

COURIER-JOURNAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

24 Pages—2 Sections

Wednesday, March 4, 1981

OUR 97th YEAR

25 Cents



COURIER-JOURNAL

Focus on Disabled

Bishop Clark

Dear Friends:

In the recently published Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Bishops on Handicapped People we read:

"By every means possible, therefore, the Church must continue to expand its healing ministry to these persons, helping them when necessary, working with them, and raising its voice with them and with all members of society who are their advocates."

As we reflect on what it means to be members of the Body of Christ, we come to realize that all persons are endowed with special gifts which they receive at birth. Handicapped persons deserve our love and acceptance of them as persons with special gifts and talents.

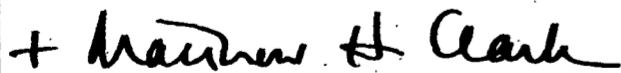
We must do all we can to improve the quality of life for each handicapped person. The Catholic Church must be a visible leader in this ministry, just as Jesus was visible as he walked this earth curing the lame, the deaf, the blind, and all persons who needed to be healed.

Recently our ministry to handicapped persons has been highlighted on an international and national level. The United Nations has declared 1981 the International Year of the Disabled Persons (IYDP) and a United States Council has been formed to promote full participation of handicapped persons in American society.

The recommendations for ministry to handicapped persons are clearly stated in the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Statement. Let us make every effort on all levels of Church life to study the needs of handicapped persons and to seek new pastoral initiatives on their behalf.

As Christians, it is our responsibility to be aware of each other's special needs. Perhaps this challenge is best expressed in the United Nations theme of the International Year of Disabled Persons: "full participation of disabled persons in the life of our society."

Your brother in Christ,



Most Reverend Matthew H. Clark, DD
Bishop of Rochester

Lenten Regulations

Today, Ash Wednesday, is a day of fast and abstinence from meat. Good Friday is the only other day of both fast and abstinence.

Other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat.

The fast is defined as one full meal a day, with two lighter meals. It is required of those 21 to 59 years of age.

The prohibition against meat on Fridays applies to those 14 years of age and older.

Catholics should not lightly excuse himself from these regulations.

Forms of Penance Focus Of Meeting on Sacraments

By Martin Toombs
Southern Tier Editor

Bath — General Absolution and the order of First Penance-First Eucharist were the most discussed items at a presentation Feb. 27 at St. Mary's of the new diocesan sacramental guidelines.

General Absolution must neither be scheduled, nor conditions for it contrived, the guidelines state.

And while preparation for First Penance should precede First Eucharist, the guidelines allow for individual decisions to delay the reception of First Penance.

The new guidelines, being presented to the diocese following a 14-month consultation and revision process, include Baptism, Confirmation, First Eucharist, First Penance, Penance, and Marriage. A section on Eucharist will follow in April.

The guidelines have an implementation date of July 1. Further presentations, with an afternoon session for parish staffs and an evening one for other religious educators, have been scheduled for: Friday, March 6, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Rochester; Monday, March 9, St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads; Wednesday, March 11, St. Thomas More, Rochester; and Monday, March 16, St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls.

About 30 persons attended each session in Bath, which

were opened by Bishop Matthew H. Clark. He described his observations which led to the guideline effort, noting the desire expressed by many for more consistent sacramental practices.

Father Robert Kennedy, diocesan Liturgy Office director, described the provisions in the guidelines for General Absolution. The use of that style of Penance, he said, is "certainly seen as an exceptional form."

"General Absolution may not be announced in advance," the guidelines state; nor is a large number of penitents itself sufficient grounds for its use.

While General Absolution is permissible at times of conversion or renewal, such as Advent or Lent, confessors have a responsibility to provide opportunities for individual confession. Failure to do so could otherwise be used to increase attendance at communal services.

Bishop Clark also criticized the scheduling of a communal Penance service with individual confession, without making any attempt to get additional confessors, thereby "setting up" an emergency. Bishop Clark commented that such an action is "not really what we're about."

The document advises those unsure of the policy's application to their situation to consult the ordinary.

