

# Laboring to renew the church



Banner bearers walk down Main street from the Riverside Convention Center to the War Memorial for the closing Mass Oct. 3.



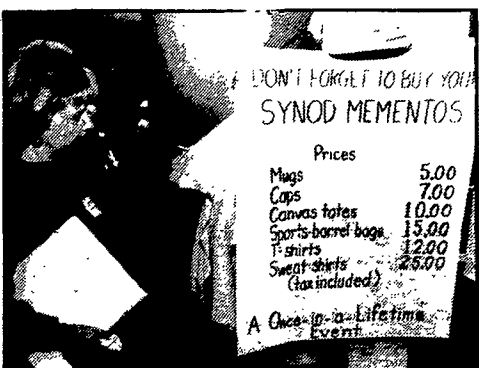
Delegate Christopher Olek finds his name tag at the registration table with the help of Sara Vandermeid Oct 1. More than 1,300 delegates attended the Synod.



A Hosanna Sacred dancer carries incense to the altar set up in the center of the War Memorial.



Bishop Matthew H. Clark presided over the Oct. 3 Mass, which was concelebrated by Bishops Joseph L. Hogan, Dennis W. Hickey, the bishops of the New York Providence, and Rochester diocesan priests.



Delegate Joanne Carroll checks out the assorted merchandise during a break between meetings.



Bishop Clark prepares for the opening ceremony at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center Oct. 1.

Photos by  
S. John Wilkin  
Staff photographer

## Delegates call for women's ordination, married priests

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — If the Catholic church in the Rochester diocese had its way, priests could marry and women could be priests.

So spoke many voices at the recently completed seventh General Synod in diocesan history.

The delegates approved two "prophetic recommendations" calling for the ordination of women to the diaconate and priesthood, and ending the

restriction of the priesthood to celibates.

On a "yes/no" vote, 945 delegates voted in favor of women's ordination, and 277 voted against the recommendation. On the matter of recommending changes in celibacy requirements for priests, 1,020 delegates voted "yes" and 199 voted "no."

Unlike the five priorities selected to guide the diocese in the coming years, these are recommendations that the local church is unable to implement or — as the official synod program noted

— are "clearly meant for the universal church."

Indeed, both recommendations were justified, in part, by appeals to a sense of urgency regarding the shortage of priests — a situation that directly affects the church's sacramental life, the recommendations noted.

"The Eucharist is central the life of the Catholic Community but the scarcity of priests will soon threaten the availability of weekly Eucharistic celebrations in some of the parishes of the diocese," stated the recommendation

on priestly celibacy.

That statement also asked Bishop Matthew H. Clark to bring the case before the U.S. Conference of Bishops and Rome.

One priest welcomed the introduction of both questions at the Synod.

"I think that these issues should be presented to Rome," said Father David P. Reid, SS.CC., pastor of St. Peter and Paul Church in Rochester. "Hopefully, other local churches will make like moves."

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