

# AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM

## *Agony In Albany Revisited*



Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc.  
Spring 2004



## **Our Mission Statement**

Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc. (RCF) is a lay organization, with many religious members, dedicated to promoting orthodox Catholic teaching and fighting herodoxy and corruption within the Catholic hierarchy.

## **Our Philosophy**

While we accept the authority of the Holy Father and all bishops in union with him, we will not sit idly by, nor blindly follow, while many in the hierarchy allow the Holy Catholic Church to be torn apart and assaulted by the forces of Modernism, Syncretism, Heresy, and the gross immorality of some of its clergy. As parents and teachers, we will not allow our Catholic youth to be robbed of their faith or have their innocence destroyed in the name of "tolerance", "ecumenism", "diversity" or any other politically correct ideology of the day.

We object to individuals or groups of individuals being given access to Catholic schools, churches, and Church property to promote any belief, teaching, or idea contrary to Catholic teaching as defined by two thousand years of Tradition and Church teaching. We expect every Catholic priest to follow the disciplines of the Catholic Church as he promised. We expect every bishop to do all he can to safeguard the souls of our children by exercising his authority to ensure proper teaching within Catholic schools and parish religion programs. We insist that Catholic colleges and universities either teach the True Faith or cease calling themselves Catholic.

We object to any priest treating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as his personal possession by adding, changing, or removing any part of the Mass on his own authority. Furthermore, we assert that the right of every Catholic priest to celebrate the Traditional Latin Mass must be recognized, and we consider it a grave scandal that such a right is not recognized while at the same time countless liturgical and theological novelties are promoted by many in the hierarchy.

We will do everything within our power to undo the last thirty-plus years of watered-down Catholicism that has been foisted upon us. We will not separate ourselves from the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; we will stand and fight and demand what is rightfully ours. In that regard, we insist at this time in history that those in positions of authority in the Church proclaim loudly the infallibly defined dogma that "outside the Church there is no salvation", as that dogma has been taught and explained by the Church for centuries.

We insist that the Catholic media, especially diocesan newspapers, present authentically Catholic perspectives on social issues and current events and cease being used as forums for heresy and blasphemy.

We express our love for the clergy, and refuse to be silent while holy priests and nuns are persecuted by the modernist establishment holding power within the layers of bureaucracy existing in chancery offices throughout much of the world. At the same time, we refuse to be blind to the fact that a pattern of gross immorality exists among many religious, and that among their victims have been children, and that the hierarchy has for years covered up and enabled these predators to attack God's children. For this we cry out to heaven for justice, and pledge to our last breath to seek out and expose these predators.

We acknowledge Jesus Christ as our Lord and King, and will fight for His social reign in society. We adopt as our slogan the words of Blessed Miguel Pro just before his murder by the Masonic revolutionaries of his land:

**VIVA CRISTO REY!**

AMDG is the newsletter of Roman Catholic Faithful and is sent out to our supporters free of charge. Your contributions make RCF's work possible.

Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc.  
P.O. Box 109, Petersburg, IL 62675-0109

Phone: (217) 632-5920 / Fax: (217) 632-7054  
Web site: <http://www.rcf.org>

### Board Members

Stephen Brady, President, James Bendell, Esq.  
J. Brady, P. Bultmann, M. McGrath

We need your financial help to continue our work.  
Please send a generous contribution.

**Please send your tax-exempt donation today.**

**Front Cover:** Albany Cathedral pictured with Bishop Matthew Clark of Rochester and Bishop Howard Hubbard of Albany seated in lawn chairs on a beach while vacationing together at a beach-front home in Cape Cod area.

Heavenly Father, we ask Thy blessing on our efforts. Show us the way to spread the Truth of the Catholic faith in the midst of error and infidelity. Fill our hearts with authentic love for our priests, bishops, pope and all the clergy, a love that moves us to unceasing prayer for their souls and to constant exhortation to faithfully fulfill their sacred task of preaching the whole truth of the Catholic faith without compromise. Grant us wisdom in our deliberations, courage in exposing error and corruption, and humility and charity in all the things we do. Bless our Holy Father with the wisdom and holiness to discern and carry out Thy Will, and the loyalty and fidelity of bishops, priests and all religious in helping him carry out this task. May Thy will be done in all things. We ask this through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

### SPECIAL ISSUE

This special issue of *The Roman Catholic Faithful's* newsletter, *Ad Majoriem Dei Gloriam* (AMDG) was brought about by the tragic and mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of Fr. John Minkler of Watervliet, New York, in the diocese of Albany.

In January of 2001, Fr. Minkler provided RCF with a copy of a 1995 report he prepared at the request of Cardinal O'Connor of the Archdiocese of New York. The report detailed, among other things, the alleged homosexual activity of Albany Bishop Howard Hubbard as well as some of his clergy.

In this issue of AMDG you will find two reports regarding Father's death as well as a reprint of a 1991 report titled "*Agony in Albany*". This detailed study documented the deplorable condition of the Albany Diocese under the rule of Bishop Hubbard. The report was written by Paul Likoudis with the help of Fr. Minkler. It was published March 7, 1991 by *The Wanderer*, a Catholic weekly newspaper based in St. Paul, Minnesota.

RCF holds strongly to the position that Howard Hubbard is not fit to serve as Bishop of Albany. In fact, the Bishop's actions (as well as his omissions) suggest that he may not even be *Catholic*. Any honest reader who studies the facts contained in this publication will be hard pressed to reach any other conclusion.

RCF encourages anyone with information regarding clergy misconduct or abuse of authority to contact us.

For more information regarding our work, please visit our website at [www.rcf.org](http://www.rcf.org) or write and request past issues of AMDG. We are in the process of archiving all of our past newsletters on a CD and hope to make it available soon to the public.

**Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc.**  
**PO Box 109**

**Petersburg, Illinois 62675**  
Ph. 217-632-5920 / Fax 217-632-7054  
[www.rcf.org](http://www.rcf.org) / [sbrady@rcf.org](mailto:sbrady@rcf.org)

# *The Death of Catholicism in Albany*

By Stephen Brady

Warning: It is assumed that individuals reading this report are true Catholics. Those who reject even one of the truths of the Catholic faith are, by definition, not Catholic and therefore could not possibly comprehend the depravity of Bishop Howard Hubbard's actions.

Saturday, February 14, 2004, Father John Minkler left a message on my voice mail asking me to help him with Bishop Howard Hubbard. Unfortunately, I did not check my voice mail until Monday morning and Fr. Minkler was already dead.

My first trip to Albany was November 24, 1996. I was invited by a group of Catholics from Oneonta New York. The group was headed by Mrs. Rita Armstrong. Rita and her friends were concerned about the condition of the Church in Albany and wanted RCF's help.

After meeting with local Catholics, who provided me with a list of abuses too long to mention here, I attended an evening "college Mass" at St. Mary's in Oneonta. Bishop Howard Hubbard celebrated Mass with Fr. Brian Raiche present.

The first thing that caught my attention once I arrived at the parish for Mass was a sign posted on the inside door of St. Mary's. The sign on the door stated: "if you want to be an extraordinary minister, show up 15 minutes before Mass." The sign made it clear that anyone who wished to do so could distribute the Eucharist, and those priests about to celebrate Mass, at the very least, had little if any respect for and possibly no belief in the Real Presence.

During Mass six women dressed in white gowns danced around the Altar and through the sanctuary \*. It was a scandal. Prior to Mass I had spoken to parishioners and was informed that the bread used at Mass was made by the parishioners and included sugar and honey as well as other ingredients that, according to Church law, rendered the Mass invalid.\* The bread was of such a texture that Bishop Hubbard struggled to tear it apart at this pretend Mass. The parish was packed with impressionable college kids who witnessed this disgrace perpetrated by their bishop.

On the way out after the service a priest with me confronted the Bishop about his use of invalid matter, only to be brushed off by assurances from Hubbard that all was well.

By participating in such a scandalous, sacrilegious display in a Catholic Church, Bishop Howard Hubbard exposes himself as a fraud. He could not do such things and other things documented in this issue of AMDG and believe in the Real Presence, mortal sin, salvation of souls, or the existence of Hell. Hubbard is not fit to serve!

I received a phone call from Father John Minkler on January 8, 2001. He called to inform me that he was sending me a copy of the 1995 report that he prepared at the request of Cardinal O'Connor of New York. The report

\* **"DANCING, LITURGICAL.** Moving rhythmically to music as part of a religious ceremony... Here dancing is tied in with love, with diversion, with profaneness, with unbridling of the senses; such dancing, in general, is not pure. For that reason it cannot be introduced into liturgical celebrations of any kind whatever." *"The Modern Catholic Dictionary"* by Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.

\* For **VALID CONSECRATION** the hosts must be: \* made of wheaten flour, \* mixed with pure natural water, \* baked in an oven, or between two heated iron moulds, and \* they must not be corrupted (Miss. Rom., De Defectibus, III, 1).

detailed problems within the Albany Diocese, including allegations that Hubbard had engaged in homosexual activity with clergy. The report named names. Father felt RCF could use the information to help in our investigation of Hubbard.

Several days later I received the report along with a signed cover letter in which Fr. Minkler updated the 1995 report with additional information, including the names of Albany clergy who were alleged to have engaged in homosexual activity and/or been accused of abuse. Father made it clear that he wrote the report and asked that I never make his name public. Fr. Minkler was afraid of what Hubbard might do if he found out that he (Minkler) had gathered information for the 1995 report. According to Father, Cardinal O'Connor was frustrated because of the fact that Rome would not remove Hubbard.

I realize that it is difficult for some Catholics to believe that a bishop could be corrupt or engage in homosexual activity. One need only look to recent news reports to realize just how bad the situation is within the Church.

The late Fr. John Hardon worked with our organization, on a limited basis, before his death. What I remember most about Fr. Hardon was his statement that, *"according to my Vatican superiors, unless the laity do something, one diocese after another will be lost.* And what does that tell you? The Bishops are the problem. Let me give a few examples of corrupt bishops. For more information refer to our web site [www.rcf.org](http://www.rcf.org) or request back copies of our newsletter *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (AMDG).

\*Bishop Patrick Ziemann. He resigned in July 21, 1999 after admitting to a consensual sexual relationship with a priest. The priest claimed he was coerced by Ziemann to engage in sexual activity. When Bishop Ziemann resigned, we had in our possession, correspondence between a family in the Orange, California Diocese and their then-bishop Macfarland from five years earlier. The Bishop had been notified that Ziemann had made unwanted sexual advances towards the family's son as well as other boys. When the then-Bishop of Orange Diocese responded to this family with a letter, he informed them that he did not believe what they were saying, and he reminded them that they could face legal action for saying such things. The family, fearing legal action against them, dropped the issue. RCF later learned that Bishop Ziemann, after his resignation, was giving church retreats in St. David, Arizona area.

\* Bishop Keith Symons of West Palm Beach, Florida, resigned June 2, 1998. This is a particularly troubling case because of who followed Bishop Symons in that diocese. Bishop Symons acknowledged sexual contact with at least five boys while he was a priest. One of them, he admitted, was a long-term relationship. I don't know how you call having sex with a minor a long-term relationship.

The information regarding Symons' abuse was made known to the hierarchy at least a year earlier according to press reports. It wasn't until one victim went to the press that action was taken and Symons resigned. Bishop Symons was later found to be leading retreats in the Lansing Michigan Diocese. One Michigan bishop referred to Symons as a "wounded healer."

\*Bishop Anthony J. O'Connell replaced Bishop Symons in West Palm Beach, Florida. The local Catholics however, were not told that, in 1996, a \$125,000 settlement was paid by the Jefferson City, Missouri, Diocese (O'Connell's home diocese), to an abuse victim of Bishop O'Connell's. The abuse took place when O'Connell was a priest in the diocese of Jefferson City, Mo. It was later learned that there were other victims and on March 8, 2002 Bishop O'Connell resigned.

Bishop O'Connell was appointed to the Diocese of West Palm Beach, a diocese that had already suffered through one abusive bishop, even though the hierarchy knew that he was a child abuser. The then Archbishop of St. Louis, Justin Rigali, allowed O'Connell to be appointed Bishop. So don't let anyone excuse a bishop's actions by saying, *"the Pope appointed him so he must be a good bishop."*

\*When Archbishop Rembert Weakland from Milwaukee, Wisconsin resigned at age 75, we learned that he had paid \$400,000 of diocesan funds to his former boyfriend, in an effort to keep his homosexual relationship a secret.

\*More than ten years ago Bishop Brom of San Diego, California paid a former seminarian from Winona, MN. more than \$70,000 after the seminarian alleged that Brom coerced him into a sexual relationship in the 1980's .

RCF was founded within the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. There, Bishop Daniel Ryan resigned in October of 1999 after RCF made his predatory homosexual activity public. Ryan was not only having sex with his priests, he had picked up underage boys off the street and paid them for sexual favors. When we brought this information to the hierarchy, they refused to act. It was only after RCF went public that Ryan resigned. The new Bishop, George Lucas, would later use Diocesan funds to buy Ryan a Springfield home to live in.

On March 14, 2003 RCF's attorney and I traveled to Washington, D.C. to be interviewed by Mr. Robert Bennett, of the bishops' Sexual Review Board. We presented Mr. Bennett with several hundred pages documenting our investigation of Bishop Daniel Ryan and the hierarchy's cover-up.

To obtain a copy of the Bennett report, past newsletters, and press releases, contact RCF or visit our web site at [www.rcf.org](http://www.rcf.org)

RCF IS preparing a CD that contains additional information regarding abuses within the diocese of Albany. It will be made available when complete. If you have any information regarding clergy misconduct or abuse of authority within the Albany Diocese please contact RCF.

We are also in the process of placing all our past newsletters and reports on CDs. We will notify our members when it becomes available.

To be placed on our mailing send a contribution of any size to RCF. \$25.00 per family per year is suggested but not required. Larger donations to help in our work are gladly accepted.

**Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc (RCF)**  
**PO Box 109,**  
**Petersburg, Illinois 62675**  
**Phone: 217-632-5920**  
**Fax: 217-632-7054**  
**Web Site: [www.rcf.org](http://www.rcf.org)**  
**Email: [sbrady@rcf.org](mailto:sbrady@rcf.org)**

### **Recommended Reading**

## **“The Throw Away Child”**

*By Susanne Robertson*

ISBN: 1-4137-0094-2

Published by “Publish America”

[www.publishamerica.com](http://www.publishamerica.com)

The book tells of death and abuse at St. Colman's Home in Colonie, New York. A children's home within in the Albany diocese.

RCF will be covering this story in greater detail in future reports. It is a must read.

**RCF has some copies available.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## **AMCHURCH COMES OUT:**

The U.S. Bishops, Pedophile Scandals and the Homosexual Agenda

*By Paul Likoudis*

Published by Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc.  
Retail \$24.95 hardcover (see enclosed flyer)

**For your copy at a reduced price, mention this ad and send \$15.00 to:**

RCF, P.O. Box 109, Petersburg, IL 62675  
217-632-5920 (credit card orders accepted)  
Reduced rates for volume orders

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Vatican II, Homosexuality & Pedophilia**

*By Atila Sinke Guimaraes*

To order contact:

**Tradition in Action, Inc.**

P.O. Box 23135

Los Angeles, CA 90023

[www.TraditioninAction.org](http://www.TraditioninAction.org)

For issues with sex education contact:

## **Mother's Watch**

P.O. Box 1029, Frederick, MD 21702-0029

Ph: 410-761-7437 / Fax: 410-761-4233

Or Ph: 540-822-3875 / Fax: 540-822-3876

[www.motherswatch.org](http://www.motherswatch.org)

## *In Wake of Priest's Death....*

# BISHOP HUBBARD LAUNCHES PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

by Paul Likoudis

Three months after the mysterious death of Albany priest Fr. John Minkler, found dead 48 hours after he was coerced by Bishop Howard Hubbard and his chancellor Fr. Kenneth Doyle into signing a statement denying he ever wrote a letter nearly nine years ago to the late John Cardinal O'Connor exposing Hubbard as the ringleader of a cabal of homosexual priests, Hubbard has withstood a barrage of withering criticism that reveals not only his tenacity, but his still-solid grip on the powers-that-be in Albany – and that includes the politicians, the press and the police.

Hubbard, the “boy bishop” who has conducted a reign of terror over Albany Catholics since 1977, is now waging the fight of his life to maintain the public approval his ego needs; but in true form, his public relations campaign is marked by outright lies, sending his agents to disrupt a public meeting, smearing his critics and accusers, shifting blame and presenting himself as the victim of rabid right-wingers.

Fr. Minkler, who was a close collaborator with this reporter for the “Agony in Albany” series of articles published by *The Wanderer* 13 years ago, was on retreat at a monastery in Spencer, Mass., when he received a call from Fr. Doyle summoning him to the chancery. When he arrived for the meeting, he was presented with an affidavit denying he had written the letter to O'Connor, and ordered to sign it.

In the statement, Fr. Minkler also swore – which was true – that he had never spoken with attorney John Aretakis (who handed out two copies of the letter to reporters at a press conference Hubbard convened to defend himself against allegations of homosexual activity, some of whom already had it); that he had never made such allegations against Hubbard; and that he had “never, in writing or otherwise, communicated with the Archdiocese of New York regarding such allegations.”

The affidavit concluded: “I make this statement of my own free will and I know that making a false statement is a crime.”

Contrary to Fr. Minkler's recollection to this reporter, made six hours after his visit to the chancery, Hubbard lied to reporters at a press conference after Minkler's death was reported:

“Father Minkler made an appointment to see me and he told me that he did not author the letter, and he wanted to be with me face to face and to assure me that he had not written anything to Cardinal O'Connor about me. He did not know the priests that were named in the letter, and he did not know how his name got associated with the letter.”

The meeting with Doyle was very brief, and he only saw Hubbard from a hallway. Minkler told this reporter. “Fr. Doyle had this disclaimer all made out, and he said, ‘Sign it.’”

“I signed it with mental reservations, and now I'm going to have to go to Confession down in New York, because I can't go in this diocese,” Minkler told me.

But in that long Friday evening conversation with this reporter, Minkler sounded scared. He recounted the day's events, and feared that the disclosure of the letter he wrote to Cardinal O'Connor in 1995 – at the cardinal's request – would be disastrous for him.

He asked for advice, and he was extremely apprehensive about a forthcoming meeting with Hubbard, set for Monday February 16. I suggested that he pre-empt the meeting by holding his own press conference “and let everything out.” His response was that if he did that, “I'd be dead.”

On Monday morning at 7 a.m., Albany Catholic Bob McCauley called me, barely able to speak through his tears, to say Fr. Minkler was dead. He died early on Sunday afternoon, apparently of a heart attack.

## THE LETTER TO O'CONNOR

On Monday February 16, Fr. Minkler's death was the top news story on Albany radio and television, and by Monday evening, reports of Fr. Minkler's death was being reported in more than 100 newspapers, mostly through Associated Press reports, in the United States and England.

For Bishop Hubbard, the news of Minkler's death came in the midst of an intense public relations campaign in which he would meet with the press in an effort to undo the damage caused a week earlier by

the accusation of the brother of a man who committed suicide after he had a sexual relationship with Hubbard.

The press conferences have not been going well. At a February 6 press conference, which Hubbard called to deny those allegations, he was asked by a reporter if he ever had sex with a man or a woman. Hubbard, said no, while surrounded by 40 of his closest priest friends, who booed and hissed at the questioner.

Most of the reports on Minkler's death carried headlines such as, "Priest Found Dead After Meeting With Bishop," or "Priest Found Dead After Abuse Report."

Local Capital News 9's Jessica Schneider reported on the evening of February 16:

"The questions are swirling after the sudden death of 57-year-old Father John Minkler of Watervliet. His passing comes just days after a controversial letter surfaced, claiming Bishop Howard Hubbard had sexual relationships with two young priests. The letter is being attributed to the late Father Minkler.

