

# Diocesan Priest Celebrates Mass with Pope

By Father John J. Hayes

"I could not forbear from boasting that I was a pilgrim on my way to Rome," wrote Hilaire Belloc many years ago and his thoughts were evident in the proud and expectant attitude that marked the departure of the Courier-Journal Holy Year Pilgrimage led by Father Louis Vasile to Rome on Sept. 4.

A special ambience colors every pilgrim group as it did ours. A common purpose of prayer characteristic of a pilgrimage had a bonding effect on all the 73 pilgrims from the Rochester diocese. Strangers for the most part at the beginning, a sense of familiarity quickly permeated the gathering. We see this in Chaucer.

After Assisi and Mass at the tomb of St. Francis, we arrived in Rome, the mecca of our journey to enter St. Peter's through the Holy Door, praying together for the Holy Father's intentions.

Our bus was delayed in Sorrento (luggage problems) so we arrived tardy for the general audience in St. Peter's Piazza on Wednesday, Sept. 14. The Holy Father began to speak at 10 a.m. Just as our pilgrimage entered the piazza through the Porta Angelica to the right of Bernini's great colonnade providentially the Holy Father welcomed "The Rochester Diocesan Pilgrimage" under the leadership of Bishop Matthew Clark. As the Holy Father said "Rochester," we all began to cheer loudly and he waved graciously in our direction. We had not been seated so were making our way Indian-file to our places. He said "Rochester", then the cheering, then he added "New York" which sounded like a different pilgrimage.

The Holy Father spoke clearly with a firm voice and a pronounced guttural accent. He was strong enough to stand the oppressive noon-day sun for two hours-greeting all comers with warm words in many languages. Most of the pilgrims had covered their heads with newspapers.

Bishop Clark joined the Rochester pilgrims, no easy effort as he was seated at the foot of the papal platform and had to wrestle his way through the huge crowd to meet us. He greeted each pilgrim with his customary warmth.

On Friday (16), Bishop Clark offered Mass in St. Peter's early in the morning. His homily had a special eloquence in the sacred place of Peter's tomb. It was said that strong men wept.

At the same time, two pilgrim priests were at Castelgondolfo, the Holy Father's summer residence. Through the good offices of Archbishop Achille Silvestrini who has been arranging papal audiences for this observer since the days of Pius XII, a note came to our hotel saying "A very good news: The Holy Father asked you and Father Thomas F. Guyder (of Camillus) to concelebrate the Mass tomorrow."

What a privilege! Admitted to the papal palace by a Swiss Guard, up three flights of a wide marble staircase to an area large enough to accommodate 300 people, we could look out the window at Lake Albano below and the Alban Hills beyond. The decor was richly simple: marble floors, soft-toned walls and a frieze with a Renaissance design. In front the Holy Father's throne -- a simple high backed chair which was replaced by another chair as we waited. In the back of the chapel, a life-size marble, rough-hewn, not polished statue of Pope John XXIII making him look rugged. Chairs for the concelebrants were arranged, then after much consultation rearranged. The confusion in the

sanctuary while we were vesting led my companion to say "It appears they are doing this for the first time."

Presently vested and seated in rows flanking the altar we wait anxiously for the Holy Father to appear. He enters accompanied by a Scottish bishop, the leader of a large group of priest-pilgrims. Other concelebrants were 15 graduates of the North American College celebrating their 25th year of ordination.

Mass with the Holy Father is indescribable. He showed from start to finish a spirit of repose that evidenced a deep mood of prayer, occasionally his eyes were tightly shut as he prayed. Twice in the Mass so deep was his concentration in silent prayer he had to be roused from his reverie by a gentle touch of the master of ceremonies. He was in a world apart.

After Mass, the priests were ushered into a room where the Holy Father knelt in prayer on the floor, his face in his hands that rested on a table. On the wall above a startling, stern, life-size painting of Pius XI in full pontifical regalia. The pope prayed for several minutes. Then he began to greet each priest in person, presenting as he did a rosary in a packet. In this situation he appeared to be in an ambivalent way just the opposite of himself at Mass: outgoing, vigorously alert, lively, the picture of health.

As we left, my companion said "I understand Simeon's experience. "Dismiss your servant in peace for I have seen my salvation in the person of the Vicar of Christ."

Father John S. Hayes is pastor of St. Patrick, Aurora, and St. Michael, Union Springs.



FATHER HAYES

## Open House Scheduled For Nurses

The Department of Nursing of Nazareth College will have an open house for registered nurses interested in the college's upper level baccalaureate nursing program from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 11, in the Forum of the Otto A. Shults Community Center.

Diploma and associate degree graduates of area nursing programs are invited. Another evening open house is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 15.

Among other topics, representatives of the Department of Nursing will discuss admission requirements, curriculum design, opportunities for part-time and fulltime study, and managing work, study and family responsibilities.

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## Questionnaire

### 1. What is a Community Mausoleum?

A mausoleum is an above ground building designed for the sole purpose of providing crypts and niches.

### 2. What is a Crypt?

A crypt is an above ground vault constructed of steel reinforced concrete. They are made in different sizes to accommodate from one to four caskets.

### 3. What is a Niche?

A niche is similar to a crypt except it is only large enough to accommodate one or two urns of cremated remains.

### 4. How much more does a Mausoleum Crypt cost than regular land burial?

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