



Bishop Hickey enjoys a moment with his sisters Kay, left, and Helen at the Campbell home in Crestwood, N.Y., in 1982.



Bishop Hickey baptized his grandniece, Allison, at the Marian shrine, Our Lady of Wallsingham, England Aug. 24, 1984. Mary Caldwell holds Allison, and Pat holds older brother Nicholas. Nick. Godparents were James and Mickey Sprance.

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"I remember the day Dennis and Helen were sitting on the front steps the last day they were here. I lived across the street from them and we were good friends. I hated to see the Hickey family go," she remarked.

In 1959 Father Hickey was named a monsignor, and his niece recalls wondering as a child what all the fuss was about. "He was just a lot of fun at home," she remarked. "He was so informal."

"He loved music, especially Tommy Dorsey and the swing bands," she continued, adding that she could never predict what would be playing on his stereo — swing or Gregorian chant.

Bishop Hickey was well known for his dry wit, but Mary Caldwell recalls incidents that hint of a somewhat zany side as well. She remembers numerous instances from her childhood when Bishop Hickey — then in his 40s or 50s — played tricks on the family dogs. He would repeatedly ring doorbells, leap from closets to startle them and chase the dogs around the house with vacuum cleaners, she said.

"He liked to play golf, but he didn't like the clothes. That was always a problem for his sisters," his niece recalled. "They were horrified that he'd go golfing looking like the pool cleaner."

"He was wonderful with kids. He was not the kind of guy who would get down on the floor and play, but he would coax kids into being themselves. He always spoke to kids as adults. I always thought he was very respectful of children," Mary Caldwell said, adding that she especially appreciated the interest Bishop Hickey took in what her children were thinking. "I always thought he felt talking to kids in a silly way was demeaning."

Often accompanied by his friend Father Paul Wohlrab, Bishop Hickey traveled to see his family in a variety of far-flung locales. Although he visited the Campbell and Caldwell families in such countries as England, Venezuela and even Malaysia, Bishop Hickey had no interest in visiting them in Ireland.

"He couldn't walk in the country. He had to walk in cities

where he could see things," his niece remarked.

When he visited Mary's parents in London, he always made a point of visiting the shrine of St. John Fisher in Rochester, England. She noted that he loved English history, and was "in his element" there.

"I would want him to be more Irish than he was, but he saw himself as American," Mary Caldwell said. Though he would clip and send her articles about Ireland and Celtic culture, he did not take much interest in them himself.

While visiting the Caldwells in England in 1984, he baptized Allison at the Marian shrine at Our Lady of Wallsingham. (He baptized her elder brother Nicholas in 1982 at the family's parish, Annunciation, in Crestwood, N.Y.)

During his two trips to visit the Caldwells in Malaysia — where Patrick, an Air Force colonel now retired, was Air Force attache to the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur from 1993 to 1997 — "he was indefatigable," Mary Caldwell recalled. "He was fascinated by the church there. I saw more Catholic churches when he was with us than I knew existed."

She noted that the church of Malaysia has a slightly anti-Western bias and is heavily oriented toward pomp and circumstance. So during Bishop Hickey's visits to the family in Malaysia, the Caldwell residence became known among Kuala Lumpur's Western Catholics as "Mary's cathedral and cafe."

"Everyone was just thrilled to have Uncle Dennis and Father Wohlrab there," she said. "Fifty or 60 people would go to Mass at our house."

She noted that her Malaysian housekeeper kept bringing Bishop Hickey large quantities of bottled drinking water to bless.

"We found out later that she was selling it as 'Bishop's Water,' which they thought was much better than ordinary holy water," she said with a laugh. "He didn't say anything when we told him — just raised his eyebrow."

Mary Caldwell said that on the evening after her uncle died, she wondered whether he and other deceased family members were having

Manhattans in heaven.

"I'm sure my father is there mixing them, and Uncle Dennis is saying 'They're too strong; add an ice cube,'" she mused.



Dennis Hickey in 1933.

I remember when I was probably a first-grader and news had come out of Dennis being named a monsignor. My mother dressed me up in a cute little pair of shorts; it was a warm day. The bishop's parents lived up the street from us. I walked up and congratulated his mother on his being named monsignor. I rang the doorbell. Mrs. Hickey graciously invited me in. It was a pretty important day in the neighborhood. It must be important to me. I remember it vividly. I remember the doorbell. I went in with a big smile on my face.

John F. Rauber, Dansville parishioner

He had his inaugural Mass at St. Patrick's in Dansville, in 1941. I was one of the altar boys. I just remember being there. It was quite an honor back then. You used to go by age, the older ones got to go to the more important Masses. He was quite a fellow. It was quite a thing to have somebody ordained a priest from Dansville.

Donald McGovern, Dansville parishioner

He was six years older than me. His father, Walter, was a station agent for the D. & W. station. His father also sold blue coal — a coal treated with a chemical to color it, from Scranton, Pennsylvania, a kind of novelty.

I've lived in the house his father and mother lived in, since 1956. It was a convent for St. Mary's Church during the 1930s. Dansville is the same population as 100 years ago — 5,000-6,000.

I remember as a kid going up to the first house the family grew up in, on Knox Street. It had one of those old-fashioned side yard swings, the wooden swings. I remember being in that.

William Kelly, Dansville parishioner

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