

DSC Ponders Questions On Personnel Groups

By MARTIN TOOMBS

The position of two of the personnel committees in the diocese was clarified for members of the Diocesan Sisters Council last Saturday. Father James Boyle and James Noonan spoke on the functions of the committees they represent.

Christmas At the Cathedral

A week from today, at 5:30 p.m., Bishop Joseph L. Hogan will open the Christmas celebration at Sacred Heart Cathedral with a special Mass for children and their parents.

The 7:45 p.m. Mass will be for young adults, with carols and contemporary songs by the cathedral folk group. The music will begin at 7:20.

A sung Mass at midnight will be preceded by an hour-long concert. The program ranges from Gregorian chant to the contemporary, with songs from 18 countries. At the end, Donald Meminger, choir director and organist, will play Dupre's Variations on a Noel. At each of the Christmas Eve Masses there will be a blessing of the crib and procession.

Masses Christmas Day will be at 7, 8:30, 10, and 11:15 a.m., and 12:30 p.m.

Father Boyle is chairman of the Joint Personnel Procedure Committee, which is designed to coordinate the use of personnel, both sisters and priests, throughout the diocese. With members from both the Priests Council and the Sisters Council, it has dealt with such matters as priest's sabbaticals, evaluation of priests and priest interns. Presently, it is studying proposals for missionary work in South America.

Noonan is a member of the Interim Personnel Advisory Committee, an ad hoc committee formed by the bishop to advise him on fiscal matters dealing with personnel. The committee will evaluate proposals for change in the financial situation of priests, sister, lay employees and lay teachers in the diocese. Potential topics include pensions, health insurance and vacation time for diocesan personnel.

Pope Paul Composes Prayer To Mary

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul, marking the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary (Dec. 8), read a new prayer he had composed, "imploping" the mother of Jesus to grant "special heavenly assistance" to a world in crisis.

The prayer, read during the celebration of Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, focused on the Holy Year theme of "reconciliation" of man with God and of men with one another.

Following are excerpts of the authorized English version of Pope Paul's new prayer:

"Mary most holy, immaculate in your conception, beloved above all creatures, daughter of God the Father Almighty, raised to the highest place in His merciful plan for all mankind. Listen, O Mary, to our filia voice, echoing sentiments of the whole Church on this tenth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council and at the happy conclusion of this Holy Year, as we earnestly implore your special heavenly assistance in this critical hour for the spiritual and civil destiny of the world.

"To you, the Mother of the Church, we therefore entrust our commitment to reconciliation, which has likewise been strengthened during the Holy Year: reconciliation with God; reconciliation with all men, our brethren; the longed-for complete reconciliation with all those who believe in our one Teacher and Redeemer, your son Jesus Christ, ever increasing reconciliation through justice, liberty, and cooperation among the different social groups; and finally reconciliation among the peoples and nations in a watchful and sincere spirit of security, collaboration, and peace.

"To you, Mary, the fountain of life, we entrust the expectations of the young, who are restless in their search for a world more just and human, and we trustfully implore: guide their steps towards Christ, the firstborn of renewed humanity, so that in His light they may plan their endeavors and fulfill their hopes.

"Handmaid of the Lord and Daughter of Zion, look down upon your people, sprung from the faith of Abraham, Ark of the New Covenant, intercede for all those who have been redeemed by Christ but who as yet do not know the light of the Gospel.

In earlier action, the DSC had appointed Sisters Janet Wahl and Loretta Pool to both committees, feeling that they would overlap. Some concern was expressed, after the function of the committees had been explained, that a conflict of interest existed; the sisters would be required to examine proposals which they had helped write. Father Boyle asked that the two sisters not be removed from his committee, citing their valuable work. As Sister Loretta and Sister Janet were not present, no action was taken.

Discussion of the Sister's Living Needs Proposal consisted mainly of a report by the liaison to the priest's council, Sister Mary John VanAtta. She told of the response of the priests council and of her concern that many of the priests didn't understand the purpose of the proposal. As she said in her report to the DSC: "Money is not the problem. It seems that very few more priests understand any better today than they did two years ago, when Sisters' Maintenance started, just why we are concerned about where we live."

The proposal says, "Sisters are encouraged to live in the kind of situation which will best foster their growth as women of prayer and service in the contemporary church. Each sister must receive the support she needs within the local community so that she can grow in prayer and in effective response to the needs of God's people."

Sister Ann Miller's motion to re-form the committee that wrote the proposal, and examine ways to educate the priests and people of the diocese concerning the rationale, was approved.

