

War draws leaders' wrath

By Bill Pritchard
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — In reacting to war in the Persian Gulf, Catholic leaders worldwide have expressed outspoken opposition to the use of force to outright support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Pope John Paul II has devoted continual public statements to urging the U.S.-led coalition and Iraq to stop the fighting and negotiate a settlement of Iraq's annexation of neighboring Kuwait last August. He wrote to President Bush and to Saddam, urging a diplomatic solution.

Later, the pope worried publicly about an expansion of the war and the danger posed to civilians.

Iraq's Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Raphael Bidawid of Baghdad has been a staunch public supporter of his president

and friend Saddam Hussein. Patriarch Raphael has endorsed the Iraqi position, including missile attacks on Israeli cities, and traveled to Rome to explain the Iraqi cause to Pope John Paul.

From the United States to the Philippines, Catholic clerics have deplored the war, urged prayers for the troops, or warned that the war zone could easily widen.

U.S. Catholic clergy were somewhat divided on the use of force to dislodge Iraqi occupation forces from Kuwait, with the majority against warfare.

Archbishop Joseph T. Ryan of the Archdiocese for the Military Services said in a Jan. 15 letter to chaplains that using armed force against "unjust aggression" was a "legitimate, though grave option."

Prior to Jan. 16, when the U.S.-led coalition launched its military campaign

against Iraq, several prominent U.S. Catholic leaders either urged the coalition to use caution in deciding on war or called for a political solution.

Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago said before the war began that military action would not meet the church's standards for a "just war." Those standards require that the human, economic and other costs must be in proportion to the good sought, and that all avenues to peace must be exhausted before resorting to violence.

In remarks published in the Jan. 17 edition of the Italian Catholic weekly, *Il Sabato*, Cardinal Bernardin was quoted as saying "I am personally convinced that in the current circumstances, military action would in fact violate the teaching of the church about just war."

Following the outbreak of war, the head

of the U.S. bishops' conference, Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, expressed deep sadness. He said in a Jan. 17 statement that the military campaign must take all reasonable steps to "safeguard human life, minimize casualties and to ensure that the means of war are proportionate to the values to be defended, that the human and other costs are truly worth the objectives to be achieved."

Catholic Iraqi-Americans of the Chaldean rite prayed for peace as a ferocious air bombardment hit their ancestral land.

Hours before the war began, Father Manuel Boji, an Iraqi priest at the Mother of God Chaldean Church in Southfield, Mich., said parishioners told him the war "hurts. It's very hard."

Continued on page 4



CATHOLIC COURIER

Tomorrow's history

The start of armed conflict in the Persian Gulf forces area high school students to confront the realities of war. Page 10

Diocese of Rochester

Thursday, January 24, 1991

50¢

16 pages

Faith communities course ways to cooperate

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — In the early 1960s, the Rev. James C. Miller, then a student at Rochester Divinity School, had a simple idea.

The Rev. Miller, now pastor of the Lake Avenue Baptist Church, wanted to invite students from St. Bernard's Seminary over to the Divinity School for informal talks with Divinity School students.

But to arrange the meetings, the Baptist minister had to seek permission from the Divinity School's rector. And the St. Bernard's students had to request permission from then-Bishop of Rochester, James E. Kearney, to meet with the Protestants.

Now, the Rev. Miller commented, such a dialogue would "not be a big thing, but then it was a risk. It took some people to take a risk, to do something that had not been done, to make dialogue possible."

Indeed, just 30 years after those students took their first tentative steps toward communication between local Catholics and Protestants, cooperation and conversation among Christian churches have become accepted ways of life in the Diocese of Rochester.

While St. Bernard's Seminary no longer exists, St. Bernard's Institute, which succeeded the seminary in 1981, is currently housed on the Divinity School campus. Today, students from SBI and the Divinity School regularly take courses together.

In addition, on May 22, 1988, the Episcopal and Roman Catholic dioceses of Rochester signed a covenant calling for cooperation and sharing of some ministries — such as marriage preparation for interfaith couples — and in social justice activities.

Bishops Matthew H. Clark, of the Catholic diocese, and William G. Burrill, of the Episcopal diocese, have since issued joint statements on several issues, including the death penalty and the Persian Gulf crisis. The dioceses have also cooperated in responding to social issues, and

jointly participated in AIDS healing services.

The fruits of that covenant are seen in parishes throughout the two dioceses as well. At many Catholic parishes, prayers are said for Bishop Burrill, just as prayers are said at many Episcopal parishes for Bishop Clark.

A number of parishes — including Good Shepherd Catholic Church and St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Henrietta — have signed their own covenants, and others are working together on projects. One example of such cooperative ministry is the joint hospice for the dying operated by St. Stephen's Episcopal and St. Augustine's Catholic churches.

But the ecumenical movement in Rochester is not limited to just Catholic/Episcopal cooperation.

