

Peace Pastoral Generates Wide Discussion

By Jim Lackey

Washington (NC) — The U.S. bishops' new pastoral letter on war and peace is generating a variety of follow-up activities, making the document so far one of the most well-studied in recent Church history.

In fact, the priest who is in charge of monitoring the follow-up for the bishops says interest in the war and peace pastoral is higher than in anything the Church has published except the documents of the Second Vatican Council.

The interest also extends beyond the U.S. Catholic Church. Overseas the pastoral already is being translated into several languages, while here at home the letter is getting what some have termed unprecedented support and endorsement from Protestant and Jewish groups and leaders.

The priest, Father Brian McCullough of the Sacred Heart Fathers and Brothers of Hales Corners, Wis., was chosen by the bishops' three-member follow-up committee to run a clearinghouse for implementation of the document. Father McCullough recently published his first newsletter detailing some of the activities taking place in the wake of the bishops' 238-9 approval of the pastoral in May. The newsletter indicated that much of the follow-up is taking place at the grassroots.

"There's a deeper sense of ownership of this document by the bishops themselves," said Father McCullough in an interview in his office at the U.S. Catholic Conference in Washington. "They (the bishops) have seen this as something not to just pass on to their staff."

A number of dioceses, he said, have hired additional

personnel to make sure the pastoral is implemented locally. One, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the nation's largest, established a new Commission on Peace and Justice with a major goal of providing education on the pastoral, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response."

Father McCullough said he also detected a sense of permanency in diocesan implementation efforts. Instead of sponsoring one-time-only workshops on the pastoral, dioceses have tended to develop activities such as two-year programs involving parishes, schools and other diocesan organizations, he said.

One example of intensive implementation of the pastoral is a plan by the six dioceses of Illinois to set aside next January as a "month of peace" with discussions in classrooms, homilies and other programs on issues presented in the pastoral.

He also noted the value to the follow-up effort of distributing copies of the full text of the pastoral among Catholics. More than 1 million copies of the final text of the pastoral have been distributed through the Catholic press, he said.

The priest added that another key aspect of the follow-up effort will be the willingness of dioceses, especially small ones with limited resources, to share information with each other, particularly if presented with a specific problem, such as how to counsel defense workers troubled by the implications of the pastoral for their jobs.

But not every aspect of implementation is taking place at the diocesan level. Religious orders, publishers and other groups have developed educational materials on the pastoral that are being offered to anyone looking for help in understanding the document's complexity. Included are filmstrips, pamphlets, tape-recorded lectures, magazine articles and grade and high school curricula examining various aspects of the bishops' letter.

The initial follow-up newsletter also listed several languages into which the pastoral is being translated. The



bishops' conference of Spain, for instance, has received permission to translate and publish the full text of the letter in Spanish, while translations also were being made into French, German, Portuguese, Dutch, Italian and Japanese.

Issuance of the pastoral also may be breaking new frontiers in ecumenical relations. According to Father McCullough the pastoral has been lent unprecedented support by Protestant groups such as the National Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Church of Christ, and the bishops of the United Methodist Church.

Also in the works in Washington state, according to the newsletter, is a two-year ecumenical dialogue on the pastoral by 10 Protestant denominations and the Archdiocese of Seattle.

The follow-up newsletter suggested that, to further such efforts, dioceses send complementary copies of the pastoral to local Protestant and Jewish leaders.

As the pastoral was being developed several bishops commented that they hoped their teachings on war and peace would not end up gathering dust on a shelf. Though it is still too early to predict the long-range impact of the letter, the initial months indicate that the bishops' wish is being granted.

Father Cyprian Davis:

Black Religious Caught Between Church and Kind

Jackson, Miss. (NC) — Many black religious find themselves with divided allegiances, trying to respond to the expectations of the predominantly white Religious and the black community, said an authority on black Catholicism in the United States.

"As men and women of God, we find ourselves at sometime or other...caught in a no-man's land — too far along to go back, too far back to go forward," said Benedictine Father Cyprian Davis, professor of Church history at St. Meinrad Archabbey, St. Meinrad, Ind.

Father Davis gave the opening address at the third annual joint conference of the National Black Sisters' Conference, the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus and the National Black Catholic Seminarians

Religious Life

Association. The conference, "Who Do You Say That I Am?" was Aug. 8-12 at Jackson State University.

"One of the things that any spirituality should do is provide a road map for those who travel in the peculiar circumstances of their own age," Father Davis said. "I believe that within the framework of our traditional Catholic spirituality, bolstered by the strength of our own black spiritual tradition, there is a place for such a road map."

"To be a black Religious or priest is to partake of this mystery of Christ as mediator. It is to become a bridge.

The price of mediatorship... the cost of being a bridge... is that one must be stretched to reach both sides...It is also the cost of being placed on the cross — to be suspended between heaven and earth and to join the one with the other," he said.

Formed during the late 1960s to address racial oppression in Church and society, the groups at the conference represented the leadership of black Catholics in the United States.

Delegates at the conference honored Bishop Joseph Brunini of Jackson for his contributions to racial justice.

"You have earned the right to be called God's drum major par excellence," Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Francis of Newark, N.J., told Bishop Brunini. "We honor you as we have honored no other bishop, living or deceased."

In welcoming conferees, Bishop Brunini noted that in attending a conference in the South, "many of you have come back to your roots."

"I know for some these have been bitter roots, but through travail and suffering and depravation, strong trees usually grow," he said.

Discalced Carmelite Sister Barbara Jean LaRochester of Towson, Md., said blacks can use their "roots" to help in their ministry.

