

I was ordained a priest in 1968, and was also a deacon that March at the consecrations of Bishop Hickey and Bishop McCafferty.

Bishop Hickey was just one of the absolute joys of my being at Holy Family Church, where I was pastor from 1990 to 1995. He'd be a true servant - whatever made life easier for me. He was a good cook; he could pull together a good turkey dinner.

He had such an integrity. You might not agree with him, but you could never get angry at Bishop Hickey.

If you were to think of one priest who was loved by every priest in this diocese, conservative or liberal, it would be him.

Father James Schwartz,
pastor, St. Louis Church,
Pittsford

At critical times, he was a good listener. He would shed some historical reference and was quick to point out that we had been through something like this before, and we'd get through it again. You know, "This, too, shall pass."

He was a wonderful, unique link with our history, having served under three bishops and being in the chancery when Bishop Kearney was here.

The thing I enjoyed most of all when I would visit him at the Mercy (McAuley Residence) was, he did not want to talk about the old times. He wanted to know what was going on now.

Father John Mulligan,
vicar general since 1988 and
pastor of Most Precious
Blood Church, Rochester

He loved saying the Mass. I think he held (the faithful) in high regard, and exemplified, for me, what a priest is and should always be.

He was very compassionate, very concerned about the needs of the people. He was willing to give up his own time right up until he wasn't able to do it anymore.

Father Louis A. Sirianni,
diocesan judicial vicar and
sacramental minister at
Guardian Angels Church,
Henrietta



Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey at a confirmation of migrant workers, 1973, with Msgr. Joe Sullivan, far left, and Father John Dillon, far right.

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An auxiliary bishop's duty is to assist the bishop in administrative and pastoral care. He has the same powers of the bishop, but must have the bishop's permission to exercise them within that bishop's jurisdiction. Bishop Hickey would serve three bishops, Bishop Sheen as well as Bishops Joseph L. Hogan and Matthew H. Clark.

"Each bishop has had his own method of operation, and I've felt comfortable with each one," he said, with an air of diplomacy, in 1998. By that time he had become the senior bishop in New York state, with 30 years of service behind him.

Also in 1968, Bishop Sheen appointed Bishop Hickey director of priest personnel.

"In making transfers, if priests didn't want to be transferred, he'd have to smooth the way for it," Father Shamon observed. "For example, if an appointment had to be made to a difficult position, usually he would pave the way for it, and talk with the priest, and then if there was a little difficulty sometimes with the priest he would handle it.

"He did more work in the background that was unsung and unnoticed actually, but he kept things very smooth ... in the workings of the diocese. ... He always seemed to be given the problems of the diocese and seemed to handle them with great tact, charity and wisdom."

On the first anniversary of his consecration as auxiliary, Bishop Hickey told the *Courier*, "Having a year as his vicar general before becoming an auxiliary gave me some preparation for sharing diocesan problems with Bishop Sheen. But this past year has been the very longest of my life."

During his years as auxiliary bishop, Bishop Hickey also implemented the priests' retirement program; helped start Ministry to Priests, a "priests supporting priests" program; and was active in the 1970s, with Father Sebastian Falcone, in forming the permanent diaconate and a committee to guide parishes in the hiring of pastoral assistants.

"I found it very easy to work with him," Father Falcone said. "He was open to ideas. He recognized the fundamental challenge of change that was in the atmosphere at that point."

Deacon Anthony Mercadel, ordained in 1982, belonged to the



From left, Fathers Kevin McKenna, Robert F. McNamara, Joseph Brennan, Peter Clifford with Bishop Hickey as he confers the order of acolyte upon Dan O'Shea at St. Bernard's Seminary.

first class of permanent deacons and was one of the first black deacons in the diocese. Bishop Hickey encouraged him in his vocation, Deacon Mercadel said, adding that the bishop occasionally performed sacramental duties at Guardian Angels Church, where the deacon is based.

"He's the only bishop I've preached to, so I had quite a good impression of him," Deacon Mercadel said with a chuckle. "He

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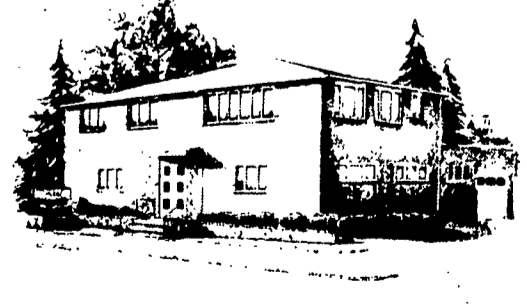
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