

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

Reflections on the Detroit Conference

PART III — The Church of Rochester Is Called to Respond

The "Call to Action" Conference in Detroit was one step in a major Bicentennial project for the Catholic Church in America. This undertaking will be completed when the U.S. Bishops issue a pastoral letter on justice to the American Catholic Church next May. Between now and then, I will study, reflect, pray and carefully listen to the voices of the people of the Diocese of Rochester. It is easy for me to write about this intention of mine but dialogue in action is quite an undertaking. Administrative efforts will be necessary creating the methods and the forums for listening and consultation. After the pastoral letter has been issued next Summer, we will begin local implementation of the agenda for justice.

I remember vividly the opening of the Conference when Pope Paul spoke on film to the assembled bishops, delegates and observers. Seated at his desk in the Vatican, he gave us strong encouragement and expressed great satisfaction with the "Call to Action" Conference. The Pope looks forward to the good results the Conference may bring to our work of pastoral ministry in today's world.

The memory of the Conference confirms in me the desire to bring to the Bishops' meeting next May a genuinely pastoral perspective on important topics of the Detroit resolutions.

The word "pastoral" implies speaking only after an attentive and open listening to the church people in every county of our diocese. Sadly, there was no consultation in our diocese prior to going with our delegation to Detroit. While I am genuinely pleased with the high caliber of all those who went to the Conference representing the Church of Rochester, I know

that there has been some controversy at home about how reflective of our people's faith and vision the final resolutions are. I want to find out. I want to be in contact with you on this important matter. There is need for a diocesan-wide pastoral dialogue on the issues of Church, Personhood, Humankind, Ethnicity and Race, Neighborhood and other matters raised and addressed in this bicentennial year.

We have been "tooling" up for serious consultation for several years now, with our councils of priests, Sisters and laity gathered together at the parish, regional and diocesan levels. The regions have been "gearing" up for serious consultation. Now it is time to shift into gear and move.

How do I propose that you help me be prepared to gather with my fellow bishops to deliberate prayerfully on the resolutions? At this point, I cannot outline a fully planned program of consultation. I do have some strong thoughts on guiding principles that should characterize this dialogue and consultation.

First, it is important for me to hear from all persons engaged directly and indirectly in pastoral ministry, including laity, Sisters, priests, experts and practitioners alike. Further, I want to hear from you as you dialogue on these matters. Detroit did not separate us into ordained, Religious and lay during the discussions. We worked together and it was a fine experience.

Second, there must be a number of avenues by which your views can reach me. Some of you may want to sit down and write. Others would prefer to work in a group. If you want to say something to me about the issues of justice and liberty addressed in Detroit, there will be a way for you to do it.

Third, the whole list of 105 resolutions (over 100 pages) is too vast for me to attempt to prepare in depth for each person. I believe it would submerge all of us in paper if we tried to be all inclusive. Therefore, I will be limiting the consultation to what I consider the 15 or 20

most important resolutions for the Church to address.

Fourth, the consultation will be, pastorally oriented and hope-filled, considering resolutions not in light of how they fit into present modes of action, but rather as they call us to deeply needed and caring service as Church. Those who live in neighborhoods, towns, villages and rural areas can best speak to these needs. I hasten to say that I see great signs of hope in the Church today but hope is often painful.

"To hope means to be liberated from calculated patterns, plans and systems that promise security and final and inevitable solutions to all of our complex problems. To hope is to let the Spirit blow where He wills, to move us to uncharted courses, to rely on the inspiration of an unpredictable God — predictable only in His call to move us from where we may have settled comfortably."

— You Are Living Stones.

Fifth, I want to hear your reflective insights, borne of serious study. Study groups, commissions and renewal groups around the Diocese may want to include some of the important resolutions on their agendas. I hope to see general discussions by parish councils, regional groups, the DPC, Priests and Sisters' Councils that bring your prayerful advice and counsel to me.

