

1980s:

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upheld Catholic University's action in February, 1989, and Father Curran, who spent 1988-89 as a visiting professor at the University of Southern California, opted not to appeal.

While controversy over Father Curran's censure was still brewing, the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith instructed Bishop Clark in an October 17, 1986, letter to remove his imprimatur from *Parents Talk Love*. A handbook designed to help parents teach their children about sexuality, *Parents Talk Love* was co-authored by a Rochester diocesan priest, Father Matthew A. Kawiak, and Susan K. Sullivan, a science teacher at Cardinal Mooney High School.

Some ordinary Catholics also defended a sense of orthodoxy offended by several movies released during the 1980s. "Hail Mary," a 1985 film by director Jean Luc Godard, presented a contemporary — and some charged blasphemous — version of the biblical story of Jesus' birth. The film's showing as part of the University of Rochester Summer Film Series drew more than 600 viewers and nearly 450 protestors to the River Campus.

Two years later, protesters created a similar scenario when Rochester's Little Theater showed "The Last Temptation of Christ." The Martin Scorsese film, which related the life of Christ, included a controversial dream sequence in which Jesus marries and makes love to Mary Magdalene.

Reviewers widely panned both films as flawed and obscure, noting that protesters mainly succeeded in gaining the films priceless publicity.

Some Catholics faulted such films and other media for a pervasive erosion of moral values, which in turn, contributed to declining religious vocations. The role of the media may be disputed, but vocational drought was certain.

As lay people took on the work of religious education and teaching in Catholic schools, as well as the duties of parish and diocesan ministry and administration, their need for adequate wages forced the church to re-evaluate what it was capable of accomplishing.

In 1981, the diocese abandoned the traditional system of parish taxation in favor of a once-a-year effort, known as Bishop Clark's Thanks Giving Appeal. The goal set for the annual appeal has nearly doubled since it was established, growing from an initial \$2.204 million to \$4.06 million in 1989.

Faced with declining enrollment and the rising cost of paying just wages to lay employees, many Catholic schools struggled to remain open. Between 1980 and the beginning of 1990, 12 schools lost the fight, but 60 survived to greet the new decade's first students.

Meanwhile, religious orders of men and women who had for decades served in Catholic schools with little or no financial remuneration discovered that they faced a retirement-funding crisis estimated in 1986 at more than \$2.5 billion. The small number of young, active members in such congregations has been outweighed by the number of elderly, retired and infirm, and by rapidly escalating costs for their care.

In response, the diocese gradually phased out the system of stipends and such non-cash benefits as convent housing and parish-provided cars in favor of providing salaries based on the real value of services provided.

New efforts at attaining economic justice also were prompted by the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on the economy. However, these efforts also placed new strains on the budgets of parishes, which sought new cost-containing measures. Among the most effective have been shared staff positions and, in a few cases, parish clustering.

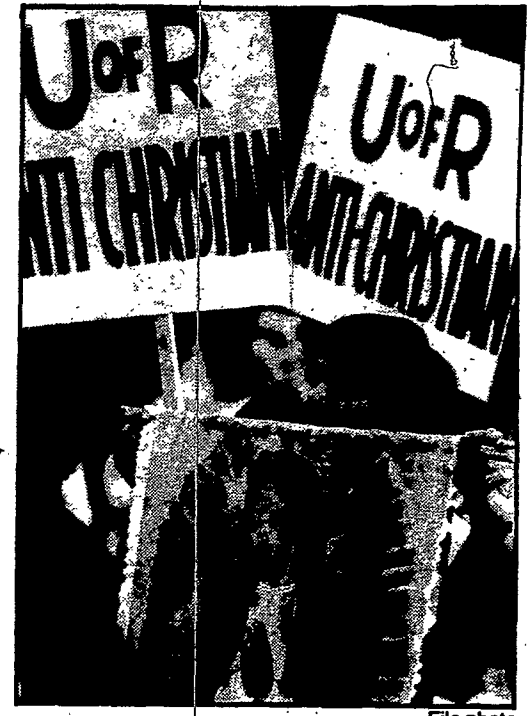
Mostly rural Cayuga County offered a testing ground for the diocese's first experiments in parish clustering. Six parishes

joined together in May, 1984, to form the Southern Cayuga cluster.

