

'Support one another in LOVE'

# Penfield youths ranked highly with ex-pastor

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

PENFIELD — Youths in the Syracuse diocese are surely curious about their new bishop's commitment to their age group.

Yet if they were to spend a few minutes speaking with members of St. Joseph's Church, that uncertainty would quickly give way to eager anticipation.

In his tenure as St. Joseph's pastor from 1976-1991, then-Father James M. Moynihan was somewhat of a pioneer in youth ministry. St. Joseph's has employed a full-time paid youth-ministry coordinator for more than a decade, making it one of the first parishes in the Rochester diocese to enter into such a commitment.

"He had an awareness that young people are different, and he had a respect for that," recalled Nora Bradbury-Haehl, St. Joseph's current director of youth ministry. "The kids didn't see him as this old man who didn't want to have anything to do with their lives and didn't understand them."

"He's always been very supportive of the youth," said Therese Stone, 28. "Any time we wanted to go on a youth retreat, the parish would pay half. When I'd see him at church, he'd always ask me what I was doing and give me a big hug."

"Whenever he'd see me, he would always have a big smile and say, 'Hi, how are you doing?'" added Peggy Riley, 21. "I felt he was very interested in my life — genuinely."

Therese and Peggy were youth-group members and also participated in Morningstar, a parish folk group. In addition, they were students at St. Joseph's School.

Peggy laughingly recalls having an initial fear of the lanky Monsignor Moynihan during her school days.

"I was petrified — this towering man standing over this little runt. And he always handed out the report cards," said Peggy.

Yet as she grew older, Peggy formed a close relationship with Monsignor Moynihan through her involvement in parish activities — including her stint as a parish council teen member.

"I felt very respected, that my opinion was valued," she said.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

(Clockwise, from bottom left) Therese Stone, Nora Bradbury-Haehl, Peggy Riley and Matt Glisson were all influenced by Bishop-designate James M. Moynihan's commitment to youth at St. Joseph's Church in Penfield. The priest was pastor there from 1976-1991.

Peggy was also on the hiring committee for a new youth-ministry coordinator six years ago. Bradbury-Haehl noted that when she went for her second interview during this period, she was struck by Monsignor Moynihan's faith in his parishioners' decision-making ability.

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“Very early on (Monsignor Moynihan) said, 'Well, as far as I'm concerned you're hired, because the committee likes you,'" said Bradbury-Haehl. "And I said to myself, 'Wow, if this person puts that much stock in his committee, I'll like working for him!'"

Bradbury-Haehl added that this philosophy of delegating with care and confidence should serve Monsignor

Moynihan well as he assumes the bishop's role.

"He believes that when you empower somebody, that's when incredible things can happen. He makes people feel very capable," Bradbury-Haehl said.

Therese described Monsignor Moynihan's approach to his groups and committees as, "You guys have identified this need; now go out and fill it."

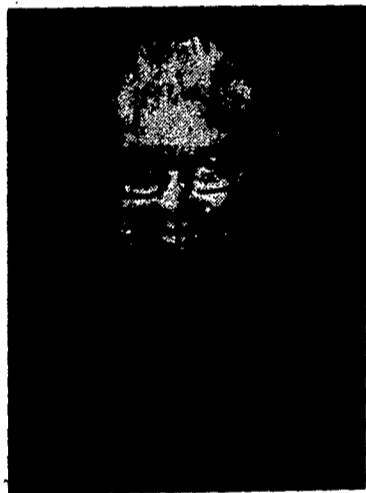
Peggy also pointed out that Monsignor Moynihan is amply equipped to handle the conflicts that are sure to arise as a diocese's bishop.

"Even if someone has a different opinion, I don't see him not being able to touch them," said Peggy.

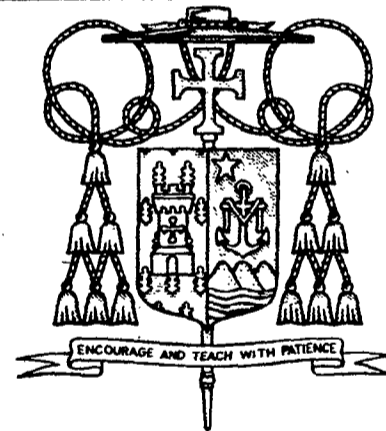
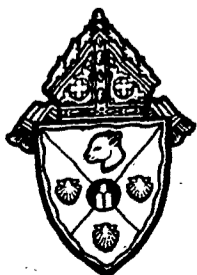
"There's a sense that he's really listening to you — not just a sense, he is. He will listen to different people's opinions," added Matt Glisson, 18, a former altar server and St. Joseph's School student.

Those interviewed said they weren't surprised upon hearing last month that Pope John Paul II had named Monsignor Moynihan as Syracuse's bishop.

"I have relatives in Syracuse and all I can say is, they're going to be lucky," Matt concluded.



Bishop John R. McGann,  
his fellow bishops and the  
entire people of God of the  
Rockville Centre, N.Y., Diocese  
join in congratulating  
Bishop James M. Moynihan,  
Ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Syracuse.



Bishop Paul S. Loverde  
and  
the People of the Diocese of Ogdensburg  
offer

Sincere Congratulations to

Bishop James M. Moynihan

on the Occasion of His

Episcopal Ordination

and

Installation as

9th Bishop of Syracuse

Ad Multos Annos!