

le

ent
ep tap roots
ater for it to
dry climate
e surround-
y plant lives
produces a
e. The term
e the palm
the ancient
ountry of
ee was use-
fruit. A fer-
e made by
the leaves
everything
to a sturdy
palm leaves
ad in front
Jerusalem,
use of this,
fore Easter

By
ard oldest
of Poland,
and sisters.
his educa-
orian, John
ed he life
n. A hum-
ed in plain
verously to
learn of
their king
and have
anwar did
he wish of
an army to
e soldiers
fight the
deserted.
before any
it as much
ing his reli-
ne to be
as "the
ph he died
of him on

riting an
question:
ission to

e, home
ide — to
ster, NY
002. The
reive the
winner's

vangelist
lant? she
esus and
s and by
s would

rch, and
sary and
l we are
our reli-

Healthy Retirement

Hume sees permanent Irish peace

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

Nobel Peace Prize winner John Hume grew up in Derry, Northern Ireland, where a number of highly intelligent Irish Catholics were known as "characters" in his city. In other words, they were harmless eccentrics who made life colorful for everyone else by saying the right thing at the wrong time.

He said one sharp-tongued woman he knew would loudly petition Jesus and Mary with her requests in church, and nobody was ever much bothered by her decision to pray aloud rather than silently like the rest of the congregation. Recently, however, someone asked Hume why contemporary

Derry seemed to have no more street characters.

"They're all university professors," he replied.

Hume's story played well before more than 200 listeners gathered the afternoon of March 7 in the Geneva Room in the library at Hobart College in Geneva. Peppered with academics, the audience laughed long at his tale, which he told as part of a presentation partly sponsored by the Friendly Sons and Daughters of St. Patrick of the Finger Lakes Region. The group is a not-for-profit organization devoted to promoting awareness of the cultural achievements of Irish people and people of Irish descent.

Hume was also invited to speak by the

group earlier in the day at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel in Rochester.

Hume, former leader of Northern Ireland's mostly Catholic Social Democrat and Labour Party, offered up his memories for a laugh. However, he was actually putting a sunny face on a grim history with which he is well-acquainted.

That history, he said, spoke of intelligent Catholics such as the eccentrics he noted on the streets. That's because Northern Ireland's rigidly segregated society gave them no place to rise. Such segregation was the fruit of the oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland by the British province's Protestant majority, he said.

Continued on page 18



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Nobel Peace Prize winner John Hume speaks at Geneva's Hobart College March 7.



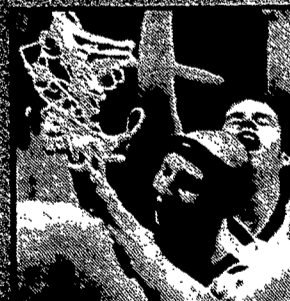
Catholic Courier

DIocese of Rochester, New York ■ VOL. 113 NO. 22 ■ THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2002 ■ 75¢ ■ 20 PAGES