Parishes in the City of Rochester were close behind. After months of discussion, members of St. Francis Xavier and Holy Redeemer parishes agreed in January, 1985, to consolidate and to close the latter.

Two years later, controversy over the possible demolition of Holy Redeemer, one of the city's oldest German-built churches, embroiled both the parish and the diocese. After months of heated negotiations with the Landmark Society of Western New York, the Northside Church of Christ purchased both the church and school in June, 1988, for \$115,000.

Clustering parishes was also a means of alleviating the worsening shortage of priests. Throughout 1989, the diocese worked to prepare lay leaders to assume more administrative functions in parishes. Although lay people in the Diocese of Rochester have only served as temporary parish administrators to date, the reservoir of qualified candidates for such appointments indicates they will be more permanent in the next decade.



File photo
Protesters expressed their dismay at the University of Rochester's 1986 presentation of Jean Luc Godard's film "Hail Mary."

1950s: Optimistic projections and newly available resources spawned massive building projects

By Father Robert F. McNamara
Guest contributor

Tally the amount of space devoted to local news in issues of the *Courier* from 1949-1959, and you will find that most of it dealt with construction. The '50s were indeed marked by a spurge in building throughout the nation, a reaction to shortages of funds, construction materials and craftsmen during the war years.

Many city and rural church buildings were revamped in keeping with the liturgical trends of pre-Vatican II. More than 20 new parishes were established — most to accommodate city folk moving to the suburbs.

Unfortunately, many of the churches built during this period were designed just before the liturgical regulations of Vatican II radically revised the layout of sanctuaries. But the diocese owes to this spirited drive some memorable structures, among them those designed by New York architect J.A. Sanford Shanley: St. Louis, Pittsford; St.



File photo
Bishop James E. Kearney laid the cornerstone of McQuaid Jesuit High School.

Ambrose; St. Thomas the Apostle; and St. Charles Borromeo, Greece.

Additionally, the diocese also embarked on a campaign to expand secondary school and college facilities. Three diocesan

drives were undertaken under the savvy supervision of Monsignor John S. Randall.

The first one — with a \$3 million goal — was staged in 1952. Proceeds provided construction funds for two new high schools, McQuaid Jesuit High in Rochester (1955), and the Carmelite Fathers' Mount Carmel High in Auburn (1955); and new homes for St. Agnes High in Rochester (1954) and Notre Dame High School in Elmira (1955). Enough was left over for the enlargement of DeSales High School in Geneva.

A second drive for \$4 million, easily oversubscribed, was mounted in 1960 to provide Catholic secondary education for the northeast and southeast sections of Monroe County. Out of it came two "co-institutional" high schools: Bishop Kearney in Irondequoit and Cardinal Mooney in Greece.

Then, in 1965, a last major campaign for \$9 million was launched on behalf of

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File photo
Bishop James E. Kearney posed for a 1945 Christmas photo with Chaplains (from left) J. Emmett Murphy, Elmer W. Hejndl, Daniel Fraher and Edward J. Waters.

1940s: Prayers for peace, ministry to men in service filled war-time thoughts

By Father Robert F. McNamara
Guest contributor

World War II monopolized the news of 1939-1949, both in the *Catholic Courier* and every publication throughout the world. On November 19, 1938, an inter-faith anti-Nazi rally was held in Rochester's Convention Hall to protest Hitler's mounting anti-semitism.

A month earlier, Rochester's fifth bishop, James E. Kearney, had urged members of the diocese to recite the rosary regularly for peace, and had instructed his

priests to say the special prayer *pro pace* at every Mass. At the anti-Nazi rally of November 19 he strongly denounced the German campaign against the Jews.

World War II broke out when the Nazis invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Hoping against hope that hostilities might be brief, and particularly that the United States might be spared involvement, Bishop Kearney asked again and again that his people storm heaven.

The spiritual needs of the young men

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