"But Bishop Hubbard said once those allegations surfaced, Minkler asked to meet with him to clear his name. Bishop Hubbard said, 'No, I did not request a meeting. He asked to see me. He came in to sign an affidavit because he was concerned about the public airing of this letter and wanted to deny his authorship of the letter.'

"The seven-page letter contains numerous slaps at Hubbard's leadership. And though the letter was written in 1995, it has just surfaced. The Albany Catholic Diocese points to the fact that the signature on the letter is crossed out, and that it hardly resembles the signature on Minkler's affidavit denying any connection to the letter.

"Bishop Hubbard said, 'He just wanted to assure me that he had not made these allegations against me and he wasn't responsible for the contents of the letter....He was upset that his name was associated with these allegations. No, I certainly didn't feel from my contact with him that he was that emotionally upset that he in any way would do anything harmful to himself or others.'"

The June 10, 1995 letter Fr. Minkler wrote to Cardinal O'Connor – for whom he served as a private secretary when O'Connor was head of the military vicariate – a position he held under his uncle, Archbishop Joseph Ryan, who was the military's top

prelate – was written at the cardinal's request.

The pleas of long suffering Catholics living under the oppressive and destructive reigns of Albany's Hubbard and Rochester's Bishop Matthew Clark had finally reached their metropolitan's ears, and O'Connor, Minkler told this reporter, told him to prepare a brief on Hubbard that he would personally turn over to Pope John Paul II.

According to Minkler, as related to this reporter the evening of Feb. 13, O'Connor made a personal appeal to John Paul II to remove both Hubbard and Clark during a visit to the Vatican and, again, according to Minkler, the Holy Father told O'Connor, "there's nothing I can do."

Minkler's letter provided details on Hubbard's deconstruction of the Church in Albany, as well as alleged homosexual proclivities of Hubbard, some of his closest aides in the chancery, and other priests. For example, it mentioned the artificially-inseminated lesbian who was teaching moral theology at the diocesan theologate, co-run by the Diocese of Rochester, St. Bernard's; of the ongoing clergy formation programs run by Clark's and Hubbard's fellow North American College graduate Fr. Tom Powers, which brought in a succession of speakers denying Catholic teaching on such vital issues as the Real Presence, the ontological understanding of the priesthood, etc., with Hubbard approving; how Catholic social service agencies and even parish priest priests send pregnant women to Planned Parenthood clinics for abortions; of the large numbers of Catholics going over to the Society of Pius X and Protestant sects; of the New Age proselytization at the diocesan camp and retreat center at Pyramid Lake; liturgical abuses and Hubbard own sloppy way of celebrating Mass, etc.

The bulk of the letter – naming names -- however, focused on the recruitment of homosexuals to the diocesan priesthood at the same time the diocese actively, sometimes aggressively discouraged normal men from applying for the priesthood; that the diocese often recruited seminarians from other dioceses who had been dropped for homosexual activity; of homosexual priests inviting male lovers to join the priesthood; of the solicitation to homosexual activity by a chancery official of a penitent in the confessional; that doctors and other professional health care workers had reported seeing AIDS patients who claimed they had relationships with Albany priests, including Hubbard; that Hubbard had long term homosexual relations with two young priests; and of



Hubbard's ongoing, relentless, vicious persecution of the faithful laity.

In another letter, dated 1-9-01, in his own writing, which has not yet surfaced in the press, Minkler provided the names and proclivities of the homosexual priests in the diocese.

### A TRUSTED PRIEST

Over the past 13 years, Fr. Minkler performed an invaluable role as *The Wanderer's* most reliable source in the Diocese of Albany. When this paper reported on a priest leaving the priesthood to marry another man, a priest boasting of having AIDS, the case of a priest having a sex-change operation, clerical arrests involving some of Hubbard's favorites, and many, many stories which never made the local newspapers, these stories almost invariably came from Fr. Minkler.

One of Minkler's greatest attributes is that he was trusted by many priests – who often didn't know who each other were – who reported incidents and affairs to him which he passed on to *The Wanderer*, knowing that the publicity would add to that ever-accumulating heap of evidence which is, someday, bound to indict Bishop Hubbard and force his removal.

Minkler, ordained in 1972, was a priest for five years when Hubbard was named Bishop of Albany, and saw the immediate effect he had on the diocesan priests. From the start, Hubbard launched a campaign of intimidation and often outright persecution of good priests, banishing old urban pastors to remote rural outposts, showering favors on those priests who exhibited the most outrageous and immoral behavior, ridiculing and ostracizing faithful laity who tried to uphold Catholic orthodoxy, and promoting an agenda of homosexuality, androgyny and sexual dysfunction.

### A PORTRAIT OF HUBBARD

Minkler's untimely death, however, cast a bright light on Hubbard's modes of operating, his ability to manipulate the press and the legal system, and his apparent invincibility.

Indeed, five weeks after Manhattan attorney John Aretakis exposed the Minkler-O'Connor letter, and who has filed approximately a half-dozen lawsuits against Hubbard and the Diocese of Albany, he met with area reporters March 22, to claim that the Albany Police Department and District Attorney's office were engaged in efforts to quash a story about

the widow of a police sergeant who claims Hubbard was caught twice in an area of Washington Park frequented by teenage male prostitutes.

He told Capital News 9's Jessica Schneider: "The Albany County politicians find it in their own self interest to protect priests whether they're pedophiles or predatory or not, and Bishop Hubbard.

"Where I'm alleging there has been corruption is with the upper echelons of the police department and the Albany district attorney's office."

In a March 24 interview with *The Wanderer*, Aretakis said the policeman's widow, Judy Berben, contacted him on her own initiative a week after he held two press conferences, on Feb. 4 with Andrew Zalay (whose brother Tom committed suicide after an alleged sexual relationship with Hubbard) and Feb. 6, after Schenectady resident Anthony Bonneau alleged Hubbard paid him for sex when he was a teenage runaway hustling in Washington Park.

"Mrs. Berben searched me out, contacted me, and wrote a brief statement saying that her husband, who died ten years ago, was an Albany police sergeant in 1977-78 and caught Bishop Hubbard in the Washington Park area in a car with a long-haired young male of Indian descent dressed as a girl....

"Then she signed the statement, and told me she was willing to go public with her name, face and story. A week later, she calls me up and says her son, who is a police lieutenant in a small town near Albany, her sister, who is a devout Catholic who loves Hubbard, and her daughter-in-law were discouraging her from going public."

The brief statement Judy Berben signed, which has been broadcast on local television and been the subject of radio talk shows for days, simply states:

"I do hereby swear to the following under the penalty of perjury:

"My husband of twenty-four years, Albany Police Department Sgt. Joseph W. Berben, repeatedly told me in the 1977-78 time period that he had stopped Bishop Howard Hubbard on two occasions in Washington Park with a teenager dressed as a female with long hair of Indian descent very late at night in an area of the park known to be frequented in the transporting of male prostitutes and male children prostitutes.

"Bishop Hubbard showed identification to my husband. My husband told me that because of his

position, Bishop Hubbard was not arrested but was advised to leave the area and to have the young person leave his car.

“My husband told me this in 1977-78 when it happened and repeated the story many times over the course of our marriage. My husband passed away ten years ago.”

Aretakis said that the more Hubbard retaliates against him for bringing statements such as those by Zalay, Bonneau and now Berben forward, the more people contact him to provide more information.

For example, he said, he has heard from other former male prostitutes who worked in Washington Park at the same time as Bonneau to substantiate Bonneau's story, giving additional and credible evidence, such as that Bonneau, who was 14 at the time he allegedly had sex with Hubbard, “looked about 10, and was a favorite of men who liked young boys.”

Aretakis also claimed that other police officers, including a State Police officer who allegedly caught Hubbard engaging in sex with another priest on the New York State Thruway, have corroborated the Berben story.

Aretakis' claims that Albany Police Commissioner John Nielsen and District Attorney Paul Clyne are protecting Hubbard were summarily dismissed by spokesmen for both offices, as well as by the Diocese of Albany's spokesman Fr. Ken Doyle.

Speaking for Commissioner Nielsen, Detective James Miller told Capital News 9 that Aretakis' charges “are baseless and false,” reported Schneider.

“He would not speak on camera, saying he didn't want to even justify the remarks. He said as of now, there are no criminal investigations into Bishop Hubbard, and no reason Albany police would ever be involved, much less look to protect Hubbard.

“District Attorney Paul Clyne,” continued Schneider “also wouldn't speak on camera, saying there was nothing to respond to. He said Aretakis hasn't named any specific instances where Clyne averted the law to protect Hubbard, so he said the claims by Aretakis are baseless.”

Likewise, the Diocese of Albany issued a statement attacking Aretakis, saying he “has no credibility...He lost every court case he brought against the Albany Diocese because he had no facts to back his

false claims. He has been threatened with contempt of court. He is the subject currently of multiple ethics investigations. This is not a man whose public statements deserve serious consideration.”

Aretakis refuted Doyle's statement, telling *The Wanderer*:

“My primary role in all of these matters is to protect children and make the community safer. I've had a major role in the removal of well over a dozen priests from active ministry in the past year and a half – from the Diocese of Albany alone. That doesn't include priests from Rochester, Syracuse and the metro New York City areas.

“I don't care what kind of scorecard Fr. Doyle is using. All I know is that he and his bishop are working very hard at continuing to keep predatory priests in the active ministry. Fr. Doyle, Bishop Hubbard and Sister [Anne Bryan] Smollin and Hubbard's lawyer have initiated at least six ethics investigations against me and none have been found to have any merit. Although all of the ethics investigations are subject to confidentiality, I have waived confidentiality in order to expose Hubbard and his staff as malicious and mean-spirited for attacking the messenger.

“These charges of ethics violations are ludicrous and frivolous and have cost me tens of thousands of dollars,” he said.

## LONG-RUNNING FEUD

Aretakis also told *The Wanderer* his high-profile media assault on Hubbard is intended to expose the \$770-per-hour (plus expenses) investigation of Hubbard by former federal prosecutor Mary Jo White as a “colossal waste of money” and a “self-serving, non-independent investigation by a lawyer of her own client” – an investigation that is supposed to include circumstances surrounding the death of Fr. Minkler.

“Mary Jo White's investigation,” Aretakis told *The Wanderer*, “in and of itself, is a conflict of interest. Number one, being paid almost \$800 per hour by one side to a two-sided dispute gives the appearance that she is going to favor or benefit her client who is paying her. As importantly, a lawyer has a fiduciary, contractual and legal duty to represent their client. Mary Jo White is not allowed to waive those duties a lawyer has to a client. Third, Mary Jo White wants me to compromise my representation of my clients; she wants me to come forward, open my files, and let her talk to my clients and my witnesses in an

effort to help her clear her client. Ethically, I am not permitted to do that; nor would I do that to help the Albany Diocese or Bishop Hubbard."

There is another aspect of Mary Jo White's investigation that is troubling to Aretakis. "When the bishops in Dallas in 2002 agreed to be 'transparent,' they promised a new era of openness. Mary Jo White's investigation is shrouded in the same secrecy that Bishop Hubbard has widely and publicly renounced."

And on the matter of his alleged ethics violations, Aretakis recalled that Hubbard and his attorney, Michael Costello, as well as Sister Anne Smollin, CSJ, who works as a counselor for the diocese, have all been rebuked for their own ethical violations.

For example, as the *Troy Record's* James V. Franco reported on December 31, 2002:

"A nun counseling a man who was sexually molested, abused and fondled by numerous Albany Roman Catholic Diocese priests has been named in a lawsuit for allegations that she manipulated the sessions to protect and benefit the diocese.

"According to the suit...Sister Anne Bryan Smollin, a counselor at the Diocesan Counseling for Laity in Albany with a doctorate in psychology, had the man sign a waiver allowing her to share all information exchanged in the sessions, which lasted from March to November, with Bishop Howard Hubbard.

"The suit further alleges that Smollin urged the man, who is known only as John Doe No. 2, to leave his wife 'because remaining together was detrimental to the diocese'....

"Specifically, the suit accuses Smollin of being professionally negligent. As an example, Aretakis said she did not take any notes or keep any progress reports on the patient's condition during 100 or so therapy sessions.

"Furthermore, the suit alleges that Smollin, at the direction of Hubbard, 'used the confidential information provided by the defendant during therapy ... and counseling for their own ulterior motives and self interests'...."

Another, of many, reports on ethical lapses of Hubbard and his crew was reported by former Albany *Times Union* reporter Andrew Tilghman on January 31, 2003, when he revealed that Albany Catholic Charities paid a victim of clerical abuse \$150,000 in the form of an untraceable bank check

several months earlier.

"The \$150,000 payment was not intended as hush money and meant only as a way to assist a Church member in need, said the Rev. Kenneth Doyle, a diocesan chancellor," reported Tilghman.

"But some not-for-profit managers said the payment appeared to be inappropriate, and lawyers familiar with not-for-profit law said it could be legally questionable and outside the bounds of tax-exempt charitable activity.

"'It doesn't pass the smell test,' said Doug Sauer, director of the statewide Council of Community Services, an umbrella group of more than 1,000 not-for-profit groups. 'You'd have a hard time saying that benefits the anti-poverty mission of the organization'....

"[Sister Maureen] Joyce has said the \$150,000 check was the largest single payment she was aware of that Catholic Charities made to a victim of sexual abuse. A diocesan spokesman later said Joyce could not speak publicly about her agency's role in assisting sexual abuse victims because she may be called as a witness in litigation pending in state Supreme Court in Albany.

"The lawsuit the diocese pointed to focuses on a church therapist, Sister Anne Bryan Smollin, accusing her of professional malpractice for allegedly pressuring the victim who received the \$150,000 payment not to hire an attorney. It is not clear what part Joyce might play in that lawsuit, which was filed in December...." the \$150,000 payment last year came just months after Hubbard and Church officials nationwide vowed not to enter into any more confidential settlement agreements with victims...."

In another case, Aretakis successfully persuaded a judge who issued a gag order on parties involved in litigation with the diocese to step down after he claimed the diocese was engaged in secret communications with the judge.

As the Albany *Times Union's* Tilghman reported March 14, 2003:

"State Supreme Court Justice Joseph Teresi has removed himself from three lawsuits involving the Albany Diocese, stepping aside amid questions about his impartiality and his alleged secret communications with Church officials.

"Teresi's recusal came two days after attorney John Aretakis, whose clients were sexually abused by

priests, urged an appeals court to remove the judge, contending the jurist is biased in favor of the Church....

"The latest questions about confidential communications between the judge and the diocese arose after Teresi issued on Feb. 10 a 'strict cautionary,' warning attorneys against public statements about current and future lawsuits involving the Albany Diocese....

"In most cases, disciplinary codes prohibit judges and lawyers from communicating privately -- or 'ex parte' -- about pending legal matters. Violations can lead to sanctions.

"Several of the news articles, which the judge said he 'culled from various sources,' have computer coding at the top and bottom of the pages indicating they were printouts from the diocese's spokesman, Ken Goldfarb. One article contains handwriting that Aretakis identified as that of the church's attorney, Michael Costello...."

## THE PR CAMPAIGN

At a press conference on February 12, eight days after a California man, Andrew Zalay, produced two documents inferring his brother Tom had a sexual relationship with Hubbard, while he was bishop of Albany, that led Zalay to suicide, and further allegations from a former street hustler, Anthony Bonneau, who claimed Hubbard was a client, Hubbard said he was "determined to leave no stone unturned to refute these charges and to restore my reputation."

Meeting the press at the diocese's "pastoral center", Hubbard compared the allegations against him to those against the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, proclaiming to representatives of the print and broadcasting media in Albany:

One month later, swirling in controversy over his hiring of former federal prosecutor Mary Jo White at \$770 per hour, he received the "support" of New York's Edward Cardinal Egan and managed to portray himself -- via a very sympathetic report by the Associated Press -- as the victim of a smear campaign waged by anti-Vatican II zealots.

Cardinal Egan, in Albany to lobby Governor George Pataki and state legislators to oppose a "gay marriage" law homosexual activists are pushing, told a crowd of reporters that he had complete confidence in the investigation of Hubbard by former federal prosecutor Mary Jo White.

"A very important person was asked to look into this in a very official and a very systematic matter, and that is under way right now," he said. "So I am going to join you and wait to find out just exactly what the outcome is. In the meantime, I am going to assure you the good bishop of Albany is a man we support, for whom we pray and, especially, do we pray for the people of God in the diocese of Albany."

On February 19, the bishop's diocesan newspaper published a four-page spread of p.r. fluff.

One report, "Christian Leaders Stand By Bishop," listed all the local Protestant ministers affirming their support for Hubbard and expressing the belief that the allegations against him are false. Letters to the editor expressed outrage that anyone would dare question the integrity of the bishop; one writer wrote: "Have we returned to the days of ancient Rome when Christians were thrown to the lions?" and continued, "In my opinion, [Hubbard's] service to the Albany area throughout his career and his sincerity to the will of God ranks him as our local version of Mother Teresa of Calcutta."

An editorial titled, "Past Holds Significant Clues," revealed the late Tom Zalay had a personality disorder and was under the care of a doctor at the time he committed suicide. It gratuitously compared Zalay's personality disorder to those of Reagan assassin John Hinckley and David Berkowitz, the serial murderer known as "Son of Sam."

The editor concluded: "The detective's report of what the parents told him and Mr. Zalay's self-analysis are not conclusive, but they should go a long way toward convincing skeptical people that the Bishop is innocent."

## SMEAR CAMPAIGN IN HIGH GEAR

An example of how a longtime Hubbard supporter, the *Albany Times Union*, continues to buck up Hubbard's image, was published on February 28. An editorial by Michael Rivest, director of the Rensselaer office of the New York State Office of Children and Family, explained to the public that Hubbard's critics "condemn homosexuality, ecumenism, feminism and changes in Catholic liturgy, essentially every progressive step the Church has taken since the Second Vatican Council."

Rivest then hammered Roman Catholic Faithful founder Stephen Brady and this reporter, saying we "prey upon the disillusioned and fearful, those who....have been so shaken by the Church they once



trusted that they can no longer trust a bishop, no matter who that bishop is or what he has stood for his entire public life....

“Brady and Likoudis are hucksters who dangle before their audiences the false certainties of the 1950s, when out of sight literally meant out of mind, when *gay* meant happy and *queers* occupied a parallel universe from which they occasionally escaped, only to be chased back in....”

## HUBBARD’S MEDIA FLACKS

Hubbard’s biggest p.r. coup was getting the Albany Associated Press reporter Michael Gormley, who writes often and very sympathetically on “gay issues” for both AP and the gay press, to write a favorable piece proclaiming Hubbard’s tenacity and portraying Hubbard’s critics as those who want to “turn the clock back” on Vatican II.

On the evening (or late afternoon) of March 5, the first of two Gormley reports on Hubbard appeared on the AP wire. The lead sentence in the first, headlined “Albany Bishop Back Battling in the Streets,” declared: “In 1967, street priest Howard Hubbard fought to create northeastern New York’s first heroin rehab clinic. Again and again, he clashed with one of Gov. Nelson Rockefeller’s top drug policy advisers, outraged at the claim there was a heroin problem in Rocky’s capital.

“Hubbard won and Hope House was founded.

“‘This was their No. 1 unmet need,’ Hubbard said of the inner city residents he served. ‘So if I was to be faithful to what I was supposed to be doing there, I had a responsibility to help out.’

“Today, as bishop of Albany’s Catholic Diocese, Hubbard is taking a new fight to the street, struggling to save his reputation and protect his Church over claims he had homosexual relationships and protected other gay priests. As others ensnared in the nationwide clergy sex abuse scandal have quit or quietly faded from view, Hubbard has stuck his chin out.

“‘He was a tough guy,’ said Jerry Connelly, 64, of Albany, a friend and one-time street basketball nemesis of Hubbard who has known the bishop for 40 years. ‘You can’t just be a little lamb...I think you fight for what you believe’.....”

