

Bishop McCafferty: His Life and Times

The "good and faithful pastor" has left. John E. McCafferty, a transplanted New Yorker who made his career in the Rochester diocese.

He had been an auxiliary bishop and vicar general for more than 12 years, and cathedral rector since 1972. Earlier in his career he served the diocese in administrative posts for 17 years, in Catholic Charities and the Tribunal. He was a former pastor of Holy Rosary Church and former Southern Tier vicar.

Son of the late Joseph and Mary Cavanagh McCafferty, he was born in New York City and spent his first 13 years there. He attended St. Nicholas of Tolentine grammar school in the Bronx and entered DeSales High School when the family moved to Geneva.

"I remember serving Archbishop Hickey's Mass in St. Stephen's Church every morning all through my high school years," Bishop McCafferty said in an interview 12 years ago. The late archbishop, he explained, had retired to the St. Stephen's rectory and was teaching religion at DeSales.

Trained for the priesthood in the diocesan seminaries, he was ordained March 17, 1945, by Bishop James E. Kearney at Sacred Heart. Then, after less than two years in parish work — at St. Mary's, Canandaigua, and Immaculate Conception, Rochester — the young priest was sent to study canon law at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He returned in 1949 with a doctorate, served two years as assistant director of Catholic Charities and in 1951 began his 15 years as officialis, or chief-judge, in the diocesan Tribunal.

Before the court years were over, he was assigned in October 1965 to the pastorate of Holy Rosary Church. There, he remained into his first year as auxiliary bishop. His appointment by Pope Paul VI was announced by

Memorial Mass

Elmira — A memorial Mass for Bishop John E. McCafferty was celebrated Sunday evening at St. Mary's, Southside. Homilist was Father Thomas Wheeland, the bishop's longtime associate.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Bishop Matthew H. Clark
President

Anthony J. Costello
Publisher &
General Manager

Carmen J. Viglucchi
Editor

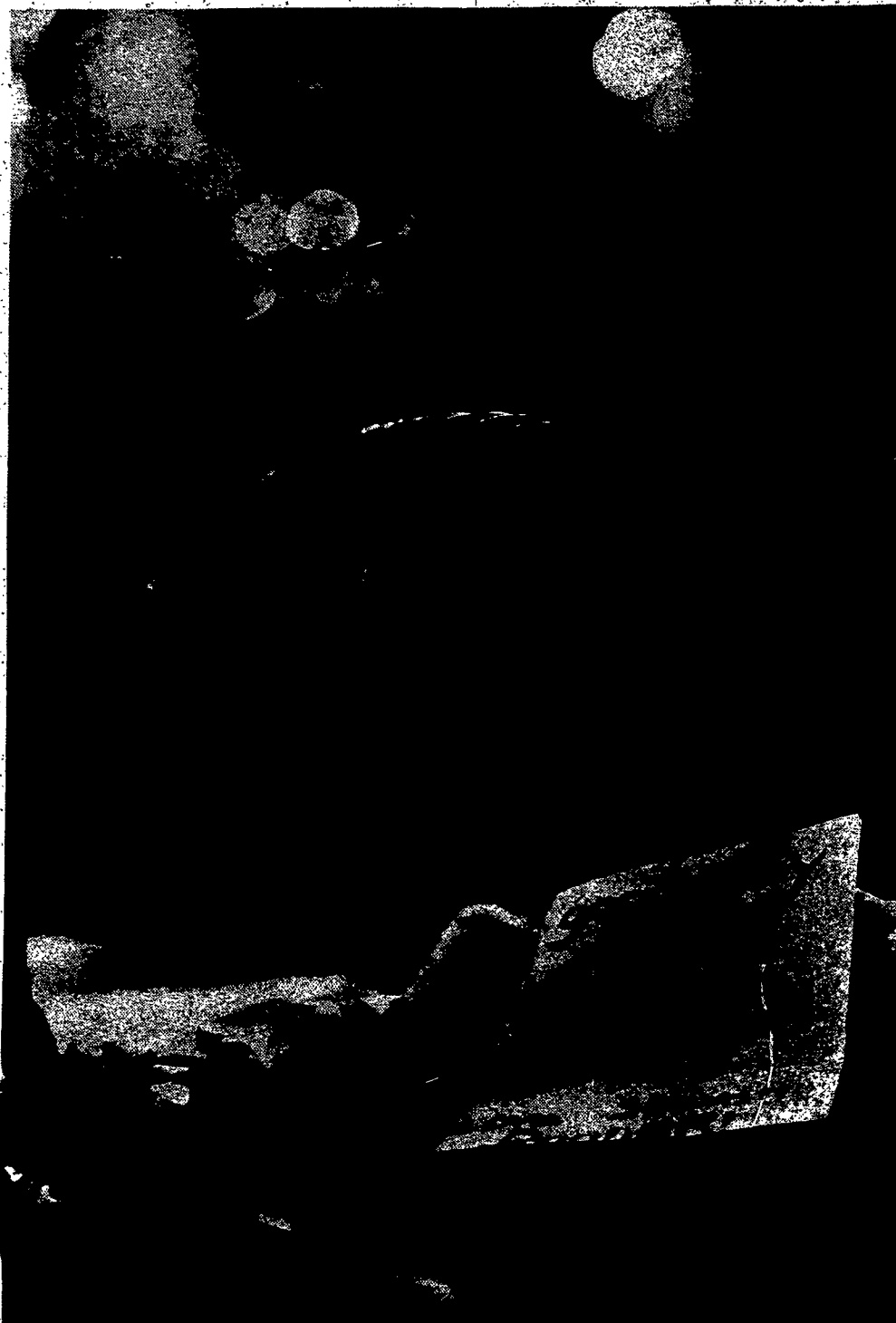
Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

