

Huge Clergy Drop Foreseen

Chicago (NC) -- By the year 2000, active diocesan clergy in the United States might decline by as much as 50 percent, and most priests will be in the 46-75 age bracket.

Those figures were included in a study by the Center for Youth Studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

The study was released at

the Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities conference Dec. 1-2 in Chicago. The conference was sponsored by FADICA in association with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Vocations, Serra International and the Lilly Endowment. Theme of the conference was "Laborers for the Vineyard: A Conference on Church Vocations."

"There is no doubt that the topic chosen for this conference relates directly to the mission of the church," said Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago. "In such a situation, we simply cannot sit back and do nothing."

The CUA study came to its conclusions by combining projections for ordinations with projections for resignations. Due to the decline in ordinations, the average diocesan priest will be older, the study concluded.

Father Eugene Hemrick, director of research for the U.S. Catholic Conference, said that in the last 15 years, seminary enrollment at the high school and college level declined 74 percent; religious novitiates, 68 percent; and theologates, 50 percent.

"The research on priestly vocations does not deny that laity and permanent deacons are filling roles once reserved to priests," he said. "Nor does it ignore new forms of church which are changing the image of priesthood."

He said the study starts with the premise that the existence of the ordained priesthood is at stake.

"To grow or not to grow in priestly vocations is the bottom line," he said.

While the number of persons in Catholic seminaries has decreased, Protestant seminaries are seeing an increase in enrollment.

U.S. Quits On Challenges To 2 Rulings

Washington (NC) -- The Justice Department has decided against appealing two court rulings which overturned a federal regulation requiring parental notification when girls under 18 receive prescription contraceptives from federally funded clinics.

Solicitor General Rex E. Lee said Nov. 30 that the Justice Department would not appeal, but he would not comment on specific reasons.

"Among the factors I have to take into account is whether there are conflicts in the circuits (courts of appeal) and whether any lower court has agreed with our position," Lee said.

The regulation, issued in January, was challenged in separate suits by the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association and the Planned Parenthood Federation. The Reagan administration, which made the regulation, lost both cases.

The U.S. Catholic Conference, public policy arm of the U.S. bishops, had supported the regulation and said that without the regulation "teen-agers are completely at the mercy of family planning operatives whose ideology of social engineering and population control blinds them to what is really in the best interests of the teen-agers themselves."

Justice Department officials had concluded the cases were lost causes, and that the Supreme Court was unlikely to review the earlier rulings because there was no conflict among the appeals courts, sources cited by the Washington Post said.

Existence of Ordained Priesthood May Be at Stake: Catholic U. Study

The reason for the Catholic shortage "must be factors peculiar to Catholicism and to the Catholic priesthood as presently structured," said Father Richard P. McBrien of the University of Notre Dame.

Research has shown five unique Catholic factors: celibacy, life-long commitment, a male-only limitation, little or no opportunity for economic advancement and pressure for a lifestyle and manner of dress which sets one apart from society.

William C. McCreedy, program director of the National Opinion Research Center, added a sixth element, "revenge of Catholic motherhood."

"Catholic women, particularly younger women, are quite angry with their church. In some subtle and not-so-subtle ways, they are no longer giving permission (to their sons) to think about vocations," he said.

Also at the conference, Notre Dame Sister Marie Augusta Neal revealed data compiled from a survey of

sisters' congregations which indicated that since 1966, overall membership in women's religious orders is down 60 percent. The number of sisters taking final vows is down 30 percent; initial commitment, 86 percent; novices, 89 percent; and candidates, 83 percent.

Father Hemrick emphasized that more studies are needed, pointing out that much of the data used to compile the CUA report was outdated.

Oblate Father Thomas Singer said the vocation ministry is "almost going through the stages of a dying process. Once we accept that, we can ask the right questions."

Archbishop Pio Laghi, apostolic delegate in the United States, noted that U.S. bishops moved vocations from their list of secondary priorities to primary priority.

"I believe that this action evidences a new awareness of the importance of this subject and the desire to deal concretely with so crucial an issue for today's church," Archbishop Laghi said.

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Black Named Auxiliary in St. Louis

Washington (NC) -- Father James Terry Steib, provincial of the Southern Province of the Divine Word Fathers, and Msgr. Edward J. O'Donnell, vicar general of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, have been named auxiliary bishops of St. Louis.

Pope John Paul II made the appointments, which were announced Dec. 6 by Archbishop Pio Laghi, apostolic delegate in the United States.

The new auxiliaries will assist Archbishop John L. May of St. Louis. There are two other auxiliary bishops in the Sec, Bishops Charles R. Koester and George J. Gattwald.

Bishop-designate Steib, 43, is former executive director of the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus. He was appointed titular bishop of Fallaba.

Bishop-designate O'Donnell, 52, is a former editor of the St. Louis Review.

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EXHIBIT - "Face to Face: Encounters With Identity," featuring 350 of the best objects from the Rochester Museum & Science Center's anthropology collection, opening Saturday, Dec. 17. Hours for viewing will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 1-5 p.m. on Sunday. Above is a Seneca Iroquois antler comb from Ontario County known as The Younger Brothers Comb.

CLASSIC FILMS - "My Darling Clementine", starring Henry Fonda, Walter Brennan, and Victor Mature, 2 and 8 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 20, Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum. Free with general museum admission.

WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY - And Calligraphy classes beginning Jan. 3 at The Community Darkroom at the Genesee Co-op, 713 Monroe Avenue. Registrations taken Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., and Fridays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Call 271-5920 for free catalog and more information.

GALLERY NOTES - Spotlight tour by docent Lillian Price on Nativity scenes in the Gallery's collections., 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 18. Free to members; free to non-members with gallery admission: Exhibition of "The Reiff Collection of Indian Miniature Paintings" through Jan. 22 in the Auditorium Promenade: Holiday Crafts and Fine Jewelry Show and Sale continues through Saturday, Dec. 24, in The Gallery Store. All events at Rochester Art Gallery.

TRAVELOGUE - "The Isles of Aloha" narrated by filmmaker Walt Chappelle, 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 18, Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum and Science Center. Tickets are \$5, \$4.50 for museum members.

RPO - presents "Holiday & Bluegrass Fun!" 8:30



p.m., Friday and Saturday, Dec. 16 and 17, Dome Arena, Monroe County Fairgrounds.
COLLEGIUM MUSICUM - Paul O'Dette, director, 8 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15, Kilbourn Hall, free.
EASTMAN SCHOOL - Symphony Orchestra, conducted by David Efron and featuring the music of Gluck, Mendelssohn, Wagner, Barber and Beethoven, 8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16 at Eastman Theatre, free.
HOLIDAY FILMS - For children featuring "Dumbo", 2 p.m., Monday, Dec. 26; "The Magic of Lassie", 2 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 28; "Babes In Toyland", 2 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 29; "Once Upon a Time", 2 p.m., Friday, Dec. 30, Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum and Science Center. Free.
CHILDREN'S THEATER - Presents "Androcles and the Lion," by the TIC/TOC Players, 7:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 16, 23, 30 and 2 p.m., on Saturday, Dec. 17, Sunday, Dec. 18, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 26-29, main auditorium, Nazareth Arts Center. Tickets are \$4. For more information call 586-2420.

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