



The bishop preached at St. Jude's Church, Gates.

"He said, 'Ah, Sylvia.'  
"So I said, 'If I could do anything to help you or take anything away from you, I would, but I can't.' I said 'You know, Bishop, you're in God's



Bishops Hickey and Clark distribute Communion during Bishop Hickey's his 50th jubilee Mass.

ter, Helen.

"I once said to him, 'You're sort of stuck with me. Once you become family, you become family for life.'" Nagy said, adding that the bishop smiled upon hearing her make that comment.

The day before he died, to the end, she said, he thought more of others than himself even as death approached.

"I asked him ... 'Are you afraid?' He said, 'No,'" she recalled. "I said, 'I'm afraid.'

hands now.'"

"And he said, 'I know.'"

Msgr. Shannon was also among Bishop Hickey's last visitors.

"I was very happy that I was able to go to see him (Oct. 2). We had a very good talk, a serious talk about God and about faith, and about the life hereafter. We really talked about things that are very important. They were on his mind not in any worried sense, but simply in the sense of a realization. He knew he was coming near the end of his life here, his mortal life.

"Normally his visitors were limited to 10 minutes, but he said 'You should stay longer.' He seemed to be spiritually very relaxed. I think he wanted to talk about things that really mattered to us — God, faith, the church," the Monsignor continued.

"I will cherish that; it was a good sharing."

Bishop Hickey died peacefully in his sleep at 8:15 a.m., Sister Wegman said, of complications of splenic lymphoma.

"I think it was so appropriate that he died so quietly," his niece, Mary Caldwell, reflected. It was so like him — he sort of slipped out the back door, which is what he always did."

Msgr. Shannon recalled that the priests of the diocese gave Bishop Hickey a trip on the Orient Express for his 50th anniversary of priestly ordination.

"As I think of it now, it goes to the East, and the East is the place of Christ our risen savior," Msgr. Shannon said, adding that the Latin word *oriens* is often used in the Scriptures literally for Christ, the risen one.

"Now the Orient Express is taking him to the final goal of any Orient Express, the kingdom of God."

We were very, very close. He was first appointed as pastor in 1961 to St. Theodore's, and I was assistant there from 1954. We worked together till 1968, when he was made an auxiliary bishop by Bishop Sheen.

... He came back a couple weeks later, and said Bishop Sheen was making two new parishes in the west part of the county: "Would you consider starting a brand new parish?" I said I certainly would. He said "Well, you've got it."

We elected our own name. By ballot people overwhelmingly chose St.

Jude. He told me the other parish had four choices, and the first was St. Jude. He said, "What's your second choice?"

Knowing him, I said, St. Denis.

He said, "Oh! Well, let me get back to you." He knew people would think we named the parish after him. He called the other priest and said they could choose from one of three names.

He certainly has been an inspiration, a benefactor, a resource for everything we have done here at St. Jude's. Whenever I called on him, he would respond. If it was a wed-

ding or funeral, he said, "I do better at funerals than weddings. They can't talk back."

His birthday (Oct. 28) is on the feast of St. Jude's. This is the first time in his 31 years he won't be here in our celebration. He'd always come and close the novena we do Oct. 20-28. Everybody who came to the novena came to his birthday party, so we had cakes, like as big as your desk top. We put the candles on them, he'd blow them out and make a wish. He always enjoyed it.

When he was consecrated, I gave him a crozier as

a personal gift. The ivory node on his crozier is carved with the Annunciation which, of course, is "Thy will be done," certainly the theme of his life, what he's always done in his life.

He loved the fire service. I bought him one of those scanners so he could follow the various alarms from the county and the city. Some classmates used to call him Chief. If something really big happened, he'd call and say, "Did you get that on the scanner?"

He also loved trains. I didn't know what to get him many times for

Christmas, so I started him with the (Jim) Beam bottles — they put out series of railroad cars.

God bless him. He loved the simple things. His spirituality was beyond question, his orthodoxy to the Holy Father, the holy church and different things in his life.

He was always right in anything he did. Orthodox, considerate. And he would never offend. Like Chesterton said, he was a "perfect gentleman."

Father John J. Steger, pastor, St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Gates

I would be up early in the morning and he'd be up earlier. He would go to church and say prayers, then pray the rosary during his morning walk.

He would walk the neighborhood daily. He had sort of a quiet presence. The people would know him, and he would know them. He also cared greatly about the quality of

the neighborhood.

He weekly did the Sunday New York Times crossword puzzle — in pen — and was often done by the middle of the afternoon. Most people take all week doing it! He loved the written word and also wrote many letters.

There were many who had left the priesthood and

he would keep in touch with them. They would stop by Holy Family to see him.

He had a gentle spirit but was also a man of deep resolve. He had an incredibly deep and solid faith which served him through goodness knows how many storms in this diocese, many of which he was negotiating. I cannot tell

you how many priests begged him to write down what he knew, but he was resolutely opposed to doing that.

He was loath to say an unkind word about any person. (But) as gentle as he was, there was nothing he would like better than a good fight! He knew I was a rabid Notre Dame football fan, and he would

go out of his way to find any kind of controversy he could about Notre Dame and bring it to my attention.

Father Peter Clifford, pastor of St. Michael's Church in Newark, who resided at Rochester's Holy Family Church with Bishop Hickey from 1991-1995

He came to St. Thomas More for confirmation last Nov. 7. I had just been there a few months. On the way from the church to the rectory, he told me to be very patient as a new pastor, to trust in God.

My first assignment as a priest was at St. Mary's in Auburn, and so was his. Now I'm the pastor at St. Thomas More, and he was also the pastor there.

He was like my grandfather, in a way. He was just a wonderful man.

— Father Lee Chase, pastor, St. Thomas More Church, Brighton

The thing that brought us together was our common love of trains. I grew up in New Jersey near the Lackawanna Railroad, the same railroad on which Bishop Hickey's father worked. He would tell me amazing stories about his dad.

He was interested in (my church) and asked questions and explained a few differences between us. He seemed to be at home with us. He didn't seem to be a stranger. He was a most welcome addition.

— Father Kenneth Sherman, presbyter of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker Church, Gates, a Melkite Greek Catholic church

When I first came to the diocese six years ago he was just so gracious and considerate to introduce himself to me, coming upstairs to the third floor to do it, making sure I was comfortable and knew people. And he invited me at one point go out to dinner with his support group of priests so I would get to know some of them. Things like that made me feel at home and welcome in the diocese. That continued right until the end of his life.

I can't tell you the number of times he climbed all the stairs to ask me a liturgical question. I used to say, "Oh Bishop, if you need to talk to me, I can come down to see you." He'd say, "Oh no, I climb the steps all the time at home." He was in better shape than we were.

— Joan Workmaster, diocesan director of liturgy

He hired me at the Catholic Courier in 1988. One year later I began working for the Pastoral Center.

I don't know if any one person knows all the goodness he did. He used to sponsor a number of Catholic school kids, and helped families pay for back to school clothes.

He had so many friends, real friends — that were from all walks of life. Presidents of companies, waitresses — he valued their friendships equally.

— Sandy Grocki, diocesan clergy services coordinator