

Chicago Priests Group Files Grievance Petition with Pope

Chicago (RNS) - An organization representing 40 per cent of the diocesan clergy of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago has sent a hand-delivered letter to Pope John Paul II outlining grievances against Cardinal John Cody of Chicago.

Father Joseph J. O'Brien, chairman of the Association of Chicago Priests, an unofficial organization not recognized by church authorities, said he had been assured that the pope had received the letter.

Father O'Brien refused to disclose the contents of the letter, saying only that it contained a list of complaints and asked for an audience with the pope for two of the priest-members of the association to discuss the grievances.

Cardinal Cody's office had no comment, although the cardinal has vigorously denied in the past published reports that he had resisted taking a Vatican post, allegedly offered to him by previous popes in order to remove him from the helm of the Chicago see.

Cardinal Cody, 71, has been accused at various times of autocratic administration, financial mismanagement and lack of consultation with clergy and laity, particularly in the closing of schools and churches.

With 2.5 million Catholics, the Chicago archdiocese is the largest in the country, Cardinal Cody has headed the see since 1965.

The latest move by the priests' association is its second attempt to take its case to Vatican authorities. Last year, the group sent a letter to the Vatican's congregation of the Clergy, which normally serves as the Church's high court of appeal in cases of authority conflicts.

The congregation responded with a letter refusing to consider the case because of the association's unofficial status. The association then voted in March to authorize its coordinating board to appeal directly to the pope.

Describing the process as "sensitive diplomacy" and admitting that the issue has created controversy, Father O'Brien said in a letter to the 581 associated members that he had been assured by other, "even members of the

hierarchy, that the board has acted most responsibly in this matter."

Referring to the letter of Pope John Paul, Father O'Brien told the members, "There have been no dramatic midnight flights, but there has been a quiet and effective approach."

"We agonized over the larger question of scandal and harm to the church, but we honestly felt that as priests we have a duty not only to our members but to the Church in Chicago to make known to our superiors the problems in the archdiocese in the hope of a pastoral solution," the priest said.

Father O'Brien reported that of the approximately

1,150 active diocesan priests, 434 are members of the association.

Although Cardinal Cody has made no comment on the association's action, the prelate called "a dirty lie" statements in a new book by Father Andrew M. Greeley that three popes, including Pope John Paul II, had unsuccessfully attempted to dislodge the cardinal as archbishop of Chicago.

In his book, *The Making of the Popes 1978*, Father Greeley, a Chicago priest who is a sociologist and syndicated columnist, also stated that Pope John Paul I "had given orders (to Cardinal Baggio) for the replacement of Cardinal Cody. The papers of the

Cody case were in his hands when (the pope) died."

"How could Greeley know that?" Cardinal Cody said to a Chicago reporter. "Only God and Cardinal Baggio could know. And Baggio is bound by secrecy. Obviously, that's a hatchet job."

Later, on a radio program Cardinal Cody was asked if he could stop dismissal proceedings begun by a pope. "No, I couldn't," the prelate replied, "and I wouldn't want to."

"If the pope . . . thinks I am not doing my job efficiently, well, all he has to do is write me a letter and say that he wishes me to be replaced, and naturally, I would be obedient."



Special Performance

Cardinal John Carberry, of St. Louis, celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood recently by playing a tune for 900 guests at his anniversary dinner. The prelate, who will be 75 this July, was ordained on July 28, 1929.

Number of U.S. Catholics Shows Slight Decline

New York (RNS) - The nation's 49,602,035 Roman Catholics now comprise 22.59 percent of the American population, says the just-issued Official Catholic Directory for 1979.

The new total represents a decrease of 234,141 since a year ago, when a gain of 510,424 Catholics, or a total of 49,836,176, was reported. The Catholic share of the United States population cited then was 23 percent.

The new directory, published by P. J. Kenedy & Sons, said that the size of archdiocesan populations declined during the year, while the numbers in dioceses went up. Similarly, priests, sisters and brothers declined in numbers, while those for deacons increased.

Catholic parishes increased by 70 to a record total of 18,695 in the 50 states. Overall attendance in church elementary and secondary schools dropped, but college enrollment rose. Infant baptisms increased, as did losses attributed to deaths, while the numbers of converts and marriages both decreased.

Chicago remained the largest archdiocese with a population of 2,415,345, followed by Boston at 2,016,272. Archdioceses with more than 1 million Catholics were Los Angeles, 1,964,000; New York, 1,824,090; Newark, 1,400,727; Philadelphia, 1,377,258; and Detroit, 1,187,382.

Brooklyn remained the largest diocese with a population of 1,458,951, followed by Rockville Centre's 1,038,505.

The 1979 directory reports 17,968 parishes with resident pastors, an increase of 30 and 727 parishes without resident clergy, an increase of 40 - for a record 18,695 Catholic parishes, an increase of 70. Also listed are 4,025 missions, down 63; 1,822 stations, up 67, and 9,485 chapels, down 250.