"The gifts black religious women and men have to offer those who seek us out as companion, as soul friend, as directors in today's world, are our examples of love and

concern for self and family — a love grounded in the sweat, blood and tears of our ancestors...our innate empathy and sympathy...patient endurance...and liberation," she said.

Black ministers face a tremendous challenge because they must be prepared to educate their people and be educated by them, said Marist Brother Cyprian L. Rowe, outgoing executive director of the National Black Catholic Clergy Conference.

"This education is so different because it implies that the minister must know the positive elements of the culture: the writings, the music, the history, the folklore — all the elements that can tell people what they need to know in order to grow to what they can be," Brother Rowe said.

"This means study," he emphasized. "Without this, the minister is not really ministering, but posturizing."

Brother Rowe also congratulated Capuchin Brother Booker T. Ashe, recipient of the clergy group's Brother Joseph Morgan Davis Award. He said the award is given "in honor of people who challenge slavery every day, who spend their human treasure for liberty, feeling in

their bodies, minds and hearts that the coin of human purchase is one side pain and the other joy."

The organizations also elected new officers to serve the next two years.

Sister Elizabeth Harris of the Home Visitors of Mary, Detroit, was re-elected president of the National Black Sisters' Conference.

President of the NBCCC will be Father Donald M. Clark of the Detroit Archdiocese. Capuchin Brother Bob Smith of Chicago, elected vice president of the National Black Catholic Seminarians Association during the 1982 conference, automatically became president.

Laud Reagan

Washington (NC) — A group of Czech-American Catholics presented President Reagan with the St. John Neumann Award Aug. 11, saying the president shows the concern for education exemplified by the Czech-born saint, founder of the American parochial school system. The award was presented by members of the board of trustees and executive council of the Czech National Chapel of Our Lady of Hostyn.

Franciscan Superiors Issue Call for Peace

By Gerard A. Perseghin
Baltimore (NC) — Peace — whether attained through nuclear disarmament or by opposing injustice — was called for at the 16th annual conference of the Franciscan Federation in the United States, Aug. 12-13 in Baltimore.

About 115 Franciscan superiors representing 20,000 brothers and sisters nationwide participated in the

conference, whose theme was "Announce Peace."

The conference backed the recent U.S. bishops' pastoral on war and peace, and focused on ways to implement the pastoral in light of the respect for life for which St. Francis of Assisi, founder of the order, is famous.

"What can the Franciscans do to implement the bishops' pastoral?" asked Sister Margaret Carney during the

opening address. Franciscans can best respond, she replied, "by balancing the skills we have in the Franciscan community."

Sister Carney, a Franciscan general counselor, was on the federation's rules committee, which revised the rule of the order to direct Franciscans to have peace in their hearts as well as on their lips.

"We are entering a year that has witnessed two monumental documents," Sister Carney said, referring to the bishops' pastoral and the new rule. "They brought some joy, awe, relief. Also fear, anxiety and bewilderment."

The new rule, she said, "is quite demanding if we take it seriously."

Sister Carney said Franciscans must work to eliminate strife and injustice both in the marketplace and the political arena.

"Are we doing everything to heal the wounded?" she asked. "Or do we add to the violence by overpraising the overachievers?"

Sister Carney said that Franciscans should implement the bishops' pastoral

"by teaching people peaceful means of resolving conflicts...We want to take a stance against the dog-eat-dog mentality of the modern world."

"We know people will be roused to wrath by the stance we take on peace," Sister Carney continued. "But our goal is not to rouse people to wrath," she said, urging the superiors not to set a pattern of "elitist" actions in the cause of peace.

"St. Francis was very concerned that we not force people to conform," Sister Carney said. "His idea was to win people by making them a brother or a sister."

Brother Thomas Grady of Brooklyn, N.Y., one of seven members of the Franciscan federation's justice and peace committee, said the committee wants to encourage people to be active on a local level.

"We aren't proposing specific actions," he said. "We're trying to help people understand that work for peace and justice is not an extraordinary activity. We want people to continually reflect on the issues of justice and repression."

St. Dorothy

Continued from Page 1

written testimonials of her influence on their lives. Miss Day, with Peter Maurin, founded the Catholic Worker Movement during the Depression.

"Just as different truths of the faith are emphasized in different times of the church's history, so some saints seem to be suited for certain times," Father Fehren wrote.

The priest, who met with her many times over 30 years, said, "What

impressed me most was her perseverance — year after year living an austere life in the grimmest of conditions, being jailed again and again, never giving up in doing the works of mercy, never getting cynical, never letting her love of God and people dissolve.

"Anyone can be saintly for a week or two, or even a year, but to persevere from youth to old age, to remain on the cross until death — that is the mark of true holiness," Father Fehren wrote.

Shannon, noted theologian, on non-violence, the U.S. bishops pastoral letter on peace, and women.

Father Spilly said that the ensuing discussion centered not on the pastoral but on the encampment, a discussion which educed the negative feelings of several area clergymen.

Also last week, the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry, the Elmira-based diocesan facility, sent a letter to the Seneca County Sheriff, the Commanding Officer of the Seneca Army Depot, the government leaders of Seneca County and the women's camp.

That letter called for mutual acceptance and dialogue pursued with tolerance and love.

In addition, support and encouragement were offered the women campers; and the letter stated that the Church has in the past supported and encouraged those seeking peace and justice through non-violence.

(The letter was also submitted to the Courier-Journal and appears on Page 13 of this issue.)

Next Monday, the Rochester chapter of Pax Christi, the Catholic peace organization will also lead a prayer service at the depot.