I hope that many of you will share your concern for justice and liberty with me during the next several months. Members of my staff are now at work preparing a process and the materials which will make this consultation a reality very soon. A diocesan-wide dialogue is something we are ready for. I need your help and your interest to make it be a reality. If you have suggested ways that we can share in this discussion, then please send them to me before the May 1977 Bishops' Meeting. Be assured that I shall be happy to hear from you.

church attendance because of the Pope's traditional stand on birth control was that since he had raised the possibility of changing the doctrine and then had simply restated it in its original form many people were disappointed. I do not know whether Father Greeley is right in this assessment but I'm sure that that is what he meant.

About the other reasons you give for leaving the church, I am sure that it is true that some people did leave because of changes in liturgy, new Mass, the overemphasis on the ecumenical movement (as if there could be too much emphasis on unity), and the other reasons you cite. Obviously no statistics would be immediately available. Many people for one reason or another found it not only difficult but excruciating to accept change in the church. Sometimes this was a real psychological problem which was due to the fact that their comfort and security had been removed and in other cases it was simply the opportunity to give a reason for something they wanted to do anyway.

In the case of the former, in our parish we are instituting what will be known as "Operation Bridge," whereby people will be helped to understand where we were at, where we have come to and why. I hope it will help to ease the pain. In the case of those who simply use these changes as the occasion for moving out, there would seem to be nothing we could do. That's the way they wanted it anyway, apparently, and when you realize the changes that have been made in no way affect the substance of Christian teaching nor basic belief in Jesus Christ as savior of the world, then you begin to realize how illogical it is to leave because of accidental matters while the substance still remained.

COURIER-CALENDAR

- Country Store — Women's Guild bazaar at St. John the Evangelist, downstairs, 549 Humboldt, Friday, Nov. 19, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 10-4.
- St. Rose Holiday Party — Dinner-dance Nov. 20 at Lima Country Club.
- Family Turkey Festival — At St. Margaret Mary, Rogers Parkway, Saturday, Nov. 20, 7-11 p.m.; food, features for children and adults. Sponsored by Men's Club.
- Turkey Festival — At St. Andrew's, 923 Portland, Friday, Nov. 19, 7-30 p.m.
- St. Philip Neri — Women's Club meeting Tuesday, Nov. 23, after 8 p.m. Benediction. Holiday crafts demonstration, collection of canned goods for Christmas baskets; sale of tickets for members-only party Dec. 15.
- Arts and Crafts Sale — Sponsored by St. Salome's Women's Club, 9-5 Sunday, Nov. 21, school hall, 4282 Culver, more than 45 craftsmen displaying their work; home-made desserts, coffee.
- Thanksgiving Bazaar — St. Stanislaus, Hudson and Norton, sponsored by Holy Name of Mary Society, Sunday, Nov. 21, beginning at 3 p.m.; turkeys, groceries, stuffed animals, plants, home-baked goods. No admission charge.
- Holly Mart — Bazaar sponsored by Twigs of F.F. Thompson Hospital Guild, Saturday, Nov. 20, 9-30 a.m.-2 p.m., elementary school, West Gibson Street, Canandaigua; boutique items, decorations, frozen casseroles; lunch served 11 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Holiday Boutique, Barn Sale — At St. Rita's, 1008 Maple Drive, West Webster, Friday, Nov. 19, 9-9; Saturday 9-5. Craft items, plants, baked goods.
- Reflections on Ethnicity — Lecture by Joseph Versage, associate professor of sociology, St. John Fisher College, tomorrow noon at Xerox Square, in conjunction with Rochester's People Exhibit.
- Mothers of Twins — Monthly meeting tomorrow, 7:30 p.m., at Messiah Lutheran Church, MC Read and English Road; discussion of alcoholism. Club information: Mrs. Gerald Yazback, 647-9102; Mrs. Donald Spillberg, 544-0976.
- Classic Film Series — Stand-in, early Bogart comedy, 2 and 8 p.m. tomorrow, Rochester Museum Auditorium, 657 East Ave.
- Senior Citizens' Matinee — Gary Cooper, Walter Brennan in The Westerner, (1940) 1:30 p.m. tomorrow, Dryden Theatre, Eastman House, 300 East Ave. Free.
- Italian Film Festival — Pasolini's The Gospel According to St. Matthew, 8 p.m. tomorrow, Room 14, Nazareth Arts Center.
- Music for a Sunday Afternoon — Nazareth Arts Center Auditorium, 3 p.m. Nov. 21; free.
- Round and Square — Dance at Bolger Hall, Nativity School.

