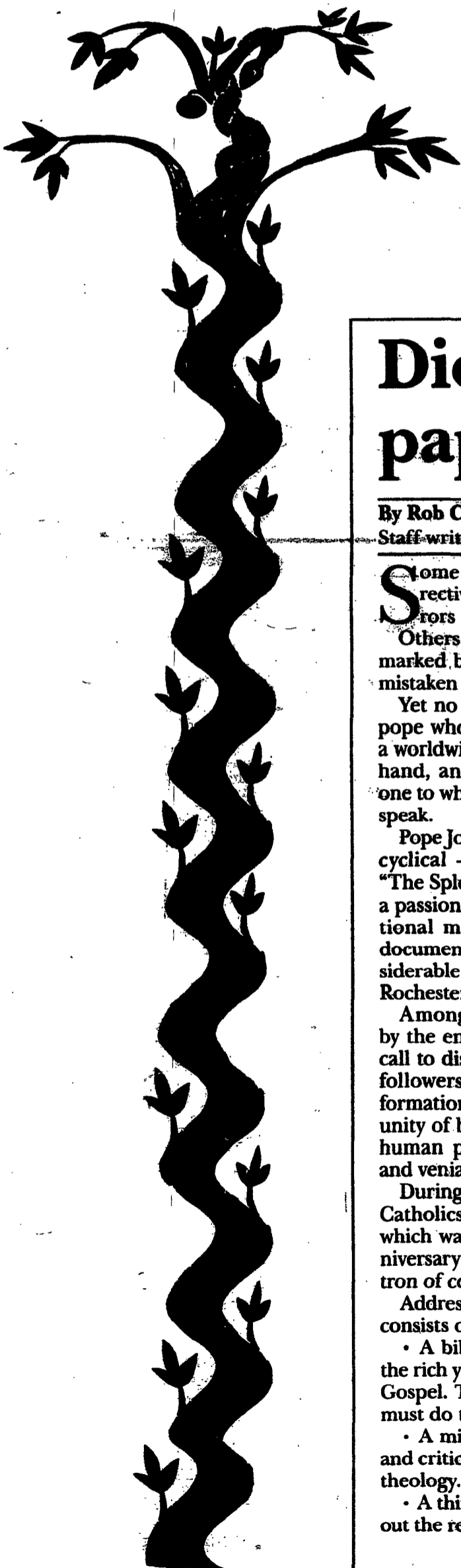


# Catholic Courier

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ VOL. 105 NO. 24 ■ THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1994 ■ 75¢ ■ 28 PAGES/2 sections

## Veritatis Splendor

*God, who alone is good, knows perfectly what is good for man, and by virtue of his very love proposes this good to man in the commandments.*



### Diocesan Catholics consider papal encyclical's firm stance

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff-writer

Some see the encyclical as a long-needed corrective for a church and world riddled with errors and moral laxity.

Others see it as an ambiguous, flawed document marked by sexist language, and questionable and mistaken conclusions.

Yet no one can deny that it bears the mark of a pope who genuinely believes a worldwide moral crisis is at hand, and that this crisis is one to which the church must speak.

Pope John Paul II's latest encyclical — *Veritatis Splendor* "The Splendor of Truth" — is a passionate defense of traditional moral thinking. The document has provoked considerable interest here in the Rochester diocese.

Among the issues tackled by the encyclical are Christ's call to discipleship for all his followers; freedom and the formation of conscience; the unity of body and soul in the human person; and mortal and venial sin.

During the last two weeks, a number of diocesan Catholics have gathered to discuss the encyclical, which was released on Oct. 5, 1993, the 200th anniversary of the death of St. Alphonsus Liguori, patron of confessors and moralists.

Addressed to the world's bishops, the document consists of three major sections:

- A biblical meditation on Jesus' dialogue with the rich young man in the 19th chapter of Matthew's Gospel. The young man asks Christ what good he must do to inherit eternal life.
- A middle chapter, which is doctrinal in nature and criticizes certain trends in contemporary moral theology.
- A third chapter, pastoral in nature, which points out the relevance of Catholic moral teaching for the

church and the world.

On Friday, March 11, about 55 pastors and parish staff members from around the diocese assembled at St. Bernard's Institute in Rochester to hear various presentations on *Veritatis Splendor* and its implications for pastoral practices.

Speakers examined the document from several different angles, including its use of Scriptural references; its place in the development of moral theology since Vatican II; and its potential role in addressing the dire situations facing many world cultures.

Many attendees said they found the encyclical's nearly exclusive use of male pronouns to be an immediate hindrance to reading its contents with an appreciative eye.

Others found the encyclical to contain ambiguous passages, particularly when it waded into such areas as suicide or alcoholism, issues that often call for delicate pastoral approaches critics contend the encyclical did not discuss properly.

On Tuesday, March 15, more than 100 people attended one session in a series of talks on the encyclical at St.

Thomas the Apostle Parish in Irondequoit. The talks are part of the ongoing adult-education programs of the Irenaeus Study Center, and are being given by Father Jack Healy of McQuaid Jesuit High School in Rochester.

Father Healy used the encyclical as a backdrop for explaining both traditional and modern approaches to Catholic morality, a discussion that prompted audience members to inquire on how Catholics might reason their way to various moral stances on such issues as the death penalty, war and contraception.

"The pope wants to make the case that there are universal and immutable laws," Father Healy stated, citing the precept that "it is wrong to kill an innocent

Continued on page 18



a

at the num-  
ely oppose  
ween them  
adys of this  
lions who  
about easy  
et stood up  
iticians.  
on is what  
l Rifle As-  
event. Lar-  
ne wonder-  
ose people  
ing.

reviewer liv-

in order pre-  
/o Penfield  
City, Iowa  
d handling.

ke  
m



sta Pictures  
line Chas-  
jewel thief  
ef.

sexual innu-  
p. The U.S.  
ion is A-III  
association  
ted.

EDS

TS

EPTED

40

ET

oll



pt.