

Pastoral Perspective

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

As the Observer Saw It

The Bishops of the United States met in Washington from Nov. 12-16 for their annual Fall meeting. For the last four years the sessions of the conference [apart from executive sessions] have been open to representatives of the news media and to delegates of the people of God, priests, sisters, brothers and laity, who are welcomed as observers. This column represents the reporting of their observations this year.

"We are both happy and encouraged by the well-prepared and sincere presentations given on issues such as Quam Singulari, the Middle East, Priestly Life and Ministry, Communion in the Hand, and Prison Reform, among others which were seen as demonstrating a genuine priority beyond simply institutional concerns. Many of these are viewed as an authentic gospel response to human life; we are further heartened by your reports and actions on the campus ministry, the national catechetical directory, pro-life, the pastoral on the Blessed Virgin Mary, liaison with the conferences of Major Superiors of Religious Women and Men. At the same time, we were unanimously surprised and disappointed by your action taken with regard to communion in the hand.

"We would like to express a very deep concern in a spirit of humility and candor. While recognizing the undeniable, even dramatic advances in the process of conducting these meetings during the past decade, we are impelled to recall the words of the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Jean Jadot, to this body last Monday from 'Your

business is not with tactics but with strategy.

"Strategy to us, your observers, is manifest in a deep concern for and an appreciation of the really major problems which confront the Church and society today and in what can be perceived of the future. It is manifest in grappling today with the perceived problems of tomorrow. It is manifest in the willingness to confront both the reality and the rapidity of change. It is manifest in daring to be bold today in order to shape the institutions of the next decade.

"We feel a need for us all to strive in prayer and action to achieve that goal set forth by Pope Paul VI in *Ecclesiam Suam*, 'If we want to be men's pastors, fathers and teachers, we must also behave as their brothers. Dialogue thrives on friendship, and most especially on service. All this we must remember and put into practice, following the example and precept of Christ.'

"After our years of observer participation, we sense a continued need to pursue the full meaning of those words of Pope Paul: If dialogue thrives on friendship and service, both of these are in turn nurtured by dialogue. Our observations incline us to say that there is not sufficient free and open dialogue at these meetings among our bishops to encourage understanding and consensus.

"We respectfully suggest that this kind of leadership — confident, forwardlooking, and strategic — can only come from this body. But it cannot be expected of this conference if it is weighted down by the sheer volume of items which we suggest may too often be of peripheral importance in the scale of issues which confront the people of God.

"Such considerations as these have impelled some of your observers to propose a more realistic application of the principle of subsidiarity — a principle stressed by a succession of Popes. For we believe that in its application — exercised with all due care and prudence — lies the possibility that this body of bishops can be freed to exercise the strategic leadership so sorely needed in today's world and so clearly called for by Pope Paul's words.

"As observers, representative of the church in the United States, we say in all sincerity that you are not alone. Our numbers — priests, religious and lay — are still legion and we share a common commitment with you to Him Who told us all to evangelize the world. We are here willing, able in perhaps varying degrees but certainly eager to rally around you, the visible symbols of our unity, and share with you the awesome burdens which confront us all.

"The observers, without exception, have no hangups with the authority of your leadership roles, but we do quite clearly perceive ourselves as sharing responsibility for the welfare of the Church and constrained by our commitments through baptism to exercise it.

"And we believe that a beginning of this exercise of our responsibility can come about through the exercise of your leadership in meaningful dialogue.

"To express our solidarity with you, with our Apostolic Delegate, and our Holy Father, we close as we opened by alluding to Archbishop Jadot's remarks.

"To behave as brothers implies trust. To that your observers humbly say Amen. Thank you."

vatican news

Pontiff Speaks on the World Food Crisis

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, receiving delegates to the 17th session of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), expressed grave concern over a growing "insufficiency" of world food supplies.

Speaking at a special audience here Nov. 16, the pontiff said the "food situation" seemed to him

"very grave." He remarked that it was "impossible not to be preoccupied by the worldwide diminution of agricultural products."