The second Gormley piece, which appeared on March 6 in, perhaps, 200 newspapers across the United States and in the United Kingdom, including

the (U.K.) *Guardian* and such major U.S. papers as the *Boston Globe*, the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, *Long Island Newsday*, *Washington Times*, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *Miami Herald*, *San Jose Mercury News*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and the *Kansas City Star*, opened:

“Albany Bishop Howard Hubbard has never shied away from a fight, and now the spiritual leader of 400,000 Roman Catholics in upstate New York is waging an unusually public campaign against sexual misconduct allegations to save his career....

“Hubbard vigorously denies the charges and insists he has kept his vow of celibacy. He has even persuaded the diocese council to hire a former federal prosecutor to do an independent investigation.

“And he insists the charges aren’t just aimed at him.

“‘It is not just an attack upon myself. It is an agenda about the direction the Church is moving,’ Hubbard said. Some conservatives want to ‘go back to the Church of before the second Vatican Council’ and see him as a liberal target.”

Both of Gormley’s reports painted Hubbard as a martyr for Vatican II.

“I’m not going to allow myself to be used that way,” Hubbard told Gormley.

The first Gormley report included a fuller explanation from Hubbard on his determination to clear his name:

“It is not just an attack upon myself. It is an agenda about the direction the Church is moving and people want to turn back the clock and renounce the strides we made in ecumenism and religious liberty and liturgical reform and go back to the Church of before the second Vatican Council. And if they can take down a leader like myself, no matter what means are used, then that’s their goal. I’m not going to allow myself to be used that way...I’m not going to hide.”

The first report to go over the wires included this essential information:

“At 65 years old, Hubbard is trim and fit, due in part to a full schedule seven days a week and evening jogs on his treadmill while reading or watching ‘Law & Order’ on TV. He usually avoids the trappings of his high office, donning the black cleric shirt and pants of a parish priest and driving himself through an unpublished schedule of events and to celebrate Mass throughout the sprawling, 14-county

diocese.

"He speaks softly and methodically, training placid blue eyes on the questioner to make sure his answers satisfy....

"National conservative Catholic groups took aim at Hubbard years before clergy abuse scandal hit front pages and the conservative weekly, the *Wanderer*, has regularly targeted the bishop.

"When he became America's youngest bishop at 38 and took over his home diocese in 1977, he was in the vanguard of the Church's liberal lurch since Vatican II in the 1960s. He helped lead the Church into a more open institution with girl altar servers, more laity involvement including women lectors, and ministries to help gay Catholics, among other measures...."

One week after the *Boston Globe* ran Gormley's defense of Hubbard, the newspaper which still enjoys taking credit for exposing corruption in the Church hierarchy, ran another defense of Hubbard by Albany freelance writer and journalism professor Darryl McGrath, a frequent reporter on "women's reproductive health issues" for the Internet site, Women's Enews, the news service of the National Organization of Women, and Metroland, an "alternative" newspaper in Albany.

McGrath's favorable report on Hubbard was also featured on the Internet gay news blog (gay\_blog.blogspot.com)

McGrath opened her report: "When Bishop Howard Hubbard of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany takes center stage at a news conference, it is usually to speak out on the death penalty, poverty, or some other issue of social justice," but now, she adds, he is "repeatedly" denying that "he has ever had any sexual relationship."

She offers a brief review of recent events, and then provides this gross mischaracterization of her hometown as a "city of 90,000 people, largely conservative and heavily Roman Catholic," and adds, "Hubbard is respected for his ecumenical skills, his social activism, and his concern for the poor.

"He's lived what he's preached," said Michael Burgess, who started a campaign of purple lapel ribbons at his Albany parish to show support for Hubbard. "He's the saintliest man I've ever met in the way he's lived his life."

McGrath also quotes from a recent editorial

by Albany *Times Union* editor Harry Rosenfeld, who deplored the attacks on his good friend the bishop, arguing, "a fair-minded public would demonstrate solidarity with the bishop. He needs the support of people who recognize the depth of the unfairness of his situation."

She also brought in moral support from David Kaczynski, executive director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty, who "has worked closely with Hubbard -- who serves as president of the group's board" -- and brother of the "Unabomber."

"He's an extraordinarily strong person," Kaczynski told McGrath. "I think the thing that has carried this place through is the bishop's clear and consistent statements that he is completely innocent. It's hard to imagine someone having the arrogance to deny these things if they were true."

The *Globe's* decision to publish McGrath's puff-piece on Hubbard, speculated C. Joseph Doyle, executive director of the Massachusetts Catholic Action League, "is part of an on-going, massive cover-up in the form of an expose".

"The *Globe*," he added, "has never used the word 'homosexual' in any of its reports on clerical sexual misconduct and crimes. It always uses 'pedophile' or 'ephebophile', but won't dare use the 'h-word' for fear of offending a very powerful constituency and pushing an agenda."

## UPDATE ON THE INVESTIGATION

On March 9, the Troy *Record* reported that investigators hired by former federal prosecutor Mary Jo White intimidated an elderly woman who was a close friend of the late Fr. John Minkler, the Albany priest who mysteriously died after he was coerced to signing an affidavit denying he wrote a report on clerical homosexuality in the diocese for the late John Cardinal O'Connor.

The *Record* declared:

"Investigators hired by the Albany Diocesan Review Board to look into allegations of sexual misconduct against Bishop Howard Hubbard refused to interview an elderly person who may have shed light on the death of Rev. John Minkler.

"The interview was supposed to occur in Minkler's 11th-floor office at the Stratton Veterans Affairs Hospital in Albany, but private investigators representing Mary Jo White walked away from the table after realizing the elderly person wanted attor-

ney John Aretakis in the room....

"Aretakis' client requested anonymity, and asked to be identified only as an 'elderly person.' His client was called by investigators for the interview last Tuesday [March 2], according to Aretakis.

"A videotape supplied by Aretakis shows the attorney and his client in the office with investigator Frank Citera and Rev. Sennen SanFratello, a priest at the Veterans Affairs Hospital, arguing with Aretakis over the legal ramifications of the attorney being in the room.

"Citera called Aretakis' presence in the room 'inappropriate' and a 'conflict of interest,' considering the lawyer has represented dozens of clients alleging sexual abuse against the diocese.

"However, the investigator never presented any legal reason as to why Aretakis should be barred from the interview...."

In an interview with *The Wanderer*, Aretakis said White's investigators attempted to deprive his client of her constitutional rights to have an attorney present during an investigation; but more importantly, Aretakis told *The Wanderer*, attorney Mary Jo White is incapable of investigating either Fr. Minkler's death or allegations that Hubbard is a homosexual predator because she has a clear "conflict of interest" in doing either.

As Aretakis explained in a letter to White, after the March 2 incident involving his client:

".....I came into this process with an open mind about clients of mine and me cooperating with you but your agents' unprofessional and bullying tactics toward a client of mine who voluntarily came forward to answer questions at the VA Hospital in Fr. Minkler's office on March 2, 2004 revealed that you and your agents are engaging in intimidating and bullying tactics similar to that evidently experienced by Fr. Minkler at the hands of Fr. [Kenneth] Doyle and Bishop Hubbard on at least February 12, 2004 through February 14, 2004....

"I need not remind you that you are not a judge, and you are no longer a government prosecutor; therefore, you nor any of your agents, nor your principal, Bishop Hubbard, or the Albany Diocese's Sexual Misconduct Panel that is appointed and selected by Bishop Hubbard or any of your other agents, will determine when my presence is appropriate and when, how and to what extent a civilian decides to retain a lawyer of her own choosing to repre-

sent her. Whatever position you are attempting to set forth, you are in error, and fail to understand the adversarial nature of the relationship that your agents have created.

"In your capacity it appears you will be adjudging individual witnesses' credibility based on their direct statements to you. Since you are not a judge, arbitrator or approved mediator, then you may have become a witness in a matter in which you are investigating, and that may render you an inappropriate person to investigate.

"For example, on the [Anthony] Bonneau matter, it is conceivable that the ultimate truth of the allegations may hinge on the credibility of Mr. Bonneau versus Bishop Hubbard. Being paid \$770 per hour by a diocese led by Bishop Hubbard renders you incapable of making any such determination on one individual's credibility over another individual who is responsible for paying your fee. It would be quite easy for you to find as more credible a nationally well-known bishop of twenty seven years who is paying your hourly rate over a former teenage youth who had to engage in very regrettable actions in order to survive on the streets.

"I believe you may also become a witness as I am aware that other witnesses have sat down with you and credibly advised you that Bishop Hubbard has had a life that is contradictory to his public statements concerning his sexual activity and that Bishop Hubbard has been in violation of his vows of celibacy and chastity. Witnesses that I am aware of have advised you that Bishop Hubbard has been sexually active, and has protected and continues to protect numerous predatory and sexually active priests in the Albany Diocese. Will you allege that I may become a witness because I am aware of dozens and dozens of priests that Bishop Hubbard is still protecting? Do you believe I may become a witness because I have many other investigations under way regarding other sexual indiscretions of Bishop Hubbard? Do you expect me to turn these matters that have not yet become public over to you to investigate?

"The reason I have not become a witness is because no case, civil or criminal, is pending, and since you are not a judge you cannot make a determination on these points in any event. You also can not and will not determine for my clients or me when it is appropriate for me to represent someone.

"Since you will be issuing a report, and in the report you may find one person more credible than another, and taken into consideration that you

are not a judge, then you will or may be making yourself a witness in making determinations how and why one person may be more credible than another.

“Are you aware that the Albany Diocese neglected to note in their February 16, 2004 press release concerning the death of Fr. Minkler that Fr. Minkler worked very closely with Cardinal O’Connor in the 1970’s until 1984? Fr. Minkler worked directly for Archbishop Joseph Ryan of the military ordinariate back when the ordinariate came directly under the auspices of the New York Archdiocese, and therefore Cardinal O’Connor. Was the Albany Diocese attempting to make sure that the public would not become aware of the close connection and close relationship that Fr. Minkler had with Cardinal O’Connor?”

“Once you become aware that Fr. Minkler authored the two letters, one can easily understand why Fr. Doyle and/or Bishop Hubbard tried to bully, intimidate and coerce Fr. Minkler into a false repudiation, much the same as Mr. Citera and Fr. SanFratello tried to bully my client on March 2, 2004.

“Once you become aware of what I already have found out about Bishop Hubbard’s credibility, you may come to the only logical conclusion that he is not telling the truth and that he and you are costing his parishioners excessive amounts of money to conceal his false and disingenuous actions.

“I take note that when I requested of your office a complete copy of your engagement letter with your principal, you or your partner advised me that the consent and approval of your principal was needed. That you needed to get this approval, and that the approval was partially denied, and you wanted to summarize same, belies the fact that you are independent and autonomous and speaks volumes about your duty to your fiduciary (the Panel and Bishop Hubbard) and your ability to be independent. You are acting as an attorney and as an attorney, you have not waived, may not be able to waive or cannot waive your fiduciary responsibilities and contractual obligations to your principals and that you have or may have non-waivable, non-dischargeable duties and obligations as an attorney to your client. You now expect me to share and open up my files and information to you, but you are constrained to provide me with your engagement letter and other materials that will show me the scope of your representation, duties and relationships. If you were hired and retained as a mediator, you would have had to be approved by me. The fact that you were hired by entities that are gener-

ally defendants that I have sued, and that I am generally a lawyer for victims of clergy sexual abuse, indicates to my clients that you are not and may never be able to be independent and autonomous.

“As an attorney and fiduciary for Bishop Hubbard and the Albany Diocese Sexual Misconduct Panel, a panel that has publicly indicated that ‘cannot investigate itself’ and therefore, stands in the shoes of Bishop Hubbard, you have or may have a legal, contractual, fiduciary and/or ethical duty to your client and principal. If the Misconduct Panel was independent of Bishop Hubbard, it would have been able to investigate the bishop. As I advised you and I believe you were made aware, I have sued your principals, both the Misconduct Panel and Bishop Hubbard.

“It appears to me, that you and your office have or may have a conflict of interest. The conflict exists on a number of levels, and would render your work and work product useless. It appears to me Ms. White, that your inflated work, inflated hourly wage and ultimate bill is a rip-off to Roman Catholic Parishioners in the Albany Diocese for many reasons, some of which are outlined in this letter.

“It is unfortunate that because of you or your agents’ actions on March 2, 2004, which I am compelled to believe were orchestrated and approved by you, adversarial relationships and lack of trust has developed. Your role in these matters has also not been explained, developed or thoroughly addressed from the standpoint of the Canons of Ethics and Disciplinary Rules that we attorneys in the State of New York must abide by.

“You also appear not to be cognizant of my ethical obligations to my clients. My obligations do not run to you, the diocese, Bishop Hubbard or the Misconduct Panel. As stated, I am a lawyer for victims of clergy sexual abuse. You were retained by present and possible future defendants. In essence, you have requested that I compromise my representation of my clients to serve Bishop Hubbard’s false claims and disingenuous desire to clear his name. Since I am ethically bound only to my clients and exclusively to my clients, and you and your agents have acted adversarial, confrontational, unprofessional, and not independent, you have made any cooperation difficult on a number of levels.

“In an attempt to further the public’s interests and save Albany Diocese Parishioner’s money,



I will ask you one question: has Bishop Hubbard taken the polygraph he pledged to be 'willing and eager to take' in the February 12, 2004 *Evangelist* article? If Bishop Hubbard is asked the most rudimentary questions on a polygraph that I am invited to attend, regarding his repeated consensual sexual relationships with adult men and priests, he will quite quickly and unequivocally be determined to have no credibility, and your investigation would terminate after only a few short hours at \$770 per hour. How do I know whether such a polygraph has been taken, and if Bishop Hubbard failed such a polygraph that same will ever see the light of day?

"I am also quite confident that a very easy handwriting analysis on Fr. Minkler's February 13, 2004 false repudiation letter that he was coerced, bullied and intimidated to sign by Fr. Doyle will demonstrate that he authored the June 10, 1995 letter to Cardinal O'Connor and the January 9, 2001 letter implicating Bishop Hubbard in sexual relationships with two and three priests, respectively. This will easily and quite inexpensively indicate that Fr. Minkler wrote both letters that set out that Bishop Hubbard is sexually active with priests and has repeatedly told untruths about obeying his vows of celibacy and chastity, as well as authorship of the letters.

"An issue for possible examination is why Fr. Doyle, a lawyer, tricked Fr. Minkler into thinking Fr. Minkler committed a crime? In the repudiation letter prepared and typed by Fr. Doyle, it states, 'I make this statement of my own free will and I know that making a false statement is a crime.' As you know, the February 13, 2004 document was not an affidavit, was not properly sworn to, was not notarized and did not involve any crime by Fr. Minkler. Fr. Doyle was 'hell-bent' on making Fr. Minkler think Fr. Minkler had committed a crime. Have you figured out why Fr. Doyle so desperately wanted that false and fabricated statement signed by Fr. Minkler? Have you figured out why Fr. Doyle was motivated to make Fr. Minkler believe Fr. Minkler was committing a crime, when he was not?

"I am also at a loss why you have not and will not secure a sworn affidavit from Bishop Hubbard denying a present and active sexual life. If these documents were ever executed and Bishop Hubbard's false denials were made under oath and those documents became public, criminal charges might soon follow at no expense to parishioners. I am quite certain you will not be securing or requesting these affidavits because your principal could then very well be guilty of current criminal activity if this is done, and

then you could be accused of causing same to your principal, whom you have duties to...." ###

### ***In Albany.... GUERRILLA THEATER: BISHOP'S BACKERS DISRUPT MEETING***

by Paul Likoudis

A February 22 press conference with Roman Catholic Faithful's founder and president Stephen Brady and this reporter proved an excellent showcase for the tactics Albany Bishop Howard Hubbard has used on faithful Catholics during his 27-year reign: intimidation, harassment and guerrilla warfare.

A standing-room-only crowd of approximately 400 people filled the ballroom of the Crown Plaza Hotel in downtown Albany, hoping for explanations for Fr. Minkler's death and the allegations that Hubbard sexually molested two young men – one of whom killed himself.

But no sooner had Brady begun to speak, after leading the Memorare, then Hubbard's backers, led by Dr. Kathy Menard, the diocese's coordinator for RE-NEW 2000, tried to disrupt the meeting by standing and waving posters, chanting their support for Bishop Hubbard, and walking en masse through the packed ballroom.

As Hubbard's 50 supporters ranted, Brady led the majority in reciting the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the prayer to St. Michael until his critics quieted down.

Stressing Bishop Hubbard's lack of credibility, Brady told his audience, "I have more trust in the street prostitute, the kid who committed suicide and the dead priest than I do in the American bishops."

In his 40-minute presentation, he described Roman Catholic Faithful's ongoing campaign to expose clerical and episcopal homosexuality, and the refusal of leading American cardinals and archbishops to address homosexuality within the hierarchy. Then he turned the podium over to this reporter, to read a brief statement to the press and answer questions from Albany press corps and the public on his 13-year friendship with Fr. Minkler.

Before I had the chance to read the opening sentence of the statement, which focused on the complicity of the Albany media in protecting Hubbard and marginalizing his critics, Dr. Menard seized a microphone and began chanting again, disrupting the meeting for another five minutes.

Throughout the reading of the brief statement, which was intended to take about two minutes, Menard and her band of guerrilla actors and actresses repeatedly tried to drown out this speaker as he called on the area's politicians, police and press to urge Hubbard to resign.

Again, during the 40-minute question-and-answer session, Shirley O'Neil, a former Sister of St. Joseph, interrupted a reporter's question to demand the right to read a two page statement in support of Bishop Hubbard. That led to another long, chaotic disruption, as most in the audience told her to sit down.

### STRANGE REPORTAGE

For most of the 400 people present, the public meeting, convened by Brady, was a cathartic event that revealed the high level of concern for the health of the Church of a broad segment of the diocese.

But the reporting, especially by the print media, was appallingly dishonest.

The Associated Press' Michael Gormley, who was present throughout the meeting and whose story appeared in newspapers from Long Island to Florida, downsized the audience, and presented Hubbard's critics as the disruptive element.

"One hundred Brady supporters attended the event at an Albany hotel," misreported Gormley, "while more than 50 protesters filled the back of the meeting room. Protesters speaking in support of Hubbard were drowned out by members of Roman Catholic Faithful reciting the Lord's Prayer and 'Hail Mary.'

"A small protest in support of the bishop was held outside the Albany hotel. One Hubbard supporter, Gerry Ladouceur, 49, of Albany County, said Brady has his own agenda and is using the claims against Hubbard to promote it.

"(Brady's) quoted as saying he wants to take the diocese back,' Ladouceur said. 'The problem is he wants to take it back to the 15th century'...."

"Albany Diocese spokesman Ken Goldfarb told the Albany *Times Union* that Brady's group 'have for many years waged an unfortunate campaign of character assassination against church leaders with whom they disagree. While their efforts at church reform may once have been well-intended, they have long since wandered astray'...."

Gormley made no mention of this reporter's

presence, the statement to the press, or the 40-minute question-and-answer session, reinforcing the widespread belief that AP has an official, longstanding, policy of refusing to acknowledge *The Wanderer's* existence.

The Troy *Record's* Kate Perry also downsized the audience, reporting that "more than 100 people" attended the event at the Crown Plaza; but the centerpiece of her report was the "shouting match" between ex-nun O'Neil, who was screaming into the microphone, "I have a right to assemble....Excuse me, it's not fair if you don't hear both sides of every story," while Annette LaBrie was telling her to sit down.

"A rift among local Catholics," wrote Perry, "precipitated by the sexual abuse scandal in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany and recent allegations against Bishop Howard Hubbard was seen in living color Sunday night as two women screamed in each other's face."

