

Friends mourn priest shot trying to mediate dispute

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (CNS) — A priest in the Diocese of Allentown who was fatally shot while trying to mediate a marital dispute was remembered by his bishop, parishioners and friends for dedicated priestly service and as someone who had earned his spot in heaven.

Father Leo J. Heineman, 59, pastor of St. Mauritius Church in Ashland, Pa., "gave his life in the last of the countless efforts he has made over the past 32 years to help the brothers and sisters he had been called to serve," wrote Bishop Thomas J. Welsh in the Sept. 27 issue of *The A.D.*

Senate committee backs Souter

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 13-1 Sept. 27 to approve the nomination of Judge David H. Souter to the Supreme Court.

The committee sent the nomination to the full Senate, where confirmation was expected in a few days.

Souter, a 51-year-old Episcopalian who spent 12 years on the New Hampshire bench before joining the federal appeals court in Boston this year, is President Bush's first nominee to the high court.

During testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Souter said he opposed a judicial ban on the death penalty and flatly denied having any "agenda on what should be done with *Roe vs. Wade*," the 1973 Supreme Court decision that made abortion a legal right.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., cast the only vote against Souter.

Souter's nomination comes at a time

Times, the diocesan newspaper.

The prelate added that he had never heard so many good things said about a priest, noting that many described him as being "like a father," as someone who'd "bend over backwards for anybody" and who'd "earned his spot in heaven."

Father Heineman was shot Sept. 16, allegedly by 70-year-old David Graham Stewart Jr., after he had been invited to the Stewart home.

Stewart's wife, Mardell, a former parishioner, had asked the priest to mediate a domestic dispute against her husband's

wishes. According to the Allentown diocesan information office, Stewart allegedly ordered Father Heineman to leave and then shot the priest in the chest with a .357 magnum handgun.

Stewart was later arraigned on charges of first- and third-degree murder and voluntary manslaughter. He was being held without bail and faced a preliminary hearing Oct. 23.

"It shocked me," said Father Joseph Kean, a friend of the slain priest and pastor of St. Joseph Church in Ashland. "Not only the manner in which he died. I looked upon him as being kind of invincible, always in control. No one will ever know how many people he helped, how sensitive he was to disadvantaged people..."

A Sept. 20 funeral Mass for the priest drew 125 priests and 500 friends and parishioners.

A native of Philadelphia, Father Heineman had been pastor of St. Mauritius since 1981. He studied for the priesthood

when the national abortion debate has heated up. Souter, if confirmed, will be the fourth Supreme Court justice named in nine years.

He would succeed Justice William J. Brennan, a Catholic, who retired earlier this year.

at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Overbrook, Pa., and was ordained May 15, 1958, in Philadelphia. Before being named a pastor, he served as an assistant pastor at a number of parishes in what is now the Allentown diocese.

Contributing to this report were Jill Caravan in Allentown and Lou Baldwin in Philadelphia.

Sale to aid hospital

ROCHESTER — St. Pius the Tenth Parish will host the 34th annual Seton sale sponsored by St. Mary's Hospital on Saturday, Oct. 27, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Proceeds from the sale will go toward the purchase of cardiac equipment for the hospital.

The sale will feature hand-crafted items and more, and visitors may enjoy a salad and sandwich bar luncheon for \$6.50 per person from 11:30 to 1 p.m. For reservations, call 716/464-3255.

Vatican II

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The archbishop characterized "the whole crisis of authority both within the church and within our society" as "one of the new signs of our times."

Vatican II, he said, "had raised high expectations for a whole new style of exercising authority within the church. That style simply has not come about."

The enthusiasm of the council, he added, "has given way to a certain amount of skepticism on the part of some or even fear on the part of others."

Left unclear by Vatican II, Archbishop Weakland said, is "the extent of the principle of collegiality." Because of the "special role" accorded to all through baptism, "one begins to ask how far people should and can participate also in the decisions that touch their lives without falling into congregationalism."

Ecumenism "has not worked as people had thought it might," he said. "Recently one could say that there is a certain apathy with regard to ecumenism and there exists a real need right now for a clear breakthrough."

Vatican II liturgical reforms, Archbishop Weakland said, were "stopped in midair," which has caused "irregular, if not inconsistent" practices.

"The whole theology of the sacraments and the whole question of sacramentality seem to be one of the most profound crises in the church today, and yet these issues have not been dealt with in any serious form," the archbishop said.

The priesthood, too, is "full of ambiguities," Archbishop Weakland said. "Because of the expanded role of the laity and the exalted sense of the position of the bishop, the priest gets a bit shortchanged."

Nor did religious life receive the same kind of attention at Vatican II that other areas did, said Archbishop Weakland, a Benedictine.

"Perhaps it is because the religious did not have a strong voice at the council in order to express their own positions, or perhaps it was that within the church itself the prophetic role was not properly esteemed in the '60s."

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