

# Bishop Describes Changing Role of the Church

By MARY ANN GINNERTY  
Auburn Correspondent

Auburn — "The Bishop is called upon to be the teacher in the diocese and you can't do much teaching unless you continue to learn," said Bishop Joseph L. Hogan at an open meeting at Holy Family School recently.

Bishop Hogan spent last September, with 70 United States bishops, in Rome, for consultation with some of the world's leading theologians.

"What I have to say tonight is much different from what I would have said and did say to my students years ago at St. Bernard's Seminary, where I taught the study of The Church for ten years. Since Vatican Council we have a whole different concept of what Church is."

Bishop Hogan recommends the book "Models of the Church" by Father Avery Dulles which shows the development of theology. He made special reference to the chapters on Church as Institution and Church as Servant, the image most dear to Bishop Hogan.

The bishop indicated that, when he taught, the emphasis was on Church as institution. This refers to a time from the Middle Ages when the hierarchical structure was emphasized and Church was defined primarily in terms of its visible structure, especially the right and power of its officials.

"We were the teaching Church. We were the answer men and you were the passive element in the life of the Church," Bishop Hogan told the assembly. "The Church was defined as the perfect society subordinate to no other society on the face of the earth, lacking nothing for completeness."

He explained this thinking reached its culmination in the second half of the 19th Century and was expressed in the Constitution on the Church prepared for the First Vatican Council.

The functions and powers of the Church were divided into three: to teach, to sanctify and to govern. This division of power led to further distinction between the Church teaching and the Church taught; the Church sanctified and the Church sanctifying; the Church governing and the Church governed.

In each, the Church as institution is on the giving end and so, the Fathers said, the Church identified with the governing body of the hierarchy.

He spoke of the pyramidal pattern where all power is conceived of as descending from the Pope, through the bishops to the priests and, right at the

bottom, to the faithful who play a passive role. He said this was hardly in keeping with the condition of the People of God as a little flock following the humble Lord Jesus.

He pointed out this changed in the Second Vatican Council. "I think we have come a long way since Vatican II defined Church as People of God. It is not Pope Paul's Church; it is not Bishop Hogan's Church nor any bishop's in any part of the world. Today we speak of co-responsibility. The Church belongs to all.

"What we are going through today is a process of democratization of the Church in which we are trying to make every one feel a sense of co-responsibility, so in the Diocese of Rochester we have the parish councils, we have regionalism, we shall have the Diocesan Pastoral Council in June. All are instances in which the Church can become the work of God's People."

He pointed out that what many people find so frightening today is actually a return to the simplicity of the early days of Christianity where there was no question of dominance by the powerful.

He asked how dominance arose in the life of the Church.

Essentially, there are not many passages in Scripture which say what a bishop should do. He referred to texts in St. Paul for consideration of what a good leader should be and none of the texts speak of dominance.

In the gospel of St. Matthew, the disciples were arguing who would be the first in the group, and Jesus' response was that those who wished to be first among them should be the last and the servant of all.

The Bishop pointed out that the reference does not describe a Church without authority, but that there is no room for a power struggle within the Christian community. Those who occupy high positions should have more dedication to service, he said.

The Bishop noted that the attributes of charity and leadership go hand in hand. Leadership is measured by the same standards a good Christian life is judged. It does not mean we bypass our talents, but that nothing we do is effective unless animated by a spirit of charity.

Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council demanded new attitudes about the Church. The Bishop feels the new image of the Church is of one always young, feeling the rhythm of each century.

The Church is considered part of the full human family, sharing

concern for all mankind, he said. He made reference to the fact that Jesus came not only to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom, but He came also to give Himself to serve and to reconcile, and to be with us in our needs and sorrows.

Bishop Hogan pointed to the Church as the universal sign of the sacrament of salvation and the body of Christ.

The Church's mission is not primarily to gain new recruits, but rather to be a help to all men where they are. The Church is able to discern the signs of the times and offer guidance to men and in this way promote the reconciliation of man, he said.

"We can be members of the servant Church only to the extent we shed some of our own self-assertion," Bishop Hogan said. "If anything is destructive to human personality today and everyday it is the goal of our self-assertion."

The marks of the good servant

are simplicity, humility, being a man, for others. This is the challenge given to the priest in ordination ceremonies.

"You are not on a self-promotion kick, we tell our priests; and say to our people, you are not on a self-promotion kick."

There is nothing more destructive to the life of the Church than the polarization in which awful tensions develop among people trying to promote together for the upbuilding of the body of Christ in the spirit of charity that makes us servants and therefore liberates us to be people for others.

Bishop Hogan said he took for his own the motto "Gladly Will Spend and Be Spent" for he believes no one gives service to anyone else unless he does so with gladness and in the spirit of joy.

Bishop Hogan recalled how the bishops were told at the onset of

the conference that refusal to grow would be the greatest sin. Growth means pain, but we can't afford to come to a standstill. The Church is more than the guardian of a tradition, but is a pattern of Christ in the 1970s and has to be a witness to our times and the developments which have happened in the world.

Bishop Hogan said Faith is no longer conceived to be an intellectual consent to a series of propositions placed before us by the Church.

Faith, he said, is looked upon as a living, loving response to God the Father, who has manifested His presence to us in His Son, made known to us through the Holy Spirit.

He said there is a growing awareness that theology is marked by the pluralism of our days. Revealed truths are not a packaged formula for all time, but rather the object of a perpetual search for a deeper message and better expression.



Share your love. With everyone.

How fortunate we are to have those we love, and who love us. For to love, and to share it with others, is the way God meant life to be. But consider for a moment those all over the world who have so little. Impoverished in body and in spirit, they look to the missionaries not only for food and clothing, but for love—and the Word of God. They—and the missions—need your love, your prayers... and your help.

## Deaths

### August Weissenberger Fire Victim at 101

August Weissenberger of Macedon Center lost his life in a fire Sunday morning, April 6, 1975, at the age of 101.

He was the grandfather of Father James Marvin, pastor of St. Ambrose Church. He had six children, 24 grandchildren and 82 great-grandchildren.

The fire that destroyed the house at 460 County Line Road occurred while his daughter, Helen Weissenberger, was at Mass. Returning home around 11:30 a.m., she found her father in a chair near a side door. He

was dead of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Mr. Weissenberger had lived in the Macedon Center house since 1904. He was a muck farmer, and continued working until he was 82 years old. Born in Germany, he came here in 1897.

Survivors besides Miss Weissenberger include a son, Fred, of Rochester, and three other daughters, Mrs. William (Lena) Lyon of Phelps; Mrs. Edmund (Rosina) Marvin of Macedon, and Mrs. John (Emma) Marvin of Adrian, Mich.



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CJ 4/9/75

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