

Cardinal's shoes will be hard to fill

By Father Richard P. McBrien
Syndicated columnist

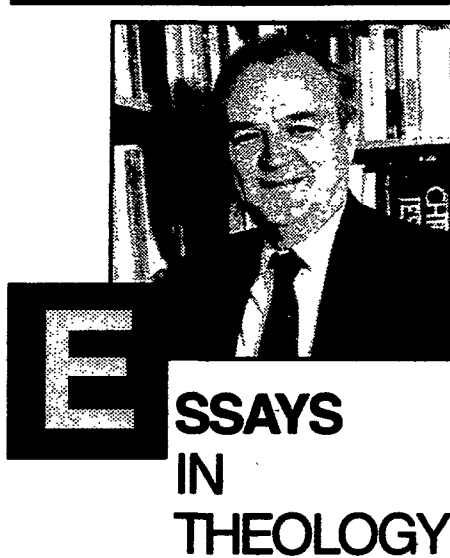
Cardinal John J. O'Connor, archbishop of New York, is scheduled to retire Jan. 15, 1995, when he turns 75. The New York press is in the first stages of speculation about his successor, and various names have been floated by sources who choose not to be identified. William Keeler, archbishop of Baltimore, has been mentioned, perhaps because he is also president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Others include Theodore McCarrick, archbishop of Newark, and Edward Egan, bishop of Bridgeport, Conn. Both are former auxiliary bishops of New York, a not insignificant item, as we shall see below.

If the pope should go outside of New York, someone like Francis Stafford, archbishop of Denver, could be given serious attention. Like the preceding two prospects, he is militantly conservative on theological and pastoral issues. In addition, he has the advantage of having hosted Pope John Paul II last summer for the World Youth Day festivities.

But most speculators are wrong about their picks. There is an old Italian saying about the favorite who goes into a conclave as pope and comes out a cardinal.

Few, if any, forecasters were prepared when the former rear admiral and chief of naval chaplains, John O'Connor, was plucked out of the diocese of Scranton, Pa., only seven months after his installation there.



**ESSAYS
IN
THEOLOGY**

To be sure, Bishop O'Connor, like Archbishop McCarrick and Bishop Egan, had previous New York connections. From 1979 until 1983 he had been auxiliary bishop to the military vicar, none other than the archbishop of New York, the late Cardinal Terence Cooke, himself a former auxiliary bishop of New York. Even so, Bishop O'Connor's appointment came as a big surprise to most handicappers.

Perhaps the most interesting name in the hopper today is that of a current auxiliary bishop of New York, Henry Mansell, appointed in November 1992. The former chancellor of the archdiocese, he is regarded locally as a favorite of Cardinal O'Connor — so much so that the archdiocese seems a bit sensitive about speculation that centers on Bishop Mansell.

One request for the bishop's biography elicited a defensive reaction. "His Eminence is not in the business of naming his own successor" — or words to that effect.

But His Eminence will probably have more to say about his successor than anyone else except the pope himself.

The Archdiocese of New York is the most important ecclesiastical see in the United States, not because of its size (Los Angeles, for example, is larger), but because it is headquartered in the media and financial capital of the world.

Whoever sits in the bishop's chair at St. Patrick's Cathedral is automatically a major public figure, sought after by newspapers, television, and radio alike.

The late and saintly Cardinal Cooke evidently did not relish that public role, preferring instead to work behind the scenes, away from the glare of television lights.

When there were sensitive matters to be discussed — for example, public policy on abortion — the late cardinal and the former governor of New York, Hugh Carey, tried to work their differences out privately, on neutral ground (such as in a physician's office).

Cardinal Cooke's style was in sharp contrast to the intensely public disputes that his successor has had with New York's current governor, Mario Cuomo, and with the 1984 Democratic candidate for vice president, Geraldine Ferraro.

Unless the incumbent is uncommonly self-effacing in the manner of

Cardinal Cooke, the archbishop of New York is potentially the most powerful ecclesiastical figure in the United States, even if he is not the president of the NCCB.

He is important not only because of the archdiocese he leads, but, in Cardinal O'Connor's case, also because of the unusually close bond of trust he enjoys with Pope John Paul II.

It caused no surprise when the Holy Father designated Cardinal O'Connor last month to address the consistory of 114 cardinals regarding the Cairo conference on world population. He is simply the most influential American bishop at the Vatican, bar none.

And that's because he is exactly the kind of bishop Pope John Paul II thinks is needed to recover whatever losses he believes the Catholic Church has suffered since Vatican II and then to restore and fortify the moral leadership of the church as it moves into a new century and a new millennium.

