

Bishop: Clinton visit violated diocesan policy

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, the Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, visited St. Michael's Church, Rochester, Oct. 29, and was greeted by about 600 people, most of whom reportedly applauded her.

But her Sunday afternoon visit was not supported by Bishop Matthew H. Clark, nor by several protesters who were both outraged by the appearance of a political candidate in a Catholic church, and by the fact that Clinton is a well-known advocate of legalized abortion.

Inviting Clinton to appear at St. Michael's was "a clear and serious violation of diocesan policy," Bishop Clark stated, referring to a policy spelled out in a letter

sent to all parishes earlier this year.

"I regret that this event took place and apologize for any confusion that may have resulted," Bishop Clark said. "While the diocese will continue to address the moral implications of public policy issues based on our rich tradition, it remains the clear and consistent policy that the diocese does not endorse or appear to endorse any candidate for public office."

The bishop added that a letter reaffirming diocesan policy on candidates' appearances would be distributed to parishes Oct. 31.

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— Bishop Matthew H. Clark

During Clinton's talk at the parish, protesters attempted to disrupt her appearance by talking loudly or singing, and were either asked to leave by people in the church, or escorted or taken out by Rochester city police, according to several observers. No arrests were made, however.

Meanwhile, several protesters picketed across Clinton Avenue in front of the church, according to Jack Foy, a parishioner at Rochester's Holy Cross Church, who was both in the church during the talk, and later across the street with the

protesters.

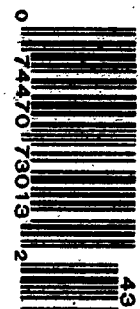
"It's a desecration of the church in my opinion because Hillary is the high priestess of the pro-abortion movement," said Foy. He added that he went to St. Michael's because he couldn't understand why any political candidate would be allowed to appear in a church for a rally, since it gives the impression the church endorses the candidate.

According to Ted O'Brien, chairman of the Monroe County Democratic Party, Clinton visited with the permission of St. Michael's pastor, Father Dennis Shaw.

"It wasn't like it was a surprise visit," O'Brien said.

Jose Cruz, a Democratic Monroe County legislator and activist in the Hispanic community in Rochester, said he ap-

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Catholic Courier

DIocese OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ VOL. 112 NO.5 ■ THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2000 ■ 75¢ ■ 12 PAGES

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CHOOSE



Gore says he'll sign ban with 'health' exception

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

DETROIT — Vice President Al Gore said he sees hope for "common ground" on abortion at the grass-roots level and said the effort should be respected and empowered.

In a wide-ranging 25-minute interview with Catholic News Service Oct. 14, Gore also said he is against a moratorium on the death penalty in federal cases until more evidence shows it is warranted.

Gore also discussed whether he would sign a ban on partial-birth abortions.

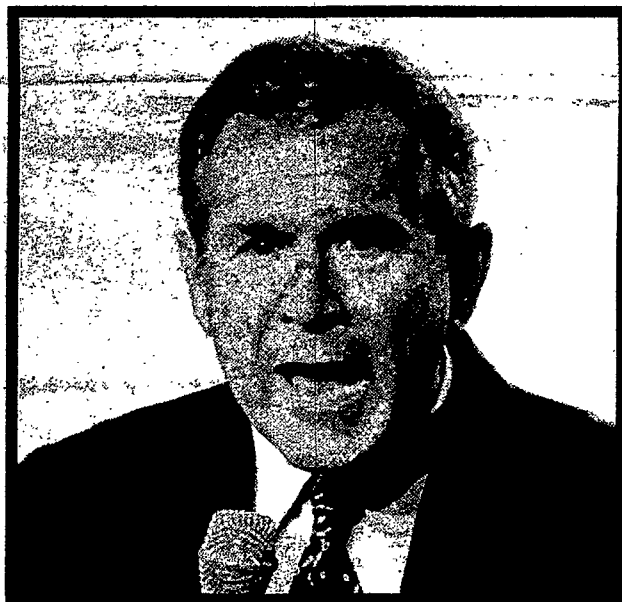
Gore, the Democratic nominee for president, also discussed his opposition to school voucher programs, as well as his support for expanding partnerships between the federal government and faith-based organizations, and for improving how the United States treats immigrants.

The interview came as Gore was en route to the Detroit airport to return to Washington after a campaign stop. While in Detroit, he rallied several thousand union supporters at Wayne State University.

Gore said he sees a burgeoning grass-roots movement seeking common ground on abortion.

"The truth is, the vast majority of those who are pro-life and those who are pro-choice actually agree that certain

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Bush reiterates his opposition to abortion

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

ABOARD THE BUSH CAMPAIGN PLANE — Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush reiterated his strong opposition to abortion and support for school choice but respectfully disagreed with Catholic stands on the death penalty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in a wide-ranging interview with Catholic News Service and *Our Sunday Visitor* Sept. 20.

The 30-minute interview aboard the Bush campaign plane traveling from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia also touched on such issues as the Medicare cuts affecting Catholic hospitals, education, Hispanic voters, the Columbine tragedy, and the value of faith-based programs that assist the poor, teen mothers and prisoners.

On a more personal note, the 54-year-old Texas governor talked about the "religious blend of diversity" within his own family and said his favorite Bible passage during the campaign is a reminder that "I shouldn't be taking a speck out of my brother's eye when I've got a log in my own."

Texas first lady Laura Bush sat in on the interview, but did not participate.

The interview followed an early morning campaign ap-

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