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Southern Tier-Auburn Geneva

Southern Tier:
Martin Toombs
268 W. 13th St., B-1
Elmira Heights, N.Y. 14903
(607) 732-3371

Auburn-Geneva:
Mary Ann Ginnerty
294 1/2 South Street Rd.
Auburn, N.Y.
(315) 253-2171

Bishop Hogan Visits Regional Assembly

By MARTIN TOOMBS
Southern Tier Editor

Elmira Heights—Bishop Joseph L. Hogan made an unexpected visit to the Chemung-Schuylar Regional Assembly May 7 at St. Charles Borromeo here.

Bishop Hogan participated in the assembly's opening prayer service, and related events of his recent "ad limina" visit to Rome.

He noted that the publication in the Courier-Journal of his "ad limina" report was "probably the first time in the history of the Church" that the report was shared with the people of the diocese. He added that copies also were sent to every bishop in the country, and that he had several favorable comments from other bishops at the recent national meetings.

Pope Paul met with the state's bishops for an hour, Bishop Hogan said, and "despite all rumors, appears to be in good health," noting that "his eyes sparkle," although his arthritis does affect his gait.

He also related that the Holy Father "singled me

out," to say that "you have a wonderful diocese, Bishop Hogan."

Such audiences, he pointed out, are often occasions for words of caution. The pope cautioned the bishops to follow "the norms of general absolution," he reported, and the guidelines for first Eucharist and first Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Bishop Hogan said that the bishops related to the pope their support for the continuation of the procedural norms for marriage annulments now in effect in the United States.

That subject also was raised at the Chicago national meetings, he noted, where certain dioceses were charged with not adequately reviewing cases. The conclusion was that the "accusations were totally unfounded," he reported. He added that the "unfortunate thing is we spend so much time writing back and forth defending ourselves" against unsubstantiated claims. It would be simpler, he said, if ordinaries were left to make the decisions for their dioceses.

While in Rome, he

reported, he visited with Father Joseph Hart, a diocesan priest studying there, and visited the mission operated by Mother Teresa's sisters.

In other activity, the assembly heard reports from its committees, including updates on the efforts to establish family counseling programs and a special education project for sacramental preparation.

The assembly also heard a presentation by Thomas Costello, assembly president, on the function of the assembly and its relationship to the parishes and institutions in the region.

Costello also expressed appreciation for the two years' service to the region by the regional coordinator, Father Joseph Gaynor, upon the completion of his first term of office. Father Gaynor informed the assembly that he has agreed to a request that he continue in the position for the next year.

It also was announced that Nancy Pesegi of St. Anthony's Parish, Elmira, will replace Ronald Jones as the newly elected DPC delegate.



Altar Work Benefits

The Rosary-Sacred Heart Society of St. Casimir's Parish presented a check for \$1,000 to Father Henry Adamski, pastor, at the organization's Hawaiian dinner May 7. The contribution is to the parish fund for renovation of the church altar. Presenting the check to Father Adamski is Diana Shabala, society president. Others pictured, from left, are Patricia Shields, Genevieve Semeski, Regina Kalec, Sara Wichtowski and Father Paul Gibbons, associate pastor and moderator for the group.

Father Young Addresses Alcoholism Council

By MARTIN TOOMBS
Southern Tier Editor

Corning—The question of who is alcoholic and how best to handle the "insidious disease" of alcoholism has been a continuing concern of his, Father Peter Young told those assembled for the Corning Alcoholism Council's annual dinner at the Lodge on the Green May 4.

Formerly, only street derelicts were regarded as alcoholics, he said, but that has changed. "A month ago, you wouldn't have thought Betty Ford" was an alcoholic, he pointed out.

Father Young, president of the state Association of Councils on Alcoholism and pastor of St. John's Church in Albany's inner city, described his experiences as a priest dealing with alcoholics, tracing his increasing understanding of the problem.

He recounted his first day as a parish priest, during which his car was demolished by a drunk driver; his father's car, which he had borrowed, was set afire by a drunk woman he had taken to Social Services, and while there, she hit a caseworker. Later that same week, he had a confrontation in the church balcony with a drunk. Alcoholics got him "in difficulty" several times that first year, he recounted.

For 18 years he served as chaplain to the drunk tank, he reported. "I thought those were the alcoholics."

That's the mistake I made, he said, not finding out until later "how wrong I was."

He also noted the problems he had during that time, 16 or 17 years ago, trying to help alcoholics. Alcoholics were arrested for being alcoholics, he noted, and it was difficult to get them medical treatment. The hospitals "wouldn't admit alcoholics," no matter how ill they were, he said. He recounted one instance when a woman he knew went to a hospital. The hospital refused care, instead calling the police to arrest her. She died on the way to the police station.

He reported on another instance when he was unable to get an alcoholic into a hospital, and ended up taking him back to the rectory for the night. "In the morning he was dead."

He also learned about the strength of the alcoholic's urge to drink, he said. He knew one woman who drank wood alcohol, fully understanding that it would kill her, he noted. She died three days later; in the hospital, she told him, Father Young said, that "it was there, Father, I had to drink it."

Until that time, he said, he thought that will power was all that an alcoholic needed; "how wrong I was," he commented.

Decriminalizing alcoholism, bringing recognition of it as a disease, became the goal, he said, and he became involved in the Albany lobbying effort for decriminalization. He reported that 3,500 meetings with legislators and other influential persons were conducted before

decriminalization was finally achieved.

The change is important because it changes "the image from a criminal one" to a medical one, meaning that alcoholics can be referred "not to a criminal system but to a health care system," he said.

Currently his organization is working "to protect autonomy for alcoholism." There are "differences between the alcoholic and the drug user," Father Young said, noting that the greatest harm would come in a change of image if drug abusers and alcoholics were treated by the same agencies. The job-holding alcoholic "will not knock on the door, but will pass it by" if the sign on it says drug abuse program, he said.

Father Young also complimented the labor-management cooperation in Corning in reaching and helping alcoholics. It is important to "open up that door of recovery," he said, and the cooperation in Corning "is the kind of thing that should be congratulated tonight."



Festival May 20

Sister Mary Joachim, Donna Szabatura, James Ryan, Sue Gamer and Dean Leach, from left to right, pausing from their work planning the Notre Dame Spring Festival scheduled for Saturday, May 20, to look over one of the many items which will be available that day. A location radio broadcast and a wide range of culinary treats again will be features of the festival, on the school grounds.

'Teen Happening' Held For Auburn Students

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Auburn—A four-session "Teen Happening" was recently completed at the Knights of Columbus building here. Some 60 area high school juniors and seniors discussed human sexuality, the Eucharist and alcohol abuse.

Mrs. Lella Cuddy, religious education coordinator at Holy Family (one of the sponsoring parishes) explained that the sessions were held to provide an

opportunity for spiritual growth that would attract this age group.

She said that many parents do not feel competent to deal with some issues around sex and even religious education. These sessions were meant to supplement what is received at home and school. She said that it is important that such opportunities for discussion be provided without the fear of reprisal.

The challenge of religious

education today, she said, is to help young people participate in this community of faith of which prayer is an important part. Opportunities, such as discussion groups, need to be provided for those experiences which can help them learn to celebrate community.

The family is often unable to provide this, she said, not because of the family itself but because of the stresses which have come to bear on the family in today's society.

Charles A. Hughes Jr.
General Manager
1800 Park Avenue, Elmira
731-2070

Gerould's Pharmacies
S. Main St. and Church & Hoffman
Elmira
Delivery Service
733-6696

M. L. ALLEN & SON
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