



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer
Bishop Matthew H. Clark ordained
Father Joseph Marcoux June 30 at
Sacred Heart Cathedral.

New priest triumphantly returns home

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

IRONDEQUOIT — Father Joseph Marcoux's Mass of Thanksgiving came to a truly crashing finale Sunday, July 1.

As Father Marcoux thanked several people, leading the congregation in applause, the heavens joined in as well: enormous thunderclaps caused Father Marcoux to raise his voice.

"Let us pray — quickly," quipped Father Marcoux, 35.

Soon after, Father Marcoux's first Mass as a priest of the Rochester Diocese was complete. He celebrated the 10:30 a.m. liturgy at his childhood parish, St. James.

"My friends, I have longed to celebrate this feast with you," Father Marcoux said. "This has been a long time coming for the

parish."

Father Marcoux, the only diocesan priest to be ordained this year, was brought into the priesthood by Bishop Matthew H. Clark June 30 at Sacred Heart Cathedral. He will begin a three-year priest internship at Sacred Heart Oct. 1, after he completes his priestly studies at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium.

Father Marcoux grew up directly across from St. James Church, on Brockley Road, near the border of Irondequoit and the city of Rochester. A few minutes after his Mass of Thanksgiving, as he briefly relaxed in his family homestead's driveway, the new priest pointed at the St. James convent and rectory.

"The nuns could watch me from there, and the priests could watch me from there. I didn't have a chance to do anything

wrong my entire life," he said, laughing.

Although St. James is one of the smaller parishes in Monroe County, this marks the second priestly vocation to recently emerge from the parish. In 1998, Father James Coughlin was ordained a Jesuit priest. Father Marcoux noted that he and Father Coughlin were classmates at the former St. James School.

Father Marcoux credited the St. James community for inspiring him toward a priestly vocation, saying, "These are the people who had first dibs on me. They created me."

Father Marcoux also lauded the St. James priests he has known over the years for their influence, as well as the many priests who concelebrated his Mass of Thanksgiving. In addition, he paid

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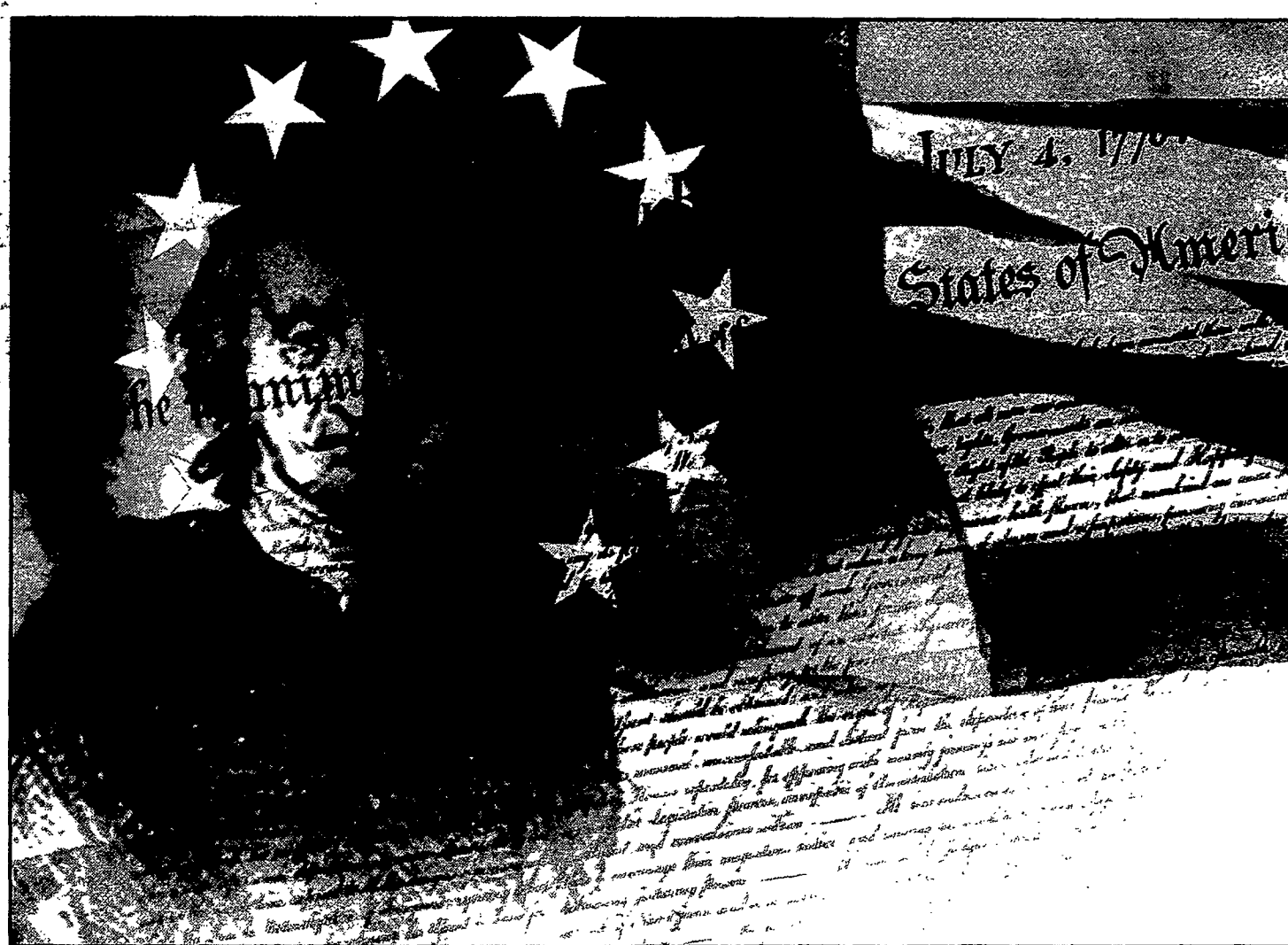
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Charles Carroll of Maryland was the only Catholic to sign the Declaration of Independence.

Catholics and the Revolution

Millions of U.S. Catholics joined their fellow citizens to celebrate Independence Day this week. Yet many probably were unaware of this historical note: Citizens loyal to the Church of Rome were almost completely unwelcome in the 13 British colonies that rebelled against King George III.

In the 1760s and '70s, Harvard College hosted viciously anti-Catholic lectures. Future revolutionaries regularly published anti-Catholic propaganda in their journals. And French Jesuit missionaries were regularly slandered, with allegations including that they preached to Native Americans that Mary was born in Paris and Jesus was crucified in London!

Indeed, some of the most famous figures in U.S. history — Alexander Hamilton, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, his cousin Samuel Adams, and the Supreme Court's first Chief Justice, John

Jay — all expressed strong anti-Catholic sentiments at one time or another. Consider, for example, this excerpt from a description of a Philadelphia vespers service John Adams attended along with a Virginia planter named George Washington in 1774:

"This Afternoon's Entertainment was to me most awfull and affecting; the poor Wretches fingering their beads, chanting Latin, not a Word of which they understood; their Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, their holy Water, their Crossing themselves perpetually; their Bowing to the Name of Jesus, whenever they hear it; their Bowings, Kneelings and Genuflections before the Altar ..."

Adams acknowledged that vespers with its music sung "sweetly" had its attractions, although he considered their charm more seductive than salvific.

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STORY BY ROB CULLIVAN