



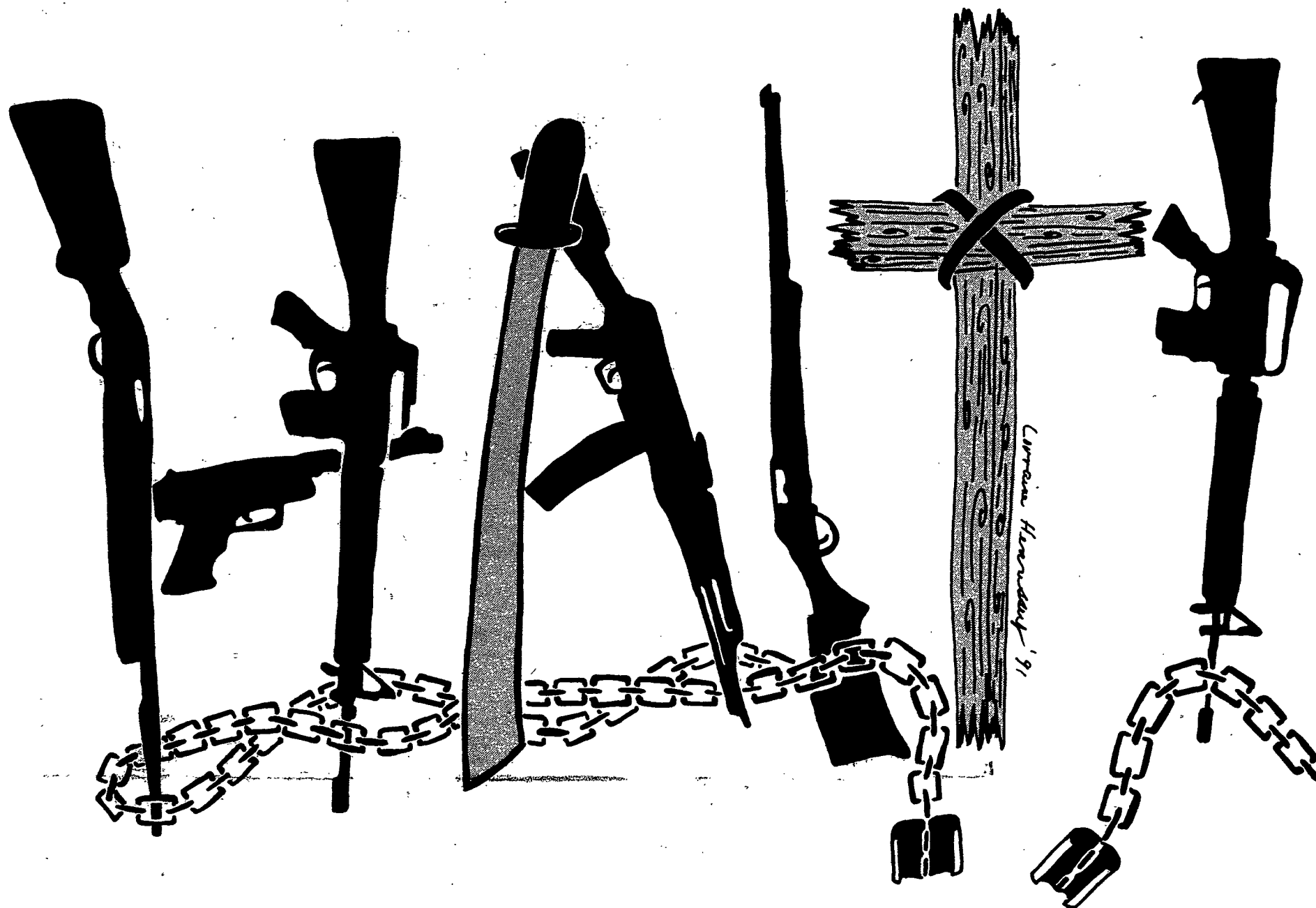
# CATHOLIC COURIER

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## Hispanic heritage

Hispanic Catholics in the diocese can find a wealth of resources from their native and ancestral lands at the Spanish Apostolate's Guaronex Library, located on North Clinton Avenue in Rochester. Page 7.



“Haiti has only one voter. The army. Ha ha.” That was the 1988 observation of Haitian General Henri Namphy, who then had ruled the Caribbean nation for two years.

Namphy's joke lost some of its punch when a former member of the Salesian order, Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, won Haiti's presidency on Dec. 16, 1990. The priest captured nearly 70 percent of the ballots in the first free and independent election ever to take place in the nation.

Haitian Catholic immigrant Lys Francis remembers well the day democracy arrived at last in Haiti.

“Personally, I was elated,” recalled Francis, who has lived in Rochester since 1974. “I was happy to see that the country would finally move toward some changes. It's a day I will probably never forget.”

But recent months have revealed the kernel of truth in Gen. Namphy's quip. Only time will tell whether Francis eventually remembers Dec. 16 as the beginning of Haitian democracy or as the start of a brief and somewhat peaceful respite from Haiti's relentless political violence.

For on Sept. 30, the army cast its vote in a military coup that deposed President Aristide. Since his ouster, the ruling junta has earned the condemnation of the Organization of American States. The OAS also has imposed a U.S.-supported economic embargo on the tiny nation, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic to the east.

Yet, as of this week, Haiti's rulers have not announced any intention of allowing the exiled president to return to his country — the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere and a region stalked by illiteracy, hunger, disease and political violence.

Haitian Catholics in the Diocese of Rochester voice a wide range of opinions about the toppled priest-president and his usurpers.

For Lionel Honorat the coup is a family affair. A parishioner at Rochester's St. Anne's Church and former member of the Diocesan Office of Black Ministries' board of directors, he is the brother of current Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Jacques Honorat.

Lionel Honorat was a legal adviser in the Haitian military in 1963 when President Francois “Papa Doc” Duvalier exiled him for having criticized the dictator in a conversation with other officers. He recalled making a hasty exit from his birthland to Brazil.

“When I left, I left only with my uniform,” he said.

“I didn't even take my baptismal certificate.”

Honorat's brother, Jean-Jacques, who was director-general of Haitian tourism in the 1950s, suffered a similar fate. In 1980, Papa Doc's son, Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier, expelled him from Haiti. Jean-Jacques Honorat formed a human-rights organization in New York City and, when he returned to Haiti in 1986, founded the Haitian Center for Human Rights.

The human-rights activist also criticized Father Aristide and was installed as prime minister by the regime that ousted the priest-

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## Haitian weigh coup's effects

Writer