

Pastoral Perspective

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

John Paul II — Servant of Servants

I write these words the day following the installation of our new Holy Father, Pope John Paul II. Through the wonders of satellite communication I was able to see a unique moment in the history of our Church. I was one of an audience estimated at one billion people watching television in forty countries of the world, including the Pope's own native Poland behind the Iron Curtain. I joined him in his humble prayer for success in his mission of service to the Church and humanity:

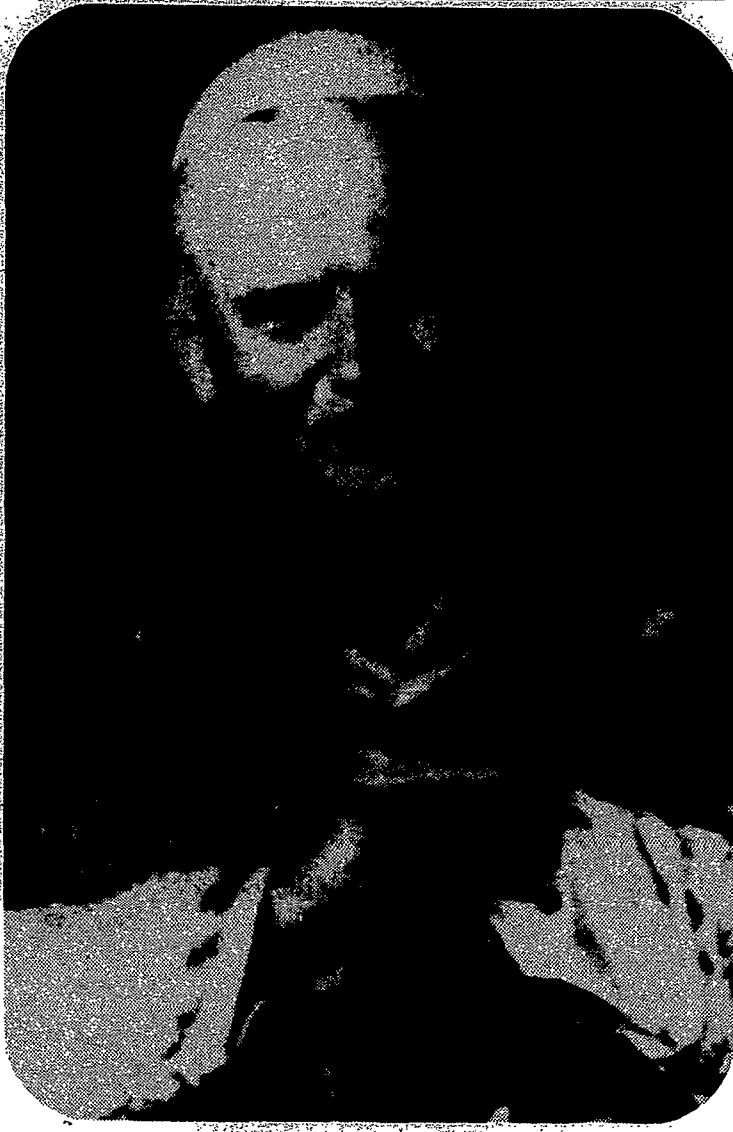
"Christ, make me become and remain the servant of Your unique power, the servant of Your power that knows no eventide. Make me a servant. Indeed, the servant of your servants."

I received his blessing as did all present in St. Peter's Square and, by his wish, all who were part of the viewing and listening audience throughout the world.

The 58 year old former Cardinal Archbishop of Krakow was installed as the 264th leader of the Church at 5:18 a.m. E.D.T. (Rochester time). At that moment the Senior Cardinal Deacon Pericle Felici placed a white wool pallium (like the stole priests, bishops and deacons wear as a symbol of authority and membership in the hierarchy of Holy Orders) on the shoulders of the new Pope and prayed that it would serve as a sign of his pastoral authority over the universal Church and an eventual pledge of immortality when he will be called to the final accounting of his stewardship. The pallium is made of wool and marked with six black crosses. How symbolic the wool for the office of our supreme pastor and shepherd and the cross for the Vicar of Christ who carried the Cross as the inevitable pilgrimage for all Christians who bear His name and dare to follow Him.

Let me share with you some impressions I had of the installation ceremony. I have been in St. Peter's Square on many occasions dating back to 1949-51 where I was a priest-student in Rome. As bishop, I have been present for two canonization ceremonies — Mother Elizabeth Seton and Bishop John Neumann. The largest crowd I have ever seen overflowing the Piazza and reaching down into the Via Conciliazione was on November 1, 1950, the day of the solemn declaration of the Dogmas of the Assumption of Mary. The second largest was the one I saw yesterday at the installation of Pope John Paul II. The homily was a great pastoral message preached first in its entirety in Italian and then in Polish and was followed by greetings in French, English, German, Spanish, Portuguese and in four languages of the Soviet bloc — Russian, Czech, Ukrainian and Lithuanian. Add to that the liturgy sung in Latin and parts in Greek, we had the universality of the Church symbolized in 13 different languages — 12 of them used in the ceremony by our Holy Father.

