

Teaching years revealed love for youth

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

He was always such a thank-you person. There was never a time you went with him and did a little thing, like getting a glass of water, some paper, opening a window, closing a door, that he didn't say thank you. I was visiting him at the seminary, and the last thing he said was thank you. He's such an example of gratitude.

He was so placid and humility, especially at the infirmary, where he devoted himself to living in one room and gave up so many opportunities, said these are things he would have done. Things were not done. I think he missed his books.

He lived in a lovely house in the room. He was an excellent teacher, we have to say. He was a very good teacher, and he did it so beautifully.

He was always smiling after school.

He was a very good teacher, we know he was a very good teacher, breathing was a problem and walking more a problem, you never thought he was sick into death. It was a shock but it was a great way for him to go.

— Sister Roberta Tierney,
SSND

The people of Lima were very saddened. He was a pillar of our community, obviously. He will be missed very much. He never forgot his roots. He was always willing and able to come back here for functions.

— Tom Crego, business manager,
St. Rose Parish, Lima

We had a good relationship. We played on the same baseball team. He was pitcher, and I usually got to be at third base. He was a good pitcher. A tall man, he would send that ball over there, it was difficult to hit.

He was always supportive. That's what you expect from a friend, right?

— Father Clarence W. Gardner,
last surviving member of the
1942 ordination class

Bishop James E. Kearney ordained Joseph L. Hogan to the priesthood on June 6, 1942, in Sacred Heart Cathedral. The young priest's first assignment was at St. Mary's Church in Elmira, where he was assistant pastor from 1942 to 1945.

Father Robert F. McNamara, diocesan historian, had been his history teacher at St. Bernard's Seminary. Father McNamara recalled that while visiting his hometown of Corning one summer, he and young Father Hogan helped staff a youth camp in Elmira. Father Hogan, according to Father McNamara, was quite the jokester.

"We told ghost stories, and he was a monster. I remember he had these two buggy eyes in the dark," said Father McNamara, who now resides in retirement at St. Thomas the Apostle in Irondequoit.

"He was always pulling jokes on kids; he had a great sense of humor. He liked young people, and he liked to be liked by them. If he had a choice between talking to this person or that person, he'd talk to the younger one."

As it turned out, St. Mary's was one of only two parish assignments for Father Hogan, who later served one year as pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Irondequoit.

"I think he would have been a good parish priest, but it depends on your major direction. You have to forget all the other things," Father McNamara commented.

The major direction for Father Hogan was education. He was a professor of Latin and social studies at St. Andrew's Seminary from 1945-49, and received his master of arts degree from Buffalo's Canisius College in 1949.

The Syracuse Diocese's current bishop, James M. Moynihan, recalled that Father Hogan had been a major role model for him at St. Andrew's.

"Of all of the faculty, he was head and shoulders above the rest in more ways than one (he stood more than 6 feet 4 inches tall). He was our favorite faculty member. As far as I was concerned, he was my favorite priest. He was fun to be with, and he was a pretty darn good softball pitcher," said Bishop Moynihan, who would later serve as diocesan chancellor under Bishop Hogan.

"As I sat in class I would think, 'I'd like to be a priest like Father Hogan.' I thought that all the time. I looked up to him in many ways," Bishop Moynihan added.

From 1949 to 1951, Father Hogan pursued graduate studies in theology at the Pontifical University Angelicum in Rome, Italy, earning his doctorate of sacred theology. Bishop Hogan returned in 1951 to St. Andrew's Seminary, where he taught Latin and religion for two years. He then served as principal of Geneva DeSales High School from 1953-55.

Father James Lawlor, pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Mendon, graduated from DeSales in 1955. Though Father Hogan only spent two years in Geneva, Father Lawlor said he made a big impact.

"He was very well received. I recently went to a 45th-year reunion and I was really impressed with how many people said, 'He really turned my life around,'" Father Lawlor remarked.

For the next 10 years, until 1965, Father Hogan served on the faculty of St. Bernard's Seminary. He taught fundamental dogma and was dean of studies and professor of catechetics as well. During this time he also taught theology at St. John Fisher College and at the Sisters of St. Joseph Novitiate.

Father Robert Bradler, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle in Irondequoit, was one of his students at St. Bernard's. Like Bishop Moynihan, Father Bradler recalls being impressed by Father Hogan's towering presence.

"He was very professorial. He was very tall and stately, though I'm not going to say I was afraid of him," Father Bradler said. "After I was ordained (in 1962) I found that he was very approachable, but in the seminary the teachers and seminarians didn't talk. You just didn't do that ... at least, I didn't."