Vol. 97 No. 2 May 7, 1980

Courier-Journal (USPS 135-580)

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 25¢; 1 year subscription in U.S. \$10. Canada and Foreign \$15.00. Offices: Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604, (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y. For circulation information or to place a classified advertisement, call (716) 454-7050.

Courier-Journal



Notes from Sacred Heart pupils were included in the offertory gifts.

Bishop Fulton J. Sheen on Jan. 10, 1968, along with that of Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey. The consecration took place the following March 14 at Sacred Heart Cathedral. In September, Bishop McCafferty left Rochester for Elmira, to serve as vicar for the Southern Tier until his recall as cathedral rector in January 1972.

He was the first chairman

of the diocesan Ecumenical Commission, 1965-68, and first president of the diocesan Priests Council, 1968-69. He was a member, ex officio, of the state and national bishops' conferences, and since 1974 had served on the New York State Catholic Committee. In 1971, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan put him in charge of planning for the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

From time to time, Bishop

McCafferty commented publicly on his various activities. The ecumenism program, he remarked, "has done a great deal to open doors between personalities in our many church groups. I treasure the fine associations I have been able to make with clergy and persons in professional life in this diocese whom I had never known before. I believe that the laity have welcomed ecumenical



A mourner pays respects at the bier as hundreds filed past during the day Thursday. The priest in line is Father Robert F. McNamara of St. Bernard's Seminary, the diocesan historian.

Photos by Anthony J. Costello and Terrance J. Brennan

efforts with marked cordiality and generosity...

At one of his first Southern Tier meetings, he told a group of Corning women that Pope John XXIII had "demolished many of the ceremonial barriers that existed" between bishops and their people.

"If the Church is to maintain a community," he went on, "it can no longer be based on simple geography; rather, it must be based on the Eucharist. Teamwork is a necessity, and there must be a real ecumenical effort if we are to bring about the true spirit of Christianity."

He spoke of his Holy Rosary pastorate as "an enjoyable fulfillment" of his priesthood. "There never was a time when I didn't feel at home here," he told his parishioners in his farewell sermon.

