

**PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE**

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

# Let's Raise Our Voices

[This is the first in a series of articles on the sad plight of the American Farm Worker, written with the hope that as Church we will



raise a collective voice to support them in their plea for justice and the dignity that is their birthright.]

Thomas Wolfe described the Promise of America in, these words:

**To everyone a chance . . .**  
Regardless of birth  
A Golden Opportunity  
— The right to live,  
To work, to be Oneself.

I know of 2.6 million people who have yet to see this American promise fulfilled. They are our farm workers, the lowest paid income group in our Country. Many of them are migrants who follow the crops from the Mexican border to the State of Washington, from Texas to Michigan, from Florida to New England. They are all colors. They are poor.

If you were a farm worker:

- 1) You would be paid around \$1,500 a year. If everybody in your family worked, you might make \$2,700.
- 2) You would be a part of the 6 per cent of the American work force that suffers 22 per cent of all the fatalities from work accidents.

3) Your life expectancy would be 49 years.

4) Your children would be more than twice as likely to die at birth; and your wife in giving birth.

5) Your family's chance of catching influenza, pneumonia, tuberculosis or some other infectious disease would be three times the national average.

6) You would probably never have reached the eighth grade.

7) You would be fortunate to have two rooms in which to lodge your family. You might have electricity but probably no toilet, sink, bathtub or shower.

Truly, our farm workers are a disenfranchised and oppressed people about whom we may be only vaguely aware. Ironically, while they are involved in the basic service of putting food on our tables, they remain without enough for their own tables.

I must say that I have personally grown in admiration for my brother bishops who have dared to raise their voices against the injustices of our society that affect the lives of the farm workers and their families. In November 1974 this resolution was passed unanimously at our National Meeting in Washington:

"We, the Catholic Bishops of the United States, reiterate the seriousness of the farm labor problem and believe the urgency for its solution is as grave as ever. It is a national scandal that at both the federal and state level sufficient pressure is not being brought to bear on legislators to pass legislation that will be just to all parties. That legislation must assure the farm workers the right to elections by secret ballot of a union of their own choice. We, therefore, accept as a pastoral necessity that we be actively concerned in the solution of an evil that has gone on far too long."

At the same time, the bishops endorsed and supported the United Farm Workers' consumer boycott of table grapes and head lettuce until such time as free secret ballot elections would be held to determine which union — if any — they want to represent them.

Which is to say that the bishops believe in the power of local food stores or supermarkets to decide the future of our farm workers.

To help farm workers achieve their basic right of self-determination, the major religious groups of the U.S.A. — Catholic, Protestant and Jewish — are participating in Farm Worker Week, May 4-10. I hope we use these days as a time to become sensitive to their needs and to find ways to respond.

[to be continued]

## Holy Year Group Notes 'Heartening Response'

The diocese gave the 1974 Advance Holy Year a "surprising, touching and heartening" response, the Rochester Diocesan Holy Year Committee said in a

recently issued report which will be sent to the Central Committee for the Holy Year in Rome.

The local committee, chaired

by Bishop John E. McCafferty, acknowledged that about four per cent of the diocese participated in Holy Year pilgrimages last year, and stated that that

percentage "indicates that the day of popular religious devotions has not passed, or at least has returned."

"What is particularly

significant," the report says, "is the fact that those who came on pilgrimage included not only older 'pre-Vatican Council' Catholics, but a wide range of young adults and youth."

The 13-page document recounts the history of the present holy year and includes a description of the publication and distribution of printed material on the celebration, a description of the diocese-wide pilgrimage and of each region's pilgrimages, and a series of conclusions and comments.

The local committee feels that the 1974 observance "turned out well," despite the fact that certain Roman documents regarding the Holy Year were delayed in translation, thereby abbreviating the jubilee period.

While the *Courier-Journal* is cited several times in the document for its coverage of Holy Year events, "It is felt, however, that the secular media might have been used more widely to communicate the programs, and more importantly, the themes of the Holy Year."

"Certain pastors and heads of institutions gave only minimal cooperation to the diocesan observance," according to the report. "Perhaps this was because they entertained the defeatist idea that such acts of public devotion are things of the past."

