

# CONTINUED...

Father Daniel T. McMullin is appointed pastor of Corpus, and celebrates his first Masses there Oct. 17-18 amid protest. Prior to his arrival, the transition team fires Pastoral Associate Mary Ramerman for refusing to comply with Bishop Clark's directives for the parish. Father Cadena leaves the parish and says he plans to seek a leave of absence from his religious order.

**September 24**



Father Enrique Cadena, parochial vicar at Corpus, resigns from the transition leadership team.

**October**



**December 7 & 14**

**Dec. 7:** Bishop Clark suspends Father Callan from the priesthood; Father Callan begins using a Protestant church in Rochester to hold regular worship services.

**Dec. 14:** Six Corpus staff members, including Sister Marjory Henninger, SSJ, are fired.

Former Corpus parishioners and staff, including Ramerman and Father Callan, form a new church, which eventually becomes Spiritus Christi.

**Jan.-Feb.**

The diocese announces that the Catholic members of this new church have chosen to excommunicate themselves from the Catholic Church.

**1999**

**June**

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester begin procedures to remove Sister Henninger from the order for her participation in the schismatic church. On Oct. 31, 2000, the congregation applies sanctions, telling her to stop calling herself "sister" at work and in public.



## Spiritus Christi

Continued from page 1

After his removal was announced, hundreds of parishioners attended meetings in support of Father Callan and the parish policies he and other staff members had created. More than 3,300 parishioners signed a statement supporting the priest and the parish's policies.

Father Callan celebrated his last Mass at the parish Sept. 6, and was sent to serve at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Elmira. At the time, the diocese asked Father Callan to discern the direction his actions were taking him, and whether he wanted to continue defying the bishop.

"I accept my punishment with a clear conscience," the priest wrote in a letter that appeared in Corpus Christi's parish bulletin.

### Lines drawn

As the weeks progressed, meetings between diocesan officials and the parish staff proved unproductive. In mid-September, the bishop appointed a transition team to run Corpus Christi, informing the parish that it must cease the practices that had led to Father Callan's removal. The bishop said the parish must understand that "the ordained alone are authorized to pray Eucharistic prayers and wear the vestments of the ordained offices"; that same-sex unions could not be blessed; and "those who are not corporately united to the Catholic Church may not be invited to the communion table."

With the bishop clearly setting out his expectations for the parish, conflict ensued between the diocesan-appointed transition team and staff members originally hired by Father Callan. Father Enrique Cadena, a Mexican-born priest who had served with Father Callan at Corpus Christi, had been performing sacramental duties after Father Callan left. He also was a member of the transition team, but

by the end of September, he resigned, citing his inability to reconcile his duties to the team with his support for the illicit parish policies. A month later, he took a leave of absence from his religious order in Mexico, the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit. He is currently listed as associate pastor of the Spiritus Christi congregation.

The transition team then fired Ramerman in mid-October for refusing to comply with the bishop's directives. Days later, Father Daniel T. McMullin, the newly appointed pastor of Corpus, celebrated his first Masses there Oct. 17-18 amid disruptive protests.

The prospect of a schism emerged on the Monday evening following Father McMullin's first Masses, when about 400 parishioners met to discuss the possibility of setting up an alternative worship service.

### Final acts

On Dec. 7, Bishop Clark suspended Father Callan from the priesthood for refusing to comply with any of the bishop's directives regarding his priestly practices.

"Father Callan seems to be headed away from being part of the wider Roman Catholic community," the bishop wrote in a diocesan statement. "My hope is that the suspension will enable him to re-evaluate the positions he has taken."

That same month, Father Callan, Ramerman and other former Corpus Christi parishioners began a regular "supplemental service" at a Protestant church in Rochester. Then, on Dec. 14, six Corpus Christi staff members, including Sister of St. Joseph Marjory Henninger, were fired for refusing to cooperate with the new parish administration.

From January 1999 on, former Corpus parishioners and staff, including Ramerman and Father Callan, began work on forming a new church, the community that eventually became Spiritus Christi. Upon hearing of the new community's

formation, the diocese announced that this new church was in schism with the Catholic Church, and that by becoming members, Catholics had chosen to excommunicate themselves from the Catholic Church. The diocese also announced it had no plans to formally excommunicate anyone. This policy, to which the diocese still adheres, enables Catholics who have joined Spiritus to return to the Catholic Church through the sacrament of reconciliation.

In June 1999, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester began procedures to dismiss Sister Henninger from the order for her participation in the schismatic church.

Fathers Callan and Cadena currently are listed as associate pastors at Spiritus Christi, and Ramerman is the congregation's pastoral administrator. Although the invitation to Ramerman's ordination says it will be "to the Catholic Priesthood," diocesan officials state clearly that she is joining the Protestant clergy. And although Spiritus labels itself as "A Catholic Community Where All Are Welcome," Catholics should not consider Spiritus Christi a Catholic church, diocesan officials stressed.

"They don't operate in our circle whatsoever," said Father Joseph A. Hart, diocesan vicar general.

## Leaders forbidden to attend

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has forbidden priests, deacons, pastoral administrators and pastoral ministers from attending the Nov. 17 ordination of Mary Ramerman, and from attending any other ordinations or sacramental celebrations at Spiritus Christi Church, Rochester.

In similarly written Oct. 29 letters to each group, the bishop wrote: "As pastoral ministers, we have a special responsibility to avoid actions that will contribute to the confusion of the faithful or increase the scandal occasioned by this schism. ... I know that you will be deeply sensitive to the situation and avoid doing anything that might cause confusion among the faithful or weaken the bonds of faith and charity which

makes us one."

In his letters to priests, deacons and pastoral administrators, the bishop cites Canon 1336, which provides for various penalties against those in church leadership positions. "Those who attend such celebrations may incur an expiatory penalty as specified in canon 1336," he wrote.

No canons are cited in his letter to pastoral ministers. However, the bishop clearly forbade their attendance at Spiritus celebrations, explaining: "If you were (to attend the ordination), you would contribute to the confusion of the faithful, harm the cause of unity that we pursue together and threaten your ability to minister in the name of the Church."

## ORGAN CONCERT

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2001  
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