"In particular," he added, "reserves of cereals are so greatly reduced that the minimum level necessary for a sufficiency of world food supplies is seriously threatened."

The Pope also expressed his "dismay" at statistics, which, he said, reveal that help from the rich nations was diminishing.

"Contributions from the richer nations to the poorer nations," he said, "have not yet reached a level of one per cent production."

Insisting that the time had come "to strengthen and enlarge

the movement towards solidarity among peoples of the world," Pope Paul declared: "An urgent appeal should be launched today to the conscience of all men of good will."

The Rome-based FAO, which represents 125 countries, meets every two years. At the recent session, Director-General Addeke H. Boerma of the Netherlands asked delegates to consider,

among other things, a proposal for "minimum world food security." This would entail the creation of national stockpiles of cereals and co-ordinated distribution of the cereals to "those countries in need."

Msgr. Agostino Ferrari-Toniolo, the Vatican's permanent observer to the FAO, said, "This would be a decisive step in human history as well as in the history of FAO. From the simple proclamation of the right to nourishment and so to life, international society would enter the effective guarantees by an act of solidarity.

"By such an act, each state would oblige itself, in proportion to its resources, to joint and continuous action."

Earlier in his address, Msgr. Ferrari-Toniolo alluded to the People's Democratic Republic of China, which became a member of the FAO, last April, and to the Soviet Union, which is not represented in the U.N. agency.

"I want to emphasize the fact," he said, "that this session of the FAO assumes importance not only because of the questions it is facing, but also because of the participation of a nation important for its vast population (China).

"Those of us who share the common desires of the FAO hope that in the future every nation of importance in the world economy will be among us (USSR)."

"These nations having different and sometimes contrasting economic and political systems, recognize the need and desire to collaborate in drawing up and effectuating criteria for a common international policy on agriculture and food," he said.

The Bishop's Public Appointments



December

- 1—Diocesan Administration Leadership Training Program — 7:30 p.m.
- 2—Blessing and Rededication of St. Columba Church, Caledonia, Concelebration of Eucharist and Homily — 11:30 a.m.
- 2—Address to Diocesan Retreat Leaders, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua — 3 p.m.
- 3—Visitation and Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Our Lady of Lourdes Convent, Rochester — 5 p.m.
- 4—Priests' Council, Becket Hall — 10:30 a.m.
- 4—Confirmation St. Theodore Church, Gates — 7:45 p.m.
- 5—Sisters of St. Joseph Council Meeting, Nazareth Motherhouse, Pittsford — 11 a.m.
- 5—Fortieth Jubilee of Monsignor James C. McAniff, Concelebration of the Eucharist and Homily, St. Louis Church, Pittsford — 5 p.m.
- 10—Confirmation, St. Anthony Church, Elmira — 7:45 p.m.
- 11—New York State Bishops' Meeting — New York City.
- 13—Genesee Ecumenical Ministries Meeting, Pastoral Office — 11 a.m.

- 13—Confirmation, St. Rita Church, West Webster — 7:45 p.m.
- 14—Confirmation, St. Rita Church, West Webster — 7:45 p.m.
- 16—Diamond Jubilee of St. Monica Parish, Concelebration of the Eucharist and Homily, Formal Installation of Parish Council — Noon.
- 17—Visitation and Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, St. Bridget's Convent — 5 p.m.
- 18—Concelebration of Eucharist and Homily for Diocesan Regional Co-ordinators, Episcopal Residence, Victor — 5 p.m.
- 21—Concelebration of Eucharist and Homily for Pastoral Office Staff, Our Lady of Good Counsel Chapel, Pastoral Center — 3 p.m.
- 22—Radio Christmas Message, Family Rosary Network — 7 p.m.
- 23—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Monroe County Hospital — 3:30 p.m.
- 24—Concelebration of Family Christmas Eucharist and Homily, Sacred Heart Cathedral — 5:30 p.m.
- 25—Concelebration of Christmas Eucharist and Homily, St. Ann's Home — 10 a.m.