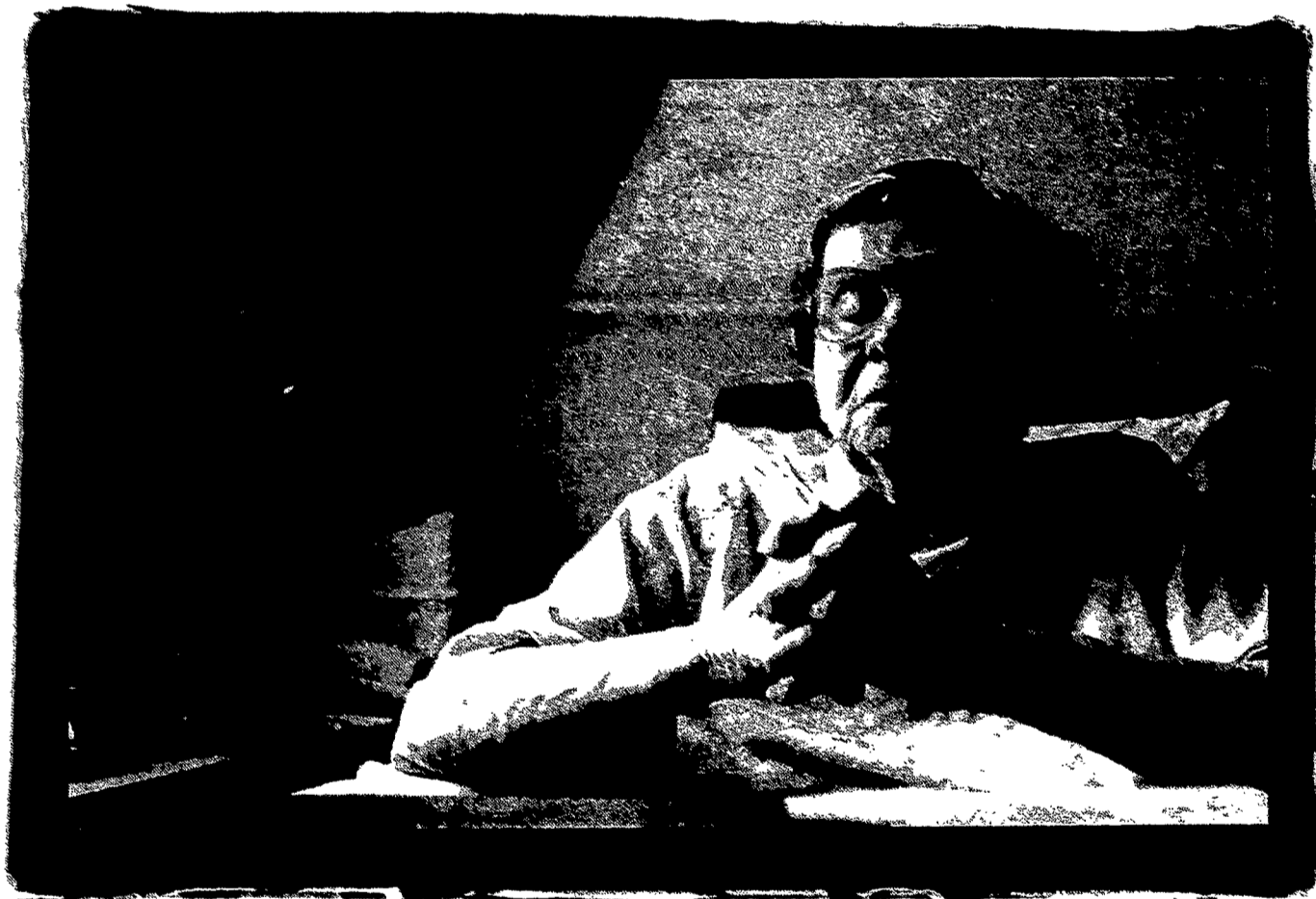
Inside This Week



Anti-sweatshop presentation
Speaker discusses
case against Nike
— Page 4



Catholic teams
win semifinals
at BK and
— Page 10



Eva Irons prays the Our Father as Father Peter Bayer administers the Anointing of the Sick at Rochester's St. Ann's Home March 10. The nursing home chaplain says the rite brings people a sense of peace that can help them heal.

Religion as a healing tool

"All you can do is pray now."

Marianne Blanda-Holtzberg of Penfield was surprised to hear these non-scientific words uttered by the doctors and nurses caring for her husband, Richard, at Strong Memorial Hospital.

On the advice of his doctor, Richard went to Strong's emergency room Jan. 23 to find out the cause of severe flu-like symptoms and the welts on his right arm, which had swelled to double its normal size. After administering antibiotics and performing an MRI and surgery on his arm, doctors diagnosed Richard with a rare, life-threatening, invasive strep infection that was eating away

at his arm, causing toxic shock syndrome and kidney failure. There was a chance, Marianne was told, that Richard could lose his arm — and his life.

So Marianne, who grew up in Blessed Sacrament Parish in Rochester, pulled out her rosary and prayed for her husband of 25 years, and for the physicians who were treating him. And she waited, along with her three daughters and three stepdaughters, for those prayers to be answered.

The debate

The religious, scientific and medical

communities are engaged in acrimonious debate over whether religion should play a role in science and medicine. Many question whether prayer has an effect on the healing of patients and whether it is appropriate for medical practitioners to bring the notion of religion and spirituality into their practices.

The pages of such well-known medical journals as *The New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association* have been filled of late with articles arguing both sides of the issue.

One such article, "Should Physicians Prescribe Religious Activities?" appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on June 22.

Continued on page 18

STORY BY JENNIFER FIGCAGLIA • PHOTOS BY ANDREA DIXON