

Bishop Rafael To Our Diocese



I would like to use the Courier-Journal to send my very warm and affectionate greetings, first of all, to Bishop Clark who has been a real brother to me, full of warmth and attention.

And also to all who work for and are interested in the welfare of the Diocese of Tabasco.

Let me encourage them in their missionary spirit and say that I am sure that the Lord will not fail us.

In a special way, I am thankful for the personnel of the Missions Office, the Justice and Peace Department and the Division of Social Ministries who are responsible for the decisions on the sharing of resources between both dioceses.

I am personally pleased to be carrying the message to the priests, especially the Priests Council since they can be one of the important links between the two dioceses.

Mi afecta y mi saludo especial a los de habla hispana para que sigan firmes en la fe de sus padres y vivan siempre como hermanos. Mi oración constante a la Santísima Virgen de Guadalupe nuestra piadosa madre.

Bishop Clark

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parish ministry work involved with economic and racial questions.

Sister Mary Weaver, SSJ, "who is going on 20 years of mission service in the area," also works in social ministry. She arranged for Bishop Clark to meet with local ministers involved in civil rights all the way back to the days of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and the march to Montgomery.

Sister Catherine Martin, SSJ, as do all the Sisters, works closely with the Edmundite Fathers. She often works at their central mission office in Selma which serves the southern states.

"Thus," the bishop said, "she not only has a broad vision of Christ's work in Selma but throughout the South."

Also serving the impoverished is Sister Claude Loeb, RSM, whom the bishop visited at Vredenburgh. He spoke of her special "care and concern for the lonely and those who are in some way at least poor."

The bishop said that the Sisters are moved by "the beautiful gifts" they, in turn, receive from the people they serve. "I didn't speak with any Sister who didn't mention very specifically that they were impressed with the piety and profound trust in God evident in the lives of many of their friends."

"In my limited time there, I was able to appreciate exactly what they meant."

But, back on the road — to the Good Samaritan Hospital and Nursing Home in Selma, where the news was not all that good.

Sister Sharon Jones, CSJ, and Sister Mary Alma Murphy (a nurse) and Sister Joanne Taetz, SFCC, (director of social services) related the financial difficulties facing the hospital. Already some beds have been closed off and "we may have to terminate services all together."

They are quite concerned, the bishop said, that the poor of the region will be in danger of losing adequate medical care. "They obviously are taking all possible steps to avert that but the hospital's future is a real concern to the Edmundite Fathers who run it."

At Queen of Peace parish, Sister Patricia Sullivan, OP, coordinates the Religious Education program. She takes "special delight in the quality of the Adult Education program they have developed."

Good-sized crowds are drawn by guest speakers who have included Sister Elizabeth Le Valley of the Central Council of the SSJs, and Archbishop Oscar Lipscomb of Mobile.

Then, time was up. The bishop had to leave for Rochester, there to begin a new journey which is to take him to all corners of the home diocese. And it seems likely that he will be taking the story of the Selma Sisters with him wherever he goes.

Bishop Rafael

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relationship, the Tabasco diocese has provided Rochester with a priest each of the last three summers to help with the Hispanic community.

Although most Americans picture Mexico as a land of vast financial imbalance — either very wealthy or very poor people — Bishop Rafael is from "a lower middle-class" family. He is the sixth of seven children and two of his brothers are Marists.

His father was a telegrapher and that past tense applies only to his occupation. He is still going strong at 96.

The bishop is the proud uncle of 35 nieces and nephews.

He entered the seminary at age 11 and has a Roman background very similar to the bishop of his sister diocese. He held the same position at the Mexican College in Rome as Bishop Clark did at the North American College — spiritual director. He also was ordained in Rome in 1949 and studied for five years at the Gregorian University. He became a bishop on the Feast of the Assumption in 1972.

The bishop, who is on the road with his social ministries director, Father Jose del Carmen Gomez, had a new experience last week in Rochester.

"It was the first time I have ever seen snow," he said. "I had never seen it, I have never been in it." Then he said something Rochesterian: "I think for a very short period it is very nice." He is more used to the average 98-degree temperatures of his own diocese.

Another impression: "It is very industrial here . . . I am not sure if Rochester is Kodak or if Kodak is Rochester."

There is not much industry in Tabasco. Cement is manufactured and although oil was discovered there in 1976, the industry has not been the source of beneficence for the community as Kodak has been in Rochester.

When will this gracious bishop return to Rochester?

"When God wants me to — that is the best date I can give you."

Besides, he smiled, it is Bishop Clark's turn to come to Tabasco.

Lecture Scheduled At Nazareth

"Afro-American Religion and the Quest for Freedom" will be discussed by Dr. James H. Evans Jr. in a lecture at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 22, at Nazareth College.

Dr. Evans, assistant professor of theology and Black Church Studies at the Divinity Schools, will speak in the Forum of the Otto A. Shults Community Center. The lecture is open to the public without charge.

An ordained minister, Dr. Evans formerly taught at the University of Rochester, Empire State College and Union Theological Seminary, and served as associate pastor at Chambers Memorial Baptist Church in New York City.

Executive Director Appointed

Sister Patricia Houlihan, RSM, president of the Catholic School Administrators Association of the state, has announced the appointment of Sister Madeline Powers, CSJ, as executive director, effective Sept. 1, 1983.

Founded in 1972, the association is a statewide professional group which serves the Catholic school principals. Sister Madeline succeeds Brother Bernard G. Flood, FMS, in this position.

For the past five years, Sister Madeline has been the Oneida-Madison counties' area superintendent for the Diocese of Syracuse. Prior to assuming that job, she served as director of federal and state programs for that diocese.

Nuclear Arms Will Be Focus of Film

The recently certified local chapter of the Lawyers Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control (LANAC) has scheduled showings of the LANAC Speakers' Training Film at 12:15 p.m. and 7-9:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, and at 12:15 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 25. The evening showing on Feb. 24, which is open to the general

public as well as legal professionals, will be by prior reservation only, made on or before Feb. 23 by calling the Bar Center at 546-1817.

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