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Bishop Clark Reports On Visit to Tabasco

Bishop Matthew H. Clark, Father Charles Mulligan, diocesan director of social ministries, and Lourdes Perez-Albuerne, diocesan coordinator for justice and peace, returned last week from a visit to our sister diocese of Tabasco, Mexico. Upon his return, Bishop Clark was interviewed about the trip by Carmen J. Viglucci, Courier-Journal editor.

Bishop Clark, would you explain the purpose of your trip?

Surely. To give more concrete expression to our desire here in Rochester to continue to develop our sister relationship with Tabasco. Bishop Rafael Garcia-Gonzalez was kind enough to ask us last year and I feel it important to reciprocate his visit and go to him in Tabasco.

The trip afforded me the opportunity to visit Tamulte which is a village in which 18 missionaries from our diocese have worked over the past two summers. We were able to meet the people they served and to have the extraordinary experience to hear from them how much our relationship means to them.

We had the wonderful opportunity to visit several parish communities of different types across the diocese and to experience the richness of the spirit of the people there and to see some of the challenges that confront the Church in Tabasco.

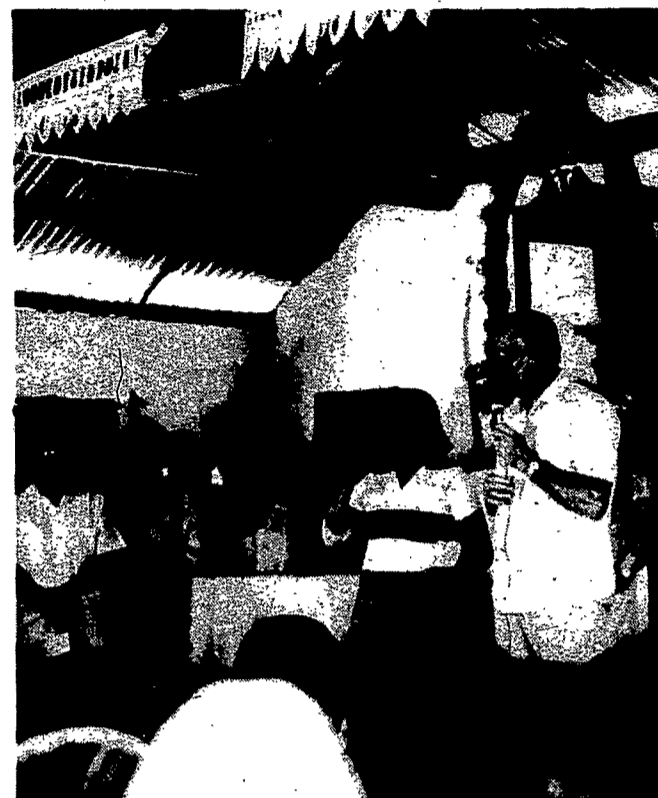
I also had the occasion to visit at length with Bishop Rafael, several of his priests and Religious and lay leaders. It was an education and helps us to appreciate much more fully the significance of what we are trying to do with our sister diocese.

From these meetings and other events of your visit, do you expect to see any new programs between the dioceses?

Perhaps it would be better to review what we have been doing so far as preface to the future. For the past two summers, a team from here has visited Tamulte for three to six weeks. While there, they have served in many capacities. They have conducted biblical discussion groups, worked on programs of nutrition and recreation, offered assistance in improving agricultural techniques and have in general shared as fully as possible in the faith pilgrimage and lives of the people there.

Another way in which we have expressed our commitment has been the very generous contributions of diocesans through Operation Breadbox which has helped to purchase farm land for development and has helped us in promoting among them better methods of farming.

When we talk about things we have done, it would miss the best of our relationship to omit mention of the powerful human interchange that has taken place between our missionaries and the people. For example, the overwhelming interest of the people of Tamulte in our people who have been such a part of them. They literally surround you when they know of your association with our missionaries and ask for them by name and then ask when they're coming back. And when you hear those questions and see their faces you know very well that they appreciate what the missionaries have done for them and with them. But you also know that it is the spiritual union that is born in the association that gives everything else its lasting value.