Perry did capture the intense atmosphere at the meeting, writing:

"In recent days, some have implied that the bishop and the diocese played a role in Minkler's death, either directly or by driving him to suicide. Hubbard's supporters maintain that the allegation is ridiculous.

"The most heated moments however, occurred when supporters of Hubbard spoke up. They gathered outside the conference room and periodically interrupted those speaking to express their disagreement or just to make statements of their own, which had the audience shouting 'move on,' 'get a life,' and 'leave.'

"But it was when one of the bishop's supporters approached the microphone during the question-and-answer period that the most intense disagreement occurred...."

"The incident occurred after Likoudis spoke about his ties with Minkler, with whom he wrote the 10-part series 'Agony in Albany'...."

The Albany *Times Union's* Mike Goodwin also downsized the turnout, but not quite as low as the AP's Gormley.

"At least 200 people crammed into a ballroom at the State Street hotel," wrote Goodwin, "many frequently breaking into applause during Likoudis' speech. But he and Brady were repeatedly in-

terruted by Hubbard supporters, who claim the men are conservative religious zealots bent on destroying Hubbard.

“‘You’re stealing our Church,’ Troy resident Shirley O’Neil shouted at Likoudis from a microphone in the center of the ballroom as another woman stepped to the microphone and tried to talk over O’Neil.

“Cathy Toedt, holding a purple sign that declared ‘We Believe Our Bishop,’ called the meeting ‘a disgrace.’

“‘They’re breeding hatred,’ the Colonie woman said as she stood outside the ballroom. ‘We don’t need outsiders coming in and telling us what to do about our bishop.’”

Another person accusing Brady and this reporter of “breeding hatred” was layman Michael Burgess, executive director of the New York Statewide Senior Action Council, a beneficiary of the Catholic Church’s Campaign for Human Development.

“We should be trying to heal these differences and reconcile these people, not engaging in the hatred I saw in there and name calling,” he told the local NBC affiliate, WNYT-TV, Channel 13.

WNYT also featured Sr. Mary Anne Rodgers, CSJ, asserting that Roman Catholic Faithful is hijacking the sex abuse issue to push a conservative agenda. “We heard people coming forth with liturgical changes, and using the legitimate sorrow over clergy sex abuse and the sexual abuse of children to get their agenda on the front page,” she said.

Another television news station, Capital News 9, also smeared the bishop’s critics. “Supporters of Bishop Hubbard who tried to speak on his behalf were either shouted down or led out of the room. The Albany Diocese issued a statement accusing Brady and Likoudis of ‘character assassination against church leaders with whom they disagree.’ The bishop and the diocese continue to deny all allegations against him. The bishop’s supporters believe him.”

## REACTION FROM THE AUDIENCE

Members of the audience who watched the television reports or read their newspapers the following morning manifested their anger at these news distortions on Paul Vandenburg’s popular morning talk show.

Vandenburg, perhaps the only Albany-area

media figure to publicize “Agony in Albany” after its release 13 years ago – and whom, he claimed in a conversation last week with this reporter, Hubbard tried to have fired from his station at WROW – played excerpts from this reporter’s press statement throughout his morning program, particularly the allegation that the media is “giving Hubbard a pass on one of the most notable fleecings of his flock for his own personal benefit and protection.”

Callers to the program who attended the Sunday meeting repeatedly asked Vandenburg why Brady and Likoudis are presented by the diocese and the *Times Union* as “lunatics and extremists,” while Vandenburg, over and over again, stressed the fear that inhabits the hearts of Hubbard’s critics.

“I cannot believe,” he said at one point, “the people I talk to, how afraid they are. I advise people to disguise their voices, to give a fictitious name, but to call. What kind of reign of terror is going on?”

One caller said she was at the Sunday evening event at the Crown Plaza and sat next to a former judge. When one of the film crews pointed the camera in his direction and began to focus on him, he turned his head, and then asked himself aloud, “Why am I hiding? Why I am doing this?”

“Everyone is afraid of Hubbard’s political clout and vindictiveness,” the caller said.

Other callers repeatedly excoriated the Albany *Times Union* for protecting Hubbard, while others raised questions about whether they were actually receiving sacraments, such as Confirmation, since Hubbard created his own unique Confirmation prayers, whether or not they should start going to a Protestant church, explaining why they had left the Catholic Church and a few callers made blunt remarks about clerical sex abuse they were aware of.

A major issue for Albany-area Catholics is the hiring of former U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White, hired by the diocese’s review board to probe allegations of Hubbard’s sexual misconduct at \$770 per hour, plus per diem expenses, plus hourly wages for her team of investigators and reporters.

Questions abound about who selected this Clinton-appointed Federal prosecutor, who vigorously prosecuted FACE charges against the late Bishop George Lynch and another priest for sitting-in at a Dobbs Ferry abortion clinic, even seeking a reversal of a Second Circuit Court opinion which freed Lynch, and who refused to indict Democrat Party

chairman Terry McAuliffe and other top Democrats and union officials for a money-laundering scheme uncovered by her own office in what is known as the Teamsters Swap Scandal.

In an open-ended investigation that could easily cost \$10,000 per day, Catholics in Albany want to know if the cost is being underwritten by someone outside the diocese, since the legal services are far too expensive for a diocese to meet, even in flush times.

## NEW COMPLICATIONS

Complicating the bishop's problems are two other recent developments.

On February 23, Fr. Minkler's 1995 letter to John Cardinal O'Connor detailing clerical misconduct and his January 2001 hand-written letter to RCF's Brady naming 30 homosexual priests in the diocese appeared on at least two different Internet sites.

News that the letters are on the Internet first appeared on the FreeRepublic.com web site, which has been a venue for hundreds of people speaking about the Hubbard scandal, and among the readers are Catholics in Albany who are posting such comments as, "Oh, my God, my pastor is on the list!"

Also, there is another challenge to Bishop Hubbard's credibility regarding the sequence of events that led to the late Fr. Minkler's disavowal of the letter he wrote to O'Connor.

Fr. Joseph Wilson, the Brooklyn priest who was one of the last people to speak with Minkler, disclosed that Fr. Minkler was summoned to the Albany Catholic chancery while on retreat at St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Mass.

"Fr. Minkler was told by the Guestmaster of St. Joseph's that the chancery had placed an urgent call to the abbey for him, and Fr. Minkler returned the call Thursday afternoon from Spencer.

"He spoke twice that afternoon with Fr. [Ken] Doyle, the chancellor, and once to a woman reporter in the Albany area, and then returned to Albany Friday morning, earlier than he had planned," Wilson told *The Wanderer*.

Bishop Hubbard has consistently maintained that Fr. Minkler called him to request the meeting, so he could disavow the letter to O'Connor. Minkler was dead two days later. ###

## STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

## Crown Plaza Hotel, Albany, February 22, 2004, by Paul Likoudis

The death of my good friend and close collaborator for the past 13 years is devastating to me personally and completely unnecessary. Do I blame Bishop Howard Hubbard for this tragedy? Yes, I do. But there are other culprits and hosts of guilty bystanders.

After the release of "Agony In Albany" 13 years ago, a ten-part series on the dismal record of Bishop Hubbard in this diocese, which I wrote with the close cooperation of Fr. Minkler, the bishop should have had the decency to resign, for his own good and for the good of Catholics and the general population of the Diocese of Albany.

Instead, he instituted a reign of psychological and institutional terror, focused in particular against the good priests and the good Catholic laity of his own diocese, as evidenced by the demand that priests individually and collectively rise to his defense and denounce me, *The Wanderer*, and, in particular the "Agony in Albany" series, and members of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics – from the pulpits on Sunday mornings – without any attempts to answer or rebut any of the numerous crimes and malfeasances which were exposed and documented. This has continued to last week when Hubbard brought unbearable pressure to Fr. Minkler himself.

The abuse of Fr. Minkler, this reporter, and the Catholic people of the Diocese of Albany continues.

Bishop Hubbard's decision to pressure Fr. Minkler to sign a phony disclaimer is part of that 13-year campaign.

His current decision to hire attorney Mary Jo White at \$770 per hour – higher than the average weekly wage of most of his struggling flock – with unlimited budget for her expensive investigators and ancillaries – is yet another example of his willingness to fleece his flock.

No amount of money – and Mary Jo White's investigation could end up costing Catholics ten thousand dollars a day – can possibly absolve Bishop Hubbard or rehabilitate his shattered image.

During the 10 week run of "Agony in Albany" from the first week of March 1991 to the second week of May, 1991, Bishop Hubbard went to his friends at the Albany *Times Union* to generate a series of positive reports that portrayed him as the very



model of a very modern bishop. At the same time "Agony In Albany" was reporting the concerns of priests and laity that Hubbard had a policy of recruiting homosexuals to the priesthood, some of whom had been expelled from other seminaries, he even defended his policy of recruiting homosexuals in the *Times Union*.

After "Agony In Albany" was printed, the Coalition of Concerned Catholics in Albany circulated more than 5,000 copies of the assembled ten articles, and sent copies to all reporters and editors and priests in the Diocese of Albany, politicians, police, other professionals and diocesan bureaucrats and parish leadership.

It had no restorative effect. To the contrary, Hubbard's persecution of good Catholics, lay and clerical, intensified, and the abuses continued and increased during the past 13 years.

Because an acquiescent media was told to ignore *The Wanderer*, because it was "extremist," Hubbard was emboldened and empowered.

Additionally, Hubbard would never have been permitted to conduct his reign of terror against the Catholics of Albany if he did not understand implicitly that he had the protection of the press, the politicians, the police and above all, most of his fellow American bishops.

Why didn't Catholic Governor Mario Cuomo intercede for the Catholics of Albany and advise Hubbard to step aside?

Where is Catholic Governor George Pataki? Why, for the good of the Church, doesn't he quietly tell Hubbard he has lost all credibility?

Where are all the prominent Catholic politicians and professionals and the influential, wealthy Catholics? Why not speak the truth to Hubbard and tell him he must step aside.

Where are the media? Why are they giving Hubbard a pass on one of the most notable fleecings of his flock for his own personal benefit and protection?

If an institution cannot correct its corruption from within, it needs to be corrected from outside. It is time for the politicians, the police, the press and the Catholic people to demand that Howard Hubbard step aside or be degraded from the office of Bishop of Albany before there are any more tragedies like the death of good, courageous Fr. John Minkler. # # #

<http://www.cruxnews.com/rose/rose-27feb04.html>

27 February 2004

***Priest's mysterious death complicates  
Albany bishop's quest to clear his name***

Two separate accusations that Bishop Howard Hubbard had homosexual relations, including paying for sex with a 16-year-old minor, have left the leader of the Albany diocese embarrassed and humiliated. At press conferences, in public statements, and on talk radio he has steadfastly refuted both allegations, saying that he has "never had sexual relations with anyone."

But it is the death of Fr. John Minkler that has severely complicated matters for the accused bishop. Fr. Minkler, 57, was found dead in his home on Sunday, February 15. Three days before, the deceased priest was identified in a television news report as the author of a 1995 report addressed to New York's Cardinal John J. O'Connor. Among other things, the letter detailed "a ring of homosexual Albany priests" including Bishop Howard Hubbard's alleged long-term homosexual relationships with two younger priests.

Police won't say how Fr. Minkler died, only that the circumstances surrounding his death are not yet clear. The coroner has yet to release his report of the autopsy.

But that's only the beginning. Bishop Hubbard appears to be caught in a lie, and according to sources close to the late priest, the bishop may also have forced Fr. Minkler to lie.

In a Feb. 16 press conference (the day after Fr. Minkler's death), Bishop Hubbard announced that Fr. Minkler disavowed authorship of the controversial report in a written affidavit signed at diocesan headquarters two days before his death. The bishop also claimed that Fr. Minkler arrived there of his own free-will and assured everyone that he was not summoned there: "Fr. Minkler made an appointment to see me, and he told me that he did not author the letter, and he wanted to be with me face-to-face and to assure me that he had not written anything to Cardinal O'Connor about me...and he did not know how his name got associated with the letter."

Stephen Brady, head of the Illinois-based [Roman Catholic Faithful](#), was the first to contradict that report of events. Brady revealed that Fr. Minkler had been working with his lay Catholic group

for at least three years in order to document homosexual misconduct and abuse among Albany priests, including Bishop Howard Hubbard. "[Fr.] Minkler was scared to death that the bishop would find out," Brady told Albany's Times-Union. Brady said the priest left him a voice mail message asking for advice the day before his death.

Brady confirmed that Fr. Minkler was indeed the author of the controversial 1995 report. The priest sent Brady a copy of the report in 2001, and although the report itself was signed with the pseudonym "Henry," the fax coversheet accompanying the letter was signed by Fr. Minkler.

According to [Paul Likoudis](#), news editor for The Wanderer, he received a phone call from Fr. Minkler shortly after the priest returned from signing the affidavit. In the course of their conversation, said Likoudis, Fr. Minkler indicated that, contrary to Bishop Hubbard's claim, he was summoned to the chancery by diocesan chancellor Fr. Kenneth Doyle, former spokesman for the U.S. bishops conference in Washington. According to Likoudis, Fr. Minkler explained that Fr. Doyle had the affidavit all made out and told the priest to sign it during their brief meeting.

[Fr. Joseph F. Wilson](#) of the Diocese of Brooklyn also spoke with Fr. Minkler by telephone that same evening. Although the Albany priest made no mention to him of being summoned to the chancery, he did tell Fr. Wilson that "the bishop made me lie." Fr. Wilson said he assumed Fr. Minkler was referring to being forced to sign the affidavit disavowing authorship of the 1995 report to Cardinal O'Connor.

"I talked to Fr. Minkler for about an hour," Fr. Wilson explained. "He wanted advice on how to smooth things over with his bishop. I had no reservations whatsoever about his state of mind when I finished talking to him that night." Fr. Wilson added that the Albany priest also mentioned that he had talked with at least one other priest and a lay canon lawyer to solicit advice that same evening. "Not exactly the actions of a man who's planning to commit suicide," commented Fr. Wilson.

Likoudis agreed, but admits that he doesn't know the circumstances surrounding the priest's death, other than that they seem suspicious. "It's all speculation at this point," he said. What is not speculation is the fact that Fr. Minkler, a former secretary to Cardinal O'Connor, was asked by the late Archbishop of New York to prepare a brief detailing

clerical corruption in the Albany diocese. That report, said Likoudis, was supposedly delivered directly into the hands of Pope John Paul II during a private 1995 meeting with Cardinal O'Connor, who was allegedly trying to facilitate the removal of the Albany bishop.

Likoudis was a featured speaker, along with Stephen Brady, at a public meeting held by [Roman Catholic Faithful](#) at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Albany a week after Fr. Minkler's death. Likoudis told a crowd of 500 that for the past 13 years Fr. Minkler was a trusted source of inside information in the Diocese of Albany. In 1991, Likoudis added, Fr. Minkler was a primary source for a series of Wanderer articles ("Agony in Albany") critical of Bishop Howard Hubbard.

Brady revealed that Fr. Minkler was also a close collaborator with Roman Catholic Faithful: "Fr. Minkler had been seeking RCF's assistance to help bring about reformatory changes in the Albany diocese."

Fr. Minkler is not the first priest associated with Roman Catholic Faithful to die under mysterious circumstances. In 1998 Fr. Alfred Kunz was murdered at his rural Wisconsin parish. His throat was slit by a razor blade, and he bled to death before his body was discovered the next morning. Although the subject of one of the most extensive FBI investigations in Wisconsin history, the murder of Fr. Kunz remains a mystery.

Fr. Kunz was an accomplished canon lawyer who lent his expert assistance to Brady as Roman Catholic Faithful investigated homosexual corruption in the Diocese of Springfield, Illinois. Less than two years after the death of Fr. Kunz, Springfield's Bishop Daniel Ryan resigned after Frank Bergen, a former male prostitute, identified the bishop as one of his regular high-paying clients for 11 years, going so far as to describe in detail the bishop's private residence. Bishop Ryan, however, steadfastly denied that charge and others for years before he resigned.

One of Bishop Hubbard's accusers is also a former male prostitute. Anthony Bonneau, now 40, says he was a 16-year-old runaway when the Albany bishop twice paid him for sex in Albany's Washington Park. Bonneau told the Times-Union that he recognized Hubbard as one of his johns about ten years ago when he saw the bishop on television. At the time, he said he told only his wife.

Bonneau, a self-described born-again Christian, called the bishop "a Washington Park predator."

He came forward with his allegations, he said, only after he saw Bishop Howard Hubbard deliver his public statement of denial about the first accusation of a homosexual encounter. He stated he has no intention of filing a suit against the diocese, and is motivated only out of a sense of Christian duty in hopes of protecting other children.

"I was appalled, I was totally appalled," Bonneau said of Bishop Hubbard's assertion that he's "never had sexual relations with anyone."

"There were many times he approached me," Bonneau announced at an Albany press conference. "There were also times when he paid me cash to have sex with him. It hurts me...to think that this person [Bishop Hubbard] could stand there and lie to the public."

Albany Chancellor Fr. Kenneth Doyle responded to Bonneau's allegations. According to the Times-Union (Feb. 7, 2004), Fr. Doyle "repeated Hubbard's statement that the bishop has never broken his vow of celibacy, which Doyle said includes any oral contact or fondling."

Bishop Hubbard also found an ally in Fr. Joseph Cebula of Schenectady. Fr. Cebula told the Times-Union that he's confident his bishop did nothing wrong: "I think [Hubbard] is a man of integrity and honesty. He's a man of his word, and I think he's a moral person too."

After two allegations were leveled against Bishop Hubbard, the Albany shepherd was quick to try to clear his name. Once he heard of the first accusation—Albany native Andrew Zalay came forward with a recently-discovered suicide note allegedly typed out by his brother, who claimed to be having a homosexual relationship with a bishop named Howard before setting himself ablaze in his Albany home—the bishop cut short his vacation in Florida to return home to the eye of the storm.

Determined to restore his reputation, Bishop Hubbard said that rather than waiting for vindication in a protracted legal battle, he is planning to appeal to the court of public opinion. Apart from his chancery staff and other collaborators, the public in Albany seems so willing to believe the accusations against their bishop—whether they are true or not—for a number of compelling reasons.

Victims rights advocates, for example, have criticized Bishop Hubbard for his opposition to the U.S. bishops "zero tolerance" policy adopted by the

national conference in 2002. That policy states that any priest who has had sexual contact with a child—even if only once—be removed from ministry immediately and permanently. Bishop Hubbard defended his stance in the name of "compassion and forgiveness" for first time offenders.

Many Catholics in the Diocese of Albany and beyond have also been critical of Bishop Hubbard for further reasons, not the least of which is promotion of a homosexualist agenda within the Catholic Church. For example, in 1991 the bishop defended his practice of ordaining known homosexual priests, telling the Times Union: "I believe the Church has a responsibility to all its members...I don't think gays or anybody else should be excluded from the ministry. Indeed, I think we have a responsibility to reach out to them with sensitivity and compassion" (Feb. 22, 1991).

As detailed in Paul Likoudis's 2002 book "Amchurch Comes Out," a number of priests ordained by Bishop Hubbard (who is, by the way, the episcopal moderator for the National Catholic AIDS Network) have since left the priesthood to "marry" another man, homosexually abused minors, and one—formerly Fr. Dennis Brennan—underwent a sex-change operation and legally changed his name to Denise, all with Bishop Hubbard's "understanding and guidance" (New York Post, Feb. 15, 2000).

Along with Bishop Hubbard's neighboring Diocese of Rochester, under the leadership of Hubbard's longtime friend Bishop Matthew Clark, the Diocese of Albany has long been known as one of the most gay-friendly dioceses in the nation.

Although Bishop Howard Hubbard is setting out with great gusto to prove himself innocent of any and all allegations of homosexual misconduct, his greater challenge is going to be disassociating himself from suspicion that he has anything whatsoever to do with the mysterious death of Fr. John Minkler, the bishop's longtime detractor.

