

# Bishop Hogan Asks Support For Black, Indian Collection

Ash Wednesday, 1977

My dear People:

The Mission of the Church to Black and Native Americans deserves continued renewal and support. Many improved and expanded efforts during the coming year depend upon the successfulness of the annual appeal. Our diocese has customarily contributed to these important apostolates through the annual collection at this weekend's Masses for the First Sunday of Lent, February 26 and 27.

In addition to the national agencies assisted by the Joint Appeals Collection, our local Office of Black Ministries is also aided in its many efforts to serve the Diocese. Your generosity last year contributed to special projects funded in several regions of the United States, and also the operational costs incurred by the Office of Black Ministries during its first year. These organizations greatly appreciate the sacrifices

so many of you made on behalf of the social spiritual welfare of their respective communities.

Thus, supporting such endeavors further ensures the Church's mission to proclaim Christ's Gospel amongst Black and Native American peoples will continue to be an important focus.

Be assured of my appreciation for your generosity, and with every best wish, I remain

Devotedly yours in Christ,

*Joseph L. Hogan*  
 Most Reverend Joseph L. Hogan, D.D.  
 Bishop of Rochester



"LOOK, BESIDES THE PRAYER AND PUTTING YOUR TRUST IN GOD, WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO GO ALONG WITH YOU TO YOUR TAX-AUDIT?"

## Editorial

### Opportunity

Lent is a time for positive action, we have all come to learn. Not that the idea of sacrifice is faulty but it becomes more effective when channeled into concrete action for good.

This first Sunday in lent we will be provided a perfect vehicle to perform just such positive good. In the annual collection for Black and Native Americans we are offered at once the opportunity to sacrifice some and aid a worthy cause at the same time.

The material gift will be put to good use throughout the nation, in special projects in the South and West and in inner cities in every state.

Part of the funds also will be used right here in our own diocese to support the programs of our Office of Black Ministries. This is one of the few dioceses in the country to establish this important apostolate and it needs all our help.

But perhaps there is even more significance. At a time when the Church is reaching out to nonwhites, realizing that in ignoring them she damaging herself, this collection has special meaning.

Prejudice persists in the Church, as in almost every other institution, but at least it has become recognized for the immoral, debilitating animal it is. Programs aided by this collection will help wipe away the deleterious effects of such prejudice.

But there is more. Though the collection Sunday will help the Church in its mission close to home, it may provide spiritual succor to the Church in other parts of the world. We speak particularly of southern Africa where the Church has been setting a fine example of moral leadership.

Just last week, the Catholic bishops of South Africa, refusing to be cowed by repressive governmental measures, issued a 21-point policy designed to buck South Africa's system of apartheid. The main premises will be the appointment of black priests to white parishes and desegregation of churches and church-run institutions, such as hostels, orphanages and hospitals. This in addition to the schools which the Church has been desegregating in open defiance of apartheid laws.

In our humble opinion, that is leadership in capital letters for the rest of the world.

The South African bishops said it well: The Church must be seen "in solidarity with all those who work for the promotion of human dignity and the legitimate aspirations of oppressed people — on the side therefore of black consciousness.

South Africa may be far off geographically but it is as close as our own racism. This Sunday we get a chance in a special way to share in the high principles of Christianity being manifested at great risk by our brothers and sisters in Africa.

## Opinion

### Humanness Of Christ

Editor:

It is impossible in a letter to the editor to respond in detail to the criticism (C-J 2-9-77) of my article (C-J 1-5-77) on the human awareness of Jesus. I shall attempt, therefore, simply to highlight what I consider the main point of difference between my position and that of my critics.

Many of the documents which they cite make quite clear that the Church has always asserted that Jesus was fully human and fully divine. The question I would like to pose is: what do we mean when we make this two-fold assertion about Jesus? In approaching this question I would point out that in our thinking about Jesus through the Christian centuries we have tended to emphasize the fullness of divinity that dwelt in Him. We have not always been equally emphatic in asserting the fullness of humanity that was His. On the contrary, we have tended to think of Him as God in disguise. We have presented Him as God in a human body, going through all the motions of being human, yet doing so without any struggle because He was God. We have pictured Him as God almighty walking about our earth in the appearance of a man. He looked like a man. He talked like a man. He was God dressed up as a man.

I reject this false image of Jesus that sacrifices His humanity on the altar of His divinity.