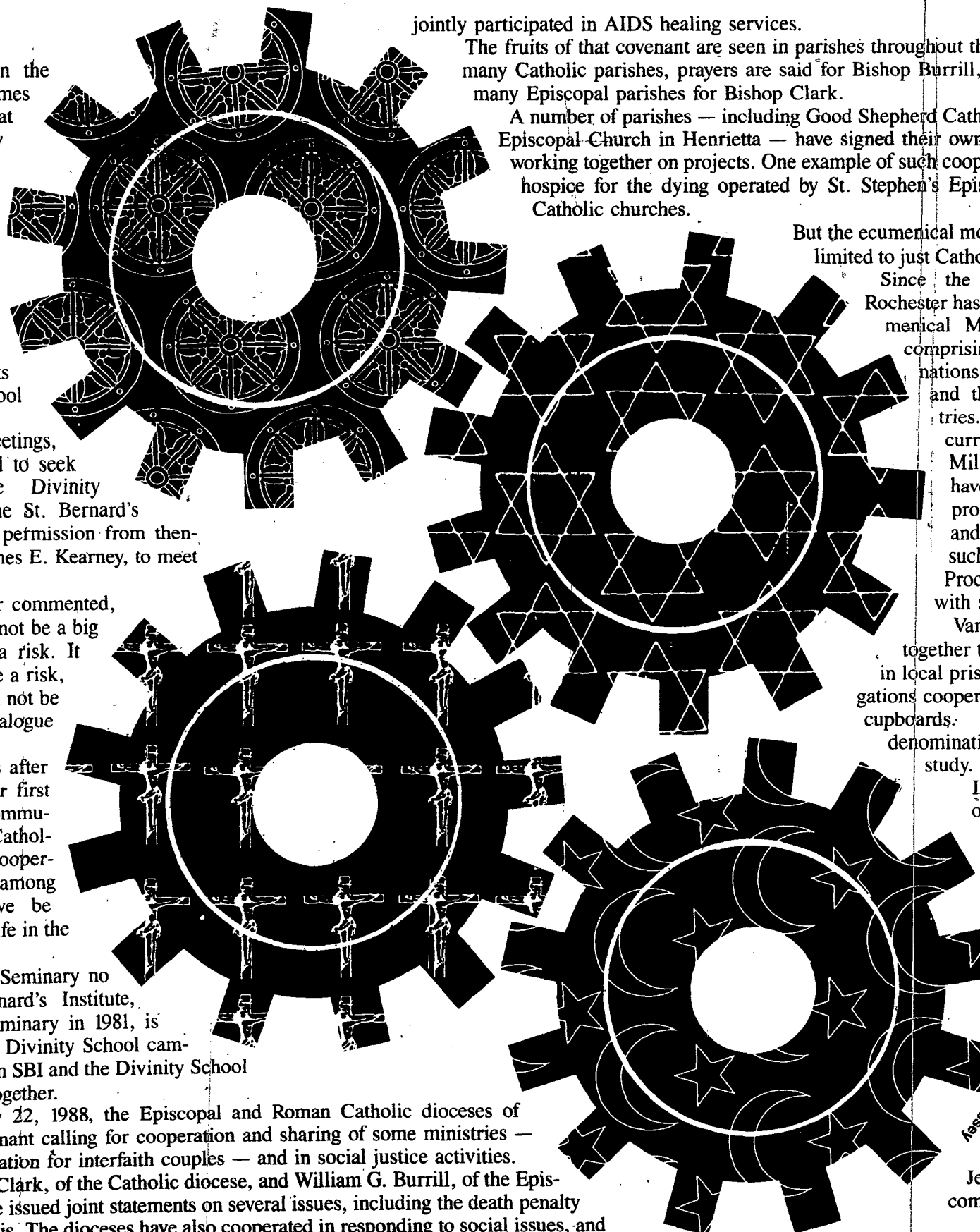
Since the 1970s, the Diocese of Rochester has been part of Genesee Ecumenical Ministries, an organization comprising nine Christian denominations, six clusters of churches, and the United Church Ministries. Through GEM — whose current president is the Rev. Miller — member churches have offered joint education programs, sponsored speakers and conferences, and created such groups as the Judicial Process Commission to deal with social issues.

Various churches now work together to offer chaplaincy services in local prisons and hospitals. Congregations cooperate to run community food cupboards. People from different denominations meet jointly for Bible study.

In addition, the Catholic diocese has, in conjunction with the local Jewish community, formed a Jewish/Christian dialogue group that has been meeting at St. Mary's Church in downtown Rochester.

On Jan. 9, Bishops Clark and Burrill, as well as representatives of a variety of Christian and non-Christian churches — including the Jewish, Muslim and Jain communities — met to form

Continued on page 14



Graphic by Lorraine Hennessy