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'WE ARE CALLED TO BE PEACEMAKERS'

U.S. Bishops Pass Anti-Nuke Pastoral

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in an historic action, approved a pastoral letter to the nation's Catholic denouncing nuclear war and calling on the world to rid itself of nuclear weapons.

More than two years in discussion, the pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response," was approved overwhelmingly by the bishops, 238-9.

A five-member committee, headed by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, archbishop of Chicago, processed hundreds of letters from Church leaders and government officials as well as conducting scores of meetings both in this nation and in Europe. Three drafts were submitted for consideration by the NCCB, with the amended version of the third eventually winning approval at the special meeting last week in Chicago. The document was finally approved Tuesday, May 3.

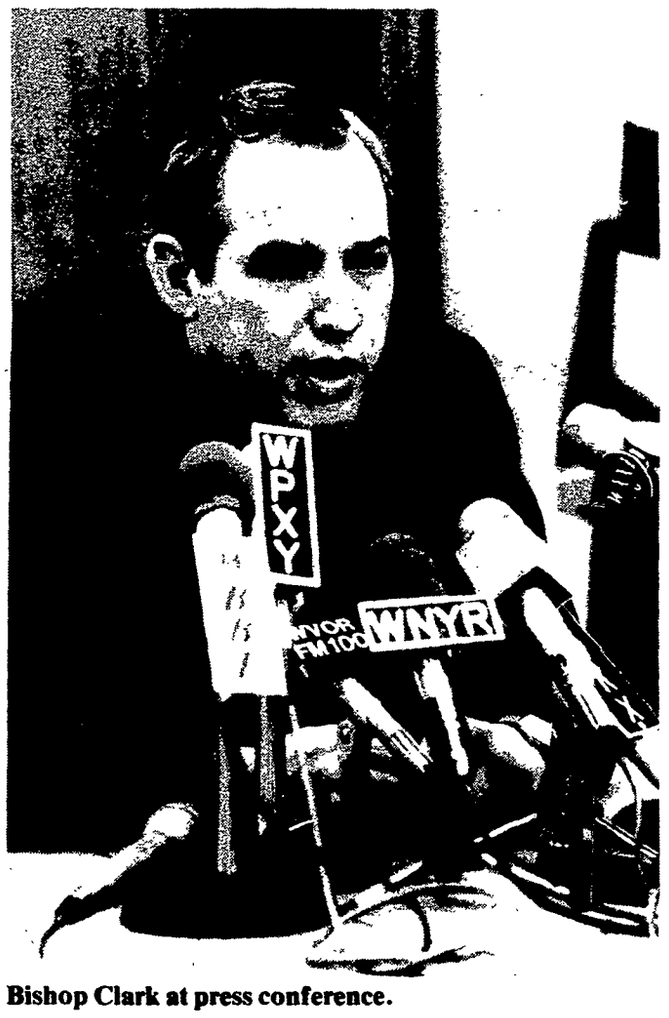
The letter was issued with the idea of providing guidelines for Catholics and influencing public policy on issues of war and peace.

Related stories and articles elsewhere in the Courier:

- Along the Way ...Page 3.
- An analysis . . . Page 6.
- Reaction ... Page 7.
- Editorials ... Page 21.

The Pastoral Briefly

- Nuclear war ...
- Deterrence ... education programs that promote a ... of war and peace issues.
- Initiation of nuclear war at any level is "morally unjustifiable." Nations should renounce a "first-use" policy.
- Limited nuclear exchanges also be questioned since they may not be controllable and may not have a reasonable hope of success.
- No weapons may ever be used to destroy population centers or civilian targets, even when the direct target is military, the principle of proportionality would rule out targeting if the foreseen civilian casualty toll would be too great.
- While every nation has a right and duty to defend itself against unjust aggression, offensive war of any kind is not morally justifiable.
- Deterrence policies are morally acceptable only on a strictly conditional basis. They must not be an end in themselves but be a step toward progressive disarmament.
- Immediate, bilateral and verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems are supported, followed by deep cuts in the arsenals of both superpowers. The bishops say they do not want their use of the word "halt" to be identified with specific political measures nor do they want their position to be used against such measures.
- Moral judgments in the pastoral letter on specific issues, such as "no first use," are not morally binding but "are to be given serious attention and consideration by Catholics."
- Because of the increasing interdependence of the world, the United States should promote political and economic policies aimed at meeting the needs of the world's poor. Such policies are an essential element of a peaceful world. The United States also should adopt a strong supportive leadership role in the United Nations.
- Though Americans need have no illusions about Soviet power and the Soviet system of repression, the "irreducible truth" is that the two superpowers have mutual interests.
- While the debate within the Church over war and peace should be expressed in the framework of Catholic moral teaching, there also should be mutual respect, civility and charity among participants in the debate.
- Prayer and penance also are essential elements of peace. As one form of penance, the bishops commit themselves to fast and abstain each Friday and urge Catholics to do the same voluntarily. Fridays should be significantly devoted to prayer, penance and almsgiving for peace."
- While the concept in scripture of peace has been understood in a variety of ways and contexts, scripture still provides a unique source of revelation on war and peace issues.
- The Church's theological traditions of a just war and nonviolence are distinct but complementary. Each contributes to the full moral vision needed in the pursuit of peace.
- Parishes and dioceses should implement education programs that promote a better understanding of war and peace issues.