More impressive to me than this unusual gift with languages was the content of his message. The theme was taken from the Gospel of the Mass which recorded Peter's profession of faith on the occasion of the Lord's



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question: "Who do you say that I am?" Peter replied: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This was followed by the mission entrusted to Peter: "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep." Pope John Paul II then asked us to listen to these words today for they are profession of faith: "Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God." In speaking of his own trepidation in the responsibilities of the office of the Chair of Peter, he recalled that undoubtedly Peter, himself, had preferred to stay on the shores of the Lake of Galilee rather than come to Rome. He recalled, too, the later temptation of Peter to escape the persecution of the Roman Emperor Nero and according to the famous "Quo Vadis?" story he met Christ returning to Rome to be crucified again. Then Peter returned to his mission and eventual crucifixion. Then the Pope remarked: "To the See of Peter in Rome there succeeds today a bishop who is a son of Poland. But from this moment he, too, becomes a Roman. Yes — a Roman." He identified his native land with constant fidelity to the See of Peter.

I was impressed, too, with the simplicity of the ceremony. Pope Paul VI had, in a sense, suggested that the days of coronation for Popes should come to an end. He received the tiara at his own coronation and then sold it to provide help to the poor. He left it to the judgment of his successors to make their own decisions. Now, John Paul I and John Paul II have insisted on a simplified ceremony of installation. "Our times," the Pope remarked, "oblige us to meditate on the supreme power of Christ. We are all members of a Kingdom of priests, prophets and kings — sharing together in the Mission of Christ which was one of service." This was a clear reference to the definition of

Church emanating from the Second Vatican Council: "The Church is the entire people of God."

Then in an animated voice he said: "Open wide the doors to Christ. To His saving power open the boundaries of states, economic and political systems, the vast fields of culture, civilization and development. Do not be afraid. Christ knows what is within the heart of man. He alone knows it. He alone has the words of life — eternal life." In the last talk he gave during his visit to our country in 1976, he remarked: "We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has gone through. I do not think that wide circles of the American society or wide circles of the Christian community realize this fully."

"We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-Church, of the Gospel versus the anti-Gospel. This confrontation lies within the plans of divine Providence; it is a trial which the whole Church and the Polish Church in particular must take up.

"It is a trial not only of our nation and the Church, but in a sense a trial of 2,000 years of culture and Christian civilization with all its consequences for human dignity, individual rights, human rights and the rights of all nations. All these are affected by the confrontation."

Let us all thank the Holy Spirit who guided the College of Cardinals in the selection of a Pope who understands by personal experience the crises of the modern world, whose faith has been severely tested and proven, who has lived close to the daily struggles of the human family, who is a splendid blend of pastor and administrator, a man gifted as a multilingualist and who — most important — speaks by word and example the one language we are all called to learn and utter each day — the language of love, compassion and caring for one another.

It was my privilege on the day of Pope John Paul II's installation to celebrate the liturgy at St. Stanislaus Church and to share with their community the joy of the universal Church and the joy of the Polish people whose faith has contributed so much through the Church of the Rochester Diocese to the life of the universal Church.

Our message to Pope John Paul II is simply "Do not be afraid. Our love and prayers and filial affection are with you always."

Bishop Hogan's Public Appointments.

NOVEMBER 1978

- 3 — First Friday Mass and Luncheon Knights of Columbus — 11:45 a.m.
- 3 — Directors Meeting — 1:30 p.m.
- 4 — Webster Knights of Columbus 20th Anniversary — Sweets Farm — 7:30 p.m.
- 5 — Marriage Encounter — Eucharist and Homily, Aquinas Institute — 5:00 p.m.

- 6 — Diocesan Directors and Inter-Congregational Council — St. Joseph's Motherhouse — 4:00 p.m.
- 7 — Priests' Council — Becket Hall — 10:30 a.m.
- 10 — Diocesan Directors Meeting — 9:00 a.m.
- 10 — 90th Anniversary Mass — Corpus Christi — 6:30 p.m.
- 11 — Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting — Canandaigua Sheraton — 9:00 a.m.

- 12 — Eucharist and Homily — R.I.T. — 10:30 a.m.
- 13-16 — National Council Catholic Bishops Meeting — Washington, D.C.
- 17 — Diocesan Directors Meeting — 9:00 a.m.
- 17 — Association of Christian Therapists Conference — Airport Holiday Inn — Eucharist — 7:30 p.m.
- 18 — Seton Ball — 6:15 p.m.

- 19 — Confirmation — St. Ann's, Hornell — 3:00 p.m.
- 20 — Confirmation — St. Philip Neri — 7:45 p.m.
- 23 — Thanksgiving Day — Eddie Meath TV Program 7:00 a.m.
- 23 — Mass and Homily — Sacred Heart Cathedral — 9:00 a.m.
- 28 — Confirmation — St. Monica's and St. Augustine's — 7:45 p.m.