Father Kennedy explained

Fr. O'Beirne Dies, Seneca Falls Pastor

Funeral rites were celebrated Sunday and Tuesday for Father John P. O'Beirne, former pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Seneca Falls, who died Friday, Feb. 27, 1981, in St. Ann's Home.

Father O'Beirne, 87, was ordained in 1922 by Bishop Joseph H. Conroy of Ogdensburg after schooling at St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, former Bishop of Rochester, celebrated the Mass of Christ the High Priest at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Sunday. Bishop Matthew H. Clark celebrated the Mass of Christian Burial on Tuesday in Seneca Falls, where the priest had lain in state.

Father O'Beirne had served St. Patrick's, Corning; St. Mary's, Auburn; Holy Apostles, Rochester and Sacred Heart Church, later to become the Cathedral.

In 1940, Father O'Beirne was named administrator of St. Michael's, Penn Yan and St. Andrew's, Dundee.



FATHER O'BEIRNE

Five years later he was named pastor of St. Patrick's, a post he held until 1969. He remained in Seneca Falls for several years following his retirement.

He is survived by two sisters, Sister M. Ethelreda, SJ, and Miss Marie A. O'Beirne; several nieces and nephews and grand-nieces and nephews, and cousins.

the requirement that preparation for Penance precede First Eucharist reception is based on the National Catechetical Directory's provision that "catechesis for First Penance is to precede First Eucharist." No requirement for prior reception is made, he said.

The decision to delay First Penance lies with the parents, the child and parish staff, he said; a parish should not pressure parents to delay First Penance.

Father Joseph F. Hogan, St. Vincent's, Corning, pastor, asked about the papal statements concerning the order of reception. Father Kennedy responded that two popes have stated their interest in having First Penance precede First Eucharist, but that it has never been incorporated into the Church's documents on the sacraments.

He and Bishop Clark commented that it is expected that, for most, First Penance will precede First Eucharist. Bishop Clark called attention to the National Catechetical Directory's statement that First Penance will "normally" be first.

The sections of the new guidelines concerning the reception of new members into the Church, both through Baptism and of those validly baptized in another Church, didn't previously exist.

The most-discussed item in the section was the possible delay of an infant baptism due to concern about the parents' faith. Parent education programs "tailored to the individual case" are called for, Father Kennedy explained.

That can mean a delay of baptism in some cases, during which time further meetings with the parents can take place. Father Lewis Brown, diocesan Religious Education director, stated that the guidelines tell parishes "don't say no, say not yet."

Father Kennedy estimated that such delays probably would not exceed a few weeks.

There also are provisions in the guidelines to prevent parents from going to another parish to circumvent such a delay.

A problem with Confirmation, Father Brown observed, is that many youngsters "see it as a graduation from religious education." The guidelines suggest efforts to make the preparation more meaningful.

The First Eucharist guidelines emphasize the role of the parents, Father Brown said, and call for the inclusion of instruction on the options involved in the reception of the Eucharist.

The section on Penance calls for a greater understanding of the sacrament; Father Kennedy noted the need "to continue to help people appreciate the value of this sacrament."

Marriage guidelines call for six meetings over a six-month period, with the wedding not being scheduled until after the first meeting. The rite itself should "be seen as a religious event," Father Kennedy explained. There should be no replacement of Scripture, and the ceremony should include "good liturgical music."

Sister Jean Marie Elected Superior

Sister Jean Marie Kearse, RSM, was elected major superior of the diocesan Sisters of Mercy last Sunday.

She succeeds Sister Judith Heberle, RSM, who has been major superior since 1970.

Sister Jean Marie, 39, has most recently been a member of the congregation's executive council.

The daughter of the late Mary and Henry Kearse of Rochester entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1959. She made her final profession in 1967. She schooled at Catherine McAuley College, Nazareth College and Catholic University, where she earned an M.A. in Religious Education.

She is a member of St. James Mercy Hospital board, the Rochester Catholic Health



SISTER JEAN MARIE

Care Council, the design committee and the executive committee of the Diocesan Association of Health Care Chaplains, and the Becket Hall board of trustees.