In October, 1965, he took part in the consecration of the erstwhile Episcopalian cathedral, Christ Church, and it was noted at the time as a "first" for this diocese. His view of the ecumenical movement was that there would be "no hasty decisions about a mutual Eucharist."

When his appointment as auxiliary bishop was announced he said he was

"overwhelmed" it is a terrible responsibility in this age." He reported later, from Elmira, that as Southern Tier vicar he never had had what he could call an average day.

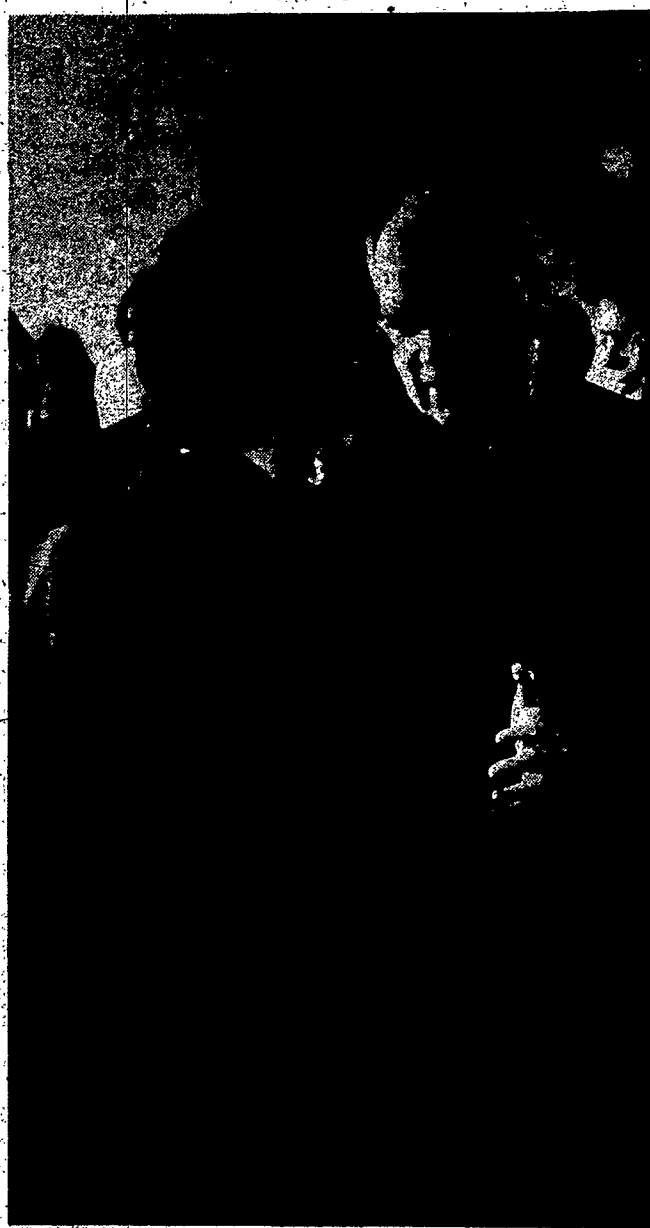
But two years ago, posing with Bishop Hickey for a 10th anniversary photograph, he didn't talk about his work. His "statement," delivered with a grin and seconded by his colleague, was simply, "We stand on our record."

They Came To Pray

Large turnouts at a series of rosary services for the ailing Bishop John E. McCafferty evidenced the popularity and respect for him, according to Father Thomas Wheeland, Sacred Heart associate pastor and secretary to the bishop.

The first of the 10 services drew between 600 and 700 persons to the Cathedral, Father Wheeland said. Eight more on successive nights before the bishop's death were attended by 300 or 400, Father Wheeland said.

"And then on the first night after his death, the church was full (800)."



Cardinal Terence J. Cooke offers condolences to Joan McCafferty, Bishop McCafferty's sister and only living relative. In their respective homilies, both Bishop Clark (Friday) and Bishop Hickey (Thursday) extended the sympathy of all in the diocese to Miss McCafferty.