

Diocesan director spurs debate at teleconference

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service
NEW YORK — Held as the worldwide Synod of Bishops was getting under way in Rome, a teleconference on "tomorrow's priesthood" spotlighted a variety of job descriptions for today's priest: spiritual leader, liturgist, supporter of non-ordained ministries, icon of Christ.

It also brought a strong expression of support for ordaining women after a member of a listening group in the Diocese of Rochester asked why no panelist had mentioned use of women and married former priests.

Judith Ann Kollar, continuing education director of the Rochester Diocese and the only woman among six panelists, said acceptance of women into the priesthood was her "fondest hope," though she did not expect it in her lifetime.

"Everybody I know hopes it will happen," she said. "Everyone who talks about it wants to see equality in the church as in other areas."

Dominican Father Paul J. Philibert, head of his order's Southern province in New Orleans, expressed sympathy for Kollar's view, and called for thinking about the kind of church that would result from the service of women as priests.

He said men were commonly regarded as more competitive and women as more collaborative. And he suggested that efforts begin now to make church structures more collaborative as preparation for the transition if ordination of women were in-

troduced.

Father M. Edmund Hussey, pastor of St. Paul Church in Yellow Springs, Ohio, said acceptance of women and married former priests were "challenging issues" that kept being raised although they were "officially somewhat closed."

Not all the panelists spoke on the issue, but no one defended the restriction of the priesthood to men and to the celibate.

The Oct. 4 teleconference was one of a series sponsored by the National Pastoral Life Center in New York and moderated by the center director, Father Philip J. Murnion.

Father Richard Martini of Queen of the Angels Seminary in Mission Hills, Calif., emphasized that the priest must have capacities for dealing with diverse cultures and that he "has got to be a disciple of Jesus."

Father Murnion suggested the description of the priest as an icon or representation of Christ whose being represents more than any personal achievements.

However, emphasis on the priest as a special person, Kollar said, should be handled in a way that avoids clericalism, a tendency of some priests to exploit their position for personal privilege.

Father Philibert said priests should see themselves as supporters of the non-ordained in their ministries. Just as lay volunteers have long carried such programs as parish religious education, he said, in the future they must be called on for other ministries.



AP/Wide World Photos
ANTI-UNIFICATION PROTEST — Demonstrators hold up a banner during anti-unification protests in downtown Berlin Oct. 3. About 10,000 left-wing Berliners joined the demonstration, declaring "big business" as the winner of German unification.

Prelate enters renewal program; family letter thanks supporters

ATLANTA (CNS) — Archbishop Eugene A. Marino has "entered a structured program of psychological and spiritual renewal in the Midwest," his brother and five sisters said in an open letter to U.S. Catholics thanking them for their prayers and support.

During the former Atlanta archbishop's August-September stay at a hospital in Larchmont, N.Y., "several of us had the opportunity to visit him extensively and to witness a tremendous improvement in his physical and emotional condition. We are happy to be able to share this news with you," the family members wrote.

They did not disclose Archbishop Marino's exact location in the Midwest, but they said, "He plans to remain there until he is ready to accept a new assignment."

Archbishop Marino went into seclusion in May and resigned his Atlanta post in July, citing severe mental, physical and spiritual stress. In August it was learned that he resigned because he had been involved in a two-year affair with a young woman.

The archbishop's sisters and brother are

Juanita Marino Howell of Minneapolis; Lillia Marino Patterson of Kinston, N.C.; Oblate Sister of Providence Eileen Marino of Washington; Clare Marino Rhodeman of Biloxi, Miss.; Katherine Marino Cain of San Francisco; and Joaquin M. Marino of Plainfield, N.J.

Their letter was sent to several Catholic newspapers in late September and published in early October.

They sent the open letter, they said, because "it simply has not been possible to answer" individually the "hundreds of messages: letters, cards, telegrams and phone calls" offering the archbishop prayers and support.

They said the "overwhelming majority" of the messages were understanding and compassionate. "This outreach, support and encouragement is much more than we could have ever anticipated," they said.

"It is not our purpose here to explain or discuss the events in Atlanta," they wrote. "Our sole purpose here is to acknowledge how happy it makes us to know that, despite whatever has happened, there are so many of you who love and hold our brother in such high esteem."

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