

# COURIER-JOURNAL

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The Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting featured a panel on the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.

## DPC Hears RCIA Presentation

Keuka Park — Receiving the sacraments following her completion of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults was "one of the most joyous occasions of my life," Jean Granger told the Diocesan Pastoral Council Saturday.

The Rochester Institute of Technology student said the year-long RCIA program brought her to understand the role of Church, and to want to become a member of the Catholic Church.

She was one of the panel who described various aspects of the program to the DPC on Saturday.

The RCIA program was her first experience with a close-knit faith community, Miss Granger said. She had always felt churches should be perfect because of their alliance with God, she said, but she came to understand that they really were human organizations, and she said the Catholic Church had done a better job learning from its mistakes than others had.

She also said her baptism at age 23 meant more to her than it would have if she had been baptized as an infant. Last Easter, she said, "I really appreciated it."

Sylvia Lavin of Geneva, who dropped out of the RCIA program at St. Stephen's Parish, also was a panelist.

She assured the DPC that she, too, had good things to say about the program. She said it helped her understand the Catholic faith of the family into which she had married.

She said that when she joined the program, it was with the understanding that she would not be baptized. But at the end, she said, it was harder than she thought it would be to decide not to receive the sacraments.

Now she'll be participating in the program again this year, she said, and possibly her decision next Easter will be to join the Church. She's open to that possibility, she said.

Participation in the RCIA meetings and in the various rites which take place during the year "was a wonderful religious experience for me," Mrs. Lavin said, much like it was for Miss Granger.

For one, she said, "I began to sit in the front of the church instead of the back."

Her husband, a pre-Vatican II priest, said she was "Continued on Page 4"

## DPC Installs New Officers

Keuka Park — After installing the Diocesan Pastoral Council Friday, Bishop Matthew H. Clark asked the congregation to repeat the prayer once more, for himself.

Later he told the opening session of the DPC Convocation at Keuka College that he hoped everything done this year by the group "is for our growth as a local Church."

As he moves around the diocese, he said, he sees the call to "probe into the reality of what a Church is."

He said he is always impressed by "the generosity of God as His own spirit moves among our people."

He said he hopes the DPC's assemblies can be "models for our brothers and sisters of what we're supposed to be."

He urged the council members to be prepared, to keep "in prayer all that we do," and don't forget those to whom the DPC is united within service.

"Why all of us came together in this room tonight in 1982 I haven't the faintest idea," he said.

"But I'm glad that we're

here," and he is looking forward to the rest of the weekend and the rest of the year.

"Be confident in what you're about," he said, "because you don't do it without the help of God and support of those around you."

Shirley Toole of Geneva, DPC president, then outlined the topics the group will be examining. The first, she noted in a discussion which took place Saturday, would be the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Also on the agenda for the year will be the Evangelism day next June; the Parish Project and parish spiritual renewal; discussions by the Division Directors; of establishment of a Diocesan Office of Communications and an Office of Pastoral Ministry; and other topics, including Bishop Clark's pastoral, "Fire in the Thornbush."

She noted that the "bishop has challenged us to be the prayerful, thoughtful voice of the people," and she hoped the members would accept the challenge.

On Saturday, the DPC heard reports from its committees, from the diocese's regions, and from the appointed members.

## Pope Meets With Arafat; Israel Upset

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II met privately with Yassir Arafat Sept. 15 despite Israeli criticism of his meeting with the Palestine Liberation Organization leader.

Following the meeting, the pope conducted his weekly general audience and called on the Israeli and Palestinian peoples to accept "the existence and the reality" of each other and to "find a path to dialogue."

The Vatican said the pope and Arafat met for 20 minutes with no one else present. A spokesman for Arafat said he gave the pope Palestinian-made mother-of-pearl replicas of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Dome of the Rock, the chief Christian and Moslem shrines in Jerusalem.

The PLO leader, recently ousted from his guerrilla base in Beirut, Lebanon, by the Israeli armed forces, arrived at the Vatican under heavy police protection late in the afternoon, shortly before the pope was to hold the general audience.

In a diplomatic communique issued the day before, the

Vatican, emphasized that the pope's meeting with Arafat was meant "as a sign of the good will and concern of the supreme pontiff for the Palestinian people without any political significance."

After the PLO announced plans for the meeting, criticism of the meeting and of the Church came from high Israeli government officials. Prime Minister Menachem Begin in comments at a closed cabinet meeting reportedly accused the Church of insensitivity to the Jewish Holocaust in World War II and to Lebanese Christians killed by the PLO.

Israeli officials expressed fear that among the world's Catholics the papal meeting with Arafat would boost PLO standing as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Vatican, which has maintained neutrality on that issue, stressed in the communique released that the meeting did not mark any change in that stance. The meeting was without political significance "particularly as regards the character of representation for these people as claimed by the PLO," the Vatican said.

The Vatican reacted sharply to the Begin remarks.

"Such an outrage to the truth cannot go unanswered," Father Romeo Panciroli, Vatican press spokesman said.

A high government official in Israel, and it is still not clear who, declared, "The Church, which did not say a word about the massacre of the Jews for six years in Europe and has not had much to say about the killing of



Pope, Arafat meet.

Christians for seven years in Lebanon, is now ready to meet a man who committed the killings in Lebanon and who wants the destruction of Israel in order to complete the work carried out by the Nazis in Germany," the official said.

"If this man meets with Arafat, it is indicative of a certain moral standard," he added.

Reporting the official's remarks, Radio Israel said that Begin had expressed a similar opinion.

Calling the unnamed Israeli official's statement an "Continued on Page 4"

## Tuition Tax Credits Also in Trouble

# Hatch, Helms Proposals Dead for This Session

Washington — Pro-life hopes for reversals of liberalized abortion through congressional action seemed dashed for this session.

The Senate last week voted 47-46 to kill a proposal by Sen. Jesse Helms, which would have permanently banned the

use of federal funds for abortions and would have encouraged legal efforts to reverse Supreme Court decisions liberalizing abortion on demand. The measure was offered as a rider to a bill raising the national debt limit.

Further bad news for anti-

abortion forces came with the announcement by Sen. Orrin Hatch that he was withdrawing for this session his proposed constitutional amendment that would allow states to pass legislation restricting abortions.

Hatch, involved in a re-

election bid, said he wanted to have the debate on his amendment unfettered by the distractions his campaign would cause.

The Hatch amendment had the support of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The abortion developments were seen as a defeat for President Reagan who had of late lobbied strongly for the Helms bill.

Another of President Reagan's programs also seemed in jeopardy, Senate Republican leaders reportedly

have informed him that they would not push vigorously for tuition tax credits.

Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr., the Senate majority leader, said that the "must list" for this session contained only appropriations measures.