

1940s:

Continued from page 9

drafted into military service became a new pastoral concern, and the chaplains' corps asked the American bishops to seek volunteers for military ministry. Bishop Kearney proposed this pressing invitation to his priests, and they did not disappoint him. In late October he sent off the first two diocesan army chaplains, and before the end of the war, 41 diocesan priests and four Rochester-based members of religious orders had joined the armed services.

When the war effort brought some of its operations into the territory of his diocese, Bishop Kearney welcomed the chance to participate personally.

Bishop Kearney celebrated Mass and preached at the Geneva USO on several occasions, and in two instances administered group confirmation. His most memorable liturgy at the Sampson naval training station along Seneca Lake was the great pontifical Mass of July 4, 1944. On that day 16,000 naval servicemen were in attendance.

Another unanticipated apostolate within the diocese was the care of prisoners of war. The Italian prisoners came first, in 1943; the German prisoners followed them in 1944. Local clergy, especially priests with a knowledge of Italian or German, helped these prisoners as much as they could.

But Rochester's fifth bishop was most outstanding in wartime as leader in prayer. In his public liturgies, sermons and pastoral communications, he constantly emphasized prayer, especially to Our Lady, as the surest means of binding together families split by war and of achieving a just peace. When V-J day finally arrived on August 14, 1945, Bishop Kearney pointed out to his people that this terrible struggle

that had begun on the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1941, had ended on the eve of the feast of Mary's Assumption.

The *Courier* had issued a wartime rotogravure magazine on November 23, 1943, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the diocese. In its introductory article, Bishop Kearney praised the response of his diocesans abroad and at home as providing "vibrant proof that we are alive to our responsibilities to God and country... united in support of the cause we know is just."

The bishop also wrote an introduction to the *Courier's* comparable Victory Issue, published on January 10, 1946. Here he was more subdued. Kearney was ready to admit that victory had not yet "brought the kind of peace for which we prayed and for which our boys fought and died," and that he was disconcerted by the "grim shadow of the atomic bomb" and the unreadiness of nations to acknowledge the God who had brought them victory.

1960s:

Continued from page 8

come he received to the Catholic missions.

By the 1960s, therefore, Fulton J. Sheen was the best-known Catholic priest in this country. Although his career behind a microphone had ended by 1966, Rochesterians in general were pleased to welcome him. At age 71, he set out to institute Vatican-II principles like a man in a hurry.

One theme emphasized by the council was "collegiality," or working together. In that spirit, the bishop at once asked his priests to nominate by secret ballot those local priests whom they would most like to see serve in his "cabinet."

Vatican II also promoted interfaith and ecumenical contacts. Bishop Sheen readily accepted an early invitation to address the Jewish congregation of Temple B'rith Kodesh. With regard to local Protestant

1950s:

Continued from page 9

higher education. The amount realized allowed for the construction of a fine-arts center at Nazareth College; new buildings at St. John Fisher College; and Becket Hall, a residence near Fisher for diocesan seminarians enrolled at the college.

A previous drive had financed the building of a new St. Andrew's Preparatory Seminary on Buffalo Road in 1950 — now the diocesan Pastoral Center. Meanwhile, in 1959, the Rochester Sisters of Mercy opened Catherine McAuley College on their own.

Zeal for construction by no means excluded elementary schools. Pastors had not forgotten the dream of Bishop McQuaid: a parochial school in every parish. After World War II, more than 20 new schools opened. Thirteen other parishes erected new buildings for their existing schools, in

response to a seemingly endless increase in enrollment, which topped 46,000 in 1961.

The first problem encountered by the burgeoning school system was a shortage of teachers. In 1951, 794 sisters and only 24 lay teachers were working in diocesan schools. In 1961, local orders of women religious reached their highest number — 820 sisters in all — but the schools already employed 320 lay teachers.

Therefore, in 1963, the diocese declared a moratorium on founding any new parish schools, "until there are enough nuns to staff the classrooms." That condition was never met, since the number of religious sisters diminished rather than increased following Vatican II. Since that time, many parish schools have been forced to close — especially those in the urban centers. Schools remaining open also face an uncertain future, their enrollment decreasing because of smaller families and higher tuition.

bodies, he promoted the formation in 1968 of the "Rochester Center for Theological Studies," a consortium of local seminaries including Colgate-Rochester (Baptist), Bexley Hall (Episcopalian) and St. Bernard's Seminary (Catholic).