If this is so, the next archbishop of New York should be a carbon copy of the present one. However, the Holy Father would have to search far and wide to find a candidate better suited to New York — by the pope's standards — than the man already there.

Undoubtedly, the pope already knows that — which is why His Eminence will probably not retire next January. Assuming good health on both sides, the pope is likely to ask him to stay on, and the cardinal is more than likely to bow to the pope's wishes.

But only time will tell.

To listen to Jesus is to obey

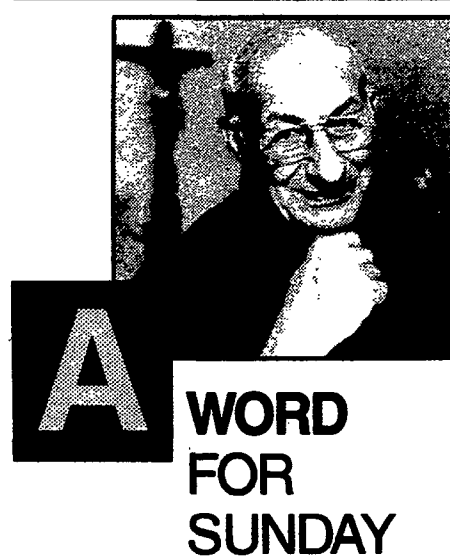
By Father Albert Shamon
Courier columnist

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mark 6:7-13; (R1) Amos 7:12-15; (R2) Ephesians 1:3-14.

Jesus had two objectives in His public life: first, to redeem the world; and secondly, to found a church to bring His redemption to all mankind. He started with the second objective first by calling 12 to Himself.

The Latin word for church is *ecclesia*, meaning "called together." The church is constituted by those called together by Jesus. One of His first acts was to call together four of the disciples of John the Baptist: Andrew, Peter, John and James. At Bethsaida, He picked up Philip and Bartholomew. With these six He went to Cana where He changed water into wine. Soon, the six became 12.

Jesus kept them with Himself. He wanted them to absorb the Gospel



**A
WORD
FOR
SUNDAY**

message, authenticated by His many miracles. After they had been with Him for some time, He sent them out to share in His work. They fanned out in six different directions. They went

two by two, for two witnesses are required in order to guarantee the truth of what they said (Deuteronomy 17:6). The fact Mark says that Jesus *began* to send them out implies continuance.

Their mission was to proclaim the need of repentance. They, too, authenticated their preaching by expelling demons and working many cures. The chief equipment for their task was the knowledge that Jesus Himself had commissioned the work. They were to entrust themselves to the Lord for the work. They were to entrust themselves to the Lord for the necessities. They were to take nothing but walking sticks and sandals. For hospitality, they were to accept the first offer. To move to more luxurious quarters would be more than bad manners; it would be a rejection of divine providence.

But Jesus warned them to expect rejection from some. Jesus told parables about good seed falling on bad

ground, about wicked tenants who beat the master's messengers, about guests who refused the king's invitation. "Some places will not receive you or hear you," He told them. What was to be their response?

Obviously, if they weren't accepted by a town or village, their feet would not be washed, so they were to shake off the dust from their feet and check out. This symbolic action stated that people such as the residents of an unreceptive town are heathens in the eyes of God. Such a dramatic sign would possibly cause people to rethink their position and yet repent.

The word "absurd" comes from the Latin *ab-surdus* meaning "absolutely deaf." To fail to listen is to become absurd. On the other hand, "obedience" is from a Latin root, *ob-audiens*, which means "to listen thoroughly." Not to listen to the Gospel is absurdity; to listen to it is to obey.

STOREWIDE SALE
30% off

all gifts and all Hallmark cards,
albums, giftwrap & candles

Colony

Card & Gift Shoppe

840 Merchants Rd. • 654-9860

*Please patronize our
advertisers.*

BARTOLOMEO
FUNERAL HOME, INC.



Peter W. Giuliani, Jr. Philip P. Perotto Michael P. Perotto

Personalized service in the community
since 1922.

1425 Lexington Avenue, Rochester, NY 14606
conveniently located near 390

(716) 254-5400



**Hilton East Residential Home's
20th Anniversary**

We Are Welcoming You To Join Us For A

Celebration Picnic

at

Hilton East

231 East Avenue, Hilton, New York

Featuring 2 Performances byJOSIE WAVERLY

Sunday, July 17, 1994 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Picnic Lunch Provided (your own lawn chairs, please)

Hilton East Tours Available