

# Protesters mark contemporary 'crucifixions'



Bibette G. Augustin/Staff photographer

Approximately 100 pro-life demonstrators, among them 13 priests and 11 deacons, peacefully recited the Stations of the Cross in front of Strong Memorial Hospital on Friday, April 13.

## Professor, bishop will address diocesan priests' convocation

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — A noted Notre Dame history professor and the auxiliary bishop of Syracuse will be among the speakers featured at the annual diocesan priests' convocation, scheduled to take place Monday through Wednesday, April 23-25, at the Holiday Inn on Jefferson Road.

More than 200 diocesan priests are expected to attend the convocation this year, according to Father Dan Tormey, chairman of the convocation planning committee and diocesan director of ministry to priests.

The convocation's theme, "Serving in Style," emphasizes that the three-day seminar will focus on raising each priest's level of professionalism in his work, Father Tormey said, adding that the convocation is designed to be a "continuing-education" experience.

Jay P. Dolan, director of the Charles and Margaret Hall Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame, will give the convocation's inaugural presentation on the afternoon of April 23.

Dolan, whose talk is entitled "Priesthood: Rooted in the Past; Challenged by the Future," is author of the 1987 book *Transforming Parish Ministry, the Changing Roles of Catholic Clergy, Laity and Women Religious in the United States 1930-1980*. Dolan also wrote *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* and edited *The American Catholic Parish: A History from 1850*.

In a telephone interview with the *Catholic Courier*, Dolan said he will discuss changes that have taken place in the role of the American Catholic priest during the last 200 years. For example, he said, in the 1940s and '50s, a parish priest was seen "as a jack-of-all-trades," performing a wide variety of duties that since have been taken over by members of the contemporary parish.

He added that the community's elevated perception of the priesthood has changed. "I think it's fair to say the element of (a priest's) status is no longer there," he commented.

Dolan's views were echoed by Father Tormey, who noted that as the 1990s beckon, priests will have to redefine their pastoral roles now that more and more pastoral positions are being filled by lay people. Father Tormey said the convocation's April 24 workshops will help priests explore this redefinition by presenting updated information on such issues as family violence that may not have been covered in their seminary training.

The convocation will conclude on Wednesday morning with a keynote address from Bishop Thomas J. Costello, auxiliary bishop of Syracuse. The bishop is an alumnus of St. Bernard's Seminary and a member of the administrative committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Bishop Costello has not formally defined his topic for the address, but it will probably be a "motivational" speech, Father Tormey said.

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Various regions within the Diocese of Rochester became a symbolic road to Calvary on Good Friday, as dozens of Catholics participated in demonstrations marking what protesters saw as contemporary crucifixions of Christ.

About 100 people, including 13 priests and 11 deacons, participated in a peaceful anti-abortion demonstration just outside the main entrance of Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester. The demonstrators met at St. Rita's Church in Webster at 9 a.m. where they said the Stations of the Cross. The group repeated the stations at about 10:45 a.m. outside Strong, where city police and the hospital's security eyed them suspiciously, but made no arrests.

The demonstration was organized by the Catholic Pro-life Planning Committee, which did not warn the hospital and which had never before targeted Strong for any kind of demonstration, according to Amy Dorscheid, a committee member.

"The reason we went there was, of course, to pray and ask for God's mercy and to alert the community to the fact that Strong Hospital does second-trimester abortions," Dorscheid said. She added that such a policy appears contradictory given the fact that the hospital works to save the lives of infants born prematurely during the second trimester of a pregnancy.

Strong's public-information director, Robert Loeb, said Strong has occasionally been picketed by pro-life groups in the past. He also said the hospital called the city police as a matter of "routine policy," noting that the hospital initially feared a "rescue mission," but was relieved by the demonstrators' "peaceful" actions.

At noon that day, several of the demonstrators from the Strong protest joined a group of 35 people outside the Federal Building on State Street in Rochester. The group effort was sponsored by the Faith and Resistance Community, which promotes the "seamless garment" ethic on such issues as war and abortion, according to Father Robert Werth, pastor of St. Bridget's in Rochester and a protest participant.

Carol Crossed, who participated in both

demonstrations, said that Faith and Resistance targeted the Federal Building because the U.S. government's defense spending diverts resources from the nation's families. "The money goes for bombs instead of babies," she remarked.

Peace and disarmament also were on the minds of 25 demonstrators who gathered outside the entrance to the Seneca Army Depot in Romulus. Organized by St. Joseph's House of Hospitality in Rochester, the noontime protest was — like the other two Catholic-led demonstrations — marked by a prayerful commemoration of Christ's crucifixion, according to Mary Rose McCarthy, a house staff member.

The demonstrators heard Scripture readings and burned dollar bills that had been dipped in the blood of the protesters, McCarthy said. The action symbolized how "money used for militarism is stained with the blood of people around the world," she commented.

McCarthy said an Army helicopter circled over the group during the protest and a Seneca County sheriff showed up, but that no protesters were arrested. "They're used to us," she said, noting that the depot has been the site of continual anti-nuclear protests over the last decade.

Anti-nuclear activists have long maintained that the army depot stores nuclear weapons, basing their assertion in part on observation of the type of Army personnel employed at the site, McCarthy said.

Bob Zemanek, the depot's public-affairs officer, said the U.S. government "will neither confirm nor deny the absence of nuclear weapons and components" at any U.S. military installation.

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