Note: The Diocese of Albany has contracted former U.S. attorney Mary Jo White at \$770 per hour in order to investigate the sexual allegations against Bishop Howard Hubbard. White invites anybody with information about possible sexual misconduct about Bishop Hubbard to contact her by email at: [independentinquiry10@yahoo.com](mailto:independentinquiry10@yahoo.com) or by telephone at 1-800-901-6853. Michael S. Rose is the author of several books including the New York Times bestseller Goodbye, Good Men. He is editor of Cruxnews.com

## “AGONY IN ALBANY”

*“Agony in Albany,” the series, was written by Wanderer reporter Paul Likoudis. It appeared in The Wanderer beginning with its issue of March 7th, 1991 and continuing for ten weeks, The Wanderer published a series on the situation in the Church of Albany, N.Y., under Bishop Howard Hubbard. (Reprinted here with permission / edited for space)*

### Introduction

“A guerrilla-type warfare is going on inside the Church and its outcome is clearly doubtful,” wrote Msgr. George A. Kelly in the opening line of his 1979 book, *The Battle for the American Church*.

For many Catholics, Msgr. Kelly's book was an eye-opening adventure into the highly charged arena of ecclesiastical politics, demonstrating that the skirmishes over liturgy, catechetics, and morality experienced at the parish or diocesan level were part of a bigger war fought throughout the United States and even the Church Universal. Thirteen years later, the outcome of the Battle for the American Church is still doubtful.

There are few dioceses, in this reporter's judgment, where the Battle for the American Church is as intense and protracted as in Albany, N.Y.

Bishop Howard J. Hubbard, one of the last Bishops selected by Archbishop Jean Jadot and appointed by Pope Paul VI in 1977, is clearly a “modernizing” Bishop, one willing to “risk unorthodoxy” to carry out a “vision” of the Church proposed by liberal Catholics in the early 1960s. His vision of an ideal church is one that is ecumenical, nondogmatic, non-judgmental, nonhierarchical, and nonhistoric. He himself has said his view of the Church is a circle.

In fact, the kind of church Bishop Hubbard has constructed as he begins his 15th year as Bishop of Albany bears an uncanny resemblance to the church proposed by novelist Irving Wallace in *The Word*:

“...The new church I advocate will be one church, Protestant and Catholic as one. It will have Christian unity. An ecumenical spirit — one world in one church — will prevail. This church will not promote a blind faith, miracles, celibacy, and irrefutable authority for its clergy. This church will reject riches, will spend its money on its people and not on massive cathedrals. . . . It will work in the community, through small groups which will not suffer sermonizing but will enjoy spiritual celebrations. It will integrate minorities, it will acknowledge the equality of women, it will promote social action. It will support birth con-

trol, abortion, artificial insemination, psychiatric help, sex education.

“...Ask your associates whether they are prepared to give up dogmatic church teachings for free discussions. Ask them what they are doing — now — about race relations, poverty, the unequal distribution of wealth. Ask them whether they are prepared to surrender their fat institutions for a universal Christian community, where the minister or priest is not a special person, not a dignitary, but simply a servant who can bring to those who employ him spiritual life. ...”

Bishop Hubbard and his troops are confidently entrenched, convinced of their righteousness and purpose, and determined to persevere.

Across a battle-scarred landscape are dug-in members of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics of the Albany Diocese, equally determined to defend the Church and its traditional teachings, and, it must be said, worn out from a 15-year struggle. To say they are demoralized would be inaccurate, for they are confident in the power of prayer, the efficacy of suffering, and the mercy of God.

*Agony in Albany* is essentially their report from the battleground; the conflict with their modernizing Bishop as they have seen it, experienced it, and reflected on it. Naturally, no individual reporter can cover both sides during the same war, but he can describe as accurately as possible the situation of the combatants, based on their testimony and personal observation. -P. L. .

### Part I

#### Catholic Priests And Laity Fear Church Will Not Survive In Albany

*“LOOKING BACK IS FRIGHTENING” — Bishop Howard Hubbard, in an interview with Peter Feuerherd, assistant editor of The Evangelist. The occasion was the Bishop's 25th anniversary as a priest.*

ALBANY, N. Y. -The first Catholic mission-ary into the area now encompassed by the Diocese of

Albany, St. Isaac Jogues, one of the North American Martyrs, described his mission territory as a “stronghold of the Devil.”

The native Indians of the region displayed a diabolical reaction to the very presence of Jesuit missionaries in their lands, prompting St. Isaac Jogues to write:

“The prince of this world, driven out from almost every quarter of the globe by the power of the cross, seems to have fled into these regions as his best fortified stronghold. So that the kingdom which this ‘strong man armed’ has possessed for so many thousand years cannot be overthrown except by the process of time and by the constant attacks of the soldiers of Christ.”

The site where Jogues was martyred, a short ride down the New York State Thruway from Albany, in Auriesville, N.Y., is a sacred place, a refuge of holiness in a land, many Catholics say, is being wrestled away from God by Satan — and those Catholics are afraid.

+ + +

In the course of preparing this series of articles on the turmoil in the Diocese of Albany, The Wanderer spoke, in person or by telephone, to dozens of lay people and a broad spectrum of priests, in addition to reviewing hundreds of pages of documentation.

Not only are the sources contacted by The Wanderer enormously concerned, in the words of one layman, “that the Catholic Church for all practical purposes has ceased to exist in the Albany Diocese,” but fear to speak out publicly in a critical way about Bishop Howard Hubbard. Bishop Hubbard recently celebrated the 15th anniversary of his consecration as Bishop of Albany.

A number of those lay people told The Wanderer that Bishop Hubbard is highly sensitive about his public image, and extraordinarily vindictive to those who publicly question his actions (or inaction, as is often the case), his motives, and his orthodoxy.

Several laymen said that Bishop Hubbard's political connections in the Albany area are so secure that they feared he could cause them to lose their jobs. One said the Bishop had attempted to have him fired from his job for writing a critical letter to the editor of a daily newspaper.

It is understandable why diocesan priests

would be reluctant to have their names printed in a report on the Diocese of Albany.

In meetings with several priests, and in phone conversations with others, the reluctance in their voices was apparent, so afraid were they that someone might be listening in.

It was an extremely risky thing for priests to meet with this reporter, but those priests spared no details in cataloguing the serious problems afflicting the Diocese of Albany, and involving its Bishop.

As one said, “We have to tell people the truth, so that something will be done for this Diocese.”

“The situation now is as extreme as we want to see. We have a Bishop who, at best, doesn't care about the clergy. We feel very angry; we feel betrayed.”

+ + +

From the time of St. Isaac Jogues to the appointment of Bishop Howard Hubbard, the Diocese of Albany displayed a remarkable growth, easily measured by the proliferation of churches, schools, convents, seminaries, hospitals, poor houses, orphanages and asylums, and all the rest of the material manifestations of the Catholic Church in action.

Farseeing bishops throughout the history of the Diocese planned for the future, and waves of Irish, German, Polish, French, and Italian immigrants in the 19th and 20th centuries built the Church into a powerful social and political presence in Albany. As the Diocese entered the 1960s, the Catholic population quadrupled to 400,000, from the 100,000 it had been at the turn of the century. More than half of Albany's children attended Catholic schools.

There were weaknesses in the system, and as the social fabric of the nation unraveled in the 1960s, the unraveling of the Church in Albany was facilitated by a mysterious set of circumstances — both providential and, some say, diabolical.

Bishop William Scully's absences from the Diocese during the period of Vatican II, his subsequent health breakdown, the absence of his Auxiliary Bishop Edward Maginn, the euphoria caused by the Council, the inferiority complex many older priests felt when young priests returned from studies in Rome, led to a crisis in management at the Albany chancery.

Into a turbulent ecclesial and social milieu

arrived recently ordained “Howie” Hubbard, who would become Albany’s “boy bishop,” after a well-publicized, even glamorous, career as a “street priest.”

### **Destined For Success**

His appointment as Bishop in 1977, after serving a half-year as apostolic administrator of the Diocese, at the age of 38, capped an amazingly charmed rise through the ranks of the priesthood.

Born on Oct. 31st, 1938, to Howard J. and Elizabeth Hubbard, young Howie seemed destined for success in whatever field he chose to work. As a child, he loved to play priest. He recited prayers in Latin, and was assisted at a little table by his two sisters who played altar boys. He was a cheerful worker at chores, always singing, and he was an excellent student.

A former teacher of his from St. Patrick’s in Troy, N.Y., remembers: “He was the same type of boy that he is as a man — gentle, a good scholar, wonderful in every way.”

At the LaSalle Institute, a Catholic school operated by the Christian Brothers, he was an A student. He excelled in Latin, played sports, and achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel in the school’s junior ROTC program.

In 1956, he went to Mater Christi Seminary, earned an associate’s degree, proceeded to St. Joseph’s, Dunwoodie, N.Y., a place he told other priests he found “cold,” “unwelcoming,” and “impersonal,” and then went to the North American College in Rome for courses at the Gregorianum.

On Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 1963, he was ordained a priest by Archbishop Martin J. O’Connor, the rector of the North American College, in the Church of St. Ignatius in Rome. He toured Europe, saying Mass at all the significant shrines, returned to Rome to finish studies for his licentiate in sacred theology, and returned to Albany.

He served for a summer at St. Joseph’s Parish in Schenectady, and received his first permanent assignment as an assistant at Immaculate Conception Cathedral. He became principal of the school, even though, as he admitted in an interview, he had “never taken one course in education!..I hadn’t even gotten my feet wet as a priest.”

Then he was invited to be assistant editor of *The Evangelist*, but he declined after being invited to

study social services at Catholic University.

He returned from Washington and was asked to develop a storefront ministry, Providence House, a refuge for drug addicts and prostitutes.

### **Winning Hearts**

A priest who observed Hubbard’s favored status as a priest wondered why Fr. Hubbard was so privileged to receive assignments that were so out of the ordinary.

“How did this happen?,” he asked. “He would go into a flophouse, or open a storefront church, and he would just be a social worker. He’d just rap with the people. There was no effort to teach the Faith. But he did have a coterie of close friends who were moving into powerful positions.”

Fr. Hubbard was already showing and developing the skills that would lead to his appointment as Bishop. The first was his photographic memory. “He remembers everything,” said a priest.

Then, there is the personal charm — the warm and effusive mannerisms that defuse tension and win loyalty.

As he was winning the hearts of Albany in his role as street priest — as the humble priest who talked to blacks in a racially charged atmosphere, who mingled with the poor as LBJ launched the “War on Poverty,” who built bridges to Protestant churches in the dawning age of ecumenism — he assumed greater and greater power in the chancery.

In 1972, he was appointed chairman of the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission, and elected president of the Ecumenical Board of Christians United for Mission. In 1973, he became chairman of the Priests’ Personnel Board, making recommendations to Bishop Edwin Broderick about the appointment of priests. In 1974, he became director of Pastoral Planning for the Diocese. In 1976, he became a member of the Diocesan Board of Consultors. In November, 1976, he was elected administrator of the Diocese to fill the void left by Bishop Broderick; who was selected by his fellow Bishops to head Catholic Relief Services.

The obvious strength of Bishop Hubbard’s formidable personal powers and gifts is attested to by David Burke, once Gov. Hugh Carey’s top aide.

“Give me this guy for a week,” said Burke, “and I could make him governor.”

But in the judgment of others there was



something else operating here as well, a driving vanity.

A fellow priest remembers: "There was another priest who was working as a 'street priest,' only he was doing it better. He was banished, so that Howie wouldn't be outshone."

### A Sad Case

Fr. Hubbard had been in Albany for four years when Bishop Edwin Broderick was appointed Bishop, replacing Auxiliary Bishop Edward Maginn, who had been named administrator of the Diocese when Bishop Scully could not function.

"Broderick was a sad case," recalled the priest. "He was bright, witty, intelligent, orthodox in doctrine, but he had some personal problems."

Broderick was rector of Dunwoodie when Terence Cardinal Cooke saw that the seminary's survival might depend on finding another position for him to fill, so Broderick was appointed Bishop of Albany.

The Church structures that had kept Broderick's problems under control in New York City were not present in the Church in Albany, and Broderick began to suffer from his personal problems. He never really liked being out of New York City, and for much of his reign, he was "basically an absentee landlord," in the words of one priest.

According to the same source, this situation was exploited by a group of very ambitious young priests, all graduates of the North American College. They included the very intelligent Fr. C. Howard Russell, who managed to become chancellor for the Diocese and a close friend of Hubbard, and Fr. Matthew Clark, now Bishop of Rochester.

"Fr. Russell probably would have become the next Bishop," speculated a *Wanderer* source, "except that too many stories began to circulate about him."

During Russell's years as chancellor of the Diocese, it was the policy that every candidate offering himself for the priesthood must be "homegrown," that is, come from a family in the Diocese known for being a practicing Catholic family. Fr. Russell flagrantly disregarded those rules by bringing in numerous candidates for the priesthood from outside the Diocese. Many of these were of questionable moral character.

"Almost every priest brought in during this period when Russell was running the chancery," re-

vealed a source, "has turned out to be a homosexual." Eventually Russell himself left the priesthood, and moved to Florida.

### The Advantages Of Being Radical

During this period of chaos and turmoil, the career of Bishop Howard Hubbard's close friend, Bishop Matthew Clark, also advanced.

A year older than Hubbard, Clark graduated from the Gregorianum in 1963, received a parish assignment for a year while he taught at the Vincentian Institute, returned to Rome in 1964 to pick up a Canon Law degree, was vice-chancellor in the Diocese from 1966–1967 when Hubbard was a street-priest, became chairman of the Priests' Personnel Board, 1969–1972, and then from 1972–1979 he served as assistant spiritual director and spiritual director of the North American College in Rome.

"Fr. Clark would persecute any seminarian who believed in One Person of the Blessed Trinity," quipped a priest, "Let alone all three."

"That sounds funny," he added, "but it was true. He gave some seminarians a very hard time.

"You have to understand," he continued, "this was at a time when every radical was being promoted, and the more radical you were, the better jobs you got."

As the Albany Diocese deteriorated and a major financial scandal threatened to unfold, Terence Cardinal Cooke from New York City intervened, moved Bishop Broderick up and out of Albany, and an intense power struggle ensued to make the street-priest a Bishop.

When the news broke that Fr. Hubbard was named Bishop, two of the best and most-loved priests in the Diocese reacted by having nervous breakdowns.

### Credibility Problem

In a congratulatory message to Bishop Hubbard; Archbishop Jean Jadot, the progressivist Apostolic Delegate, reminded the "boy-bishop" that if he were ever asked to fill a role in the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), he should do so enthusiastically. (In recommending Hubbard for Albany, Jadot repeated what he did dozens of times during his tenure as Apostolic Delegate. He advanced the careers of progressivist and Modernist priests and bishops by promoting them to fill the episcopal vacancies in one diocese after another.)

As quickly as Bishop Hubbard's talents were recognized in Albany, they were recognized in Washington.

Although he had always had difficulty accepting *Humanae Vitae*, saying it created "a vast credibility problem for the Church," he became a Catholic representative for President Jimmy Carter's White House Conference on Families. There, he earned some notoriety for saying he could not accept a traditional definition of the family.

His expertise in family matters led to a position on the Advisory Council of the National Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting, Inc. (NOAPP), whose "vision" calls for an end to sexism, total contraceptive availability for teens, tolerance of homosexuality, sex education to all schools, K-12, and a definition of the family as "two or more people living together."

In the 1990 *NCCB Membership Directory*, Bishop Hubbard is listed as being on the Administrative Committee of the NCCB and on the Bishops' Welfare Emergency Relief Committee; as an adviser to the NCCB's Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs Committee and to the Science and Human Values Committee; a member of the 1990 Special Assembly Committee, the Marriage and Family Life Committee, and the Priorities and Plans Committee.

He also contributes his services to the United States Catholic Conference, and is a member of its Administrative Board, as well as to the Campaign for Human Development, the Education Committee, and the Priorities and Plans Committee, according to the *NCCB Directory*.

There are few other Bishops who appear to receive as many assignments with the Church's national offices, or who have the opportunity to influence the agenda of the Catholic Church in the United States.

A preview of that agenda might be discerned by a close examination of Bishop Hubbard's initiatives in his own Diocese, regarding marriage and family life, education, liturgy, vocations, and parish life.

As one layman stated, "There's a lot you can say about the Bishop's leadership in Albany: the steady decline of the Diocese, the schools and parishes closing, the encouragement of actual heresy. This is a Church that is dying. There is no vitality. That's worrisome to many here."

## **Albany Newspaper's Profile Of Diocese Reveals Drastic Decline**

"There's an atmosphere of utter hopelessness about this whole thing," said Albany Catholic Tom Coffey. He was reflecting on a series of articles, "Albany Diocese in the '90s," which appeared in the *Albany Times Union* the week of Feb. 17th.

The series, which opened with a graphic detailing of the decline of the Diocese, presents a picture of the Diocese that is "deplorable," said Paul Kerin.

"The series shows the deep malaise of the Church here that has occurred as a consequence of the misinterpretation of the documents of Vatican II, the lack of strong leadership on the part of the Bishop, and his neglect of his role as ruler, teacher, and sanctifier," added Kerin.

In a comparison of diocesan statistics from 1965 to 1990, the vast decline in the Church is obvious. "To say that it all happened before Bishop Hubbard started his reign is to be very uncharitable to his predecessors," said Kerin.

According to statistics supplied by the Albany Diocese, in 1965, there were 397,894 Catholics in a total population of just over a million. While the Albany area has grown by half-a-million, the Catholic population is now listed at 408,648.

But according to Tom Coffey, "that figure of 408,000 Catholics has been static for years. I don't think anyone in the Diocese knows how many Catholics there are. If the Bishop and the clergy designed some kind of test to determine who is a Catholic, they'd get nowhere near that."

Nevertheless, the statistics also show:

In 1965, there were 207 parishes; in 1990, 196.

The number of priests has dropped from 426 to 255.

Religious Brothers dropped from 144 to 66.

Religious Sisters (nuns) dropped from 1,875 to 1,178.

Catholic elementary schools dropped from 106 to 44.

Catholic high schools dropped from 25 to 7.

Teaching priests and Brothers dropped from 247 to 28.

Teaching nuns dropped from 1,348 to 83.

The number of lay teachers increased from 400 to

552.

Students in Catholic schools declined from 51,131 to 12,261.

Public school students attending Catholic religious education have declined from 39,200 to 38,398.

Retreat houses and houses of prayer have increased from 4 to 7.

Seminaries and novitiates for priests and Brothers has dropped from 12 to zero.

Baptisms (infants and adult converts) have dropped from 12,950 to 6,227.

Catholic marriages have dropped from 4,208 to 2,659.

The deaths of Catholics have dropped from 4,602 to 4,596.

"I think we have a very vibrant Diocese," Bishop Hubbard told *Times Union* reporter Tim Beidel, "and I think that we're a Diocese that's kept pace with the needs of the times and the needs of the people."

While the Bishop is facing the reality that he is going to have to close some churches because of the declining numbers of Catholics and clergy available to staff parishes, and because churches drain financial resources that should be going to service projects, he is confident, according to Beidel, that "the Church of the 1990s may see even more rapid implementation of the Second Vatican Council reforms that allow a greater role for lay people."

Hubbard also told Beidel that "maybe it has been the work of the Holy Spirit that there has been a shortage (of priests) at this point in history.

"Perhaps the renewed opportunities for ministry on the part of the laity of the Church that the Second Vatican Council permitted would not have been actualized if we had the abundance of clerical and vowed ministries that we had in the 1940s and 1950s."

Concerning the impact dissent has made in the Albany Diocese, and the fact that many Albany Catholics do not accept Pope Paul VI's teaching on the transmission of life, Bishop Hubbard told reporter Beidel: "There is no question that the reality of pick-and-choose Catholics is part and parcel of the life of the Church today,"

The Bishop said that there is so much confusion on the Church's moral teaching because most

adults have only "an eighth-grade knowledge of their Faith."

