

Bishop Corrada del Rio welcomed by Rochester's Hispanic community

By Teresa A. Parsons

The son of a Puerto Rican farmer, Bishop Alvaro Corrada del Rio, S.J., learned about breaking ground as a child. But since his ordination last August as the first Puerto Rican bishop in the United States, Bishop Corrada del Rio has found a new meaning in those words.

"It's a hard time, but a time of dreams," he said of his transition from priest to bishop and from individual to a symbol of many other people's hopes.

"Others have prepared the ground. After breaking the ground and sowing the seed, you wait for the growth," he added. "Sometimes you may not see the harvest — others may do that."

The bishop visited Rochester last Friday to mark several celebrations with Mass and a reception at St. Francis Xavier/Holy Redeemer Church. It was the first opportunity for many in the Diocese of Rochester to congratulate him on his ordination and appointment as auxiliary of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. Bishop Corrada del Rio's presence was also one of the highlights of Santa Mision, two weeks of evangelization and renewal within the Hispanic community in Rochester. On a more sorrowful note, the Mass commemorated the lives lost in recent flooding in Puerto Rico.

Bishop Corrada del Rio's new ministry as vicar general extends over 44 parishes in Montgomery County, encompassing some of the richest and poorest sections of the Washington metropolitan area. On any given day, his work may take him from Chevy Chase, a wealthy and exclusive Maryland suburb, to Adams Morgan, a very poor area where many Salvadoran refugees have congregated.

"The most wonderful experience is being with people in the parishes," he said. "I've done a confirmation and I've ordained a deacon so far, and those have been wonderful experiences."

The experience most striking to him so far was his ordination. "I came into the Basilica (at the National Shrine in Washington) and saw the 4-5,000 people there from Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Newark — quite a large group from Rochester," he recalled. "I never realized I had worked with so many people — so many were there."

When he was named to his new position, the bishop said, his first reactions were surprise and a feeling of unworthiness. "I thought that I shouldn't be the one so honored," he said. "Then I thought I could keep doing the work of a priest ... The great difference in being a bishop is that it takes longer to see the same group twice."

On a more serious note, he said that as a breaker of new ground, he is very conscious

of being a spokesman for the Church, with the eyes of Hispanic people around the country upon him. As a priest, he recalled, it was much easier to make decisions and to speak freely.

One of the most stressful requirements of the bishop's new position is learning to drive. "I never had to drive in New York City," he said regretfully. "Now I'm always getting lost."

Bishop Corrada del Rio's return to Rochester was particularly momentous for the permanent deacons in the Hispanic community. For two years, the bishop was their instructor, traveling from New York City to Rochester once a month.

"They taught me more than I taught them," he said of the candidates. "We Jesuits love to teach ... Our method is such that before long the teacher becomes the student and the student becomes the teacher."

Bishop Corrada del Rio also emphasized the importance of the deacons' ministry in the Hispanic and Puerto Rican communities. "The Puerto Rican community needs more men and women who give themselves totally to the community — we have always suffered a lack of that," the bishop said. "There are many who want to take, but very few who are willing to give."

"To be a permanent deacon is as much a vocation as to be a priest," he added. "The Hispanic and Puerto Rican communities have many men called to that vocation. They could have better jobs, perhaps make more money, but they sacrifice their time to the Church and to the needs of people. And the wives of the deacons are as self-sacrificing as the deacons. They do answer to a call, which is a gift from God."

St. Francis Xavier/Holy Redeemer Church was nearly full for the bishop's Mass Friday evening. The altar was also crowded with concelebrants from around the diocese and beyond, including Father Jack Podsiadlo, visiting from New York City. Choirs from several churches combined to provide music.

Bishop Corrada delivered a homily on divine providence and ranged in mood from jovial to fiery. "God guides our destiny," he reminded the congregation. Believing in His providence, we have nothing to fear from the arms race or war or sickness, he said.

Afterward in the church hall, the bishop was honored for his local contributions by a number of groups and organizations, including the Rochester City Council; Father John Mulligan of the diocesan Division of Urban Services; and his former students, the deacons.

"I miss Rochester," Bishop Corrada del Rio said. "Not the weather, but the great kindness of the people."

Governor authorizes shelter for unwed mothers

By Mike Brown

Newark, N.J. (NC) — Gov. Thomas Kean signed a bill Nov. 13 which allows private citizens to open their houses and administer charitable services to those seeking food and shelter. Mother Teresa of Calcutta had urged him to sign the bill.

The law is seen as a victory for Kathy DiFiore of Ramsey, N.J., and her house of unwed mothers, which under previous legislation had been fined \$10,000 for operating an unlicensed boarding house.

DiFiore (a Rochester native profiled in the Courier-Journal on July 31) gave credit to Mother Teresa, recent publicity in the media

Thanksgiving Service

St. Ignatius Church in Hornell will celebrate a community ecumenical Thanksgiving service on Sunday, Nov. 24, at 7 p.m.

