

# WORLD & NATION

## Kennedys

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Bishop Sean P. O'Malley of Fall River, Mass., happened to be at St. Francis Xavier Church in Hyannis, Mass., July 18 for an evening Mass celebrating renovations at the Cape Cod church.

In a July 19 statement, he said, "I could not help but recall that the beautiful altar which adorns the sanctuary was a generous gift of John's grandparents, Ambassador and Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy, to memorialize their first-born son, Joseph."

He also remembered Rose Kennedy's "profound faith," and said he hoped the same "strong foundation of faith" would sustain the family now.

In offering prayers for the Kennedy and Bessette families, Bishop O'Malley said he wished especially to extend "heartfelt prayers to Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg, who has lost still another member of her immediate family in such a tragic manner."

Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston also offered condolences to both families.

"To all who mourn the deaths of John, Carolyn and Lauren, I offer the one lasting hope without which we would despair," he said in a statement July 19. "We all die enfolded in the promise of eternal life given us by the Lord."

Among parishes praying in the Diocese of Rochester for the Kennedy family was St. Stephen's, Geneva. Parishioner Pat McGuire had been Lauren Bessette's academic adviser during her last two years at William Smith College in Geneva. She graduated in 1986 with a B.A. in economics.

"I remember her because she was an outstanding student and a really wonderful person," said McGuire, a professor of economics at Hobart and William Smith Colleges for 30 years. "She also was in four or five of my classes. ...I'm sure if she walked

in the door we'd be old friends meeting again."

Although he probably met Bessette's family at graduation, he said, "My only memory is of someone just a delight to know and it's very sad this had happened. Very sad."

Bishop Edward M. Egan of Bridgeport, Conn., said that as the head of the diocese in which the Bessette family resides, "I express to the parents, sister, other relatives and friends of Carolyn and Lauren my heartfelt sympathy."

In a July 19 statement, he said that clergy, religious and laity throughout the diocese would continue to pray for the victims.

"The passing of these three extraordinary young people is a source of great sadness for the entire Catholic community of Fairfield County," he said.

Father Michael Moynihan, pastor at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Greenwich, Conn., put three candles near the altar July 17 in remembrance of the victims.

He told Catholic News Service he got the idea after friends of Carolyn and Lauren Bessette had asked if there would be a special service at St. Michael's.

The church is adjacent to Greenwich Catholic School, an elementary school that formerly housed St. Mary High School, from which Carolyn Bessette graduated in 1983. Lauren Bessette graduated from Greenwich High School a year earlier.

Father Moynihan said the parish cantor also sang "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" — known as the Navy Hymn — after Communion at the parish's six weekend Masses.

And, at the regular children's liturgy July 18, he said, he talked with parish children about the plane accident, explaining "that we help someone through our prayers." He also noted that some of their parents had gone to St. Mary's with Carolyn Bessette.



CNS/Reuters

Carolyn Bessette and her husband, John F. Kennedy Jr., arrive for an awards dinner in New York in this May 19 file photo. The couple and Bessette's sister, Lauren, were aboard a small plane that disappeared July 16.

Father Moynihan said several parishioners knew at least one of the victims.

Joseph McAleer, spokesman for the Bridgeport Diocese, told CNS that Bessette family members are not members of St. Michael's and have never belonged to that parish.

In the Diocese of Savannah, Ga., where Kennedy and Carolyn Bessette were married in 1996, Bishop J. Kevin Boland said his prayers, too, were with members of the Kennedy and Bessette families.

In a July 19 statement, Bishop Boland recalled that he had to give special permission for the wedding to be held in a 19th-century Baptist church on Cumberland Island in his diocese.

About six weeks after the wedding, he said, Kennedy phoned to personally thank him for his help.

"I was very impressed with his courtesy in calling to express his gratitude for something that was so easy to grant," Bishop Boland said. Kennedy also said he "appreciated very much" that the bishop had kept the wedding plans confidential, he remembered.

The bishop said that Kennedy, who had learned the bishop was recovering from leg surgery, also inquired about his health during the five-minute call.

Bishop Boland, who was leaving later July 19 for a seminary reunion and vacation in his native Ireland, said in the statement, "The people in Ireland had a great admi-

ration for President Kennedy and his entire family. I know they will be feeling a great sense of loss because of the disappearance of John Jr."

In other reactions July 19, Cardinal James A. Hickey of Washington said prayers for the Kennedy and Bessette families had been offered at weekend Masses throughout the archdiocese.

He said in a statement, "I pray that they may find solace in their faith and be comforted by the Lord's healing love."

In Philadelphia, Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua said that, upon learning of the missing plane, "I immediately began praying for both families." He said he hoped they would find strength "in knowing that many people are keeping them in prayer."

Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore said, "Our hearts and prayers are with all those who have been touched by the sad news regarding John F. Kennedy Jr. and those with him."

In Los Angeles, Cardinal Roger M. Mahony offered prayers during a July 18 Mass ending the National Catholic Gathering for Jubilee Justice at the University of California at Los Angeles.

The night before, some 3,000 social justice workers participating in the meeting joined in a moment of silent prayer for Kennedy, his wife and sister-in-law.

And Cardinal John J. O'Connor prayed for the crash victims at a July 18 Youth 2000 event in the New York Archdiocese.

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