



Pope John Paul II holds the crucifix once carried by Pope Paul VI.

Photos by Anthony J. Costello



Bishop Larkin awaits ordination.

Bishop Larkin Also Ordained

By Carmen J. Viglucci

Vatican City - The Rochester diocese was doubly honored at the resplendent ordination ceremony at St. Peter's Basilica Sunday. Not only was our next ordinary among the bishops ordained, but a native son of the diocese also was among them.

Bishop W. Thomas Larkin, who will be installed as bishop of St. Petersburg, Fla. on June 28, was born in Mt. Morris where he grew up in St. Patrick's parish and attended Mt. Morris High School.

Bishop Larkin is a longtime friend and associate of Pope John Paul II. Father Chester M. Klocek, pastor of St. Leo's in Hilton, another friend of the Holy Father, recounted to the Courier-Journal that when he first met the future pope at the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia in 1976, he said to the then Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, "I know a friend of yours - Tom Larkin." To which the cardinal replied, "You mean W. Thomas Larkin."

The new bishop from Mt. Morris studied in Rome 30 years ago and resided at the Belgian College, that country's equivalent of the North American College. Also staying there at the time was a young Polish priest - Karol Wojtyla. The two became friends and on their daily walk to classes, the young Father Larkin gave the Polish priest his first lessons in English.

Another of the Americans in that class was Robert W. Schiefen who also happens to be a native of the city of Rochester and a 1946 graduate of St. Bernard's Seminary. He is a monsignor now working in Sarasota, Fla.

When the group had a reunion last month at the Belgian College, its most illustrious member showed up. They gathered at the Vatican Chapel of St. Marta which was large enough to accommodate the 22 former Belgian College priests. When the Holy Father, in greeting the old friends, came to Msgr. Schiefen, he slapped him on the back and said, "I remember you, Bob. You haven't changed a bit."

That account appeared in a recent edition of the Florida Catholic, written by Jane Quinn. She wrote that the Pope frequently spoke personally to the guests and that Msgr. Larkin, who marked his 56th birthday on March 31, received the good wishes of the group.

Bishop Larkin has been in parish work in Florida for many years, having been ordained for St. Augustine in 1947, in the Syracuse Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

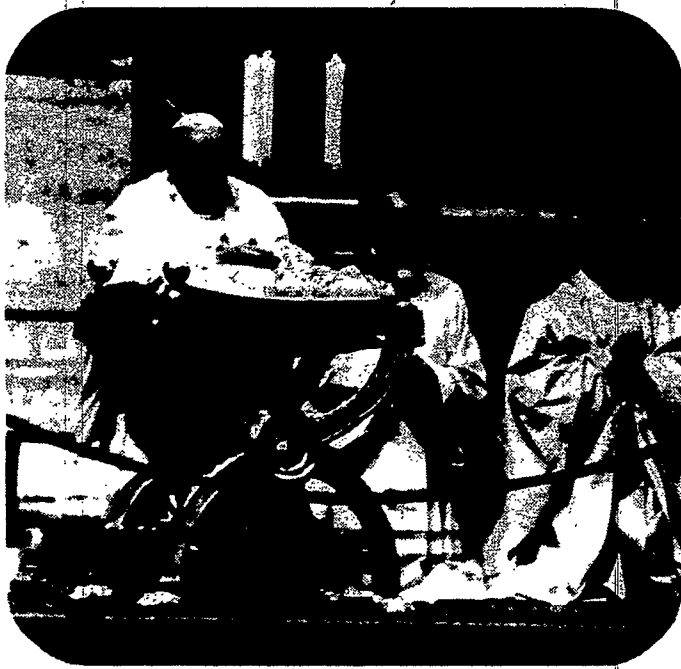
He earned a doctorate in theology 25 years ago at the Belgian College. He is the son of the late William and Julia Beuerlein Larkin. His father was editor of the Mt. Morris Union, now the Enterprise, a weekly newspaper. He attended St. Andrew's Seminary in preparation for St. Bernard's from where he was graduated in 1947.

His most recent assignment has been as administrator of the St. Petersburg Diocese.

His sister, Clarice Larkin, lives in Clearwater, Fla. Among his relatives in this area are two aunts, Veronica Larkin and Agnes Bryant, and three cousins, Hanley Larkin of Wayland and Robert and J. Frederick Beuerlein of Mt. Morris.



Bishop Hubbard at the rites.



Pope John Paul II kneels in prayer.



Bishop Clark (third from left) among his fellow bishops.

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