I take very seriously the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews which state unequivocally that Jesus was tempted as we are and that He had to struggle to overcome temptation. "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are yet never sinned." (Heb. 4:15). The New Testament commits us to a belief in the sinlessness of Jesus, but not a sinlessness that came without a truly human struggle. His sinlessness is not a denial that He really felt the attraction of evil, it

is rather an affirmation that He overcame that attraction.

He was always obedient to His Father's will, but it was an obedience that caused Him, at times, acute suffering. In the Garden of Gethsemani He chose His Father's will, even though it was clearly not what He wanted. "Father, if it be possible," He prayed, "let this chalice pass from me; yet not my will but yours be done." As the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses it so beautifully and poignantly, "Son though He was, he learned obedience in the school of suffering." (Heb. 5:9). That is where you and I have to learn obedience, too. In this respect Jesus was not different from us.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is the only book of the New Testament that refers explicitly to the perfection of Jesus. Interestingly, it always uses of Him the verb "perfected", never the adjective "perfect." The perfection of His humanity was something He gradually achieved. The Epistle to the Hebrews suggests that Jesus achieved perfection in His obedience to His Father. But it was a perfection that did not come easily. "He learned obedience in the school of suffering and, once perfected he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him." (Heb. 5:9).

The New Testament knows no Jesus who during His earthly sojourn, enjoyed the beatific vision or infused knowledge. This is a later fabrication of theologians who forgot somehow that Jesus was like us in all things, except sin.

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### They Thank The Bishop

Editor:

At our recent Parish Council meeting convened to discuss the Call to Action, we spent some time reflecting on Bishop Hogan's recent press release regarding the Vatican Statement on Women.

Our Council consists of staff and laity and together we want to thank the bishop sincerely for his insights and sensitivity on this issue. The

clarification he issued, both in the secular and diocesan press, was most helpful and we are very grateful.

Bishop Hogan may be assured of our continued prayerful support.

Paul Oliver, Chairman  
 St. Monica's Parish Council

### Grateful To Bishop

Editor:

We, the members of St. Charles Parish Council, wish to express our appreciation to Bishop Hogan for his leadership.

In particular, we are grateful for the manner in which he has sought the opinions of his people in responding to the Call to Action issues.

Furthermore, we commend his clarification of the Vatican Declaration about the ordination of women as a proper fulfillment of his office as principal teacher in the Diocese of Rochester.

We trust that Bishop Hogan will continue to offer leadership exercised with openness and vision.

St. Charles Borromeo, Rochester, Parish Council:  
 Father L. John Hedges,  
 Father James Lawlor, Sister Patricia Norton, Brother Charles Varnak, Salvatore Musso, Carey O'Neill, Rev. Mr. Stephen Ward, Linda Insalaco, Marti Armour, Rex McHail Sr., Jean Simmer, Karen Cass, Sumner McColester, Donald Kautzky, Sandra Blood, Angelo Siena, Janice Taffner, Sally Grieb, Edward Young, Joseph Coughlin.

### Survey Has Little Value

Editor:

I read with interest the "Call to Action" summary on Page 1 in the Courier-Journal of 2-16.

Your readership should be warned, however, that they must accept these figures, whether the pros or the contras, with great caution.

The reason for such caution is that the questionnaire was conceived and phrased in a very faulty manner, in two respects particularly.

In the first place, one had to vote "for" or "against" propositions that were in some cases multiple. For instance, Nos. 1, 7, 9. No chance was given to vote for the paragraph in parts, or with qualifications. Who can ever be sure therefore that a vote pro was a vote in

favor of the whole package or of one part of it?

In the second place, an intelligent answer to some of the propositions presupposed a background that one may assume most of the respondents did not have. How many know the complicated issues behind No. 1, on the laity having a voice in the selection of bishops and pastors? How many who voted either pro or contra on No. 2, of clerical celibacy, have ever heard the reasons for celibacy expounded from the pulpit? And how many who voted on the question of ordaining women have studied the cons as well as the pros of this current project?

The article accompanying the tally gives no assurance that either the CTA team or the Courier intends the figures presented in the summary to be taken at other than their face value. This is very unfortunate. Surveys have a valid place in our society, but their right to speak depends on their adhering to scientific procedure. The Call to Action tally cannot claim to be scientific, so it is of practically no value.

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