The *Times Union* series, "while not shedding any constructive light on diocesan organizations," according to Paul Kerin, "does show how the whole Church here is falling apart, and how the Bishop continues to hasten the process."

## Part II

### *The Problem of Dissent*

"Bishop Hubbard has always had a problem with *Humanae Vitae*" - Tom Coffey, *Catholic Layman*

The year Bishop Howard Hubbard was installed as Bishop of Albany was a pivotal year for the Church in the United States. In 1977, the attacks on Pope Paul VI escalated during what would be the last full year of his embattled Pontificate, and the Catholic Theological Society of America released the notorious *Human Sexuality*. Msgr. George Kelly has described that work as "the climax of an orchestrated volley of shots against the Church's sexual ethics."

The book, eventually condemned by the American Bishops, sanctioned not only contraception, but sterilization, artificial insemination, mate-swapping, adultery, premarital intercourse, homosexuality, masturbation, patient-therapist sex, and even left the door open for bestiality.

*Human Sexuality*, said Msgr. Kelly, is "an explicit effort to overturn the 2,000-year tradition of the Church in the name of Christianity."

The chairman of the CTSA committee that wrote the book was Fr. Anthony Kosnick, a professor at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in the Detroit Archdiocese. One of Bishop Howard Hubbard's first revealing acts as Bishop was to sanction Kosnick's Albany appearance.

There, Kosnick spoke in a public forum, granted an interview to *The Evangelist* (the diocesan newspaper), and addressed an assembly of priests. According to one report, Bishop Hubbard told the assembled priests that *Human Sexuality* would be "the source" for their pastoral counseling.

### At The Head Of The List

That was also the year many Albany Catholics began to take notice of the revolution taking place in Catholicism. Many of those who are now active members of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics in the Albany Diocese became alarmed when they saw

the types of materials their children were bringing home from school, or heard about materials their children were not allowed to bring home from school. They also became concerned about the removal of lay and Religious teachers who upheld the teaching of the Church.

When the diocesan newspaper announced that the notorious Kosnick was coming to Albany, there were many Catholics whose worst fears were confirmed: The Diocese of Albany would not only tolerate dissent, but would actively promote it.

One Catholic who was starting to take notice of the turmoil in the Church was Tom Coffey, who had once studied with the Vincentians with a mind to becoming a priest.

Shortly after Bishop Hubbard was installed, Coffey and four or five other Catholics held an initial meeting to form a chapter of Catholics United for the Faith.

He wrote to the CUF office in New Rochelle, asking for a list of Albany Catholics they could contact. Heading that list was the name of Bishop Hubbard.

“Well, we wrote to Bishop Hubbard,” recalled Coffey, “and we told him we were thinking of organizing a local chapter, and we were very happy to see that his name was on the list that CUF supplied. We asked him if he would like to assist us in any way in forming this chapter, and he wrote back to us saying that we didn’t have the right to use the name ‘Catholic’ without his permission. “Then, in October, 1977, he brought in Kosnick.”

With Kosnick’s visit to Albany, said Coffey, “began one of the longest one-way dialogs ever conducted in print.” Coffey has written hundreds of letters to Bishop Hubbard over the past 14 years, on topics such as dissenters coming to Albany, liturgical abuses, educational problems, and other topics, but has yet to receive “a reply specific to the question raised.”

When it was reported that Anthony Kosnick would speak in Albany, Coffey wrote a letter informing the Bishop that it was highly unlikely that Fr. Kosnick would present the Church’s official teaching on sexuality.

The Bishop replied, “To my knowledge, there is no prohibition of workshops dealing with human sexuality. A workshop is not an official teaching medium for the Church in general or this Diocese in par-

ticular.”

During his visit to Albany, Kosnick defended the CTSA’s *Human Sexuality*, asserting that it was “a development of the Church’s teaching and is faithful to Church Tradition and Scriptures.”

In an interview with The *Evangelist*, Kosnick said that his only regret in releasing the study was that he had not done it 20 years earlier.

### **Especially Irsome**

Two and a half years after Kosnick spoke in Albany, Sr. Margaret Farley, an associate professor of ethics at Yale University, was invited to Albany to speak at Mercy High School to an assembly of Catholic health-care workers. The Catholic hospitals of the Diocese sponsored the talk. Sr. Farley branded the Church’s prohibition on contraception and sterilization as “extremely paternalistic,” and an unwarranted interference in the right of health-care workers to offer “comprehensive health care.”

Her attack on *Humanae Vitae* was not the only one in the Diocese made by an invited guest since Kosnick’s visit, but what made it especially irksome to Catholics was that it was delivered less than six months after Pope John Paul II had confirmed the value of *Humanae Vitae* in his address on the Mall in Washington, D.C.

### **“Shocking And Scandalous”**

The level of concern registered by Catholics in Albany can be measured by two letters to the editor written at the time in local newspapers.

Layman Robert McCauley, outraged that Bishop Hubbard sat through Sr. Farley’s attack on *Humanae Vitae* without saying a word, wondered if the Bishop wasn’t responsible for a “deformation of consciences.”

He objected to the “re-education” of Catholics by the Diocese, and to the Bishop’s tactic of denying that he opposes the Church’s teaching while bringing in dissident speakers.

A local priest found it “shocking and scandalous” that a person “clearly outside the Church” should be invited to form consciences of local Catholics.

### **A Unique Appearance**

In the ten years since Sr. Farley spoke, the Diocese has continued to allow public dissenters to

use Catholic facilities for their attacks on Church teachings. Fr. Charles E. Curran has been in Albany many times. Fr. Robert Nugent, known for his disagreement with the Church's teaching on homosexuality, ex-priest Gregory Baum, Fr. James Provost, Fr. Matthew Fox, C.P., Fr. Philip Keane, and many others have been invited.

"This Diocese has never made the mistake of inviting anyone in who was not a dissenter," said Coffey.

In April, 1988, the scheduled appearance of radical feminist and lesbian "theologian" Mary Hunt indicated to area Catholics that Bishop Hubbard was "more determined than ever to impose his dissenter's vision of the Church in Albany," a priest told *The Wanderer*. Hunt's appearance in the Diocese, where she would speak from the sanctuary of St. John the Baptist Church in Schenectady, was important for two reasons.

"What was unique about Hunt's appearance," said the priest, "is that it showed a new brazenness on the part of the Bishop. He gave notice that he would allow the most rabid dissenters the privilege of speaking in this Diocese, even from a church sanctuary.

"It's part of a pattern that intensified after the Vatican backed down in the Hunthausen affair, and after Pope John Paul II told the American Bishops in California that they should clamp down on dissent. The Bishop has become much more reckless, and much more determined to promote his agenda."

The Hunt affair is also important because it led to the formation of the **Coalition of Concerned Catholics in the Albany Diocese**, which represents some 4,400 Catholics drawn from various lay organizations and apostolates.

The view of the coalition is that dissent has become so thoroughly established in the Diocese that it permeates all the Bishop's offices, and imperils the very survival of the Catholic Church in Albany.

As one priest said, "Dissent is so embedded that it will take the next Bishop, or the next two Bishops, 50 years or more to correct the problems — if they can be corrected at all."

### **Authentic Doctrinal Teaching**

In 1969, Fr. Joseph F. Costanzo, S.J., authored an article in defense of *Humanae Vitae* titled, "*Papal Magisterium and Humanae Vitae*."

Anticipating the direction dissenters from

Paul VI's encyclical would take, Fr. Costanzo wrote that, between those who accept *Humanae Vitae* with "religious submission of will and mind" and those who reject it outright, is a third and most dangerous group which insists that it does "give deference and loyalty to Papal authority" but "mitigates the literal and explicit absoluteness of the proscriptions of *Humanae Vitae*."

"They do this either by: 1) refusing to take seriously the dogmatic language in which the doctrinal teaching is unambiguously expressed, or by 2) weakening the binding force of the doctrinal propositions by an evaluation of the merits of the intrinsic argumentation of the encyclical, or by 3) mitigating the condemnations of contraceptive intercourse in the light of the pastoral counsels set down by Pope Paul. .

"This third group differentiates itself from the outright dissident clerics by maintaining that *Humanae Vitae* gave expression to a prudent, positive ennobling *ideal* which the spouses should strive to realize in their conjugal relations.

"In other words, they seem to say, Pope Paul did not authoritatively propound an authentic doctrinal teaching on marital relations to be followed in the daily lives of the married.

"This ingenious construction, we respectfully submit, can work to an earnest self-deception. It does violence to the language of moral condemnations of the encyclical and, as a principle of interpretive exegesis, will work no less havoc with other doctrinal teachings of the Church."

Again, anticipating the objections of dissenting theologians and priests, Fr. Costanzo emphasized that the Papal encyclical was based not only on natural law, but also on divine law, the latter being added because "in the present frail condition of mankind it is a morally necessary corrective to the discernments of reason alone of the exigencies of the natural law."

Fr. Costanzo also criticized the dissenters' position that, after consulting Church teaching, one had the responsibility to "follow one's conscience" when deciding to use birth control. Instead, *Humanae Vitae* stated that Catholics can never use "methods of regulating procreation which are found blameworthy by the teaching authority of the Church."

The "grave obligatory force" of *Humanae Vitae* has been repeatedly reaffirmed both by Pope Paul VI and by Pope John Paul II, since its publication, but in the Diocese of Albany, the consistent ap-

proach to *Humanae Vitae* has been that it is an “ideal” that is not binding.

Or, as one priest said, “*Humanae Vitae* is not an issue here, like it is in other places. It has never been taught. Everyone who surrounds the Bishop opposes it.”

### Clever Tactics

One of the first clues to the approach that Bishop Hubbard would take with regard to *Humanae Vitae* surfaced in a “dialog” carried out in the pages of *The Evangelist*. This was before Hubbard was named a Bishop.

In the June 3rd, 1976 issue of *The Evangelist*, Bishop Hubbard was one of 12 Catholics, with Bishop Edwin Broderick, priests, Religious, and laity, discussing in an open forum their views on the impact of *Humanae Vitae* on Catholics.

During the dialog, Fr. Hubbard spoke twice. Both reflections he offered were anticipated by Fr. Costanzo as a key indication of the clever dissenter’s tactics. In a reference to natural law, Fr. Hubbard said, “Saying it’s natural law, as the encyclical did, well, natural law by definition is something clearly recognizable to all. If it is that clearly recognizable, why the confusion about it? Why do so many people of goodwill (and I don’t think that anyone can deny that) find that it is something they really can’t assent to?”

Later in the dialog, Fr. Hubbard, responding to a statistic that only 29% of priests agreed with the Pope on birth control, and explaining that the sense of the faithful can also be an infallible judgment, said:

“There was so much confusion and dispute on the part of theologians, priests, Sisters, Religious, and laity about this issue, and then it was handed down as being nonnegotiable. This has created a vast credibility problem.”

Three years later, in April of 1979, on the television program *Face-to-Face*, Bishop Hubbard again offered a view of *Humanae Vitae* proscribed by Fr. Costanzo:

“In the area of birth control,” said Bishop Hubbard, “we know the Papal encyclical that was issued back in 1968 says that artificial contraception is not the acceptable ideal for Roman Catholics, and we also know that in the same pastoral encyclical the Holy Father said that the ultimate guide and norm for a couple in this matter has to be their conscience. . .

but if in their own conscience they conclude that this is not an ideal that the Lord expects them to measure up to at this point, it is possible for them to continue to be faithful and a good member within the Roman Catholic community. So we have ideals that we propose. . . .”

### “By Appointment Only”

“At the parish level,” a priest told *The Wanderer*, “there is no teaching on the binding nature of *Humanae Vitae*. The priests who may still think that contraception is a sin are in parishes where there are only old people, where contraception is just not an issue.”

Asked if the Bishop was likely to encourage Catholics who contracept to go to Confession, the priest replied, “We’ve moved beyond Confession in this diocese. Many parishes have communal penance services at Lent or Advent, and a number of parishes have Confession ‘by appointment only’ — which means no one goes. Thus even Paul VI’s pastoral counsels have been voided.”

In a February, 1987 radio interview, Bishop Hubbard said that Pope Paul VI’s teaching in *Humanae Vitae* was “open to some debate. I think it’s not part . . . It’s never been defined by councils or by the bishops and the Pope gathered to discuss it. It would never have anywhere near the weight of belief in the Trinity, the Incarnation. . .” etc.

His most recent publicly stated view of *Humanae Vitae* was given to the *Albany Times-Union* after he returned from the November, 1990 Bishops’ meeting in Washington, D.C.

Commenting on Bishop Kenneth Untener’s appeal to the American Bishops that they re-examine the Papal condemnation of contraception, Bishop Hubbard stated that he not only thought it was important for Bishops to listen to those who do not accept the teaching, but that contraception is “one of those issues that needs to be discussed further with people who have the experience of marriage and family life.”

The opening of the same *Times-Union* news article reported that Albany Bishop Howard Hubbard stated that just because the Vatican seemed to “discourage dissent and even discussion of controversial matters” the American Bishops “are unlikely to squelch dissent.”

### Part III

#### *Bishop Hubbard’s*



## ***Toleration Of Dissent***

*"The key to understanding our Bishop is knowing how much he needs to feel that he is loved"*  
— an Albany priest.

*"Bishop Hubbard doesn't represent a minority by any means; a lot of people do support him. He's clever enough to use his charm and charisma, and to say the things that please the people. A lot of people are sentimental about him"* — another Albany priest

In September, 1987, when Howard Hubbard had been Bishop for ten years, the *Albany Times-Union* and the *Knickerbocker News* published the results of a survey on what Catholics believe. The survey showed that Albany-area Catholics "don't toe the Papal line."

Sixteen percent agreed with the Pope on all issues; 16% disagreed with most of the Pope's positions; and 66% agreed with some of his teachings and disagreed with others.

Nearly 55% of Catholics polled approved of divorce and remarriage; 49% believed women should be ordained, 41% disapproved; almost 63% said priests should be allowed to marry; 25% believed abortion should remain legal; 72.4% approved of artificial birth control, and only 18% did not; 45% approved of sex between unmarried adults; and 43% disapproved of the Church's teaching on homosexuality.

Twelve percent of those surveyed said they attend Mass more than once a week, 50% said they attend weekly, 16% attend monthly, 10% on holidays; and 10% never.

At the time the survey results were published, Bishop Hubbard was quoted as saying, "We have to do a better job of communicating our message."

### **"Loyal Opposition"**

But after interviewing a number of Catholics, reporter Stephen Frank wrote that the view held by a majority of Catholics on contraception "reflects a de facto cease-fire" from the chancery and Catholic educational and marriage officials on the issue.

"I find very few priests that even see it as a problem with their parishioners anymore," said Michael Dick, an associate professor of religious studies at Siena College. "I think there has been widespread popular resistance to *Humanae Vitae* on the part of the clergy."

"In interview after interview," noted Frank, "the commentators said the poll reflects changes within the Church and in society at large. They characterized dissenting opinion as part of a 'loyal opposition' who disagree with some Vatican teachings but who choose to remain in the Church.

"According to Hubbard, dissent over Church teachings on birth control, divorce and remarriage, and similar issues is an inevitable conflict in the Church.

" 'I think there always has been and always will be a tension in the dual role the Church plays — the Church as teacher of ideals and the role of the Church as pastor wherein we deal with people who cannot measure up to those ideals or who do not accept those ideals'," said Hubbard.

The Bishop also remarked, "I think as we go, about our theologizing there will be more of an attempt in the future to draw upon the experiences of the laity and that will be reflected in Church documents."

In March, 1988, former Catholic theologian Fr. Charles E. Curran made another visit to Albany. He spoke at St. Rose and Siena Colleges to defend the "right" of Catholics to dissent from official Church teachings.

"I wanted to make this a whole teaching moment. . . to take the opportunity to indicate that dissent is appropriate in the Roman Catholic Church and make people aware of it," said Curran. "This has become my guide and direction."

During his Albany appearance, Fr. Curran reaffirmed his position that contraception, sterilization, and homosexuality are not intrinsically evil.

### **A Long Record**

Responding to objections made by Catholics that the appearance of Fr. Curran at Catholic colleges gave the impression that the Diocese was sanctioning dissent, Bishop Hubbard stated that the Diocese was not sponsoring the events. "A typical excuse," said a priest.

Nevertheless, there is a long record, dating back to the beginning of Bishop Hubbard's episcopacy, of support for dissenters in general and Fr. Curran specifically by members of the chancery.

On Feb. 22nd, 1980, a statement titled *Even the Stones Will Cry Out*, protesting a "new pattern of intimidation which is appearing in our Church," was

published in *The National Catholic Reporter*.

The statement expressed the fear many dissenters had that Pope John Paul II was about to lower the boom on major dissenters such as Edward Schillebeeckx, Hans Kueng, Charles Curran, Leonardo Boff, and a host of others. It was signed by leading figures in the Albany Church.

Among those from Albany who told the Pope that “we shall not go away” was Mary Reed Newland, chairman of the Committee on Adult and Home Education for the Diocese of Albany, adviser for the *Albany Curriculum* sex education program, a nationally known critic of *Humanae Vitae*, and a member of the National Committee for Human Sexuality.

Fr. Thomas Berardi, then a judge on the Diocesan Tribunal and now a counselor and professor of religious studies at the College of St. Rose, also signed the document. Fr. Berardi, who has signed almost every subsequent expression of dissent, such as *The Love of Christ Impels Us* (Jan. 9th, 1987) and *The New York Times* ad of Feb. 28th, 1990, defended Curran’s visit to St. Rose. He said that the college had “the responsibility and the right to expose people to a variety of thoughts,” and that the Vatican views theology too narrowly. Fr. Berardi, who offers counseling on a variety of sexual issues to students, once told the *Albany Times-Union* that if a female student wanted to have an abortion, he would send her to Planned Parenthood.

Also signing were Dennis McDonald, a youth minister for the Diocese and an adviser for the Albany sex education program, and ex-Sr. Judith Mazza, a feminist who was involved in parish ministry formation and was a leader in the recent women’s discussion groups for the Albany Women’s Commission. Though an advocate of women’s ordination and a frequent critic of *Humanae Vitae*, she is still active in religious education programs in the Diocese.

Other signers included Sr. Maria Mercurio, C.S.J., catechist at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception; Sr. Barbara DiTomaso, C.S.J., of the Diocesan Peace and Justice Committee; Jack Simeone and, his wife Denise (Simeone left his wife and he is now married to another woman. He is in charge of Family Life Education for Community Maternity Services of the Albany Diocese); Fr. Michael Hogan, chaplain at Bishop Maginn School; Fr. Gary Gelfenbein, who was campus minister at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Fr. Thomas Phelan, also a campus minister and a member of the Diocesan Committee on Ecumenism and Interreligious Affairs and “Art and

Architecture” where he has “done unbelievable harm,” said one Catholic; and Fr. Joseph Cotugno, now a campus minister at the State University at Albany.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it backs up a claim made by one-priest that “dissenters get all the key positions in the Diocese.

“It’s not that he just passively allows dissent to go on around him,” he said, “but he willingly promotes people who are not loyal to the *Magisterium*. It’s so bad, you feel like you don’t belong to the same Church.

“Bishop Hubbard had a vocations director who used to tell people he didn’t believe in the physical Resurrection of Christ; his vocations co-director was an advocate of women’s ordination; the head of his tribunal is promoting ‘internal forum’ solutions over ecclesiastical annulments. It goes on and on.”

### **No Attempt To Present Church Teaching**

The dissent against *Humanae Vitae* continued by members of Bishop Hubbard’s diocesan family was illustrated in a letter to the editor of *The Schenectady Gazette* in November, 1988. This was at the time that the Albany Curriculum on sex education began to make its way into diocesan schools and parish religious education programs.

