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New Era Dawning, Ecumenist Claims

Philadelphia — Agreements reached by theologians in a decade of eucharistic dialogue signal "a new era" for the Christians of the world, according to the U.S. Bishops' chief ecumenist.

Father John Hotchkiss predicted that interfaith communion might come about relatively soon, in his comments on the theological symposium held during the 41st International Eucharistic Congress.

Another decade of study and discussion might dispel the differences that stand in the way of unity, Father Hotchkiss said. Others involved declined to make any such estimate.

Scholars participating in the symposium included Anglicans, Lutherans, United Methodists, Presbyterians and Eastern Orthodox. Several of them later addressed an ecumenical meeting that drew large crowds to the Civic Center.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen spoke of the centuries-long division

of Christians over the meaning of Holy Communion as a "lover's quarrel."

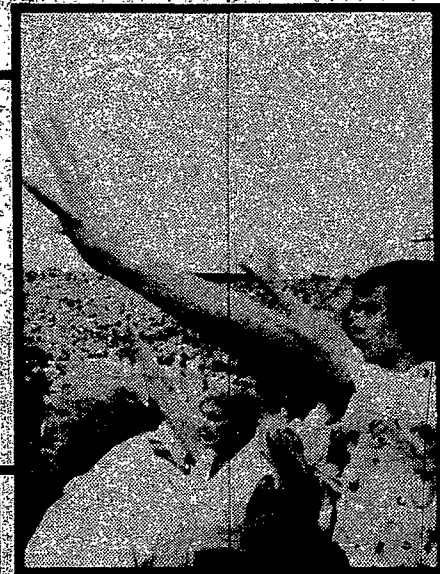
"Theological jargon to some extent has kept us apart," he said also.

The Rev. Robert Marshall, president of the Lutheran Church in America opened the public meeting. A standing ovation was the response to his greeting, "Fellow Christians."

Dr. Marshall noted that part of the Christian heritage is "separate and distinct administrations of the Eucharist," but he added that it is the same Eucharist because the sacrament is from God, not from people.

There must be concern for truth, as well as love, in the pursuit of visible unity, the Lutheran leader continued. The command is, he said, "to search for truth, but to do it together."

Archbishop Sheen said, "Lovers don't argue about their basic love



One in Spirit, in Philadelphia, a woman prayed quietly and a young charismatic lifted his hands in prayer, and in Bolsena, Italy, Pope Paul raised his hand in benediction (an event brought to Philadelphia by television) during the closing ceremonies of the 41st International Eucharistic Congress. (RNS)

for each other. They argue about how much money they should spend on things like meat.

"Christians don't argue about their love for Christ, either. They argue about more peripheral, less important things."

He urged all present to just

forget our discussion and later on, to spend an hour before the Eucharistic Lord in the Tabernacle, where His body, blood, soul and divinity continue to be present among us."

Father Hotchkiss said at a news conference that "deep and encompassing" agreements had

developed among theologians of the divided churches.

"In the light of what our past history has been," he said, "they are clear and compelling evidence the Christian people have crossed over into an unmistakably new era in their life together."

Seminary Days Again

Dansville Pastor Plugs Ongoing Education

Father Richard O'Connell went back to school and he's glad he did.

"It was a very delightful experience to go back to school," said Father O'Connell, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Dansville. He took the 10-week Program for Ministerial Renewal offered by the New York Province Priests Institute at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, Yonkers.

The course centered on church history, Scripture, Biblical criticism, Ecclesiology, Christian anthropology, psychology, moral and sacramental theology and liturgy.

Father O'Connell, a priest for 25 years, heard about the program through Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, who, on behalf of the diocese, encourages continuing education for the clergy. He studied with 25 priests from across the state, most having left pastoral work to come to the seminary. "It was an education to be with priests of

different ages, different backgrounds, and with different pastorates."

He learned that "problems present in the Diocese of Rochester are common all over New York State."

Dunwoodie Seminary is offering another renewal program for priests this fall. Father O'Connell has encouraged other priests in Rochester to attend the program, and several are considering it, he said.

"Many programs are being offered all over for this kind of renewal opportunity. A lot of priests and bishops have done it, here and in Rome," Father O'Connell said.

Parish priests need ongoing education "to keep up," he noted. "The parish priest today is called upon to be more of a professional person than ever before."

Most priests are held back from

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Priests celebrate the Eucharist in Auburn rites.

Auburn 'Congress' Draws 1,000 Pilgrims to Prayer

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Auburn — More than 1,000 people attended the Eucharistic Congress Observance held Sunday, Aug. 8, at Casey Park Pavilion, as the 41st International Eucharistic Congress came to a close in Philadelphia.

"We need the Eucharistic Congress every four years to take a renewed look at what it really means to have God's presence in the world. What we get out of the Eucharist is determined by the faith and awareness we bring to it," said the homilist, Father Albert Shamon, pastor of St. Mary's, Waterloo.

Mass was concelebrated by 23 diocesan priests, primarily from the Cayuga-Seneca region. Chief

concelebrants included Father Michael Conboy, secretary to Bishop Joseph L. Hogan; Father Elmer Heindl, regional coordinator and pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Weedsport, and the assistant coordinator, Father Leo Lynch of St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls.

Father Shamon praised the renewal aspects of the Eucharistic Congress. "One of the greatest dangers to religion is when it becomes mechanical and routine and people go through the motions without knowing why."

Religious practice is built on habit, he noted, but it is habit that can liberate.

"It frees us so that we can satisfy one of the basic hungers of the human race — the hunger for love.

Christianity is more than something negative, but something positive like trying to be Christ-like."

"Only a God of love can set mankind on fire and this is the whole purpose of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is God among us to nourish us so that love will spill over to others. And with love comes the satisfaction of man's hunger for peace in the world," Father Shamon said.

The collection was to be given to Sister Agnes Donovan, a Maryknoll Sister from Auburn, for earthquake relief to the Guatemalans she has served since 1968.

On the altar was a Eucharistic Congress flag brought from Philadelphia by Father Louis Sinianni.

Back to School

This week's Courier-Journal includes a special pullout, back-to-school section. In it, diocesan school officials talk of future plans, new appointments are announced, innovative programs explained, and the school calendar for the new year published. The section touches on both elementary and secondary schools and may be pulled out of the center of the paper for saving.