

Depot Personnel, Troops Have Bishop's 'Affection'

Seneca Falls -- Though most of what Bishop Matthew H. Clark had to say at the peace hearing Sunday was done in the context of the question-and-answer format, he also used the occasion to get across some points which obviously concern him.

Perhaps the most important of these was his feeling about the people who work at the Seneca Army Depot. Speaking about "the personnel at the Seneca Army Depot and military personnel in general and all citizens employed by the military," he expressed his "heartfelt . . . respect and affection."

"It is extremely important to regard one another as persons always," the bishop said. "We should not put 'white and black' hats on our heads or on others."

The bishop also revealed that he had a meeting with Col. Wilson, the Seneca Army Depot.

"I went there for no other reason than to put flesh, blood and bone on what could be an abstract statement. I expressed my respect for the military. The colonel is no less interested in peace than I -- history may show him to be a more effective agent than I ever will be."

"My point -- I am very glad we talked and I told him . . . it's not that we have agreement but we do have mutual respect," the bishop said.

Later, he returned to the topic of the soldiers stationed at the depot: "There's not one single thing in God's green earth that those troops can do to change national direction . . . it is very important to remember that those troops should be treated with respect -- I will not support or participate in civil disobedience."

Sensing perhaps that some have imputed disrespect for authority to the peace movement and thus an endorsement of such sentiment by his decisions, Bishop Clark spoke personally:

Referring to his name, Matthew, he said, "And Matthew was my father's name and my grandfather's name. Thus Matthew (of the Bible) means a great deal to me. He was a tax collector, just as was my own father. He worked for the government. Well, the Lord went to Matthew and had supper with sinners. Matthew himself was apparently a sinner but the Lord said, 'Come, follow me.'"

But, in his own words, the most important aspect of Sunday's hearing was to promote reading and study of "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response." Time and again, the bishop asked all in attendance, and by extension all others, to please read the document. --Viglucchi.

Parish Staffers Have Their Say

By John Dash

In what was described as "a very honest and open sharing with the bishop," staff members of several parishes in the region of the Seneca Army Depot met privately with Bishop Matthew H. Clark last week at St. Mary's, Waterloo, to air their concerns about the Oct. 22 peace demonstration at Sampson State Park.

An estimated 25 people took part in the conversation.

"I feel it was a very honest and open sharing with the bishop," Sister Joan Cawley, SSJ, remarked later.

The pastoral assistant at St. Patrick's Church in Seneca Falls said, "It was very, very enlightening to hear (Bishop Clark's) reasons for coming, and the bishop's openness and asking for input on his talk at the Oct. 22 rally."

"There are very mixed feelings -- strong opponents and strong support for his coming. In almost every parish there seems to be that mix of people."

Father Edwin Wedow, pastor of Holy Cross Parish in Ovid, described the sense of his parishioners as "one of concern, mainly because they're sort of confused. So much has happened and so quickly, there really hasn't been time to digest through study and reflection what the bishop's stand is."

Nevertheless, he said, "No one in our area is against the cause of peace and they are dead against the use of nuclear bombs; and the basis for the bishop's stand is very logical and sound

theologically, and more and more of our people are coming to realize that."

"I defend the bishop's right to speak, after listening to him. I feel it's almost his duty to be there because he is the voice of Christ for us in this diocese," Father Wedow said.

"Unfortunately, it has to be under such confusing and emotion-filled times. And this I believe is the crux of what disagreement there is. To the charge that anybody favoring peace or a slowdown or reduction in nuclear arms is unpatriotic is unworthy in my mind of comment. As Al Smith said 'Let's look at the record.'"

Father Paul Tomasso, associate pastor of St. Stephen's Church in Geneva, voiced a similar concern:

"I think the people of our parish are very much for peace and against nuclear war and are very supportive of the movement for nuclear disarmament. But the fact the rally is here in our own back yard is another step and that's a step we're still digesting."

"I thought the bishop was very concerned about peoples' feelings about the

rally," Father Tomasso said, "about the Church's involvement and his own presence at the rally: two levels, the rational and feeling level, and we're all in the process of sorting out the two areas."

"He is extremely supportive and understanding of the different perspectives in a very positive way. And I found him most sympathetic to peoples' struggles, especially supportive with parishioners at large and how it is affecting them."

"I thought the meeting was really good," said Sister Christine Lloyd, pastoral assistant at St. Mary's Church in Auburn.

"People had a chance to share. And the meeting was a chance to bring people together to focus on peace. There was a lot of sharing across the board and there

was a good spirit of camaraderie (among members of parish staffs present)."

Sister Lorraine Julien, SSJ, pastoral assistant at St. Francis De Sales Church in Geneva, also remarked on that spirit.

"I liked the meeting," she said. "It was helpful to me. The bishop talked about how he came to the decision to speak. He made that very clear. He gave it a great deal of prayer and thought."

Both staff and lay reaction to the bishop's decision, she said, "was very accurately represented."

She also applauded the attempts on the part of both parish staffers and parishioners to "honestly grapple with the question."

"I came away feeling it was worth while to hear that; and it was a help to me."



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Pope Once Confessed to Stigmatic

By Father Kenneth J. Doyle

Vatican City (NC) -- As a young priest during the late 1940s Pope John Paul II went to confession to Padre

Pio, the well-known Italian priest who had wounds similar to those inflicted on Jesus Christ at his crucifixion.

Such wounds are referred to as stigmata.

Priests Council

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rally as an opportunity to promote the cause of peace. "Be it resolved that the Priests Council of Rochester endorses the Oct. 22 rally at Sampson State Park."

Father Jankowiak attributed the wording of the resolution to Father James Lawlor, pastor of Old St. Mary's Church and chairman of the council's social concerns committee.

In other council action, the priests welcomed Bishop Clark back to the diocese, and heard from him an account of his recent time in Rome and Israel.

The bishop also led the priests in prayer for and tribute to Cardinal Terence

Cooke, then near death.

"The overall motif of the day was the feast of St. Francis of Assisi," Father Jankowiak reported. It began with a prayer led by Father Benedict Ehmann on Francis' humility and poverty, and included the sung version of Francis' prayer for peace.

The pontiff revealed the information during an audience at the Vatican Oct. 1 with 18,000 pilgrims celebrating the 15th anniversary of the death of the Capuchin Franciscan priest.

The pope added that later he had returned to visit the shrine of the popular priest at San Giovanni Rotondo, a tiny town in southern Italy. In 1974 the pope, who was then cardinal-archbishop of Cracow, Poland, celebrated Mass and prayed at the tomb of Padre Pio, who died on Sept. 23, 1968 at the age of 81.

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