Infant baptisms, increased by 5,474 to 896,151. The number of converts dropped by 1,393 to a total 77,205. The number of marriages recorded dropped by 840 to 340,489; while 407,102 Catholics died, an increase of 2,939 over the previous year's deaths.

The new directory lists 345 members of the hierarchy, an increase of 4 from the 341 listed a year ago. The number of ordained priests dropped by 55 to 58,430.

There are now 35,472 diocesan or secular priests, a drop of 294 and a total 22,958 religious order priests, an increase of 239. During the last year, 798 permanent deacons were added, bringing the total to 3,296. The current total of Catholic clergy is 61,726.

Professed religious personnel now include 7,965 brothers, a drop of 495, and 128,378 sisters, a decline of 1,013.

Catholic educational institutions in the U. S. decreased by 112, to a total of 10,373. The 1979 directory lists 92 diocesan seminaries, 258 religious order seminaries or novitiates and scholasticates, 241 colleges and universities, 905 diocesan and parish high schools, 637 private high schools, 7,929 parish elementary schools, and 311 private elementary schools. There are also 140 protective institutions enrolling 10,082 youths.

Catholic colleges and universities increased by 3 to a total 241. Enrollment at these institutions also rose last year to a total 483,760, an increase of 26,262.

Full-time enrollment at Catholic elementary and high schools showed an overall decrease of 38,624 during the past year, despite increases in the number of private schools.

The number of parish and diocesan high schools dropped by 33 to a total of 905 while enrollment declined by 28,420 to 512,413. Private high schools, meanwhile, increased by 3 and gained 12,758 students for a total of 341,193 in 637 schools.

Parish elementary schools dropped by 30 to 7,929 with a total 2,313,110 students, a decline of 26,555. The number of private elementary schools dropped by 29 to 311 but enrollment increased by 3,593 to 66,706.

During 1978, 92 diocesan seminaries were in operation, 6 less than the year before, with a total enrollment of 8,694, a drop of 866 from

1977. There were 258 novitiates and scholasticates of the religious orders, a drop of 20, enrolling 5,266 students or 172 less than the previous year.

Totals reported in the 1979 directory indicate 13,960 candidates for the priesthood, 20,030 fewer than the 33,990 seminarians reported 10 years ago in 1969.

More children are now receiving religious instruction under released time, in religious vacation school and other classes, according to the new directory. A total 4,786,029 public school children, an increase of

134,633 students are receiving religious instruction. A total 8,527,353 American youths of all grades, an increase of 122,784, are now under Catholic instruction.

A record 34,171,565 patients were treated last year at Catholic hospitals, an increase of 745,717. The number of Catholic hospitals, however, decreased by 10 to a total 720. Bed capacity decreased by 623, to 171,785. Nine general hospitals and one special hospital were closed. There are now 634 general hospitals with 164,967 beds and 86 special hospitals which accommodate 6,818.

Mass Rites Studied

Washington (RNS) - The U.S. Catholic bishops have authorized a comprehensive three-year study of the structural parts of the Mass, the central element of Roman Catholic worship.

The national study will not have any immediate effect on current practice in this country, according to Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee. The archbishop is chairman of the bishops' Committee on the Liturgy which will conduct the study in cooperation with diocesan liturgical commissions throughout the country.

Findings and recommendations will be presented to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and to the Vatican's Congregation for


the Sacraments and Divine Worship when the study is completed in 1982.

The archbishop said that a growing number of bishops, priests and laity have asked his committee to restudy possible changes within the present rite of the Eucharist.

At the recent bishops' meeting in Chicago, for example, Archbishop John F. Whealon of Hartford expressed concern that the practice of exchanging the sign of peace was inappropriate in its present place in the Mass, just before Communion. "The typical American greeting is open, often loud, and frequently distracting," Archbishop Whealon said. "Could there be an optional transfer of the sign, perhaps to the beginning of Mass or to the Offertory?"

Others have suggested that the Gloria, the prayer of praise to the Trinity, be placed at the beginning of Mass to serve as an entrance hymn. Some have raised questions about whether the responsorial psalm between the Scripture readings should be used when not sung.

Archbishop Whealon said that rather than consider changes in piecemeal fashion, the committee judged that a careful study should be made to evaluate the 10 years of experience since Pope Paul VI approved the new Order of the Mass in 1969. The prelate emphasized that no changes would be introduced until after the study had been completed and approved both by the U. S. bishops and the Vatican.

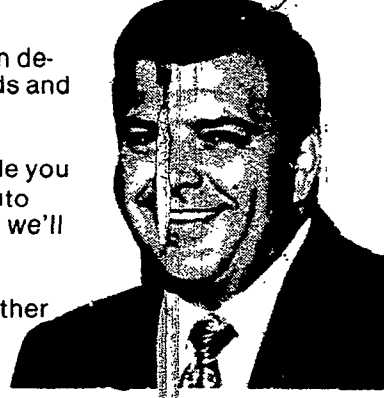


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