Father Elmer Schmidt of St. Ann's will be the homilist. Choirs from St. Paul's, Spencer Methodist and First Presbyterian Church as well as St. Ann's folk group will provide music. Scripture readings will be accompanied by slides illustrating St. Paul's Letters to the Colossians.

Participants are asked to bring bread for blessing. For more information, call (607)324-5811.

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Along the Way

Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Sunday evening.

It's good to be home again after a long session in Washington with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

To be with such genuinely good colleagues and with them to consider items as diverse as Catholic social teaching, religious life, black Catholics, campus ministry and our liturgical practices make such weeks rewarding ones.

Notwithstanding all of that, I am deeply grateful that since arriving home this morning, I have not heard one gavel pounded, one motion made or any human speech that even remotely reminded me of parliamentary debate.

Today was a busy day but a pleasant one made so not only by the change of routine it provided from last week's meetings, but also by the joyful nature of the events in which I was privileged to participate.

This morning shortly after arriving from Washington, I had the pleasure of confirming 17 young women and men at Mount Carmel in Rochester. Those sacramental moments were special for our young friends who in turn filled that community of faith with a special measure of joy.

In the afternoon, I participated in a moving worship service at Asbury Methodist Church, celebrating the 50th anniversary of Genesee Ecumenical Ministries. Among the several memorable moments of the afternoon were Bishop Hogan's reflections on the contribution the late Father Henry Atwell made to the formation of GEM and the sermon by the preacher of the day, the Rev. Marvin Chandler.

If today provided a change from the week, this evening offered an activity different from those of the day. I went

to the Rich Little Show at the Eastman Theatre. There, with several thousand other friends of the Sisters of Mercy, I enjoyed the performance offered by that remarkable impressionist.

Between Mount Carmel and the Asbury Methodist, I enjoyed a 45 minute run during which I listened to the Bills-Brown game. The Bills were ahead when I finished the run, but I just heard when I came home that they lost another one.

So ... after the events of the day, the weeks meeting, I am tired. Before I finish this and retire for the night, I want to thank Rita Carberry for her encouragement.

Rita is a parishoner at St. Mary's, Rochester, whom I met on the way to the show tonight. She put herself out to tell me that she enjoyed reading "Along the Way" each week and thanked me for working on it.

I told her quite truthfully that encouragement such as hers is very important to me because it connects me to people I care for very much.

It prompts me to encourage you to be generous in the gratitude you express to others during the days ahead.

In the morning when you pray, or shave or scramble the eggs, or drive to work or change the baby, ask the Lord for the grace to be aware in a new way of the people who your life better even the simplest ways.

In the evening, remember who such persons were and thank the Lord for them.

In the meantime, lavish thanks on others. You'll find yourself more connected to them because gratitude genuinely expressed comes from the heart and is received there by those to whom it is offered.

Peace to all!

Obituaries

Sister Sheila Hanley, SSJ

Sister Sheila Hanley, S.S.J., known for her rare combination of humor and discipline in the classroom, died unexpectedly on Saturday, Nov. 9, at Seneca Falls Hospital. She was 60.

For 21 years, Sister Sheila taught business classes at DeSales High School in Geneva as well as continuing education classes. Prior to coming to DeSales in 1964, she taught in diocesan elementary schools, including St. Ambrose, Blessed Sacrament, St. Jerome in East Rochester and St. Francis Xavier.

Her students credit her with teaching more than what was in the textbooks. "She taught you to stand up for what you believed in," said one current student. "She was always trying to live up her classes, calling people different names and things like that."

A former principal at DeSales, Sister Eileen Broad, also recalled Sister Sheila's way of bringing subjects to life. She once took up a collection in class and invested the money in stocks. When the stocks did well, the class reinvested in a new concrete sidewalk for the school.

Sister Eileen added that Sister Sheila was especially good at dealing with children in trouble or who were not interested in school.

"She was one of those rare individuals who endeared herself to everyone with her quiet Irish humor ... her quick wit and lighthearted gaiety enriched every gathering of which she was a part," said a spokesperson for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

A member of Holy Rosary Parish in Rochester, Sister Sheila became a Sister of St. Joseph in 1946. She graduated from Nazareth Academy and earned a bachelor's degree from Nazareth College. She also studied under government grants at Albany State College, the University of Ohio, Assumption College and the University of Oklahoma.

Sister Sheila is survived by two brothers, Joseph Hanley of Rochester and Richard of Utica; two sisters, Mrs. Walter (Bonnie) Brazill of Fairport and Mrs. Eileen Brundage of Albany, Georgia; a sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Hanley of Rochester; nieces, nephews and cousins.

Sister Sheila was buried in her favorite green jacket and "Danny Boy" was sung at her funeral. Interment was Wednesday morning, Nov. 13, in the Sisters' section of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

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