

NCAN Nun Hesitant on Pro-Choice Label

By John Dash

Sister Margaret Traxler last week would not directly say that the National Coalition of American Nuns could be labeled "pro-choice" in the matter of abortion.

Rather she cited the organization's now nationally known statement:

"While we continue to oppose abortion on principle and in practice, we are likewise convinced that the responsibility for decisions in this regard resides primarily with those who are directly and personally involved."

On the question of the

pro-choice label Sister Margaret did, however, cite her enthusiasm for an editorial in the Miami Herald which, she said, praised the organization for supporting free choice while at the same time maintaining that abortion in principle is wrong.

Sister Margaret, reached at the coalition's headquarters in Chicago, also would not directly answer questions about any negative reaction from coalition members to the statement, actually only signed and published by coalition board members.

She did say, however, that

the statement has been public for some time and that there have been favorable responses to it. She said that there are about a dozen Rochester diocesan Sisters in the nationwide coalition.

The statement caught the attention of the national press two weeks ago because it challenged the support of the nation's bishops for the Hatch Human Life Amendment.

That support was announced last fall. The Hatch Human Life Amendment is a constitutional amendment which allow for both federal and state legislation restricting abortions, with

the stricter laws prevailing in disputed cases.

Because the amendment, however, does not itself ban abortions, it has drawn fire from some pro-life groups.

The nuns' statement, on the other hand, is seen as the first public break with the bishops from their own camp.

The statement also said that it was "paradoxical to us that the same leaders who are currently demanding that women bring their babies to term are simultaneously voting to cut off food stamps, child nutrition programs and related benefits to the health

and well-being of our children."

The recent statement is not the first time that Sister Margaret has captured the national spotlight in the question. In 1977, she castigated Congress for the decision to withhold public funds for abortion to welfare recipients. At that time she also scorned "men in political and church circles who imperiously speak and legislate about women's bodies as though men and not women were the ones who are the primary nurturers of children."

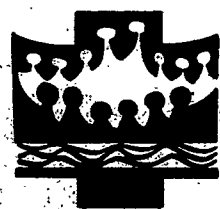
That sentiment had its echo in the most recent statement, in which the

coalition urged leaders in the churches, courts, and Congress to provide "a more nurturing environment so that women will be encouraged to bring new life into the world."

The coalition text also called on men to educate themselves for the responsibilities of fatherhood, urged "women everywhere to disavow the use of abortion as a normative means of birth control," and said that women should also educate themselves, but "in ways of being creatively responsible — insofar as this is possible — for avoiding "unwanted pregnancies."

Insights In Liturgy

By Sister Nancy Burkin, SSI



The Ordo Missae Study

By way of this column last January, I attempted to share with the people of the diocese some of the thoughts, reflections and suggestions regarding the Eucharistic liturgy that dioceses engaged in the Ordo Missae Study had submitted as a result of their study and discussion. This study, which is being done nationally, has been faithfully pursued since September by nearly 50 parishes in the Rochester diocese. The study is now complete and once more I wish to share generally the direction the people of the diocese seem to be taking. As was true in January, it is impossible to specify each particular concern that parishes had for each part of the Mass. However, there are particular areas of concern that seemed to arise again and again regardless of the type of parish that was submitting material.

The study itself was designed to examine the order or structure of the Mass, not the text, the minister, the music, etc. Because of this, though much, much background information was studied by the members of the participating parishes, no evaluation was submitted by parishes on the Eucharistic prayer. With this omission, then, the parishes since January have studied the Mass in small sections from the prayers at the preparation of the gifts through the recessional.

One of the clearest concepts that has come through again and again in the evaluation submitted by the parish groups is their

Ouzer Exhibit

Internationally known Rochester photographer Louis Ouzer will have a one-man showing at the American College in Bryn Mawr College, Pa. for six weeks. The exhibit "LOUIS OUZER: Portraits of Musicians" began June 13.

difficulty accepting the recitation of "private prayers" by the priest. Their argument was not with prayer said during a communal silence such as that following the reception of Communion when they, too, would be praying within the privacy of themselves, but with the specific prayers assigned to the priest as "private prayers," such as the prayer said after the mixing of the wine and water, during the washing of hands and just before communion.

As was true this fall, there was much concern that symbols be authentic and meaningful. Several parish groups commented that the washing of the hands should be just that and not a ritualistic dipping of the fingertips. For most, the breaking of the bread, once a most important rite, has become meaningless since the breaking of a host, even when large ones are used, neither looks like nor sounds like breaking bread. Once again, the people expressed a desire for bread to look like bread. The meaning of some symbols has become lost over the years according to many parishes (e.g., the mixing of the water and wine, the incensation and commingling of bread and wine).

The Rite of Peace, usually a good subject for discussion, did not fall short of this description on the evaluation forms of the participants. However, the question was not whether or not we should have it but rather, its placement in the order of Mass. Many people felt that the placement should be flexible and depend on the function of the sign: greeting, forgiveness, etc.

Difficulty was expressed regarding song at the time of reception of communion but most parishes were very insistent that communion should be offered under both forms each Sunday.

NEXT WEEK: General comments regarding the time after communion, the concluding rites and the

Letters Urged Hatch Nearing Vote

The diocesan Human Life Commission has learned that the Hatch-Ashbrook Human Life Amendment likely will be coming to the floor of the U.S. Senate by the end of this month.

The U.S. Bishops at their November 1981 meeting restated their opposition to abortion-on-demand and announced their support of the Hatch amendment as the most realistic step in protecting human lives.

The Human Life Commission feels that the support of both Sen. Alfonse D'Amato and Sen. Daniel Moynihan

will be critical. The commission urges all dioceses to write to them immediately and urge their support for the amendment.

Both may be addressed at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 10510.

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Man of Year

Auburn — John J. Madden was feted as Hibernian of the Year by the John F. Kennedy Division 1 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians at a dinner-dance, 7 p.m., Saturday, June 12, at the AOH clubrooms. Madden has been a member of the AOH since the division reorganization in 1951, and has been active in various offices and on many committees. For the past eight years he has been division financial secretary.

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