Catholic parent David Phelan attended a meeting where the program was unveiled, and found that “there was no attempt to present Roman Catholic teaching in the area of human sexuality.

“It is no secret that the prophetic teachings of *Humanae Vitae* and *Familiaris Consortio* are not upheld on any level of diocesan education. What was presented by a team of two ‘Sisters,’ a priest, and a pathologist, was a potpourri of agnostic psychology, values clarification, naturalism, moral relativism, and Orwellian newspeak. There were a couple of references to ‘God’ and ‘Church teaching,’ and a few catty remarks about Planned Parenthood, but these, it turned out, had to do more with tactics than strategy.

“The climax came when the team priest indicated what a parent should do with a sexually active, i.e., promiscuous, daughter and the issue of birth control. He stated that if the child rejected parental values and Church teachings, one should not just let her go to Planned Parenthood alone, but that she should be accompanied there so one could monitor” the birth control prescribed.

“Apparently, the parent’s role, in what amounts to be Planned Parenthood for Catholics, is to cooperate so as not to close off ‘dialog.’ There was absolutely no attempt to assess the spiritual death inherent in such choices.

“Evidently, Bishop Hubbard, faced with many half-empty churches and schools and with dwindling revenues, has opted for teaching members of the flock exactly what they want to hear in order to hold onto the remnant. The result is obvious: Catholics may well be Planned Parenthood’s best customers.”

### **“Fully Human”**

Among the most active Religious in the Diocese of Albany who crusade against the Church’s teaching is Sr. Lynn Levo, C.S.J., Ph.D., a member of the Consultation Center of the Diocese of Albany. Newly ordained priests are required to meet with her every two weeks for two years in order to be guided into their ministry.

A frequent workshop speaker at various centers operated by the Diocese, Sr. Levo was featured at length in *The Altamont Enterprise*, Oct. 25th, 1990.

In a workshop offered at the Diocesan Pastoral Center (the chancery), “Do We Need To Reunite Sexuality and Spirituality?,” Sr. Levo “discussed how parents, teachers, the Church, clergy, and our peers have fostered negative attitudes regarding sexuality, based upon traditional beliefs. Yet those attitudes have been changing and will continue to change in the years ahead.”

Sr. Levo told the 15 people there that the Church’s traditional view of sexuality, forced upon Christians by a patriarchy, has prevented people from becoming “fully human” and “deeply unwilling to accept a human Messiah.”

The sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, according to the Sister, has fueled a reassessment of sexuality that sees past restrictions as mistaken. Genital sexuality and urges, desires, fantasies, and feelings — including acting them out in intercourse and masturbation — “are not bad, are not wrong,”

### **Dissent From The Official Family**

Frequently, the pages of *The Evangelist* not only carry the views of major dissenter theologians when they speak in Albany, but also feature the views of the Bishop’s official family members when they

wish to speak out against Church teachings.

Letters to the diocesan paper have been written by a member of the Family Services Office and the wife of a deacon in charge of the Deacon Formation Program.

The former “applauded those priests who have the courage to accept and bless married couples whose conscience has allowed them to use the birth control of their choice. . . Rhythm puts a strain on marriage ...This birth control issue should be a private one for each couple.”

The latter wrote, responding to an article by Bishop James McHugh of Camden, N.J., “There seems to be a blatant implication that couples who do not practice birth control are, by nature, more selfless and loving than those who do. I find this implication contradicted every day by couples, who, although choosing to practice birth control, are true signs of the Lord’s selfless love for all of us. These couples readily extend their love, talents, and economic resources to many others in God’s family.”

Dissent in Albany is not confined to *Humanae Vitae*, but covers a wide area, including married priests and women priests, liturgical norms, religious education and the sacraments, especially the Church’s teaching on the indissolubility of marriage. Bishop Hubbard’s typical response when confronted with dissent in Albany is, “I can only reiterate that I have said nothing which opposes, weakens, or otherwise brings into question the clear teaching of our Church.”

### **Missed Opportunities**

In the 1,000-plus pages of documentation made available to *The Wanderer* by the Concerned Catholics in Albany, covering the Bishop’s public appearances, pastoral visits, interviews, and letters written to members of his flock, Bishop Hubbard apparently has never affirmed that believing Catholics may not openly dissent from their faith; that pastors of souls may not accept dissenting views as sources for parochial work; that the faithful may not follow the opinions of dissenting theologians.

This is a strange neglect, say Catholics here, considering the many opportunities he has had over the past 14 years to affirm the duty Catholics have to assent to Church teaching.

### **Albany Newspaper’s Profile Of Diocese Reveals Drastic Decline**

"There's an atmosphere of utter hopelessness about this whole thing," said Albany Catholic Tom Coffey. He was reflecting on a series of articles, "Albany Diocese in the '90s," which appeared in the *Albany Times Union* the week of Feb. 17th.

The series, which opened with a graphic detailing of the decline of the Diocese, presents a picture of the Diocese that is "deplorable," said Paul Kerin.

"The series shows the deep malaise of the Church here that has occurred as a consequence of the misinterpretation of the documents of Vatican II, the lack of strong leadership on the part of the Bishop, and his neglect of his role as ruler, teacher, and sanctifier," added Kerin.

In a comparison of diocesan statistics from 1965 to 1990, the vast decline in the Church is obvious. "To say that it all happened before Bishop Hubbard started his reign is to be very uncharitable to his predecessors," said Kerin.

According to statistics supplied by the Albany Diocese, in 1965, there were 397,894 Catholics in a total population of just over a million. While the Albany area has grown by half-a-million, the Catholic population is now listed at 408,648.

But according to Tom Coffey, "that figure of 408,000 Catholics has been static for years. I don't think anyone in the Diocese knows how many Catholics there are. If the Bishop and the clergy designed some kind of test to determine who is a Catholic, they'd get nowhere near that."

Nevertheless, the statistics also show:

In 1965, there were 207 parishes; in 1990, 196.

The number of priests has dropped from 426 to 255.

Religious Brothers dropped from 144 to 66.

Religious Sisters (nuns) dropped from 1,875 to 1,178.

Catholic elementary schools dropped from 106 to 44.

Catholic high schools dropped from 25 to 7.

Teaching priests and Brothers dropped from 247 to 28.

Teaching nuns dropped from 1,348 to 83.

The number of lay teachers increased from 400 to 552.

Students in Catholic schools declined from 51,131 to

12,261.

Public school students attending Catholic religious education have declined from 39,200 to 38,398.

Retreat houses and houses of prayer have increased from 4 to 7.

Seminaries and novitiates for priests and Brothers has dropped from 12 to zero.

Baptisms (infants and adult converts) have dropped from 12,950 to 6,227.

Catholic marriages have dropped from 4,208 to 2,659.

The deaths of Catholics have dropped from 4,602 to 4,596.

"I think we have a very vibrant Diocese," Bishop Hubbard told *Times Union* reporter Tim Beidel, "and I think that we're a Diocese that's kept pace with the needs of the times and the needs of the people."

While the Bishop is facing the reality that he is going to have to close some churches because of the declining numbers of Catholics and clergy available to staff parishes, and because churches drain financial resources that should be going to service projects, he is confident, according to Beidel, that "the Church of the 1990s may see even more rapid implementation of the Second Vatican Council reforms that allow a greater role for lay people."

Hubbard also told Beidel that "maybe it has been the work of the Holy Spirit that there has been a shortage (of priests) at this point in history.

"Perhaps the renewed opportunities for ministry on the part of the laity of the Church that the Second Vatican Council permitted would not have been actualized if we had the abundance of clerical and vowed ministries that we had in the 1940s and 1950s."

(Other reasons for the sharp decline in the vocations in the Diocese cited by Albany Catholics will be discussed in *The Wanderer's* "Agony in Albany" series of articles. The series marks the beginning of the 15th year of Bishop Hubbard's reign.)

Concerning the impact dissent has made in the Albany Diocese, and the fact that many Albany Catholics do not accept Pope Paul VI's teaching on the transmission of life, Bishop Hubbard told reporter Beidel: "There is no question that the reality of pick-and-choose Catholics is part and parcel of the life of

the Church today,”

The Bishop said that there is so much confusion on the Church's moral teaching because most adults have only “an eighth-grade knowledge of their Faith.”

(Others say, however, that it has to do with the Diocese's commitment to dissent. This will be discussed at length in two articles in the upcoming series.)

The *Times Union* series, “while not shedding any constructive light on diocesan organizations, according to Paul Kerin, “does show how the whole Church here is falling apart, and how the Bishop continues to hasten the process.”

## Part IV

### *Crisis in the Priesthood*

*“There are Catholics who would be alive if they had priests who were spiritually alive” — A Catholic layman who would not allow his name to be used for this story. “Why are only certain priests promoted?” — An Albany priest*

“We're scared.”

That feeling is shared by many priests in the Diocese of Albany, who are afraid to speak or act contrary to the desires of their Bishop. This article focuses on their views and statements concerning the situation in the Albany Diocese.

“There was one priest who had a disagreement with the Bishop, and the Bishop told him, ‘We don't need you here. There is no shortage of priests.’ That priest is now working in a restaurant,” one of his brother priests told *The Wanderer*.

“What's happening to the priesthood,” said another, “is heartbreaking.”

### A Sad Fact

In talking about the crisis in the priesthood in the Diocese of Albany with both priests and lay people, *The Wanderer* learned that there are many fine priests working in their parishes, doing an outstanding job

“There are many holy priests here,” said one lay woman, “who go about their duties quietly, but the problem is that they are in such remote areas.”

A sad fact, according to a number of priests, is that the choicest assignments go to priests who

share Bishop Hubbard's ecclesiology.

“Priests who use the tried and true methods that produce results in parish life are frequently sent into oblivion,” said one priest. There have been numerous instances when orthodox priests were ordered by chancery officials never to say a word about birth control or abortion in a church; if their liturgies were not sufficiently “progressive” were assigned a deacon or a radical nun to ensure Masses were creative and innovative; and, if they taught orthodox Catholicism, were prohibited from teaching religion classes.

While most orthodox priests appear to be confined to small, rural parishes, and seldom ever rise to a prominent pastorate — regardless of how long they have been ordained — there is the public perception that priests who flagrantly violate their celibacy requirement (with men and/or women) receive the best assignments.

*Item:* A priest assigned to a parish about eight miles north of Albany resides in a “brownstone” in Albany with his male companion, in a part of the city known as “boys' town” — about five or six blocks from the Bishop's residence.

“Everyone knows about it, and it's a mystery why the Bishop tolerates it,” said a priest. “Father \*\*\*\*\* is the classic example of a priest who took a leave of absence, but upon returning to Albany, got an even better parish.”

*Item:* Another priest, a “notorious homosexual,” lived with his companion in the rectory. He spent thousands of dollars renovating it, but he caused such a scene there that he was sent away for “reconditioning.” When he came back, he repeated the same performance at another equally good parish, even putting his companion on the payroll. The parishioners were outraged. The priest finally left the priesthood to become a salesman.

*Item:* “Notorious” doesn't even describe another priest who destroyed a large ethnic parish, and was allegedly arrested by an undercover policeman, after the latter was propositioned. The priest was sent for “reconditioning,” and then reassigned to the same parish despite pleas from parishioners to the Bishop.

*Item:* One priest who was a classmate of Bishop Hubbard was known throughout the area as a practicing homosexual. He was assigned to a parish regarded as one of the best in the entire Diocese. This priest left the priesthood after he went off with a woman who had worked in the parish. This defection

greatly saddened Bishop Hubbard, for, it is said, his old classmate was very good at raising money.

*Item:* One of Bishop Hubbard's "most loyal" priests organized a fundraising effort among Albany priests to pay for ads in secular newspapers in March, 1990, showing Albany priests "thank," "praise," and "affirm" Bishop Hubbard for his leadership. This "most loyal" priest has a long-standing reputation as a womanizer, and allegedly was transferred from one parish after a scandal arose involving him and a woman whose husband was dying of cancer.

*Item:* An associate pastor was transferred from his parish after he reportedly was caught smuggling a camera into the boys' locker-room at a local school. He was abruptly transferred again when parishioners, according to a source, "were going to tar and feather him" when they learned he was sexually abusing altar boys.

*Item:* An Albany priest, it is widely said, is known for marrying homosexual couples and for running a "dating service" for homosexual priests. The list could go on.

### **"Hanoi Jim"**

Defections from the priesthood have occurred at a steady pace in the Diocese of Albany over the past 14 years. Included in that number are priests who have been very close to Bishop Hubbard, and who had been given important positions in the Diocese.

*Item:* Fr. Robert Willi, who was a major "authority" on the "new theology" that emerged from Vatican and who frequently gave "theology updates" and "re-orientations," finally left the priesthood to marry.

*Item:* Bishop Hubbard's first vocations director, Fr. Chuck Philips, left the priesthood to marry.

*Item:* Fr. Jim Murphy, known by Albany Catholics as "Hanoi Jim" because of his activism during the 1960s, was a close friend of Bishop Hubbard, dating back to their days at the North American College. Known by his long hair and beard, Fr. Murphy was indulged by the Bishop who let him be a political activist. He eventually became a local legislator in the 1970s and 1980s.

Fr. Murphy resigned from the priesthood to marry, saying, "I wish there was a possibility for marriage and the priesthood — that is not the case, nor is it likely to be in the near future."

There is a curious incident concerning Fr. Murphy. An Albany Catholic wrote a letter to the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy complaining about the political activism of this priest, especially since Pope John Paul II had on numerous occasions asked priests not to hold political offices.

A letter was sent on the stationery of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, but the content is so silly and juvenile, and the explanation supporting Murphy's political role so long-winded, that some who have seen it believe the letter may have been a forgery.

*Item:* Among recent defections is the sad case of Fr. Brian O'Shaughnessy, another very close friend of Bishop Hubbard who was also favored by him. With a reputation for being both very bright and very likable, Fr. O'Shaughnessy was a leading student in the minor seminary, but was soon drawn into left-wing radicalism at Catholic University.

O'Shaughnessy was sent by Hubbard to study at Matthew Fox's Creation Spirituality Institute in California, and to bring Fox's teaching back to Albany. Before leaving the priesthood, Fr. O'Shaughnessy was also a member of the Diocese's Peace and Justice Committee.

*Item:* There are many ex-priests and ex-nuns, some even married to each other, who still work for the Diocese in religious education or some other agency.

*Item:* There is the case of Fr. Joseph Girzone, who resigned from the active ministry for health reasons, and who is now earning hundreds of thousands of dollars for his popular *Joshua* series of books. Considered by some to be a major evangelist for a "new gnostic Jesus," Fr. Girzone is frequently the guest speaker at retreats and the guest homilist at Masses throughout the Diocese.

### **"A Real Leader"**

On numerous occasions, Bishop Hubbard has written or spoken on the problem of vocations in the Diocese, usually in the context of closing parishes.

Despite his expressed concern, the view taken by many priests is that Bishop Hubbard is "intentionally out to destroy the priesthood." What else, they ask, could explain his toleration of so many priests with sex problems, his continual advocacy of married priests and women priests, and his vindictiveness toward orthodox priests.



Speaking of the Bishop's pastoral plan for the Diocese, one priest said, "We have planned destructiveness. Bishop Hubbard wants to create a structure where he can appeal to various types — those who want married priests, women priests, homosexual priests. Then he will be seen as a real leader and say, 'Maybe I deserve to be an Archbishop now'."

Another priest said that a growing number of his fellow priests are starting to ignore Bishop Hubbard, in whatever little ways they can.

"A lot of us have stopped going to retreats, because we know there is not going to be anything spiritual there.

"We used to have retreats in spiritual places, but now we go to places with names like 'Thousand Acres Dude Ranch,' where there is an open bar throughout the retreat.

"We don't get real Catholic spirituality any longer. The Diocese hires these New Age apostles and psychologists. When the subject of priests' moral problems comes up, the people who don't have the problems are told to accept those who do. 'Lighten up,' they say to us.

"The Bishop doesn't give a damn about his priests."

Some priests in the Diocese, when they are approached by a young man who expresses a desire to be a priest, will actively discourage him.

"The only seminaries Bishop Hubbard will allow candidates to attend are St. Mary's in Baltimore and the Washington Theological College, both known for their extreme liberalism and homosexuality," said a priest, "and many feel going there will only cause a person to lose his faith, if not worse."

That view was echoed by a young man who feels he has been called to the priesthood, but after visits to the two seminaries approved by Bishop Hubbard decided not to attend.

"Our priests are being trained in Protestant seminaries," said the mother of a young man discouraged from the priesthood.

"They go there, and when they come out, they don't believe in the Eucharist."

A young man commented: "I think the Diocese of Albany doesn't have many candidates because it doesn't do anything to promote genuine vocations."

## **"Collaborative Ministry"**

In May, 1990, Bishop Hubbard published a statement in *The Evangelist* on the "qualities" a young man thinking about priesthood should have.

According to the Bishop, a candidate "must have an acceptance of his own humanity which enables him to be comfortable with himself and in his relationships with others. . . .

"In the past, the priest was sometimes referred to as an *alter Christus*, another Christ. I'm afraid, however, that this notion of 'putting on Christ' or 'of forming oneself into His image' was sometimes taken too literally. A priest cannot 'become' Christ. He can model himself *after* Jesus and he can define his ministry in Gospel terms, but he cannot 'become' Christ.

"What a priest must do, however, is to be himself and to allow his own humanity, his own unique personality, to emerge in his ministry. The personal touch is far more important today than any robotic performance a priest must give."

In the Bishop's vision, the priest must show his "humanness," showing others that he is friendly, understanding, and patient.

The second important "quality" is that the candidate must be "open to collaborative ministry."

"Today's candidate for the priesthood must develop the ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively with others in the Church. In particular, he must develop skills of listening, of learning how to facilitate group interaction, and of mastering the art of affirming, encouraging, and reassuring others. He must also acquire the capacity to work with all kinds of people, building consensus, striking compromises, and knowing the difference between assertiveness and aggressiveness.

"Of special importance is the priest's ability to relate to women, to their needs, concerns, problems, frustrations, hopes, expectations, and aspirations. If, therefore, a person is not open to a collaborative model of ministry. . . and if, more specifically, he is not attentive and supportive of the growing ministerial role of women in the Church, then. . . he is not a fit candidate for today's priesthood."

The third quality, according to the Bishop, is a "thirst for knowledge" which shows itself in reading and a willingness for "on- going education and formation."

An openness to live a simple life-style is the fourth "quality": it is a willingness to "take the initiative by offering an irrefutable counter-witness to the consumerism of our day." Fifth, there is spirituality.

"Today's priest candidate must truly be a spiritual person, a person who seeks to integrate his own personality, his relationships with family, friends, and parishioners in the hectic demands of the apostolate with a meaningful life of personal and liturgical prayer. . . .

"Assuredly with God's grace, there are people capable of following such a vision of contemporary priestly ministry. . . ."

### **"After This Papacy"**

In 1989, Fr. Christopher DeGiovine, then director of vocations for the Diocese, in an interview in *The Evangelist* said that the priest shortage would not be solved until women are ordained, priests are allowed to marry, or an optional five-or-ten year commitment is allowed for men who think they might want to be priests.

In the past year, according to one priest, during the course of his parish visitations Bishop Hubbard twice told parishioners that he sees no reason why women cannot be priests, and why priests cannot marry. "After this Papacy," he said, "they will."

### **Not Accepted**

In the past 15 years, the number of priests working in the Diocese has been diminished nearly by half.

"What will happen in another 15 years?," asked a priest.

"It's not that there haven't been decent, normal, good people who have wanted to be priests; it's just that they have been discouraged, not accepted, driven out. ...

"But, there is something worse at work here. Many of the priests who came into the Diocese of Albany in recent years have come from other dioceses, after they were dropped from their seminaries.

"We have to worry," he said.