- Brookport, 9 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 27; sponsored by parish Women's Club. Tickets \$5 per couple, at door.
- Divorced Catholics — Tureen supper, 6 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 21, at St. Charles school hall, Maiden Lane at Dewey. \$2 plus dish to pass.
- Special Faculty Recital — David Burge, chairman of Eastman School piano faculty, 8 tonight, Kilbourn Hall. Free.
- Cremona Quartet — Debut of award-winning Eastman School graduate string players, 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 19, Kilbourn Hall. Free.
- Eastman School Symphony — Free concert at 8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 22, Eastman Theatre.
- Eastman InterMusica — Beethoven chamber music and recorded electronic sounds with live flute, 8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 23, Kilbourn Hall. Free.
- La Tuna — Spanish university students in traditional music and dances from 12th century, 8:30 tonight, Nazareth Arts Center.
- Capriccio — Final opera by Richard Strauss, produced by Eastman Opera Theatre in Eastman Theatre, 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 18, 19. Free.
- Finocchio — Musical version presented by Children's Theatre, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Nov. 26; 11 a.m., 2 p.m. Nov. 27; Nazareth Arts Center. Tickets \$2.
- Much Ado About Nothing — Shakespearean comedy produced by CeVa, 168 S. Clinton, tonight through Saturday, Nov. 20, at 8; Sunday, 4 p.m.
- Theater Workshop — Free, for children and teenagers 10 to 18, conducted by members of CeVa Company, at 168 S. Clinton, Saturday, Nov. 20, 10-noon.
- Disco Dance — For all Monroe County high school students, 8 p.m. to midnight Saturday, Nov. 27, county fairgrounds building 2, Tickets at schools and at the Center, 258 Alexander or 1300 Buffalo Road, \$2 at door, \$3.
- BRIDGE fund-raiser — Dinner at Monroe County Cooperative Extension, 249 Highland, 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 20. Public Defender Peter Yellin speaker; Matt Rinaldi of Channel 13 MC; Crowley Clan of Galedonia entertainers. Tickets only at BRIDGE office, 621 W. Main.
- Art a la Carte — Half-hour talk on pop art by Dolores Mayer, 12:15 p.m. tomorrow, Memorial Art Gallery.
- Lake Country Craftsmen — Holiday sale at Cutler Union, University at Goodman, Nov. 20 and 21, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Original Prints — Old Masters and contemporary works from Rotten Galleries on sale tomorrow in Lavery Library, St. John Fisher College, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

THE OPEN WINDOW



Fr. Louis Hohman

Dear Father Hohman,

More about recent changes.

Father Greeley in his column some time ago discussed a sociological study that indicates the reason that church attendance has fallen off is the Pope's traditional stand on birth control. This reasoning does not make sense to me as this law of the Catholic Church has always been in effect. Why would people after centuries of this age-old rule decide to abandon the church because of it? What about the single people and the couples beyond child bearing age that have left the church? Will the church leaders even consider the possibility that the changes in liturgy, the new Mass, the overemphasis on the ecumenical movement, the changes in the traditional role of clergy and laity and the changes in the sacramental rites have caused people to leave the Catholic Church?

Signed, J.F.

Dear J.F.,

What Father Greeley was trying to say about the falling off of