Bishop Clark at press conference.

Letter Will Prompt 'Change of Heart,' Bishop Clark Hopes

By John Dash

Calling the challenge of peace "the most profound moral issue of our time," Bishop Matthew H. Clark returned to his home see from Chicago where he had joined nearly 250 other bishops approving the text of a pastoral letter dealing in part with the moral ramifications of U.S. nuclear arms policy.

Bishop Clark said that despite the years of preparation of that pastoral letter, "our work is just beginning."

The letter, he said, is a call to a change of heart.

Speaking at a press conference shortly after landing at the Monroe County Airport, the bishop encouraged not only diocesans, but the general citizenry to read the letter and to allow the text to prompt a change of heart.

The bishop said that he had gone to Chicago with broad support from the diocese, and he expressed "a profound word of thanks to the people of this area for their support. . ."

The pastoral letter issues "a very strong no to war of any kind," he said, "and calls people to the very hard work of building peace."

Bishop Clark acknowledged that he was one of the prelates who urged a textual change from "curb" to "halt" in a section of the letter dealing with the development and deployment of nuclear weapons.

In addition, it was later learned that the bishop had offered a further amendment indicating support for those who pursue non-violent resistance and civil disobedience to counter the development of war machineries.

That amendment, howev-

Continued on Page 7

Sister Hilaire Named New Division Director

Bishop Matthew H. Clark this week named Sister Hilaire Gaelens, RSM, to the new post of director of the diocesan Division of Special Pastoral Ministries.

Her appointment marks the end in the realignment of Pastoral Office departments and services which began in March with the appointment of Father John Mulligan as director of the Division of Urban Services.

Sister Hilaire succeeds Father Gerald J. Appelby, director of Special Ministries. In June, Father Appelby will become pastor of the new Church of the Transfiguration Parish.

The Division of Special Pastoral Ministries will include departments of liturgy, ecumenical and interreligious affairs, campus ministry, and the Commission on Young Adult Ministry. The Pastoral Office also said the division "will provide diocesan support for parish council development, regional coordinators, and the Diocesan Pastoral Council, and it will maintain liaison with Catholic Charismatic Renewal and Dignity/Integrity."

Sister Hilaire's other responsibilities include promotion of effective communications between parishes and the diocese and promotion of evangelization efforts on both the parish and diocesan levels.

For the past five years Sister Hilaire has been administrative assistant in the diocesan Permanent Diaconate Program, and she will continue to carry out certain administrative functions of that proram through June, 1984.

A native of Rochester, Sister Hilaire is a graduate of Our Lady of Mercy High School. She worked for the Veterans Administration and the Eastman Kodak Co. prior to entering the Sisters of Mercy in 1952. She taught school from 1955 to 1977, the last 20 years at Notre Dame High School in Elmira where she also held posts as office manager, business manager and treasurer. She holds a BS degree in economics from the College of St. Rose in Albany, and a master's degree in career education from Boston University.

Sister Hilaire has served the diocese in a number of other capacities, including as a member of the Diocesan

SISTER HILAIRE

Pastoral Council, as a member and as president of the Diocesan Sisters Council, as spiritual director of the St. Bernard's Seminary Spiritual Formation Team, and as assistant director and director of the St. Bernard's Seminary Summer School Program.

In addition, she is a

Continued on Page 5