

Editorial & Opinion

Who'll be in charge during the bishop's sabbatical?

Among the questions most frequently asked of me about my sabbatical study plans is, "Who will be in charge while you are gone?"

This question has been asked so often that I thought it might be helpful to write about it in this week's column.

The simplest answer is to say that Bishop Dennis Hickey will be the person who will step into my place while I am away studying. He is my auxiliary bishop and is also one of two priests of our diocese who hold the office of vicar general.

The vicar general is empowered by the general law of the Church with practically all of the powers held by the diocesan bishop, by virtue of his office. An old axiom says it well: Where the vicar general is there, the bishop is. The one general limiting guide is that in the absence of the diocesan bishop the person taking his place should not initiate any major changes.

So the Church does make provision in the law not only for strong support for the diocesan bishop in the day-to-day conduct of his ministry, but also for those times when the diocesan bishop may be ill, absent in any way or incapacitated.

Those of you who know Bishop Hickey realize that he is a great gift to our local Church. For over 20 years, he has served as vicar general. Archbishop Fulton Sheen, Bishop Joseph Hogan and I have all enjoyed his wise counsel, his friendship and his generous ministry. I can

Along
the Way

not think of anyone who has been more intimately or fruitfully involved in the life of our local Church for those 20 years than Bishop Hickey.

I am in my 10th year as bishop of Rochester. During those years, Bishop Hickey has taken my place whenever I have been away, and I can tell you in truth that I have never had the slightest worry that things would not go perfectly well in my absence. In fact, I usually plead with him not to make things notably better while I am away!

Earlier in this article I mentioned a second vicar general. I recently appointed Father John Mulligan as vicar general and asked him to take particular responsibility of moderator of the Pastoral Office. In that capacity, John oversees and coordinates all ministries and services located at the Pastoral Center or in related agen-

cies. When he carries on the functions relating to that ministry, he does so in my name and with my authority.

John has considerable experience in the Pastoral Center and, perhaps more importantly, has served as pastor in three of our parish communities. When I say that I have great respect for John's experience and ability, I know that he is held in that high regard by people all over our diocese.

Please remember that they are both vicars general and that they will be ready and willing to serve you in my absence. We will be in regular communication while I am in Cuernavaca. That does not mean that I'll be taking my desk with me when I am gone. It means only that I want to be available to Bishop Hickey and John and of as much support to them as I can be while they are so generously picking up my work.

One of the interesting side effects of embarking on this period of renewal is the opportunity it affords to reflect on the ministry of bishop in the contemporary Church. I know that my experience through the years makes my understanding of the ministry of bishops different from what it was in May of 1979 when it all started with me. The prospect of the sabbatical heightens the question and leads me to believe that reflection on that experience will be one of the pleasant features of the months ahead.

But more about that later.

Peace to all.

Letters

Column's view differs
from priest's homily

To the editor:

The article in the *Courier-Journal* by Father Paul J. Cuddy on Thursday, July 28, caught my attention ("Another point of view on bingo"). It was a privilege to hear Father James Callan from Corpus Christi Church in Rochester at our St. Patrick's in Corning.

My response was entirely different from anything I read in the *Courier-Journal*. It seemed to me that Father Callan was challenging the Church as a whole to grow up in the faith by trusting God the Father to provide for all our Church needs. It should be considered that Father Callan is not asking anyone to do something his own church has not done themselves with God's abundant blessing. The Old Testament as well as the New abounds with examples of Jehovah God compelling the Israelites to put their trust in Him. They were forced to fight battles with one-tenth the army the enemy had. They were forced to fight against civilizations with advanced weaponry unknown to them. Why? Because God wanted them to know the REAL SOURCE. Consider Gideon, Joshua and King David.

Frankly, I found Father Callan's homily at our church very moving. He just told how his own church after much community PRAYER trusted God totally to supply its needs by dropping Bingo. There was NO finger-pointing at all. If anyone felt convicted it was the Holy Spirit doing the convicting.

When the disciples cast lots to decide on Judas' replacement, they were not doing so for money. They were letting God decide, instead of themselves, much as the priests in the Old Testament used the Urim and Thumin. This is entirely different from gambling.

I also personally feel that there are much more creative ways to get to know one's fellow parishioners and also one's priest than in a bingo game. Just look around. Heavens knows the Church needs volunteers in many, many areas, and this is a constructive way to get to know each other.

There is another side, too. Many people are addicted to gambling, and bingo can feed that addiction, especially since church-sanctioned activity makes it seem right. Many are spending their Social Security checks needed for food and the gas bill. Some of these people play every night. And the addiction to gambling is just as serious as the addiction to drugs or alcohol. Please don't overlook this, because bingo monies support Catholic schools. It can enslave people, too.

As I read the article, the thought that immediately came to my mind was: "They parted His raiment and cast lots..." (Luke 23:34) Enough said.

Jacqueline W. Jones
Wicks Boulevard
Corning

PEACE



... is going home after a good day's work.

J. Kastner

Exasperated by columnist's continuing criticism of charismatic priest

To the editor:

I was exasperated to read Father Paul J. Cuddy's column in the July 28 issue, again criticizing another charismatic priest, Father James Callan.

Father Cuddy's beginning sentence reads: "The charismatic Father James Callan, administrator of Corpus Christi Parish, has accomplished great things since his reign began a decade ago. But he has an obsession about the injury of bingo."

If Father Callan is obviously so successful in carrying out his mission, for Christ's sake thank God for his wonderful gifts and talents, and let him be. Let him carry on the superb work he is doing and pray for others to follow

his example instead of finding fault. Why must Father Cuddy point an accusing finger at Father Callan's distaste for bingo?

If he wanted to write an article about the positive aspects of church bingos, then he should have kept to that topic, never mentioning Father Callan. Furthermore, if that's all Father Cuddy has to do is to look for pet peeves

of his brother priests, then maybe he should refer again to Christ's message in the Gospels, which apply to priests as well. Or perhaps his space should be given to columnists who are indeed *On the Right Side*.

R.A. Sagan
Warren Road
Ithaca

Anticipates Nazareth's next summer theater production

To the editor:

On Saturday night, August 27, my grandson Billy and I had the immense pleasure of watching the wonderful performance of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" put on by the Faestival Youth Theater of Nazareth Academy.

There we sat, the youngest and the oldest — well almost — thoroughly enthralled by the acting and enthusiastic singing and dancing of

this most notable group of young people as they made the comic strip *Peanuts* come alive. Billy and I would happily sit through another showing, but alas, it is over.

We look forward to the next production of the Faestival Youth Theater. Hats off to all who made it possible.

Anita Q. Maruggi and Billy Stokes
Bucklebury Hill
Rochester

Just an answer to prayer?

To the editor:

In regards to Father McBrien's complaints in his column (C-J August 11: "The bishops and Mother Angelica") about not being allowed time on Mother Angelica's TV network, maybe it's just an answer to prayers.

P.S. Isn't she a Franciscan?

Kathy Crane
Martinot Avenue
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to the 1988 edition of the Official Catholic Directory, Mother Angelica's community in Birmingham, Ala., belongs to the order of Poor Clares. Readers may recall that Father McBrien called her a Benedictine.

C-J Letters Policy

The *Courier-Journal* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome all signed, original letters about current issues affecting Church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the Church. We will

choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letter writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters. Mail them to: *Courier-Journal*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY, 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.