

Bishop Clark

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thority of the church. Most importantly, I'm afraid that the gulf which apparently exists between the official teaching of the church and the reception by the faithful of this teaching depresses our capacity credibly to address the area of sexuality."

Bishop Clark also cited abortion as another issue causing tension, saying that he particularly hopes that the church will do a

better job of hearing input from the women of church on this topic.

Another area causing tension is the requirement of life-long celibacy on the part of priests. "Our people are concerned — and so am I — that this requirement is a human construct which stands in the way of the church's eucharistic life. In my judgment, there exist so many questions around this discipline, its relation to the priesthood and, therefore, to the Eucharist, that the church would be well served by a careful, full consideration of the advan-

Students

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three seats would still be reserved for each student — for themselves and their parents — but that parents would not be required to accompany their children on stage to receive their diplomas.

Despite the change, many parents and students still object to the fact that the class will not be allowed to sit together, Schumacher said.

"It might be a compromise from the school's point of view, but it's not good for the kids," Schumacher said, adding, "we'll probably put up a fight."

Parents may be the students' best allies in any battle to change or protest the commencement policy. Jodoin's mother, Martha, said she didn't agree with the modified commencement policy. She added that she had heard some parents were calling other Kearney families and asking them to refuse to sit with the seniors at the ceremony.

Jodoin speculated that many of the parents may decide not to sit with their children. "I think that's very much a

possibility," she said. "Personally, (my husband) and I will not sit with (Christine)."

Some of the students speculated that the real reason behind the policy was to control potentially disruptive behavior, but Jablonski dismissed those accusations. "We haven't had what I would term trouble at graduations at the past," she said.

When asked why the revised policy still dictated that the parents sit with their children during commencement, Jablonski replied that most of the objections the school received from parents came in regard to the requirement that parents would have to walk up on stage with their child — not in regard to the seating policy.

Policy revisions aside, it remains possible that the Kearney commencement may not go according to the administration's plans.

Michelle Pecor's mother, Carole, summed up the feelings of many parents. "They're 18," she said of the seniors. "I feel they do not need their parents to hold their hands and sit in the audience."

tages and/or disadvantages of this practice."

Yet another issue causing tension is the ordination of women. "It is clear, at least in my judgment, that the arguments alleged by the church in support of her constant practice in this matter are not persuading the faithful, nor are they finding wide support in the community of scholars," he said. Bishop Clark noted that the church's position on this issue was causing loss of morale and numbers in the church, and expressed a desire for a "fuller ecclesial discussion of this question."

The bishop's final hope for the church was that process for selecting bishops would be expanded to allow greater input by the local community.

Bishop Clark said that although he has many other hopes for the church, he had

chosen to focus his talk on certain issues "because I think that they in a very real way relate to our capacity credibly and fruitfully to proclaim the Gospel in today's culture, at least in the present culture of the United States. Insofar as we appear unable or unwilling to wrestle with the real questions which are alive in the minds and hearts of faithful people, our capacity both to nourish their faith and to proclaim the Gospel to others is diminished."

In concluding his talk, Bishop Clark noted that the people of the church are a "pilgrim people whose journey is by the light of faith, who need always be ready to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit, to leave the safe and familiar places when God calls us to a new place. If that tends to discourage us, we need to remember that Jesus promised to be with us always, and Jesus is always faithful."

St. Agnes

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Rose also said the school would start recruiting students earlier for the 1991-92 academic year than it did for 1990-91. Recruiting efforts for next fall began in December, 1989.

She pointed out that her current first grade has 17 students, exceeding the average grade size of 12, but noted that the increase in one grade doesn't necessarily signal an overall upward trend in enrollment.

St. Agnes school parents greeted the news of the school's fate with joy.

"We're very excited about St. Agnes," said Laurie Vonglis of the feelings she and her husband Thomas share. The

couple has a son in first grade. "We hope (the school) stays open for many more years."

Vonglis' feelings were shared by Kathy Cook, who has two children at the school. She used the words "excitement" and "ecstatic" to describe her reaction to the bishop's decision. "I think St. Agnes offers the best experience in Catholic education that my children can receive," she commented.

Both parents remarked that the majority of parishioners want to keep the school open, and Cook saw the bishop's decision as a stimulus for further discussion on the issue.

"I think with the bishop's decision to keep the school open, it will force parish council and the school board to work together," she said.

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