It was during his tenure at St. Bernard's that Father Hogan developed a social circle he would cherish for the rest of his life. In 1958, Father James Marvin purchased a cottage on Honeoye Lake. He, Father Hogan, the late Auxiliary Bishop John McCafferty and the late Father Joseph Beatini visited the cottage religiously every Wednesday.

"After he became bishop he couldn't let it go; he kept coming every week with us," said Father Marvin, who now lives in retirement at the cottage. "We went there all year long. He did that up until this year."

Father Marvin noted that the cottage, and the support group, are named *Maneo Nobiscum*, Latin for "Remain with us." The group eventually came to include Fathers Michael Hogan (the bishop's brother), Emmett Halloran, Gerry Appleby, Larry Murphy, Thomas Statt, John Norris, Albert Delmonte and Louis Hohman.

In 1965, Bishop Hogan became the first rector of Becket Hall, a diocesan preparatory-seminary residence. Becket Hall was a revolutionary approach to the seminary program, providing a relationship with St. John Fisher College in the seminary years between St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's.



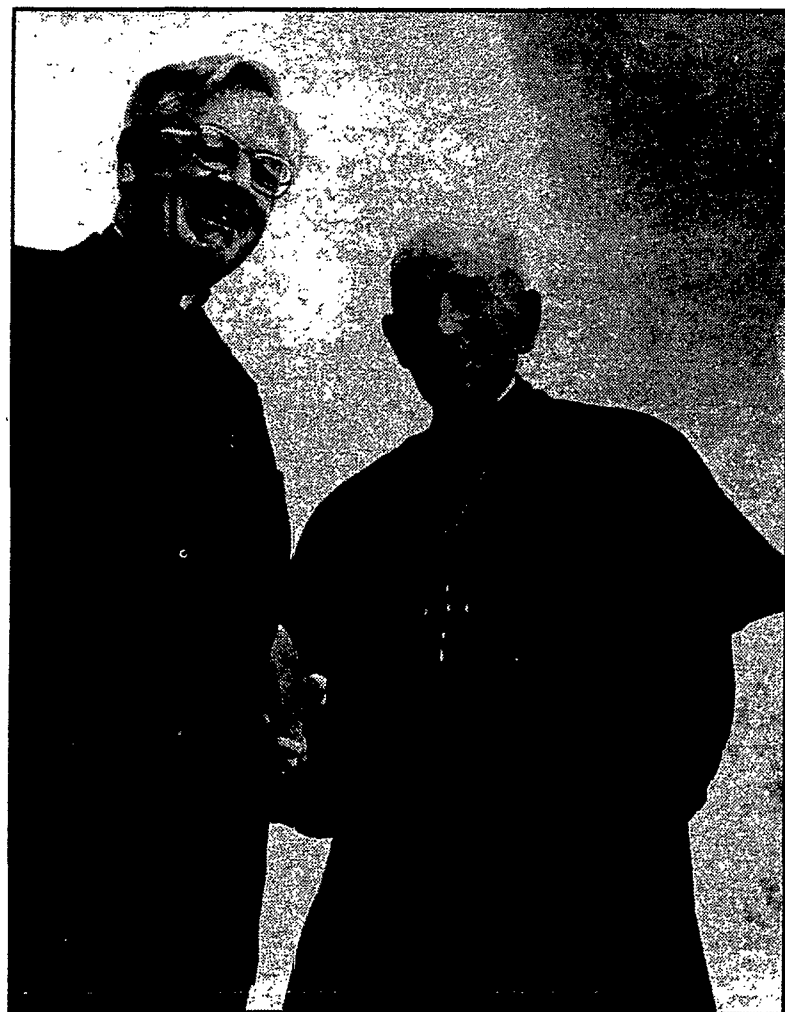
Photo courtesy of Diocesan Archives

At St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome, Father Hogan dwarfs a Fiat.



File photo

Bishop-designate Hogan is given a rousing send-off by students of Irondequoit's St. Margaret Mary School in November 1968. He was pastor at St. Margaret Mary for 17 months before being installed as the seventh bishop of Rochester on Nov. 28, 1968.



File photo

Bishop Hogan poses with a fellow bishop of Rochester, Bishop James E. Kearney.

In 1966, Pope Paul VI raised Father Hogan to the rank of domestic prelate, with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor. He was appointed pastor of St. Margaret Mary Church in Irondequoit in 1968 by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Little more than a year later, he would leave the parish to become Bishop Sheen's successor as bishop of Rochester.