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Catholic Action Mushrooming Against Nuclear Arms Race

By John Dash

Both in this diocese and across the country, Catholics are taking an increasingly active role in the move to halt the development and stockpiling of nuclear arms.

Last week, when Rochester City Council approved a resolution supporting a nuclear arms freeze, a recently organized group called CANA (Catholics Against Nuclear Arms) was prominent among the supporters.

For months, an organization called Finger Lakes Peace Alliance, and represented by Father William Spilly, has been organizing demonstrations around the likelihood of nuclear arms being stored at the Seneca Army Depot.

The diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission has just established a task force on nuclear disarmament, and the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry is doing the same.

And local chapters of Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace organization, are being established in the diocese. The Rochester group claims a membership of 50, and the Ithaca chapter claims 20. Both groups are only in their infancy.

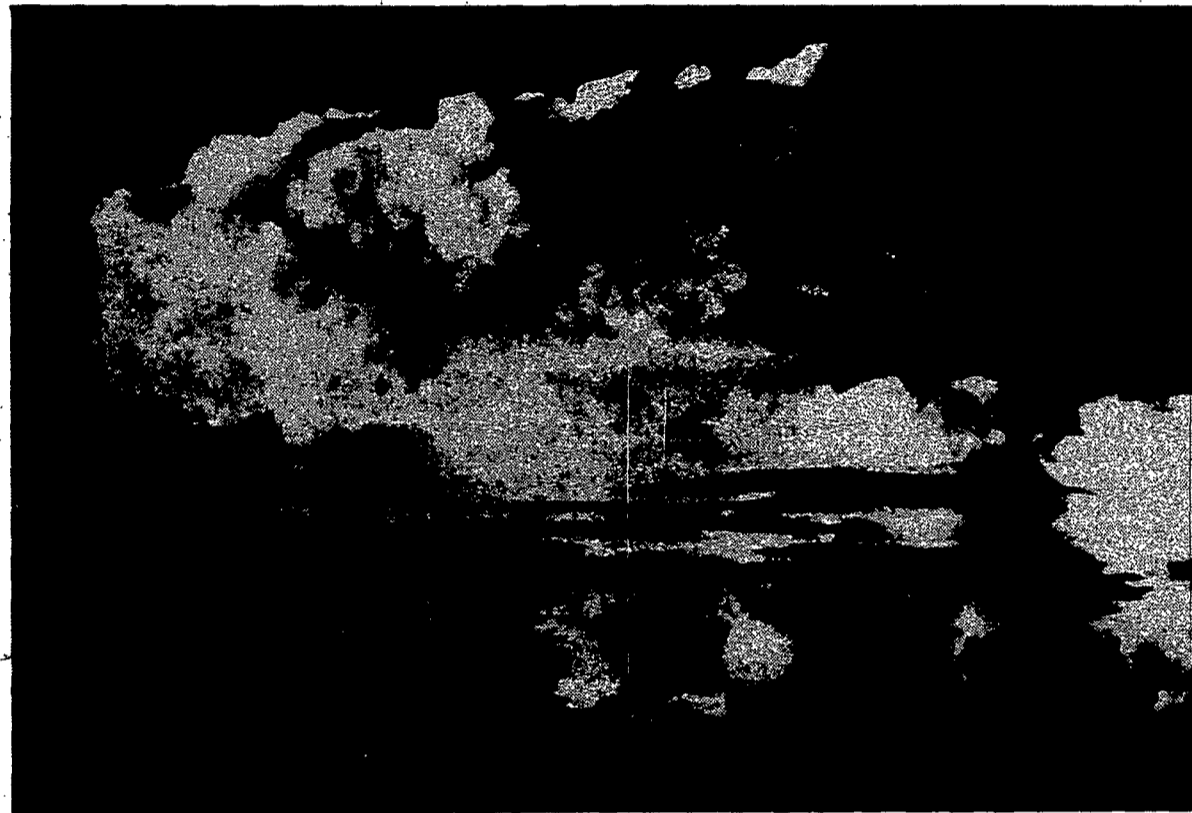
What is happening in the diocese is reflective of a national development among Catholics, signaled, perhaps by the U.S. bishops themselves.

Last Fall, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops began a year-long study of the question of curbing nuclear arms. Archbishop John R. Roach of Minneapolis-St. Paul, told the assembled prelates: "At a time when the secular debate is openly discussing the issue of nuclear weapons and winnable nuclear wars, it is useful to repeat clearly what we already know from Catholic teaching."

He said the Church is obliged to address the question because the nuclear arms race "is the most dangerous moral issue in the public order today."

"The Church needs to say 'no' clearly and decisively to the use of nuclear arms. What is spent directly for guns directly reduces what is available for the quality of care and life for the least among us," he said.

The bishops have taken counsel in their study from a diverse group of viewpoints represented by, among others, Harold Brown and James Schlesinger, two former secretaries of defense; Gerald Smith, head of the U.S. delegation at the SALT I negotiations; Father Charles Curran and Father Joseph Fuchs, noted theologians; Gordon Zahn, the pacifist author; and Molly Rush, a member of the Plovers Eight, the group headed by the



brothers Philip and Father Daniel Berrigan, convicted for entering the General Electric nuclear plant in King of Prussia, Pa.

