

Apocalyptic Literature Theme for RE Leaders

Religious education coordinators from across the diocese gathered at Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua last week for three days of intensive study of apocalyptic literature including the New Testament's Apocalypse.

The meeting, sponsored by the diocesan Office of Religious Education and the Association of Religious Educators, was convened in

response to the growing phenomenon of fundamentalist preaching from the apocalyptic texts.

"Our concern as coordinators is that we are meeting those who are biblical enthusiasts, and we questioned how to work with them and how to respond with our own sense of scripture," Eileen Slagis, an organizer of the meeting, said last week.

The program, directed by

Father Sebastian Falcone, dean and director of St. Bernard's Institute and a noted scripture scholar, "left us all with a sense of our calling (as preachers of the word), with the value of the word to us personally as well as for others," Ms. Slagis said. She is also religious education coordinator at St. Joseph's in Penfield.

The agenda, she said, included discussion of Apocalypse in reference to the

Old Testament apocalyptic symbolism, a discussion of relevant papal encyclicals, and the various Christologies of the gospels and their development.

In addition, the group discussed other issues such as the Hatch Amendment, confirmation, and parish bible study groups.

Not all was solemn, however, Ms. Slagis confessed. On one evening, she

said, the gathering staged a "roast" of Father Falcone during which he was presented with a tee-shirt emblazoned with "I am literally saved."

Pope Thanks Blood Donors

A recent American Red Cross news release said that Pope John Paul II recently expressed his thanks for all those who have ever donated blood so that his life, along with others, could be saved.

The message was made in

the form of a letter from the Vatican Secretary of State to the president of the International Federation of Blood Donor Organizations. The letter thanked the organization's president for his message of sympathy

following the assassination attempt made last year on the Pope's life.

The Vatican Secretary of State wrote that, "Prompted by personal experience, he (the Pope), wishes to take this opportunity to make an emotional appeal to those of willing heart so that they shall not fail to offer to their suffering brothers this service of sharing blood."


Mentioning the Pope's own experience, the letter continued: "His holiness would also like to express his

gratitude for this gesture of salvation from which he himself has benefited. This is why he warmly encourages all blood donors and sends to them his best wishes which he entrusts to God in thankful prayer."

This message of thanks to donors coincides with President Reagan's announcement late last year declaring January as National Volunteer Blood Donor month. The President, in keeping with a long-standing tradition, announced the declaration which said in part, "I commend those Americans who have donated blood that others might live and encourage every American to join in this expression of concern by offering the gift of blood."

Those who are interested in becoming blood donors, or who would like more information should call the Red Cross at 275-9800, ext. 240, or visit the Red Cross Blood Center, 50 Prince St.

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord

A Pair Of Questions:

First, will religious leaders have any impact on national policy by all their statements on the immorality of nuclear war, of threatening nuclear war, of stockpiling nuclear weapons?

Second, unless there is some possibility of such influence on national policy, why are they devoting so much energy and leadership capital to these issues?

No one reading the religious press can fail to be impressed by the mounting momentum of concern.

The growing concern does not add up to a moral unanimity on practical steps to be taken, but suppose it did? Suppose there were an overwhelming consensus among religious leaders that we should begin to dismantle our nuclear arsenal?

I doubt it.

President Reagan and Secretary Haig might make politically prudent statements about appreciating the advice; they might assure the religious leaders that they were seriously weighing it.

But there is every indication that they will make their decisions about nuclear armaments with their eyes on leaders in the Kremlin rather than on leaders in the pulpits.

But would we not see an irresistible political pressure from the voters as a result of such moral unanimity?

Again, I doubt it.

Oh, there would be plenty of lay voices joining the religious leaders in their concern, but there also would be plenty of others who are just as worried about those Russian weapons as are President Reagan and Secretary Haig.

The political reality seems to be that religious sensitivity becomes politically persuasive only when it

combines with an issue of major self-interest for a large group of citizens.

And the self-interest of our citizens is mixed.

Many think the proliferation of weapons increases the probability that eventually they will be used. Many others have exactly the opposite judgment — that only a powerful arsenal of nuclear weapons can prevent their use.

But this difference of opinion is not based on religious concerns. It is based on different estimates of cause and effect in world affairs.

As long as there is such a diversity in public opinion, I can't see that religious proclamation will build into an irresistible pressure on policy.

So why are the religious leaders putting so much emphasis on the issue?

In part, because this has become THE issue of moral concern today. Failure to address it suggests lack of moral sensitivity.

But it's more than that. Many of these church leaders who are speaking out feel compelled to do so, even if there is little likelihood that their judgment will influence national policy.

Religious spokesmen today are still heavily influenced by a sense of shame and embarrassment that the voices of their predecessors were not more forceful in condemning the evils of the Holocaust. Some feel the same kind of guilt about the failure of churchmen to condemn the first use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

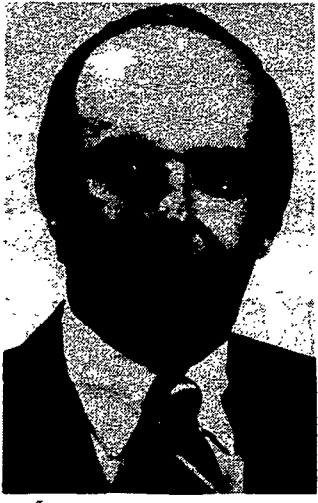
At any rate, like many of the Old Testament prophets, these leaders feel obliged to proclaim the will of God, as they understand it, regardless of its impact on national policy.

And that's a pretty good attitude for religious leaders to have.

Business in Diocese



Roger D'Aprix, author, former communication executive with Xerox Corp. and member of St. John the Evangelist Parish on Humboldt Street, has formed **Organizational Communication Services**, a complete communication consulting service to business and other institutional organizations.



DAVID KINSKY
David A. Kinsky, Cooley Business Forms, 120 Allens Creek Road, has received his certificate attesting to his accreditation as a Certified Forms Consultant.

Kinsky, a 1957 Aquinas graduate and a 1962 graduate of St. John Fisher College, resides with his wife and four children in Fairport. He is a member of St. John the Evangelist parish of Rochester and is a member of the St. Boniface Men's Club.

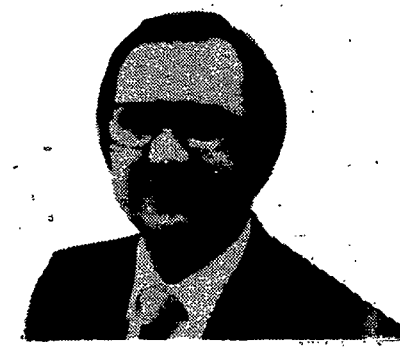
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The pain of grief penetrates slowly as we are reminded in thousands of ways that the deceased is gone. Talking about the deceased, remembering their birthday, going to their grave and learning to do jobs that they used to do can all be painful experiences. As we experience the pain of loss it is good to have friends who will listen and support us. We may feel overwhelmed at having to learn new ways of doing things. A good friend can encourage, teach and help out with many practical matters. Without being over-bearing, they can be available to help and support the bereaved when needed.

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