

Nobody I knew had ever died. It sounds strange, but I wondered what would go on at the funeral (for my grandfather). I went in to see Bishop Hickey ... I remember how I felt. I went in very confused, kind of stunned - it was an unexpected death. Bishop Hickey was very compassionate. He answered my questions, and also questions I didn't express. He told me what to expect and gave me a Mass card for my grandfather. I remember feeling calm and comforted after talking to him. He immediately grasped what I was feeling.

I remember my first meeting with the bishop, at St. Mary of the Lake Parish in Watkins Glen, where I grew up. I was my sister's confirmation sponsor. After confirmation, which Bishop Hickey did, I went up and introduced myself. I said 'I'm Jeanne Morin. I graduated from Notre Dame. I liked your homily. I don't know why I said that about Notre Dame, but he picked up on that - 'Notre Dame. Are you looking for a job?' ...

I went home and wrote up something, printed it out and took it back. He was staying at the rectory. That weekend I got the job.

Jeanne (Morin) Mooney, circulation manager 1987-98

## The Catholic Courier years

In the 1960s and '70s - the heyday of the Catholic press in the United States - the board of directors of the *Catholic Courier* tended to exercise somewhat passive oversight of the newspaper's operations. Subscription levels were high, and operations went smoothly.

But as the 1980s dawned, circulation and revenue patterns shifted throughout the Catholic press, causing financial ripples that spurred the board to greater activism. That - coupled with a plan to move the newspaper offices from downtown Rochester to the diocesan headquarters on Buffalo Road in Gates - fueled a conflict between board and staff, ultimately leading to the mass resignation of all *Courier* employees in late 1984.

Just as that conflict was coming to a head, Bishop Matthew H. Clark asked Bishop Dennis W. Hickey to join him for dinner at the former Dickens Restaurant. There, after a couple of Manhattans, as Bishop Hickey told the story, Bishop Clark popped a question that set the 70-year-old auxiliary bishop on a new career path.

"There came a time when we were having some severe problems (with the newspaper) and were on the verge of going out of existence," Bishop Clark recalled.

"I asked him, 'Would you be willing to assist me in taking up the leadership role to put the *Courier* back on its feet?' He said he would do his best," Bishop Clark continued. "He readily agreed. So I thought, 'Well, that's all I can ask of him, and his best is very, very good.'"

The newspaper's situation was deteriorating quickly. The *Courier* had accumulated significant debt, and pastors were threatening mass subscription cancellations due to declining quality.

"I received a telephone call from Bishop Hickey, explaining that the bishop had asked him to do this job," recalled Martin Q. Moll Sr., then St. John Fisher College's senior vice president for development, communications and alumni relations. "He said he needed help and would I help. He said to me, 'I'd like to see you real soon' and I asked



him when would be a good time," Moll continued. "He said, 'How about 10 minutes?' and he was in my office in 10 minutes."

Bishop Hickey invited Moll to join an ad hoc committee of board members and publishing experts he hoped would be able to help him save the newspaper.

"We basically started the paper over from scratch," remarked Richard N. Chapman, who served on both the *Courier* board and the ad hoc reorganization committee. "We had to build it up and get some new blood in there."

"It was marvelous the way he took hold and had, almost immediately, his direction and focus on the *Courier*," noted Moll, who years earlier had handled the newspaper's typesetting and printing through his company, The Christopher Press.

Bishop Hickey sought to learn as much as possible about newspaper publishing and the history of the *Courier*. "He was able to employ what others told him as if he'd been in the game for a while," Moll said.

Richard Hare, former advertising director of the Gannett Rochester Newspapers who joined the *Courier* board shortly after the

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