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Bishop Matthew H. Clark at the final Mass at Oxolotan on Sunday, Jan. 29. Beside him is Deacon Justino Hernandez. Behind them are Father Neil Miller and Bishop Rafael Garcia. The processional cross and candle holders were presented by Bishop Clark to the people there in the name of the Rochester diocese.

Our Mexican Mission: Some Reflections

By Lourdes Perez-Albuerne

"I present this crucifix to you as a representative of your community to be a symbol of the unity which we share in Christ between the people of Rochester and the people of your community." These or similar words were used by Bishop Matthew H. Clark at Oxolotan and two other "rancherias" (small rural communities) which he visited last week. As I translated these words for him in Spanish they made reality what was written as a prologue to the Tabasco Mission Proposal. "The bonds that exist between missionaries, the community that sends them and the community that receives them are real."

Who are our four missionaries that serve in our name? Three of them are young lay persons -- Mark Kavanaugh from St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Yolanda Ramos from St. Francis Assisi Parish and Valerie Smith from the Newman Community at the University of Rochester. The fourth member of the team is Father Neil Miller, who was director of the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry until last July. The four missionaries work as a team and try to live as a Christian community. In both areas they are pioneers for our diocese. We have missionaries in Brazil, Chile and Bolivia, but they are either women religious or priests, so our team is a first in the kind of approach to their ministry and style of living.

What enables them to serve? Funds are provided through the generous contributions of our diocesan people to the

Bishop Clark Report, Page 3

Diocesan Mission Collection in May. They are also supported by individuals who know of their work and by parishes who are contacted and respond to their request for simple things such as crayons, pencils, glue, etc. But more important, they are supported by the prayers offered in our diocese for them and their work and the letters they receive from home.

Who do they serve and how do they serve them? Our missionaries were assigned by Bishop Rafael Garcia of Tabasco to serve a rural town named Oxolotan and eight different "rancherias." Inhabitants of these communities are simple peasants, subsistence farmers who are mostly of Indian descent. Their work up to now has consisted in getting to know the people and understand their problems and needs and to continue working with some of the groups and programs already existing. During these last three months they have visited houses, celebrated liturgy and the sacraments in all the communities they serve and work with the different catechist in these communities.

How are they doing? When they started their work last October, I was privileged to spend three weeks with them helping them settle down. Now three months later, I am

amazed at all that has been accomplished in so little time. Our missionaries know by name most of the people of Oxolotan including children of which there is a large number (45 percent of the population of Tabasco is under age 15.) Of the eight rancherias they serve, if they do not know the name of a person, they know which community they belong to. More amazing is to watch while the community of Oxolotan (where up to now most of their work has been carried out) celebrates liturgy. There is greater community participation in the liturgy. There is a new choir of young people who provide the music, the prayer of the faithful and prepared and said by the young people every day, there is an offertory procession on Sundays and special liturgies. Work with the catechist not only in Oxolotan but also with the other communities is now being strengthened and there are two new youth groups in their initial stages, one in Oxolotan and one in Cuitlahuac.

And these are the tangible effects. Only the Lord can know the results of the many seeds they have planted. They respond to problems in the community and bring to bear Gospel values, they respond to personal problems, they care for the sick, the widowed, the infirm. In truth their work is a ministry of love which they do in our name with great generosity and commitment.

How can we further support them? I could suggest several practical ways. They definitely need our prayers, so maybe

Continued on Page 4

Father Cavanaugh, Sodus Pastor, Dies

Funeral rites will be celebrated today, Feb. 8, and tomorrow for Father John Francis Cavanaugh, pastor of the Church of the Epiphany in Sodus who died Sunday, Feb. 5, 1984.

The son of James F. and Cornelia I. Houck Cavanaugh was born in 1923 and attended Blessed Sacrament School.

He studied at St. Andrew's

Elementary School News

The Courier-Journal this issue introduces "Expressly Elementary," a new monthly page devoted to news of our elementary schools. It may be found on Page 7.

and St. Bernard's seminaries and took a master of arts degree from Cornell University.

Father Cavanaugh was ordained June 13, 1947 in his home parish church by Bishop James E. Kearney.

He returned to St. Andrew's the following year, and taught English.

From 1950-1965 he taught college level courses there; and in 1965 was named to the faculty of St. Bernard's Seminary. During the entire period he also was a familiar figure at St. John the Evangelist Church on Humboldt Street, where he celebrated daily Mass and assisted with weekend work.

Three years later he was named pastor of the Church of the Epiphany in Sodus,



FATHER CAVANAUGH

and the Chapel of St. Rose of Lima in Sodus Point.

Father Cavanaugh is survived by his sister-in-law, Mrs. Mary Cavanaugh of Philadelphia; four nieces and nephews, Thomas and William Cavanaugh, Jr., Cathleen Anderberg and Suzanne Cavanaugh.

Diocese Announces New Directions for Becket Hall

By John Dash

The diocese announced yesterday that Becket Hall will move its location from the campus of St. John Fisher College and will change its focus from a house of studies for seminary-bound collegians to a "center of discernment" open to juniors and seniors in college and to men beyond college age considering the call to the priesthood.

The new programs are still being developed, said Fathers James Schwartz, director of Becket Hall, and Father Thomas Valenti, director of the diocesan Vocations Office.

The announcement yesterday chiefly concerned the move from the Fisher campus



Fathers Schwartz and Valenti.

to the former convent at St. Boniface Church.

There are nine men, two of them from the Diocese of

Albany, in residence at Becket Hall. The diocese leases the building from St.

Continued on Page 4