In other action, the council heard an abbreviated report on the Women's Ordination Conference; a more complete report will be scheduled for the January meeting. A motion was approved supporting the activities of the core group of people from the Rochester diocese who attended the conference and are continuing to meet.

The now completed Peace and Justice Proposal will be mailed to members of the council and discussed at a future meeting.

Noonan requested that the Bishop be given two and a half hours during the January meeting to present his Pastoral Directions.

Christmas at St. Leo's

Hilton — A birthday cake for Baby Jesus will be placed on the altar at St. Leo's Christmas eve, and every child attending the 5:30 family mass will be given a piece. Parents are asked to bring special gifts for their children for blessing at the altar, and the children are asked to bring drawings and poems as tributes to the Savior. Father Chester Kloczek's homily will be addressed to the young.

The junior choir will sing at this Mass, and the School of Religion will put on a pageant. At the 7 p.m. Mass, music will be by the folk group. The adult choir and a brass and woodwind ensemble will perform at the midnight Mass, and the pageant will be repeated. Masses Christmas Day will begin at 10:15 and 11:30 a.m.

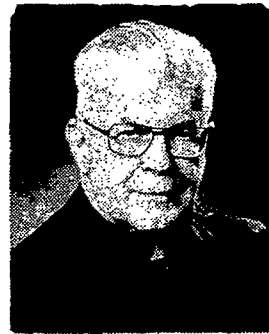
Parish festivities begin this Friday night, Dec. 19. All the choirs will assemble at 6:30 in the old church hall, then walk through the village singing carols. The evening will end with a party in the hall. The New Year's Eve dance is scheduled to begin at 9 p.m., Dec. 31, in the hall. Reservations should be made with Mrs. Frank Hubbell, 392-3824.

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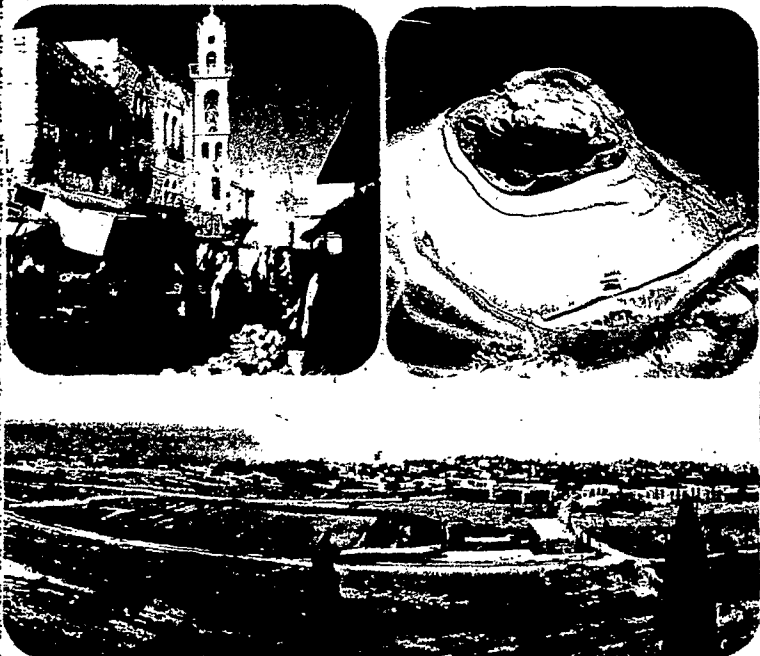
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Dec. 24, 1861. Archbishop John Hughes of New York has a Christmas "peace-making" interview with French Emperor Napoleon III. The United States Civil War erupted on April 15, 1861. One of the fears of Abraham Lincoln's government was that European powers might recognize the Confederacy or even join it in war against the United States. On Nov. 8, a U.S. naval commander seized two Confederate agents from the British ship Trent, and for several weeks Britain seemed ready to declare war on the U.S.A.

Lincoln urged Secretary of State William H. Seward to entrust his friend Archbishop Hughes with a mission to France to explain the American situation. Hughes would accept it only as a peacemaking task. He did his best to enlighten French prelates and government leaders. In his interview with Napoleon III he urged the Emperor to arbitrate the Trent issue between England and the United States; and he clarified the Civil War situation. Hughes later on heard that Southerners were blaming him for discouraging Napoleon from siding with them. The Archbishop said, "I hope the accusation is true." — Rochester Diocesan Bicentennial Commission.