

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

Beyond the Barge Canal

The Diocese of Rochester has many unique and wonderful features from the standpoint of geography. The Finger Lakes, the Southern Tier, and the Flower City, all make their contribution to its beauty.



One disadvantage, however, is the fact that the See City is not centrally located for all parishes of the diocese. This may, at times, not seem like a minus, but by and large it militates against the building up of the diocesan family spirit.

That is one reason why I am pleased that our diocese has been chosen as a pilot diocese for the upcoming Non-Metropolitan Parish Workshop for Priests.

Co-sponsored by the United States Catholic Conference — Rural Life Division, Glenmary Research Center and Liguorian publications, the workshop will be offering our Priests a fine opportunity for growth in their priestly ministry in the Non-Metropolitan Church.

Speakers at this workshop include Rev. Louis Miller, editor of the LIGUORIAN, Rev. John McRaith of the USCC, and Rev. Bernard Quinn of the Glenmary Research Center. All are outstanding leaders themselves. All have identified the kinds of leadership the Church needs as it moves ahead into the second half of this decade.

Why has our diocese been chosen?

Recent statistics have indicated that New York State has the third largest non-metropolitan area in the country. "Beyond the Barge Canal" are eleven counties that make up our diocese along with Monroe. Fifty-three percent of the parishes and forty-eight percent of the active priests are located in these counties.

Often when one thinks of the Church in non-metro areas, the typical image that comes to mind is the little church, standing in the midst of a small village surrounded by farmlands. The inhabitants all know each other; many are related. The businesses are family owned, handed down from father to son for many decades. Life is there, but it is not as hectic as the urban settings and surely not as complicated with the mass housing problems, racial differences, political discordances, drug problems, and complex school systems. There is often the desire for the nostalgic past, of simple, pure folksy living, where each town is independent of the other and where real community exists because of the size, makeup and characteristics to which rural America lent itself. Such a dream could be any pastor's ambition.

Yet to take a close look at Non-Metropolitan Rochester, one discovers in 1974 a vastly different picture. Like all of America, the rural segments are also facing the pain of change. Developments in transportation, communication, technology and industry have begun to affect people so that presently their lives are in a state of transition to a pattern that in many ways is very different from the 'good ol' days.' Industry's need for expansion has dotted the

hillsides with factories, modern homes, golf clubs, recreational facilities and shopping plazas. Transportation has made the non-metro areas closer, less isolated from each other and major urban areas. Rising costs have forced many farmers off the farm and into a commuter pattern of work into larger cities, sometimes driving close to a hundred miles daily. At the same time urban folks, in search of cleaner air and a healthier environment for their family, have migrated to non-metro lands while still holding jobs and ties in the big city.

All of this presents confusion and tension in the lives of people. Those who have always lived in the area tend to think in the past while living with the present. Newcomers face anxiety as they try to blend their cosmopolitan attitudes with the non-metro mentality. Their posture on regionalism, interdependence on other towns and cities for adequate health care, more viable use of resources, human and other, and political influence is often met with opposition. Added to the tensions society is imposing upon church people are the changes in the institutional church itself. The non-metro Church has always been a very strong presence in the lifestyle of the past and is now struggling to play a strong role in the new era that is emerging.

Vatican II speaks of the parish as a faith community. One hope of this becoming a reality, I see "sprouting" in our non-metro parishes. Therefore, the Church needs, I feel, creative and dynamic leadership: It is my hope that the Non-Metropolitan Workshop April 30 - May 1 will continue to generate a living Church in our Diocese.

vatican news



Ceremony proclaiming Father Liborius Wagner as "blessed." [RNS Photo].

Martyr Declared "Blessed"

Vatican City [RNS] — A German Roman Catholic priest, a convert from Lutheranism who was killed during the Thirty Years War for refusing, under torture, to renounce his Catholic faith, was proclaimed a "Blessed" by Pope Paul at a ceremony in St. Peter's Basilica.

According to Catholic sources, Father Liborius Wagner, a 38-year-old parish priest, was captured by Swedish Protestant troops in 1631 during the course of the religious war between Catholic and Protestant Europe that devastated Germany.

Subjected to five days of torture in a vain attempt to force him to deny his new found faith and allegiance to the Pope, he was released, but shortly afterwards, on Dec. 9, 1631, was killed by a German soldier.

Beatification is a preliminary step toward canonization of a saint.

Pope Paul, in a homily at the ceremony, remarked that the beatification of a victim of a religious conflict of long ago provided an opportunity for hopeful reflection on the "so greatly desired restoration of

Church unity."

Noting that Blessed Liborius was born into "an exemplary Protestant family," the Pope said that considering this, "we have a motive for respectful regard for the Christian heritage preserved by the German people after the great Reform.

"May we be permitted on this occasion to extend respectful and heartfelt greetings to our still separated Christian brethren in the name of Blessed Liborius, who seems to confirm our desire for an ecumenism that will renew concord and peace."

Schedule for Holy Week

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul will inaugurate Holy Week ceremonies at the Vatican with the blessing of palms and olive branches at 10 a.m. on April 7 — Palm Sunday — in St. Peter's Basilica.

Following a traditional ritual, the pontiff will then lead a procession in honor of Christ the King and climax the Church's commemoration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem by celebrating Mass at the high altar.

An announcement on the Pope's Holy Week-Easter schedule was issued here by the Prefecture of the Pontifical Household, the office which was charge of elements of papal ceremonies and papal visits outside the Vatican.

On Holy Thursday, April 11, Pope Paul will celebrate Mass at 5 p.m. in the Basilica — in memory

of Christ's "Last Supper" and the institution of the Eucharist.

The following day, Good Friday, the pontiff will celebrate the liturgy of the "Passion of Our Lord" at 5 p.m., also in St. Peter's. At 9:15 p.m. he will leave the Vatican and go to the Roman Colosseum for the Stations of the Cross.

On April 13, (Holy Saturday) Pope Paul will preside over Easter Vigil ceremonies in the Basilica. The ceremonies will begin at 10 p.m. and end with the celebration of Mass at midnight.

Finally, weather permitting, the 76-year-old pontiff will celebrate Mass in front of the basilica at 11 a.m., and at noon appear on the balcony of the Basilica overlooking St. Peter's Square and impart his solemn blessing "Orbi et Urbi" ("To the World and the City of Rome").

Vatican Extends Life Of Women's Commission Until January 1976

Vatican City [RNS] — The Vatican's ad hoc Study Commission on the Role of Women in Society and the Church, established in 1973, will continue to operate until January 1976.

A Vatican announcement said extension of the life of the temporary commission would enable its members to become involved as a group in functions of the United Nations' International Year for Women, set for 1975.

Pope Paul, acting on a recommendation of the 1971

World Synod of Bishops in Rome, authorized the ad hoc Study Commission on May 3, 1973.

Appointed to the commission were 15 women (including two nuns and an American college student), seven priests and three laymen. Archbishop Enrico Bartoletti was named president.

The goal was to study "the specific role of women in society and man-woman relationships on the basis of the radical equality of men and women, in the light of the way in which they differ and complement one another."