucharist of Thanksgiving and Homily for Blessed Trinity School, St. Alphonsus Church, Auburn — 7 p.m.
- 21—GEM Ecumenical Service of Thanksgiving, St. Luke's Episcopal Church — 12 Noon.
- 22—Thanksgiving Day Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Sacred Heart Cathedral — 9:30 a.m.
- 26—Confirmation, St. Theodore Church, Gates — 7:45 p.m.
- 27—Clergy Conference, Becket Hall — 10 a.m.
- 27—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Graduation Ceremony for Northwest Regional Conference Teacher Training Program, St. Bernard's Seminary — 7:30 p.m.
- 28—Clergy Conference, St. Casimir School, Elmira — 10 a.m.
- 29—Administrative Advisors' Meeting — 9 a.m.
- 30—Diocesan Administration Leadership training Program — 7:30 p.m.

DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting notices to the Courier-Journal of parish events is the Thursday noon preceding publication.