

When Is a Clergy Conference More Than a Clergy Conference?

By Father Louis Hohman

In an historic move, about a hundred persons engaged in other Church ministries joined with 150 priests recently at what up until now had been designated a Clergy Conference. The meeting took place at Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua.

Twelve permanent deacons and their wives, 60 pastoral assistants (religious and lay), a scattering of health care institution chaplains and heads of religious congregations joined in the discussion of "Ministries in the Church, Past, Present and Future."

The all-day conference took

place on Wednesday, Oct. 20, and was repeated the next day, under the direction of Father Douglas Morrison, director of Pastoral Center at Catholic University and a member of the faculty there. It was the first time in this diocese that the semi-annual Clergy Conference was opened to non-ordained

ministers.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark remarked that he was more than pleased at the conference and was impressed by the "high-powered" nature of the people assembled. Father Morrison pointed out that the history of ministry in the Church gives reason to expect change in forms of ministry because it has traditionally taken forms which meet the needs of the people at that time. He indicated that shared ministry — that is, ministry extended to include the laity — is theologically sound and seems to be best fitted for the circumstances of our time in the form of shared leadership.

He said that the co-responsibility was the norm of the early Church and that the old had now become new again. The form in which this exists at the parish level is parish councils, but if these are to be effective, there must be training for those coming to this leadership for the first time and change for those who have exercised authoritarian forms until now. Father Morrison further indicated that implementation of this form of shared leadership was the use of consensus.

The evening session turned to the discussion of "Future Horizons," the ministry as it will be. Three areas were considered: opening ordination to more people, extending collegiality to all levels of the Church, and extension of ecumenism to create a unity which allows for diversity.

In particular, the possibility of ordination of women to the permanent diaconate was suggested as a first step. The forms we see for tomorrow need not those of today any more than the forms of today resemble many of those of the past, he said.



VAST Emerges

Rev. Leon Dupree, left, Volunteer Attorney Service Teams (VAST) project director for Western New York, shares a laugh with area attorney Roy King prior to a kickoff luncheon last Tuesday, Oct. 26, at the University Club. Guest speaker was Thomas Higgins of Mineola, who began the program to aid prisoners in the state three years ago. More than 30 area dignitaries attended the luncheon including Bishop Matthew H. Clark and Bishop Robert Spears of the Episcopal diocese. According to James Bergland, vice president of development for VAST, the program in this area will serve four prisons: Attica, Auburn, Albion and Elmira.

Haitians' First Hearing Set Tomorrow in Buffalo

By John Dash

Rochester's contingent of Haitian refugees seeking political asylum in the United States will be arraigned in Buffalo tomorrow, Thursday morning.

The hearing, at Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) offices there, is the first step for the Haitians' official recognition as immigrants. It could also be the first step in their deportation back to the Caribbean island from which they fled. The question to be determined is whether they are political refugees or, as the U.S. government contends, economic refugees.

Seventeen men will be brought to Buffalo tomorrow by members of the Cuban Haitian Emergency Refugee Committee, an ad hoc group of individuals and agencies

initially convened by Bishop Matthew H. Clark and now by diocesan Catholic Charities.

Rochester's Haitians arrived in the U.S. following President Reagan's unique order to the Coast Guard to fire on boats of refugees from Haiti, if necessary, to keep them from reaching this country.

Those Haitians who did make it here were rounded up and placed in federal penitentiaries. All but one of the Rochester group was incarcerated at Ray Brook, high in the Adirondacks, near Saranac Lake, for more than a year.

Despite such a welcome, one Haitian, early in his imprisonment, declared that he would rather die in a U.S. prison than in his homeland.

The Haitians have been

released from federal detention under court order, the principal suit on their behalf having been decided by Judge Eugene Spellman in Miami last summer.

Rochester's Haitians are living and working in this area under the sponsorship of Church World Service and diocesan Charities, as well as under individual sponsors.

Cardinal Benelli Dies in Florence

Florence, Italy (RNS) — Cardinal Giovanni Benelli, known as the most powerful man in the Roman Curia under Pope Paul VI, died here Oct. 26 of complications from a heart attack. He was 61.

The prelate, who had been archbishop of Florence since 1977, died at his residence an hour after returning from Careggi University Hospital. Doctors had authorized the transfer after determining he was close to death of kidney failure and other complications from a heart attack he suffered on Oct. 22.

Known for his hard driving pragmatism and energetic mind, Cardinal Benelli won fame as the principal expeditor of curia reforms introduced by Paul VI and for helping the Church through the tumultuous years that followed Vatican II.

Diocesan Appointments

Bishop Matthew H. Clark appoints:

Father Robert C. Bradler, to director of the Diocesan Missions Office, and to remain pastor of St. James Church.

Father Eugene Eno, to associate pastor of St. Francis de Sales Church, Geneva.

Father William J. Gordiner, to pastor of St. Mary's Church, Geneseo.

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