The bishops have scheduled meetings next week with Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Secretary of Defense Casper W. Weinberger, and Eugene V. Rostow, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

When their study is completed, the bishops will issue a statement on the ethical and moral dimensions of war and peace. They are expected to vote on the issue at their next annual meeting in November.

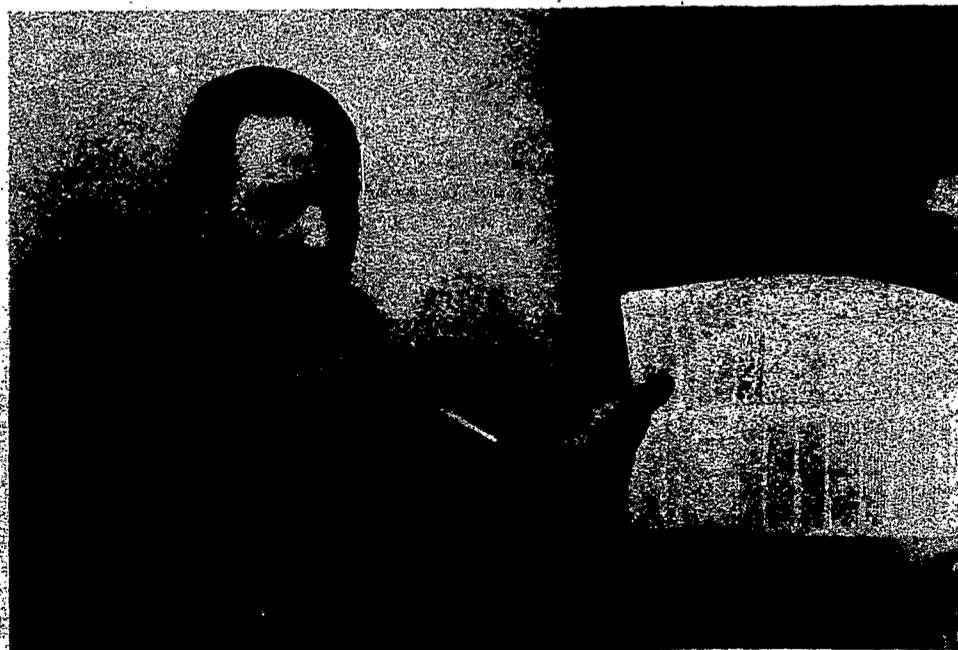
The Vatican, too, has entered the arena, with the personal interest of Pope John Paul II. The Pontifical Academy of Sciences has been studying the question; and the pontiff sent delegations of that group to present the academy's findings to government leaders in the United States, the Soviet Union, France and Great Britain in December.

In addition, at the encouragement of both Father Theodore Hesburgh, president of Notre Dame University, and Cardinal Franz Koenig, religious leaders and the academy are working on a paper describing both the scientific and moral dimensions of nuclear conflict, which will be presented to the pontiff for his endorsement at a September meeting of the academy.

Father Hesburgh has been quoted as saying recently that, like personal death, "we've pushed the threat of nuclear war back in our minds, but now we've painted ourselves into a corner."

Speaking at a seminar on the question of nuclear war, the priest, who is also a chemist, said that as he has begun exploring the magnitude of the problem, "I thought of my long involvement in human and civil rights over the last 30 years, with immigration and refugees, hunger, transfer

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Bishop Introduces Pastoral

Photo by Terrance J. Brennan

Bishop Matthew H. Clark introduced his first pastoral letter, *The Fire in the Thornbush*, to Rochester area media representatives last Tuesday, April 27, at the diocesan offices on Buffalo Road. The bishop pointed out that copies of the pastoral will be sent across the country to other bishops and diocesan officials.

Rosario La Delfa Ordination Slated

Seneca Falls — Rev. Mr. Rosario La Delfa, the deacon-intern at St. Patrick's Church, will be ordained a priest for the Diocese of Rochester by Bishop Matthew H. Clark, who will share the sanctuary with Bishop Sebastiano Rosso of Piazza Armerina, Italy, 11 a.m., Saturday, May 8, at St. Patrick's

"Deacon Rino," as the ordinand is generally known, is a native of Valguarnera, Sicily, born there in 1956 to Ferdinando and Angela Cozzo La Delfa.

He lived in Sicily until 1977, when he joined his parents, already living in Rochester.

In Sicily he completed

college and pursued two years of graduate work in medicine and surgery. During that time he also traveled extensively in Europe, particularly Germany.

He credits the late Father Joseph Beatini, pastor of Fairport's Assumption Church, for providing him with "a model of priestly life, and in offering advice and support."

He studied theology at St. Bernard's Seminary where he earned masters degrees in divinity and dogmatic theology. He has done field work at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, the Office of Urban Ministry, a parish in Bunde, Germany, and Holy



REV. MR. LA DELFA

Name of Jesus Parish in the diocese.

Other events surrounding the ordination are Masses of Thanksgiving, noon, May 9, at St. Patrick's, and 3 p.m., May 16, at St. Francis Xavier.