

'Racism Still Festers in Church'

Black Bishops' First Pastoral Cites Obstacle to Evangelization

By NC News Service

The black community in the U.S. Catholic Church has come of age but racism remains the major obstacle to evangelization, said the 10 black Catholic bishops of the United States in their first pastoral letter.

The pastoral was dated Sept. 9 and released several days later.

Titled, "What We Have Seen and Heard," it said racism "still festers within our church as within our society. This stain of racism... is a scandal to many, but for us it must be the opportunity to work for the church's renewal as part of our task of evangelization."

Sept. 9 is the feast of St. Peter Claver, a 17th-century Spanish Jesuit missionary to South American black slaves. Auxiliary Bishop James P. Lyke of Cleveland coordinated the writing and publishing of the pastoral.

The black bishops said the time has come to proclaim the richness of the heritage of American black Catholics and to accept the challenge to "share the gift of our blackness with the church in the United States."

But, they said, the contribution of blacks and other minorities is hindered by the fact that they still remain absent from many aspects of Catholic life and are only meagerly represented on the decision-making level.

The demand of black Catholics for recognition and leadership roles in the task of evangelization is not a call for separatism but "a pledge of our commitment to the church and to share in her witnessing to the love of Christ," the black bishops said.

The bishops linked evangelization to social justice. "Our own history has taught us that preaching to the poor and to those who suffer injustice without concern for their plight and the systemic cause of their plight is to trivialize the Gospel and mock the cross. To preach to the powerful without denouncing oppression is to promise Easter without Calvary, forgiveness without conversion and healing without cleansing the wound."

Numerous opportunities for evangelization exist within the black community, according to the bishops. They called attention to the need to encourage vocations, saying the duty

lies especially with black priests and Religious who have contact with youth to serve as role models.

They urged recruitment of permanent deacons. "Many permanent deacons continue to pursue their occupation in the workaday world and in family life. This gives them access to opportunities for evangelization in places where a priest or Religious might find entry difficult. This is particularly true for black deacons in the black community where many of the clergy are not black," the bishops stated.

The work of evangelization is also the responsibility of the laity, the black bishops said. The role of the laity must be better understood and "that which is understood in theory must lead to practical plans for action and even structural change."

The Catholic school has been, and remains, one of the chief vehicles of evangelization within the black community, the bishops said in the pastoral, but inner-city schools continue to disappear and black vocational recruitment lacks sufficient support.

The bishops called for programs for youth because "black youth are especially vulnerable in our modern society. Today's youth in the black community undergo many pressures. Especially in our urban areas -- where disillusionment and despair, desires and drugs, passion and poverty entrap the young -- adults and mature youths dedicated to Christ are needed to counsel, to inspire and to motivate those whom Jesus loved and placed first in his kingdom."

The black family is assailed on all sides, the bishops said. They called abortion another form of subjugation and urged more day care centers, jobs, good schools "and all else that a just society should offer its people."

Besides Bishop Lyke, others signing the pastoral were Bishop Joseph L. Howze of Biloxi, Miss.; Auxiliary Bishops Harold R. Perry of New Orleans; Eugene A. Marino of Washington; Joseph A. Francis of Newark, N.J.; Emerson J. Moore of New York; Moses B. Anderson of Detroit; Wilton D. Gregory of Chicago; J. Terry Steib of St. Louis; and John H. Ricard of Baltimore.

Boycott Officially Over

Washington (NC) -- A seven-year boycott of Nestle Co. ended Oct. 4 after monitoring of the corporation by former opponents found Nestle to be "the most responsible company" in distributing baby formula worldwide.

Leaders of the boycott said they will turn their efforts to other companies they say violate the World Health Organization's International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes.

"We found that Nestle is not perfect," Douglas Johnson, national chairperson of the Infant Formula Action Coalition, said at an Oct. 4 press conference, "but we also found that Nestle is not the same company it was seven years ago when the boycott began; it is not even the same company it was nine months ago."

Patricia Young, chair of the International Nestle Boycott Committee, said the decision to end the boycott "marks the beginning of a new stage of cooperation

with the company to resolve some remaining differences and to work together on a common agenda for future action."

