

Some Possible Issues for the Upcoming DPC

This article is based on interviews with eight priests and sisters of the Diocese of Rochester. It is part of a series introducing the Pastoral Council to the diocese.

The priests and sisters interviewed suggested several issues which they feel the Diocesan Pastoral Council could profitably consider. Usually the concerns are closely related to the ministry in which the individual is involved. The most frequently mentioned issues are education and the distribution of personnel, services, and funds within the diocese.

Father Anthony Valente, co-pastor of St. Michael's parish in the Rochester inner-city, commented, "I hope that the Pastoral Council will come forth with some positive principles in regard to schools. We must decide whether the continuation of schools in the diocese is going to be determined solely on an economic basis."

Father Lewis Brown, the associate pastor of St. Ann's, Hornell, in the Livingston-Steuben Region, suggested that

"the Pastoral Council should review the current dispersment of personnel and services throughout the entire diocese and make some positive recommendations."

Other issues mentioned for possible consideration included the role of women in the Church, the permanent diaconate, implementation of the Gospel message of social justice, and liturgical celebration. Specific issues such as abortion, our ministry to divorcees, ecumenism, diocesan priorities, team ministries and consolidated ministries, and a reassessment of the needs of the diocese were also mentioned as possible concerns.

Sister Mary Jane Mitchell, SSJ, Religious Education coordinator at St. Lawrence, suggested that "the Diocesan Pastoral Council should address itself to social issues such as world hunger and develop ways for individual parishes to respond."

The priests and sisters interviewed unanimously affirmed that we need a Diocesan Pastoral Council at this time and that the

diocese is prepared for it. "The diocese is ready for the DPC, but parish councils still need more maturing to obtain maximum value from the Diocesan Pastoral Council," advised Fr. David Callan of the Cornell Catholic Community in the Tompkins-Tioga Region. Sister Judith Weber, SSND, principal of St. Margaret Mary's School in the North Region of Monroe County agreed, "Although we are fumbling on many levels, I believe that waiting until we are perfect would cause us to be unmoving."

All the priests and sisters expect that it would be awhile before the impact of the DPC is felt in their ministries. Father James Marvin, pastor of St. Ambrose parish in the Northeast Region of Monroe County and president of the Priests Council, predicted, "Once the Pastoral Council knows what we expect and how to share its decision-making responsibility it will certainly have an effect on parish ministry. I expect that we priests are going to see much more emphatically the need of continuing education to provide the kind of leadership that will be expected of us in the future."

Most agreed with Msgr. Richard Burns, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle parish in the North Region of Monroe County, who cautioned that "we should encourage the Diocesan Pastoral Council to move slowly and to do new things only when they are better than the things we are already doing."

Father Marvin, the president of the Priests Council, and Sister Mary Beatrice Cyran, RSM, the

president of the Diocesan Sisters' Council, both stated that their groups will be strongly supportive of the Pastoral Council and look forward to working together for the strengthening of our diocese. "The Sisters Council," according to Sister Mary Beatrice of Notre Dame High School in Elmira, "stands ready to share the success and failure of its organizational struggle with the Diocesan Pastoral Council and to work in

tandem to restore all things in Christ in the diocese."

Those interviewed felt that there was a high degree of awareness of the approaching Pastoral Council among the priests and Sisters. Most are reserving judgment until they see the council in operation. Father Brown commented, "We are all aware of the DPC's beginning, but it will still have to prove itself."

Hunger Conference Seen as 'Unique'

James Jennings of the Center for Concern in Washington, D.C. will be keynote speaker at the Leadership Conference on World Hunger May 9 and 10 at St. Bernard's Seminary.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan is expected to attend the conference, which is being arranged by people from the Office of Human Development, the Department of Education, social action committees of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Sisters of Mercy, the Rochester Association of Religious Educators and St. Bernard's.

Father Daniel Tormey, coordinator, described the conference as of "unique" design, in the care taken "to place the question of world hunger in the context of Christian moral theology as historically understood," and not to treat it as "an isolated opportunity for political action." It will be unique also, Father Tormey said, in "the interplay of concrete skills and personal time for prayer and reflection which we have introduced into the design of the conference."

Workshops will focus on legislative and political action,

education and action programs for parishes and high schools, and the campus response. Details may be obtained from Sister Mary Ann Weiland at 328-6400.

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ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

Are May devotions in or out?

Where? In parishes? schools? CCD classes? In the universal Church? It depends where you are.

My children go to Cardinal Mooney High. Will they have special devotions?

In all schools they will probably depend on the faculty. In parishes, it depends on different influences. In our own Holy Trinity parish in Webster our liturgical committee has prepared a series of Marian devotions for May, including the rosary, the Little Office, Scripture readings, and the finale: a special Children's Mass with procession of children carrying flowers to Our Lady's shrine. Isn't that beautiful and educational? I like processions, ceremonial, ritual. They are such natural ways of letting many people become involved personally. Remember the slogan: "Everybody likes a parade."

Have you any Marian ideas for May?

Yes. Not everyone will plow through Pope Paul's beautiful Veneration of Mary (Marialis Cultus) given to the bishops of the world in February, 1974. But those involved in religious education should study it prayerfully. Why? It is soaked with Scripture, theology, history, psychology and devotion. The section on ecumenism is direct, positive and honest. It gives practical recommendations. Pope Paul asked the bishops to restore the devotion of the rosary and the Angelus. If you want a copy of Marialis Cultus, send me a dollar and your address.

Aren't you kind of hung-up on the Angelus?

No. To disregard the Angelus rather than use it is a hang-up. Don't you think there is something terribly amiss when the Angelus bells ring from the church to remind us of the incarnation and a believer just looks at his watch to see if the

watch and the bells synchronize? A highlight of a visit to Rome is the Sunday noon recitation of the Angelus, led by the Pope overlooking St. Peter's square, with thousands professing their faith: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." "Et Verbum caro factum est."

Is the Angelus catching on?

It certainly is in many places. Many CCD and Catholic schools religion text books now include the mysteries of the rosary and the Angelus. Here is an edifying example. Mr. William Dollar is the director of the huge library of the University of Windsor, Canada. He has been a friend to me ever since he became the first president of our Sampson College Newman Club in 1946, when I was Catholic chaplain of the college. He is a native of Thomasville, Georgia, and a convert to the Catholic Faith. He married a beautiful Windsor girl who is bi-lingual. Their five children: Paul, John Peter, Matthew, Patrick and Margot are equally at home in French and in English. On Feb. 4 he wrote: "The Thomasville, Ga. Catholics have vowed to start off their daily prayers with the Angelus, for Peace and Reconciliation. And each Mass always begins with the Angelus, whatever the hour. Isn't that a healthy, positive spirit?"

There are several translations of the Angelus. Which do you recommend?

About six years ago Maryknoll Father Pat Cleary (RIP) wrote and pleaded that I use this OTRSide column to help preserve the Lord's prayer in its familiar, archaic integrity. He recognized that proliferating translations tends to disrupt community praying together. I think the familiar archaic form might better be preserved, so that Christians can pray together. Here is the prayer, if you wish to recite the Angelus:

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. R. and she conceived of the Holy Spirit. (Hail Mary).

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord. R. Be it done unto me according to Thy word. (Hail Mary).

V. And the Word was made flesh. R. And dwelt among us. (Hail Mary).

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech Thee O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by his passion and cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

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