Certainly his most dramatic gesture on behalf of the poor was his plan to give the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development the property of an inner-city Rochester parish on the condition that housing for the needy be built on the site. The arrangement was kept secret.

Given a choice of churches, HUD picked St. Bridget's, and Bishop Sheen announced to the world his important symbolic gesture. He clearly expected bravos, but he received boos. Having forgotten in this case the principle of collegiality, he had

failed to discuss the donation with the parishioners of St. Bridget's. When HUD learned of the ensuing squabble, it quickly withdrew its acceptance of the property, and the deal fell through.

Bishop Sheen's verve for innovative action declined noticeably after the St. Bridget's incident. It was perhaps the first real failure of his life, and it shook him deeply. In October, 1969, he announced his resignation as bishop of Rochester, a full year short of his 75th birthday, the mandatory age for bishops' retirement.

Graced now with the rank of titular archbishop, he returned "home" to Manhattan. After a fairly active decade there, Archbishop Sheen died December 9, 1974, and was buried in the crypt of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

1970s:

Continued from page 7

and nuns were shifted to the area to spell fatigued staffs. A team stayed on the scene to determine the best way the diocese could help.

Those were tumultuous times. *Immense Caritatis* in 1973 allowed laymen to distribute Holy Communion. In the same year, the Vatican reiterated: "No Communion before Confession."

Bishop Hogan was the overriding figure in the diocese. An imposing 6-foot-5, he also drew attention by confronting a host of matters, ranging from boycotts to reorganization of diocesan administration. Schools had to be closed; old ways had to be changed and new ways accommodated.

In the closing years of the decade, news erupted at a rapid-fire clip.

August 6, 1978: Pope Paul VI dies. Interregnum. Then on August 26, headlines blared: "WE HAVE A POPE!"

We did have a pope — the September pope. John Paul. We mistakenly referred to him in the paper as John Paul I until dio-

cesan historian and archivist Father Robert McNamara nudged us. "You can't have a I until there is a II," he said. How sadly and unknowingly prophetic!

Soon we had our first Polish pope, and at year's end, a *Courier* headline looked back on "Three Popes in 1978."

Bishop Hogan resigned on November 29, 1978, and a long period of speculation about his successor began. On Tuesday, May 8, 1979, a priest called from the U.S. bishops' meeting in Chicago to confide, in a whisper, "You have a new bishop, and you must never tell where you heard it." I vowed. He continued, "Father Clark. From Albany."

Bishop Matthew H. Clark was later to tell the story of that day. He couldn't imagine how anyone else could have known, and on first blush thought we were a couple of salesmen from the States.

The new bishop was installed June 26, 1979. Later in 1979, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen died, 10 years after having hand-picked Joseph L. Hogan as his successor and in the wake of Bishop Hogan's own retirement and replacement.

'Courier'

Continued from page 2

Bishop Sheen then appointed Father Richard Tormey as editor in February, 1968. Father Tormey's editorial tenure was short-lived, however. In December, 1969, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, who had succeeded Bishop Sheen in October of that year, named Father Tormey executive editor of the *Courier*, and associate editor Carmen Viglucci was named the first lay editor of the paper. Meanwhile, in 1971, when Monsignor Randall ended 28 years as managing editor, advertising manager Anthony Costello was promoted to the post of general manager. This new management team marked the first time since the days of the *Catholic Journal* that the paper was completely under lay administration.

Bishop Hickey noted that under Viglucci and Costello the *Courier-Journal*, as the paper had been renamed in 1967, "picked up in terms of interest and quality." Coverage of the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions was increased. Meanwhile,

the paper's greater emphasis on professionalism led to its winning an increasing number of awards from both the Catholic Press and New York Press associations.

In 1985, however, a dispute broke out between the paper's staff and the diocese. The diocese had consolidated its administrative operations at the new Pastoral Center at 1150 Buffalo Road, and wanted the *Courier-Journal* to move there as well. The paper's entire editorial staff resigned in protest, saying that the diocese was trying to exercise closer editorial control of the paper.

Bishop Hickey was then appointed general manager of the paper, and the current editor in chief, Karen M. Franz, was hired in April, 1985. She assembled a new staff, which soon began winning major journalistic awards, including the Catholic Press Association's 1986 General Excellence Award. Among other honors have been the CPA's 1988 awards for best photo story and best news report, and first-place awards for photographic excellence from the New York Press Association in 1986 and 1987.

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