

Holy Years of Yore in the Diocese

By Father Robert F. McNamara

The diocese of Rochester, like all dioceses throughout the world, is now observing the Holy Year of Redemption — a papal jubilee in honor of Christ's saving death 1,500 years ago. I have been looking into the celebration of these jubilees in times past, in the United States and especially in the diocese of Rochester. Here are some of the interesting facts I have dug up.

Regular holy years, as we know, are proclaimed by popes every 25 years. These are meant to induce pilgrims to come to Rome to seek forgiveness of sins. But obviously not everybody can travel to Rome, so the popes customarily extend the benefits of the jubilee for at least another year to the faithful throughout the world.

The extension usually is declared in the year following the actual holy year, but it can be done even later. That is what Pope Pius VI did in 1784 regarding our new American republic. When he named Father John Carroll as superior of the American Missions that year, he authorized this future first bishop of Baltimore to announce to American Catholics the jubilee of 1775. Because of the American

Revolution, this had not been done earlier. So John Carroll's first official act as head of the American Church was to proclaim the holy year of repentance to the 25,000 Catholics, of this infant nation. Presumably they qualified for its benefits by making visits to one of the few Catholic chapels and churches then in existence.

The 19th century was not a happy one for papal jubilees. Celebrations of the holy year had to be omitted in 1800, 1850, and 1875, because all three were years of political disturbance.

By 1900, the popes, deprived of their freedom by Italy's seizure of the Papal States, were voluntary "prisoners of the Vatican." Nevertheless, Pope Leo XIII was determined not to forego the observance of the scheduled jubilee in a way to involve the whole world.

Bishop McQuaid of Rochester, having heard from the pope, announced to the people of the Rochester diocese that permission had been granted to hail the holy year of 1900 and the opening of a new century with a Mass in each parish at 11 p.m. or midnight on Dec. 31, 1899. People might also receive Communion at these Masses, if they had abstained from food and drink — even water — after 8 p.m. This was a unique privilege in those times.

The bishop outlined the service at these Masses. It was to be preceded by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and followed by consecration of the parish to the Sacred Heart of Jesus (an intercession for the spiritual renewal of its people during the jubilee year). Following that would be the Miserere (Psalm 51), the rosary, and a Te Deum of Thanksgiving. To ensure order (and to exclude undesirable), the bishop said that admission should be by (free) ticket only. The turnout everywhere must have been very great indeed.

Bishop McQuaid had urged all who could travel as pilgrims to Rome in 1900. But in 1901 the Holy Father extended the jubilee to the whole world. The bishop announced this in a pastoral letter of April 23, 1901. He himself had made a Roman pilgrimage in 1900. Now he hoped his diocese would find the extended holy year an occasion of grace for all.



In the Holy Year of Redemption 1983-84, the "pilgrimage" aspect is reduced in the dioceses to a single visit to a pilgrimage church. Back in 1901, the rules were much more exacting. Catholics of the Rochester diocese had to make 15 visits to churches selected by the bishop. In Rochester the churches were the Cathedral; one's own parish church; and any two of the following churches (two German, one "Irish"): St. Joseph's, St. Mary's, and Ss. Peter and Paul. In towns which had only one church, the visits were to be made to that church. He encouraged groups from each parish to form walking processions to the pilgrimage churches. Once arrived at the church, the pilgrims would pray for the needs of the Church and for the special intentions of the pope. A sincere confession and Communion were (as always) the final requisites for gaining the great jubilee indulgence.

How did Rochester Catholics respond in 1901? One illustration will suffice. On Sunday afternoon, May 17, 1901, 3,500 parishioners gathered in Rochester's cathedral, St. Patrick's. After initial hymns and prayers they set out, led by the parish clergy, in a procession to Ss. Peter and Paul; then to St. Mary's; and finally to St. Joseph's on Franklin Street! This procedure was scheduled to be repeated on the two following Sundays. There was also to be a special pilgrimage walk for the 1,100 children of St. Patrick's parochial school. Other parishes in Rochester and elsewhere were planning equally demanding jubilee marches.

Theoretically, the lessened requirements of the present Holy Year of Redemption should induce still larger crowds to make pilgrimages of pardon. On the other hand, maybe stricter rules would prove more of a challenge, as they did in 1900.

Of course, the important thing is the spirit of the pilgrims: sorrow for sin and gratitude to Jesus for saving us from it.

Area St. John Knights Keep Rosary Tradition

Continuing a custom started many years ago, commanderies of the Rochester Regiment, Knights of St. John, will respond each month to the recitation of the Rosary for Peace, a nightly broadcast from the

Father Shamon Will Lead Celebration

Geneva — Father Albert Shamon, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Waterloo, will be the guest homilist at a special Holy Year celebration 7-8 p.m., Monday, Jan. 16 at St. Stephen's Church.

The church has been designated as one of the diocesan Holy Year sites of pilgrimage.

The special celebration will be a Holy Hour consisting of Marian devotions, homily, scriptural rosary and benediction.