Bishop Clark responds to warm welcome from members of the Macuspana parish at rancharia Candelaria. Funds from 1981 Operation Breadbox purchased land for families in this parish. With Bishop Clark is Lourdes Perez-Albuerne, diocesan justice and peace coordinator.

To me, that was a strong, confirming sign of the worth of this effort.

So, for the future . . . there will be another group of missionaries going this summer and we hope we will enjoy the services of a priest from Tabasco among us during that same period.

Bishop Rafael and I discussed many possibilities about concrete ways to develop our cooperation and though nothing was settled, I think it is fair to say among his principal interests would be an increase in the number of missionaries and a commitment by us that there will be a priest among them. Also of interest to Bishop Rafael is some help from us in a catechetical center he would like to establish in one of the outlying districts of his diocese.

We talked about many other things but all will need much more time for reflection.

What places did you visit and what kind of people did you meet?

We talked with men working the farmland who have been helped through our Operation Breadbox. There are six families working the land and we met with four of the men at Candelaria. We had a brief discussion of their experiences. They are extremely grateful for what we have done to enable this project to develop and shared with us their experience in the new venture. For example, they talked about their struggle in clearing the land of its dense foliage, their efforts



Bishop Rafael Garcia Gonzalez, second from left facing camera, Bishop Clark, and Father Charles Mulligan, diocesan director of social ministries, visited the minor seminary at Villahermosa.

Photo by Lourdes Perez-Albuerne

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Nuclear Fission

Area Clergy Split over Seneca Depot

By John Dash

Both theologically and politically, the controversy surrounding the Seneca Army Depot has divided the clergy of the area.

The controversy stems from a number of reports that nuclear arms are likely stored in the depot. One report in particular, distributed by the Center for Defense Information in Washington, D.C., a private group which monitors defense information, identified the depot as the Army's East Coast storage and maintenance facility for nuclear weapons.

significant numbers of parishioners are either employed by or have immediate association with the depot, and many of them, they assert, are either supportive or neutral on the question of maintaining nuclear arms in their midst.

Father Albert Shamon, on the one hand, counts a number of "high echelon officials" from the depot as his parishioners. And he describes himself as "angry" over the controversy surrounding the nuclear question.

In addition, because that protest against the presence of nuclear weapons at the depot

involves area Office of Human Development personnel, notably Father William Spilly, Father Shamon is doubly incensed.

Entering such a controversial arena, Father Shamon said, puts "priests and Sisters at the lowest rung of public opinion today." The local controversy, he said, is evidence of "a lot of stupidity . . . I hate to see priests and Sisters look stupid. Shoemaker, stick to your last," the pastor of St. Mary's in Waterloo said.

Father John Mulligan, pastor of St. Stephen's in

Poland

- Solidarity Window Poster on Back Page
- Tribute to Poland Fund Passes \$52,000
- Special Photos from Inside Poland

In an effort to show the support of the people of the Rochester diocese for the people of Poland during their present plight, the Courier-Journal is publishing a special Solidarity page in this edition which can be used as a window poster. It is on the back page of the paper.

Anthony J. Costello, publisher and general manager of the Courier-Journal, said, "The page has a twofold purpose — to show our own solidarity with the valiant Polish people and also to spur contributions to the Tribute to Poland fund.

"I would like to remind all Courier readers that the address for donations is Tribute to Poland, 123 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

Father Joseph Reinhart, diocesan missions director, who is coordinating the fund, reported that as of last Friday more than \$52,000 had been contributed throughout the diocese.

Catholic Relief Services, the overseas assistance fund of the U.S. bishops, which has the responsibility of distributing the aid to the Polish people, has assured the Courier-Journal that the aid is getting through and reaching those in need.

CRS this week, at the Courier's request, has provided this newspaper with photos taken inside Poland, showing supplies people in Warsaw and Katowice. These photos are on Page 9.