

Sisters Hear Report On Permanent Diaconate

By John Dash

Questions and concerns about the place of women with the permanent diaconate program in the diocese, and some weighty self-analysis of the role of the DSC in the diocesan consultation process were the order of the day for the May meeting of the Diocesan Sisters Council last Saturday.

Following a lengthy presentation by Msgr. George Cocuzzi, the head of the diocesan permanent diaconate program, a presentation which covered the history, current status of and future plans for the program, the council members and observers raised a number of points including a concern of Sister Joan Sobala that women be included in the faculty preparing diaconate candidates.

Msgr. Cocuzzi had earlier described the place women have with the program. With the exception of Sister Mary Hilaire Gaélens, RSM, the administrative assistant of the program, women are solely members of the student body. Some, he said, attend the classes with their husbands to "keep up" with the husband's academic and spiritual formation. Others are studying with the intention of having team ministries with their husbands. A third group of wives is studying to have independent ministries.

Msgr. Cocuzzi acknowledged that women are not on the faculty, and expressed the hope that in the future women would be so included. He also said, however, that the mechanics of the program at this time, preclude such inclusion.

Msgr. Cocuzzi also said

that in the future, he would like to see "some decentralization" of the program, specifically citing Auburn and the Southern Tier as loci of permanent diaconate training in addition to St. Bernard's Seminary.

A point raised by several sisters was the preparation of supervisors for the permanent deacons. Msgr. Cocuzzi noted that the first class will not be ordained for another two years and that class is entering a program of "self-evaluation" for ministry in which that would become an issue next year. He said that a tool for that process is being devised by Father George Hill at present.

He also added that placing the permanent deacons will be done through the Field Education Office of St. Bernard's, and that he feels that office will be able better to handle the issue.

In response to yet another question, Msgr. Cocuzzi stated "Deacons in no way will be a substitute for the pastoral assistant." In recent years a number of women religious have taken posts as pastoral assistants.

At two points during the day, Sister Mary Jean Smith led the sisters through a discussion of points raised in a special meeting of the council's executive committee with Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

Among the more serious concerns both parties have, she said, is the place of the DSC in the diocesan consultation process, and the specific areas of concern for which the DSC would make a unique contribution.

The sisters informally agreed to explore those questions, among others.

Pontiff

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the Mass, during which he ordained seven African bishops from Zaire, Burundi and the Sudan, and one from French Canada, who will serve in Djibouti.

On the next day, he crossed the Congo River to Brazzaville, capital of the Marxist People's Republic of the Congo. He celebrated Mass with the country's Catholic bishops and met with representatives of other faiths and with political leaders.

Pope John Paul's itinerary included also Kenya, Ghana, Upper Volta and the Ivory Coast. The six tropical countries span about 3,500 miles across Central Africa, from the Indian Ocean to the South Atlantic.

The visit to Ghana coincided with the centenary of the Church in this former British territory, which has more than a million Catholics. The pope spoke of the "ennobling" nature of agriculture and urged that all the people work together to increase agricultural production and thus bolster the shaky economy.

He made more than 50 speeches during the 11-day tour, and logged at least 11,500 air miles.

In Nairobi, Kenya, he seemed to be addressing all of Africa's 200 million Catholics in a plea for vigorous participation in political life.

"The duties of the good Christian citizen," he said,

"involve more than shunning corruption, more than not exploiting others. These duties include positively contributing to the establishment of just laws and structures that foster human values."

When the pope's path crossed that of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Accra, Ghana, it was but the fourth meeting in four centuries of heads of the two churches. No details of their conversation were made public, but in a joint statement they described the meeting as "a joyful and moving occasion."

"The time is too short and the need too pressing," they noted, "to waste Christian energy pursuing old rivalries."

Priests

Continued from Page 1

including Fathers James Callan, Clarence Gardner and Walter Wainright, reported their blocks felt the Courier-Journal should continue to be used and with greater efficiency.

Father Callan and Msgr. Richard Burns reported that their blocks felt the primary age group which these messages should be aimed at is those in their late twenties and thirties.

Father Hohman reminded the council that television public service spots, which are given free by the stations, were getting harder to arrange

and the timeslots were coming earlier in the day. "If we don't fight to get more public service times, in viable timeslots, we will have to pay for airtime," he said, "and that time is very expensive."

During the open forum session Bishop Clark took time out to honor the memory of Bishop John McCafferty and Father William J. Devereaux. Bishop Clark said that "one of the great joys I've had since coming to the diocese is getting to know John McCafferty and Dennis Hickey," and that the loss of Bishop McCafferty is a great one for the diocese.

In other Priests Council action members unanimously adopted a resolution which supported the continuation of the federal Food Stamp program for the remainder of the fiscal year. The resolution will be sent to area members of congress.

The final Priests Council meeting of the year will take place on June 17.

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Courier-Journal

South Africa Resolution Turned Down

Kodak shareholders turned down a resolution sponsored by several religious groups which called for the company to stop its operations in South Africa.

The resolution gained only 1.31 percent of the votes cast at the annual shareholders' meeting last Wednesday in Rochester.


According to Ian Guthrie, Eastman Kodak's Rochester voice for its South African operations, the tally was 1,466,536 for the resolution and 110,505,120 against.

The resolution had the support of, among others, the executive council of the Rochester Sisters of Mercy, Bishop Robert Spears of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, and the United Church Ministries of Rochester.

Nevertheless, despite the loss, Allison Clarke, head of the Rochester Justice and Peace Education Center, said a "significant" number of religious groups abstained from voting on the resolution. A tally of the abstentions, however, was not available.

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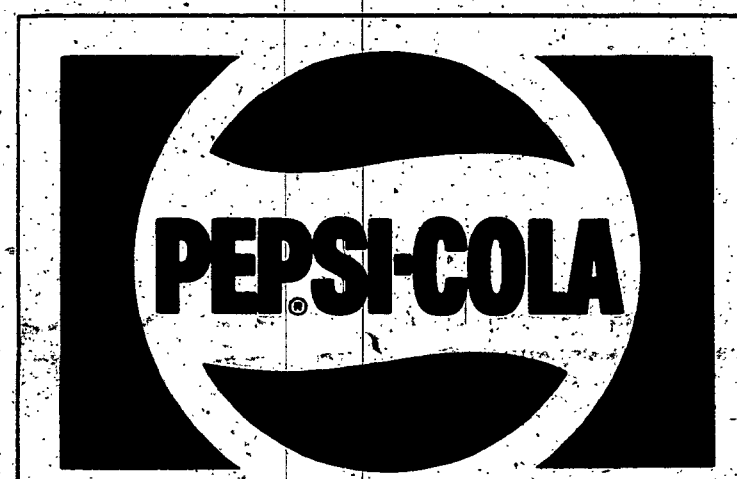
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