Rosary Chapel, 401 Orange St.

Annunciation Parish's Commandery 308 will respond Jan. 16; St. Boniface, Commandery 9, Feb. 20; St. Michael, Commandery 43, March 19; Mother of Sorrows, Commandery 39, April 16; Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Commandery 40, May 21; Holy Rosary, Commandery 106, June 18.

Have you discovered Watson Homestead

Beautiful Christian conference center serving adults, youth, and families welcomes all church and non profit groups. Accommodates 25 to 280 in year round, well-appointed facilities.

Chapel and heated indoor pool. Near Corning Glass Works and all Finger Lakes attractions. Special summer rates for week-long programs. Write Watson Homestead, R.S. Box 168, Dry Run Road, Painted Post, New York 14870 (607) 962-0541



WE READ YOUR MAIL

THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

Do you read ours? Our mail, that is. If so, you'll receive within the next few days our invitation to help the Holy Father help the helpless in 18 emerging countries. We are asking our friends to renew their membership (and to enroll their families and friends) in this Association. Look for the invitation. We hope you'll write promptly to say Yes. Since we are the Holy Father's official mission-aid in the Near and Middle East and Southern India, we are sending you his photograph with a list of the benefits he grants to members. In addition your membership offering helps Pope John Paul II himself in one of his most ambitious and heartfelt works. The relief of hunger, disease, ignorance and poverty among the tragic population groups in the Near East. Just in case our invitation does not reach you, the membership offering for one year is only \$5 per person, \$10 for a family. The offering for perpetual membership is \$25 per person, \$100 for a family.

WELCOME TO NEW FRIENDS AND OLD

LIVING CHRIST'S PASSION WITH JOHN PAUL II

Because Catholic Near East is our Holy Father's own Mission Aid, we're pleased to offer you an exclusive 4 1/2" x 6-7/8", 40 page booklet WAY OF THE CROSS — MEDITATIONS OF JOHN PAUL II. It's beautifully illustrated in full color in cloisonne style plus photos of scenes along the Via Dolorosa as they are today. Individual copies \$1. Bulk quantities of 100 or more available at cost. Ideal for parishes, schools, societies! Please write for prices.

Wonder what dollars do in our 18 countries? Here are some suggestions:

BUILD A PARISH

\$10,000 helps build a complete parish plant (church, school, convent, rectory) in India this year. Name it for your favorite saint, in memory of your loved ones.

FUTURE PRIESTS AND SISTERS

\$1080 (\$15 a month for six years) will train a poor boy for the priesthood overseas. \$300 (\$12.50 a month for two years) will train a native Sister. They will write to you.

"USE WHERE NEEDED"

Your Stringless Gift (\$1,000, \$500, \$75, \$50, \$10, \$5) equips the Holy Father for mission emergencies.

Dear Monsignor Nolan: ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND \$ RJ

FOR: _____

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Please return coupon with your offering.

THE CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOCIATION



NEAR EAST MISSIONS

MSGR. JOHN G. NOLAN, National Secretary
Write: CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOC.
1011 First Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10022
Telephone: 212/826-1480

Youth

Continued from Page 1

to the experience of a day to share with our bishop and the young people of the diocese. We are very fortunate to have a bishop who takes such a personal interest in our youths and their future."

Fox added, "It affords all the youths of the diocese an opportunity to follow up on their experience of Confirmation by gathering with the bishop and other interested adults to explore the meaning of Church today."

Phoenix Players Take Naz Stage

The Phoenix Players of Hobart and William Smith Colleges will stage "The Journey of the Fifth Horse," 8 p.m., Friday, Jan. 20 at the Nazareth College Arts Center. The performance is sponsored by the Nazareth Theater Arts Program.

The comedy-drama by Robert Ribman is directed by Henry I. Schvey, and is based on Ivan Turgenev's story, "Diary of a Superfluous Man."

Tickets at \$3.50 for adults and \$2.50 for students are available at the door.



Bishop Clark meets in his office with, from left, Father Thomas Valenti, diocesan director of vocations; students Michael Clifford, Lee Allen and Wanda Sims; Jacquelyn Dobson, youth minister from the Office of Black Ministries; and Patrick Fox, diocesan director of youth ministry.

Parents Seminars Scheduled

Two "Seminars for Parents of Teens" have been scheduled this month in the area from 8:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. — on Saturday, Jan. 14 at Mercy High School and Saturday, Jan. 28 at St. Mary's of the Lake parish, Ontario.

The seminars are designed to improve relationships and

communication skills between parents and family members, particularly adolescents age 12-21.

Topics such as "Responsibility and Maturity," "Discipline," "Peer Pressure," "Values," and "Keys to Communication" will be discussed.

The seminars are endorsed

by the Office of Family Life, and the registration fee is \$20 per family.

To register, call the Mercy High School office at 288-7120; or Maxine McDonald for the St. Mary's of the Lake seminar at 315/524-8891. For additional information, call Judy Platten at 223-3639.