"Its 1974 experience has absolutely convinced the committee (and it would now seem some of the pastors) that the very opposite is true. Whatever the mood might have been in 1965-1970, our Advance Holy Year has proved that in 1974 Catholics young and old can react enthusiastically and gratefully to public devotions, whether liturgical or paraliturgical; when they are imaginatively planned and prayerfully presented."

Committee members included Msgr. Francis B. Burris, Father Robert F. McNamara, Father Benedict Ehmann, Father Douglas Hoffman, Father Joseph Hart, Sister Margaret Mary Mattie, RSM; Miss Ruth Hoysic and William Carpenter. Meetings of the group were also attended by representatives of the leading spiritual and social movements in the diocese.

### The Bishop's Public Appointments



May

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1—Urban Ministry Meeting, Becket Hall — 10 a.m.   | 13—Concelebration of the Eucharist and Homily, Religious Education Coordinators Workshop, Pastoral Office — 4 p.m.         |
| 1—Confirmation, St. Jude's Church — 7:45 p.m.   | 14—North American College Alumni Reunion, Concelebration of the Eucharist, Old St. Joseph's Cathedral, Buffalo — 9:30 a.m. |
| 2—Priesthood Ordination, Blessed Sacrament Church — 7:30 p.m.   | 14—Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, Dinner and Address to Rosary Guild, Holy Spirit Church, Penfield — 6:15 p.m.   |
| 4—Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, St. Catherine of Siena Church, Ithaca — 11:30 a.m.             | 15—Pastoral Concerns Meeting — 9 a.m.  |
| 4—Communal Anointing Service, Tompkins-Tioga Region, Church of the Immaculate Conception, Ithaca — 3 p.m. | 15—Confirmation, Holy Rosary Church — 7:45 p.m.  |
| 4—Confirmation, St. Catherine of Siena Church, Ithaca — 7:30 p.m.   | 16—Confirmation, St. John the Evangelist Church, Greece — 7:45 p.m.  |
| 5—Meeting of the Priests of the North Region, Royal Scot Restaurant — Noon.                               | 17—Radio Message, Family Rosary Network — 7 p.m.   |
| 5—Confirmation, St. Michael's Church, Lyons — 7:45 p.m.   | 18—Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Diocesan Missions Appeal Sunday — WHEC Channel 10 — 8:30 a.m.                      |
| 6—Priests' Council, St. Bernard's Seminary — 10:30 a.m.   | 18—Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, St. Mary Our Mother Church, Horseheads — 11 a.m.                               |
| 6—Confirmation, Church of the Guardian Angels, Henrietta — 7:45 p.m.                                      | 19-20-21—Clergy Conference, Notre Dame Retreat House — Commencing at Noon.   |
| 7—Urban Ministry Meeting, St. Mary of the Lake Parish, Watkins Glen — 10 a.m.                             | 21—Confirmation, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Rochester — 7:45 p.m.   |
| 8—Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, VA Hospital, Canandaigua — 10 a.m.                             | 22—Board of Trustees Meeting, St. Joseph's Villa — 10:30 a.m.  |
| 9—Priesthood Ordination, St. Andrew's Church, Rochester — 7:30 p.m.                                       | 22—Confirmation, Our Lady Queen of Peace Church — 7:45 p.m.  |
| 10—Celebration of the Eucharist and Homily, World Hunger Workshop, St. Bernard's Seminary — 5 p.m.        | 24—Basilian Priesthood Ordination, Becket Hall — 2 p.m.  |
| 11—Ceremony of Renewal, St. Michael's Church, Union Springs — 3 p.m.                                      | 27—Budget Presentation Meeting — 9 a.m.  |
| 12—Meeting of the Priests of the Northeast Region, St. Ambrose Rectory — Noon.                            | 30—Financial Advisory Board Meeting — 11 a.m.  |
| 12—Confirmation, St. Patrick's Church, Macedon — 7:45 p.m.  | 31—Jesuit Priesthood Ordinations, St. John the Evangelist Church, Greece — 2 p.m.  |