

COURIER-JOURNAL

Newspaper of the Diocese of Rochester

Wednesday, March 13, 1985

16 Pages 35 Cents

Sexism, Not Women, Urged for Pastoral

By Jerry Filteau

Washington (NC) — The U.S. bishops' committee writing a pastoral letter on women should write it on sexism instead, leaders of several Catholic women's groups told the committee March 4 and 5.

Taking a different tack, Dolores Leckey, director of the bishops' Secretariat for the Laity, said that the bishops should write a letter on men as well as on women.

The bishops received a wide range of suggestions for the basic direction of their proposed letter during the two-day consultation at the Washington Plaza Hotel. These included:

- Delay the pastoral, said representatives of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. They argued that a good teaching document on women cannot be written by the 1988 deadline the bishops have set or under the consultation procedures they have established.

- Rather than focusing on women as its topic, the pastoral should focus on all the "isms," especially racism and sexism, that dehumanize people, said representatives of the National Black Sisters Conference.

- Sexism should be the topic, because pastorals should be written on problems, not on the victims, said Dominican Sister

Marjorie Tuite, representing the National Assembly of Religious Women. Also urging a pastoral on sexism rather than on women was Las Hermanas, a national organization of Hispanic women in ministry.

- A representative of the National Coalition of American Nuns said NCAN made no recommendation on that general issue because about half the members of NCAN thought no pastoral should be written and the other half thought it should be on sexism, not on women.

- Representatives of the Women's Ordination Conference also urged the bishops to change the topic of the pastoral to sexism. The last witnesses to testify at the hearing, the WOC representatives said afterward that they thought the bishops would accept that suggestion.

The hearings were closed to the public, but participants spoke to reporters outside the meeting room.

Mrs. Leckey said she thought suggestions for major changes in the direction of the women's pastoral could help the committee, even if none of them was adopted as such.

"The suggestions they get can help them to move the parameters of their thinking, to change the perspectives" from which they approach the topic, she said.

From sisters' organizations the bishops heard sharp objections to patriarchal structures and attitudes in both church and society.

From organizations of lay women they heard concerns directed more at problems of broken family life and the need for more pastoral support for women in difficult circumstances. As a whole, the representatives of national lay women's groups supported the basic idea of a pastoral by the U.S. bishops on women.

In the two days of hearings the five-bishop committee, headed by Bishop Joseph L. Imesch of Joliet, Ill., and including Bishop Matthew H. Clark of Rochester, heard testimony from:

- Three national organizations of sisters: the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, the National Black Sisters Conference and the National Coalition of American Nuns.

- Three national organizations of Catholic laywomen: the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, the National Council of Catholic Women and the Daughters of Isabella.

- Three groups with a mixture of lay women and women Religious in their membership: the National Assembly of

Continued on Page 4



Symposium Attracts Teachers

The Bureau of Jewish Education, in conjunction with the Commission on Interfaith Cooperation, sponsored a symposium for high school social studies teachers on the Jewish Holocaust last Thursday and Friday, at Jewish Community Federation offices, 441 East Ave. Keynote speaker was Dr. Terrence DesPres, professor of English at Colgate University and authority on the Holocaust. Among the presenters during the two-day workshop was Dr. Joseph Kelly, top, Nazareth College professor, Department of Religious Study; and Father Joseph Brennan, center, of the Commission on Interfaith Cooperation and St. Bernard's Institute.



100 Attend Conference



More than 100 eighth graders from city Catholic schools attended the Student Conference on Racial Equality (S.C.O.R.E.), Tuesday, March 5 at St. Augustine's School. One of several keynote speakers was Dr. James H. Evans Jr., left, Martin Luther King Jr. memorial professor at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. Other speakers included Melissa Mercendetti, spokesperson for Native American Rights, and William A. Johnson, president of the Urban League of Rochester. The program was created by the St. Augustine's eighth grade under the direction of Robert Graham.

Treatment by Vatican Upsets Carmelite Leader

By Sister Mary Ann Walsh
Rome (NC) — The head of the world's Discalced Carmelites in a letter to Pope John Paul II has expressed "disgust" at the "very hard tone and the polemical content" of a Vatican letter announcing a decision to write a new constitution based on a 16th-century rule.

Spanish Father Felipe Sainz de Baranda wrote to the pope Oct. 24 after he had received an Oct. 15 letter signed by the Vatican secretary of state announcing the decision. The pope had ordered the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes to draw up constitutions for the more than 800 cloistered Carmelite convents throughout the world.

"Permit me, Your Holiness, to express to you my disgust for the very hard tone and the polemical content of

the letter of the secretariat of state," Father Sainz de Baranda wrote.

Father Sainz de Baranda also said that the Vatican document had taken sides with a small number within

the order who opposed post-Vatican II efforts.

Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Vatican secretary of state, wrote the letter as a response to a dispute

Continued on Page 4



CROSSROADS III

Weekly Schedule.....16
Signs of Hope.....16
Parish Programs.....16