The boycott began in 1977 to protest Nestle's promotion practices in underdeveloped countries where, critics charged, infants were threatened by formula because of unsafe water supplies and a lack of education among mothers.

In January, the corporation and the International Nestle Boycott Committee signed a joint agreement after Nestle committed itself "to safeguard the children of the Third World from hazards related to the inappropriate marketing of infant formula." The agreement also suspended the boycott with the understanding that INBC would monitor the company's progress and make a final decision in the fall.

Since then Nestle has developed hazard warnings on labels, agreed to include in its educational materials results of tests on breastfeeding and

formula feeding, stopped personal gifts to health professionals and worked on developing a criteria for donations of formula to hospitals.

Nestle's executive vice president, Carl Angst, said at the Oct. 4 press conference, "Looking back at the work done over these last few years and the results achieved, I am convinced that we have accomplished what we set out to do."

He added that the corporation will continue its efforts by working with the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the company-formed Nestle Infant Formula Audit Commission, governments and interest groups.

Deadline

The deadline for submitting news to the Courier-Journal is noon on Thursday preceding Wednesday publication. Items must be written and sent to 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14610.



Catholic Schools Marathon

Bishop Matthew H. Clark, left, holds one of the younger participants in the annual Catholic Schools Marathon on Saturday, Oct. 6 in Highland Park. Right, the Bishop Kearney Marching Kings were among the bands that entertained the crowd.

DIOCESAN HIGH SCHOOLS

Notre Dame

Elmira -- Notre Dame High School has announced that three seniors have been honored as "Commended Students" for 1985 in the National Merit Scholarship program.

According to a press release from the school, Amy Cloke, Tim Frisk and Mark Stephens placed in the top five percent of over one million participants in the program. They will receive Letters of Commendation "in honor of outstanding promise for future academic success."

Homecoming will be Friday, Oct. 19, with a football game against Susquehanna Valley. A reception will follow in the school cafeteria for all parents, friends and alumni of Elmira Catholic High School and Notre Dame.

Cardinal Mooney

Brother Francis Ellis, school principal, announced that Joseph Chiapperi has been designated a semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

Chiapperi, a senior, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Chiapperi of Greece.

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Mercy

The Mercy Alumnae Association has donated \$12,600 to the school. The money is primarily funds raised in the 1983-84 annual Alumnae Fund Drive.

The donation is being used to purchase an alumnae-development computer system, as well as to help pay for other projects.

The Alumnae Association raised over \$22,000 the past school year and also funds an alumnae-daughter scholarship and the alumnae newsletter.

A new floating wood floor will be installed in the Mercy High School gymnasium later this month. According to a press release from the school, the floor and other cosmetic changes will cost approximately \$30,000.

"The decision," said Sister Judith Heberle, principal, "is the result of many months of evaluating the conditions and potential health hazards of the old cement floor."

The gym has had little renovation since it was constructed in 1942.

Aquinas

The Science Department at Aquinas Institute has re-

cently received new equipment from the state.

Included is a helium laser for the Physics Department which can be used to show the principle of refraction and interference of light. The Chemistry Department received an analytical balance with a digital readout, making it more accurate in the recording of massed objects. The Biology Department obtained a photo spectrometer.

All will be on display at the school's Open House on Tuesday, Oct. 23.

Nazareth

The annual Open House is scheduled from 2-4 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 28. A general information assembly will take place at 2:30 p.m. in the school auditorium.

The afternoon will consist of tours and demonstrations by teachers and students of the various departments. The school's band and choral groups will also perform.

McQuaid

The McQuaid Drama Club will present the Fall play, "Witness for the Prosecution," 8 p.m., Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Oct. 25-27, at the Mercy High School auditorium.

COORDINATOR, ISSUES AND POLITICAL MINISTRY

The Rochester Catholic Diocese is looking for an individual to work in the Social Ministry Division. Individual will assist in the selection and planning strategy for Political issues pertaining to Social Ministry needs in the 12 counties of the Diocese of Rochester. Responsibilities will include coordinating lobbying efforts, training parish personnel on the political process, research/analysis on related issues. Requirements: Bachelors Degree, 2 years experience in Church-based Social Ministry, familiarity with Catholic social teachings, and parish experience.