### **Albany Vicar General...**

### **Reportedly Warns That Clergy Who Spoke To The Wanderer Will Be Punished**

Stunned by the accuracy of the first report in

the "Agony in Albany" series of articles appearing in *The Wanderer*, the Diocese of Albany has begun asking priests to write to Apostolic Nuncio Agostino Cacciavillan, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, and Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk to praise Bishop Howard Hubbard's leadership in the Diocese.

The first installment of the series that appeared in *The Wanderer* was mailed to every clergyman in Albany, and also to all 4,500 members of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics. A typical response from readers of the first article was expressed by one woman who told a coalition member, "Oh my God, now it all fits together."

On Tuesday, March 12th, at a Day of Recollection in the Albany Diocese, at which Bishop Hubbard and both of his vicars general were present, Vicar General Fr. Michael Farano expressed great anger at the series. He told priests that if they knew of any priests who had contributed to the story, they should turn their names into the chancery.

According to several reports, he warned priests that those who spoke with *The Wanderer* "will be found out and will be punished." The priests at the Day of Recollection were also asked to stand up and applaud the Bishop to show their support.

The anger officials of the Diocese are feeling after the release of *The Wanderer* series exceeds that of a year ago, when layman David Phelan published an article in the *Troy Record*. Phelan described Bishop Hubbard's practice of deemphasizing Catholic principles and practices. Also, he compared the situation in the Diocese in the 1950s when 75,000 to 100,000 Albany Catholics marched on the Capitol to pray the Rosary, to Bishop Hubbard's comment to Catholic youth that the message of Fatima "is just a private option."

### **"We Affirm You"**

After that article appeared, Phelan was denounced by name from at least four pulpits of Albany Catholic churches, and a particular priest organized an advertising campaign that "will be an expression of our gratitude, affirmation, admiration, and a promise of our prayers."

The ad that ran in *The Evangelist* and the three major papers in the Capital District read:

"A Message to Bishop Howard J. Hubbard from

priests of the Albany Roman Catholic Diocese:  
“WE THANK YOU. . . for your concern for us.  
“WE PRAISE YOU. . . for your leadership.  
“WE AFFIRM YOU. . . for your love of all God’s people.  
“WE PROMISE OUR PRAYERS. . . for your work in His vineyard.”

Although priests were told by the organizer they “may participate in the financial support, if you choose,” some priests felt it would be prudent to send in a sizable contribution. Phelan’s article also prompted expressions of support for the Bishop that appeared in the diocesan newspaper.

One deanery saluted the Bishop “as our brother priest whom we have come to know and understand as a caring, concerned, committed, and compassionate pastor, a zealous shepherd of God’s holy people. His holiness, dedication, devotion, and unswerving loyalty to the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ have consistently been demonstrated. . . .

“During these times too often characterized by crisis and hostility from within and without the Church, we are most grateful that Howard J. Hubbard has carried on the herculean task of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus and of exercising his ministry with sensitivity. He is a leader who articulates the vision of where we are going as Church with a great understanding of where we have been and where we stand now. He is a loyal son of the Church, steeped in her traditions, with a great sense of how the faith community needs to live the Gospel in the coming 21st century.”

The letter continued, praising the Bishop for being “a voice of hope, a reservoir of love, a pillar of faith, whose integrity, honesty, and probity are, without a question, beyond reproach.”

### **Reducing The Faith To Irrelevance**

The Coalition of Concerned Catholics responded to the series by sending a letter to orthodox priests of the Diocese of Albany, comparing their suffering to the suffering of those priests in England during the Reformation.

“While you have not been asked to shed your blood, you have been called upon to undergo a more subtle, silent form of suffering for the Faith. Among other reasons, three could be mentioned: the moral and theological shortcomings of more than a few of

your fellow priests; the pusillanimity of the Hierarchy; and the massive apathy which you encounter when dealing with the bulk of the laity.

“To begin with, you are tarred with the same brush as the perpetrators in the clerical sex scandals that the media revel in. The insouciance of the Bishops in confronting these problems and weeding out the culprits gives rise to the widespread perception that the wrongdoers are operating with apparent impunity. This does untold damage to the good reputation of all priests. As in the case of the various dissenters who always seem to find a forum here, the reaction of the powers to be seems to be reduced to ‘Judge not. . .’ With this perversion of the Gospel, the Faith is reduced to irrelevance for many. . . .

“In this environment you often find yourself ministering to a flock that is suspicious of not only your actions, but your very motives. . . . A natural source of support, your fellow priests, is problematic because many value neither your faith nor your consecrated celibacy. The same could be said for the diocesan management, which, having banished you to the boondocks, hopes that you will be able to do the least amount of damage from there.

“And yet you are still with us. . . . “It should be pointed out that you too, like the English and Welsh martyrs, could have sold your souls and been redeemed from the limbo of the low end of the ecclesial bureaucratic pecking order. But you have persevered with Christ, and have passed on to us the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith in all its purity. For this, we are eternally indebted to you.”

### **The Questions Will Be Answered**

Fr. Kenneth Doyle, a priest of the Diocese of Albany, former editor of *The Evangelist* and currently media relations director for the U.S. Catholic Conference Communications Office, called this reporter after he read the initial installment.

He said he was not calling on behalf of Bishop Hubbard, but wanted to know why Bishop Hubbard was being picked on since the situation in the Diocese of Albany is not unique; if the information supplied to *The Wanderer* was accurate, and if the Catholics who supplied it were responsible. He also wondered if it was ethical to quote individuals without using their names,

All of these questions and others he raised,

Fr. Doyle was told, would be answered in the final installment of the series.

Concerning the accuracy of information supplied to *The Wanderer*, Fr. Doyle was told that his name had often been the subject of conversations, and there was an interesting bit of information *The Wanderer* would like him to verify.

Members of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics told this reporter that Fr. Doyle had achieved the highest score ever attained on the New York State Bar Exam. Was that true?

Fr. Doyle responded that he had scored in the top 99.9 percentile, but that he thought there might have been others who have scored higher.

*The Wanderer* assured Fr. Doyle that other information it had was equally accurate. .

### **Part V** ***The Breakdown Of The Liturgy***

*"We have liturgical abuses here they haven't even thought of in other places" — A Catholic layman*

*"Every liturgical norm is violated in this Diocese with efficiency and intent" — A Catholic priest.*

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany is separated from the New York Governor's Mansion by a parking lot; it is dwarfed by the massive tombstone-like towers of Nelson Rockefeller's state office buildings.

Built in the middle of the last century, the cathedral has been beautified by successive Bishops of the Diocese, and contains notable examples of church art. The Stations of the Cross, a gift of Bishop Thomas A. Burke in 1898, won first prize at the Paris Exposition. The pulpit, carved with figures of Christ and several saints, was made in Holland. The stained-glass windows are extraordinarily vivid and detailed, especially the north and south transept windows: one is a "Lady window," made in England; the other shows dramatic scenes of the Last Judgment.

Albany Catholics believe it was a great disappointment to Bishop Hubbard that the cathedral did not crumble during the massive earth-moving and construction project of the Albany Mall. The visitor to the cathedral today notices the sad condition of

neglect that the cathedral is suffering. Even the priceless windows are deteriorating in their frames.

The visitor to the cathedral might stop in for noon Mass, celebrated by Msgr. Jack Jones, rector of the cathedral for as long as anyone can remember.

Before the Second Vatican Council, one priest remembers, he was a stickler for details, concerned that every gesture and action was performed exactly as rubrics required.

"But just as the cathedral is a shadow of its former glory," said the priest, "so Msgr. Jones' Mass bears only the slightest resemblance to a Catholic Mass."

### **"How We Feel"**

The Mass at the cathedral this reporter attended was videotaped by a member of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics, in the event this description of Mass should be challenged. Almost every rubric was violated, and every abuse noted for correction by *Inaestimabile Donum* was allowed or performed.

About 50 Catholics, including six from the Coalition of Concerned Catholics, attended the Mass held in the chapel, formerly the sacristy or cloakroom. The altar used was once a pedestal for a statue in the cathedral, and around it on three sides stood the people.

Msgr. Jones wore no chasuble, but over his alb he wore a long red and green knit Christmas scarf.

The homily was given seated, and its theme (for the curious) was that "it's not what we do that counts, but how we feel." The bread and wine were offered together; there was no *lavabo* or *Orate, Fratres*. After the Holy, Holy, Holy, there was no approved Eucharistic Prayer, and the words of Consecration were made up.

There was no *hanc igitur*, no *epiklesis*; the Host was broken during the words of institution; everyone sang the *Per ipsum*; the prayers after the Our Father were invented and bore no resemblance to the authorized prayers; during the Lamb of God, little baskets containing Hosts were passed through the assembly and each person who wanted to receive Communion took one Host. Before the *Ecce Agnus Dei*, the priest left the altar to collect the baskets, and then people and priest self-communicated at the same time.

After consuming the Host, the people processed to the altar to sip from one of four glass goblets,

while the priest played a cassette tape on a portable recorder.

The entire Mass, including the homily, took just under 20 minutes.

"In lots of churches in the Diocese," said a layman who viewed this film, "this Mass would seem conservative."

### **"How Can He Say Mass?"**

That opinion is borne out by the testimony of a layman *The Wanderer* spoke with about the liturgies in Albany.

An Albany Catholic from a rural part of the Diocese reported that at a Midnight Mass this past Christmas, a small rural parish built to hold 700 had more than 1,100 people attending, because that parish is staffed by an orthodox priest.

Total attendance at Christmas Day Masses exceeded 7,000 — in a town with less than 5,000 inhabitants, most of whom are Protestant.

"Where the Church is, people still come," said the laymen, who added, "We all sit here in disbelief at what is happening, at the things that are going on. We cannot believe Rome is not doing anything about this."

He told of a priest who addressed his congregation before Mass started, saying, "How many people believe that what we're going to do today will bring God out of Heaven?"

There was a show of hands, the man reported, and the priest replied, "Well, it's not going to happen."

After that incident, people stopped going to Masses that priest was scheduled to celebrate, and when the parish stopped printing the times of the Masses he would celebrate, people called up, because they didn't want to go to his Masses. When the parish wouldn't give out that information, people just stopped going to Mass," the layman said.

"I told a Cardinal in Rome about this incident," the layman continued, "and he just sat there with an expression of unbelievable horror on his face. 'How can he say Mass?' the Cardinal asked me.

"I said, 'It's simple. His whole reason for being a priest is to destroy faith'."

This layman, who asked that his name be withheld, said, "Please don't use my name. If the

Bishop found out I spoke with you, he'd destroy me. It's not funny. This is the kind of fear people have in this Diocese."

### **Contrary To Church Rules**

One woman who is not afraid to use her name in this series of articles is Joanne Clough, a mother of nine who prays before the Blessed Sacrament two or three hours every day in reparation for the sacrileges committed in the Diocese.

A self-professed "roaming Catholic" since her own parish became too intolerable for her to bear, she is worried about the number of invalid Masses.

"There are so many parishes where the altar breads — cakes — are invalid and contrary to Church rules. But an even more grave problem is that in an increasing number of parishes, priests no longer say the words of Consecration during Mass," she said.

"One time I went to Mass — it was Martin Luther Day, and the priest gave a homily praising Martin Luther. He left out the words of Consecration. I went back to the sacristy after Mass was over, holding the bread, and I asked him if this was consecrated. He just grabbed it and ate it and never answered me.

"I wrote a letter to the Bishop, and he wrote a letter back and said he'd look into it. That priest went on to have a nervous breakdown, but he's back now, and has another parish.

"I've talked to Betsy Rowe, a former nun who runs the Office of Prayer and Worship (formerly the Liturgy Office) and asked her several times for the recipes the Diocese recommends for altar breads, because there is still so much experimentation going on in so many parishes."

The use of invalid altar breads has been a problem in the Albany Diocese since the Installation Mass of Bishop Hubbard in 1977; that Mass used invalid altar breads.

That fact caused such an uproar in the Diocese that the scandal even broke into the secular newspapers, and was debated in letters-to-the-editor for some time after.

The bread at the Installation Mass contained, in addition to wheat flour and water, honey and baking soda, as admitted by the late Mary Reed Newland, then a staff member of the Albany Diocese Office of Religious Education.

Her defense in a secular newspaper of the

recipe utilized left many believing that it was the “unofficial” reply of the Diocese, and that the bread used was justified by the fact that a Canadian liturgical bulletin and a group at Notre Dame University approved of altar breads made with that recipe.

Mrs. Clough, however, is concerned with what she describes as the propaganda battle waged against the teaching of the Catholic Church on the nature of the Mass and the sacraments conducted by the Diocese.

### **“Updating Courses”**

Two incidents illustrate her concern. When one of her daughters was scheduled to receive her First Communion, she was advised that her daughter would make her First Confession sometime afterward.

She objected to her pastor, who told her that if she wanted her daughter to make her First Confession, she would first have to prepare her herself.

Pregnant with her ninth child, and exhausted with pneumonia at the time, Mrs. Clough (whose husband is not Catholic) prepared her daughter. Two weeks before the First Communion Mass, Mrs. Clough called her pastor to ask him if her daughter, Karen, could have her First Confession scheduled. A nun who answered the phone said that the priest was too busy, and to call back a week later.

Again, Mrs. Clough called, and the priest, again, was too busy. Two days before the First Communion, Mrs. Clough called again, and was told the priest didn’t have time.

“So, my daughter couldn’t make her First Confession, first,” she said.

During the time a child prepares for First Communion, the child’s parents are required by the Diocese to enroll in “updating” courses.

Mrs. Clough remembers, “I was in a class and the teacher was saying that theologians now believe that the first Mass wasn’t celebrated until the second century.

“I raised my hand and said, ‘I thought the First Mass was at the Last Supper,’ and the teacher said, ‘That is a matter theologians are debating’.”

### **A Polka Mass**

Two months after the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship published

*Inaestimabile Donum* (April, 1980), which described unnecessary outdoor celebrations of the Eucharist as a serious abuse, Bishop Howard Hubbard celebrated a Polka Mass on the Fonda Fair Grounds for Amsterdam’s annual Polka Fest ‘80.

The noon Mass at the fairgrounds was celebrated barely 500 feet from St. Cecilia’s Church, in the open-sided shed of a picnic grove, with the congregation sitting at picnic tables.

This abuse is just one of many, say Albany Catholics, that happen with regularity.

There are ecumenical services where Protestants and Catholics receive Communion, services which are advertised as “a valid mass (sic) for Catholics while retaining the meaning of Holy Communion for participating Protestants.” There have been Masses concelebrated with Protestant ministers who receive Communion with the priest. There continue to be Masses celebrated in the Diocese “where women do all the work,” in the words of one Catholic. And as “earth worship” advances in Albany, there are more and more “nature Masses” out in the woods, where natural elements are adored.

“The radicals think they have a mandate to do whatever they want,” said one priest, “and you can’t tell me this isn’t allowed to destroy the Church.”

In his view, Bishop Hubbard’s support for women priests stems from a drive to humiliate his priests.

The priest told of “an event held in the cathedral where the Bishop was in the sanctuary, completely surrounded by women who helped him ‘concelebrate Mass,’ and then distributed Communion. Packing the first four pews were diocesan priests, reduced to spectators.”

### **“Altar Persons”**

In 1976, the Diocese of Albany began an effort to bring altar girls into every parish.

Fr. Richard Vosko, then director of the Diocesan Liturgy Center (and now a priest who operates his own architectural firm, which specializes in renovating churches throughout the United States), told *The Albany Times Union* that, while altar girls were a problem in some areas of the United States, “it’s not a real issue with us” in the Albany Diocese. In 1976, he also said that the American Bishops had petitioned Rome to allow them to use altar girls.

In 1977, Fr. Vosko, a public advocate of



women's ordination, was still in his position as liturgy director when Bishop Hubbard began his reign. He told the diocesan newspaper, *The Evangelist*, that women were to be recruited for the traditional altar boy role, and would, it was hoped, be trained as adult acolytes.

In 1978, women were being trained as acolytes as a preliminary to Confirmation in the Albany Diocese. The liturgical norm that women may not serve at the altar was interpreted by Fr. Joseph Cotugno as meaning "women may not wash the hands of the priest."

*The Evangelist* also reported that Bishop Howard Hubbard referred to girl altar boys as "altar persons."

In 1980, *Inaestimabile Donum* stated that girls may not perform the roles of altar boys, and may not be candle-bearers, cross-bearers, incense-bearers, and the like.

In 1989, the Albany Diocese stated that the issue of altar girls is still being studied by the Vatican, but that parishes that employ altar girls have the Albany Diocese's blessing.

Chancellor Michael Farano explained: "The question of whether girls officially can be altar servers is still under study by the Vatican. And so the debate goes on. Yes you can, because the Vatican hasn't said no, or no you can't, because the Vatican hasn't said yes. And it depends on which side of the question you want to come down on."

In February, 1991, diocesan spokesman and now chancellor Fr. Randall Patterson, attempting to deflect criticism that Bishop Hubbard 'wasn't loyal to Rome on the specific issue of altar girls, replied that the local Bishop has the right to decide whether girls may be altar servers.

"In his push for the ordination of women, the feminization of the liturgy was a primary goal," a layman said, "and that's why altar girls are so important."

### **The Boy Bishop**

*Inaestimabile Donum*, in the foreword, listed a number of abuses that Bishops were obliged to correct: "the confusion of roles, especially regarding the priestly ministry and the role of the laity. . . an increasing loss of the sense of the sacred. . . misunderstanding of the ecclesial character of the liturgy."

It cited specific examples of false practices

found in the Church, and stated, "None of these things can bring good results."

In May, 1987, *Capital Region* magazine published an article "The Boy Bishop Comes of Age" by Jeremy Bloom, marking the 10th anniversary of the Bishop's installation.

One of Bishop Hubbard's favored priests, Fr. Michael Hogan, was introduced and quoted by Bloom:

"Hogan, who has known Bishop Hubbard since their days together at St. Joseph's Seminary in Dunwoodie on Long Island (sic), articulates a theme with which Hubbard and most of the American Bishops would probably agree. 'I'm very loyal and affectionate —toward the Pope,' he says. 'I'm not terribly loyal to the Vatican State and its bureaucracy. That has very little to do with the dying and rising of Jesus, the Eucharist, and love: it has to do with power, and like all bureaucracies, it tends toward evil'."

That view, say Catholics here, epitomizes the chancery view of Roman liturgical directives.

### **Bishop Hubbard And The Tridentine Mass**

In his 1980 *Message of Love* to the Catholics of the Diocese of Albany, Bishop Howard Hubbard explained why he wasn't eager to be pastorally sensitive to those attached to the Tridentine Mass.

"I think the Tridentine Mass is a symbol on the part of those who basically have rejected the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. I don't think there can be an accommodation to renege on the reforms of the Second Vatican Council."

Although his episcopacy has been characterized by great "pastoral sensitivity" to groups and individuals who reject Catholic doctrine, and although he has been very tolerant of the widespread liturgical abuses in the Diocese, since 1984 when Pope John Paul II first requested that Bishops allow the celebration of the Tridentine Mass, Bishop Hubbard has not shown much willingness to allow the Tridentine Mass.

As of December, 1989, with the issuance of a decree on the implementation of *Ecclesia Dei* in the Diocese of Albany, two Tridentine Masses per month are allowed in the Diocese, one Sunday each in two different parishes.

According to the decree, "Persons participating in the celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 edition of the *Missale Romanum* must not use the Mass as a vehicle for the expression of schismatic tendencies and attitudes detrimental to the unity of the Church." Catholics in Albany can only attend the Mass "because of genuine spiritual need and not because of curiosity, purely aesthetical or personal preference. . . ."

### **"Strict Criteria"**

Although there is evidence indicating Bishop Hubbard was aware that many Catholics were growing increasingly weary with abuses of the *Novus Ordo* Mass (if they were not dropping out of the Catholic Church altogether), he made no effort to allow the celebration of any Tridentine Mass at all in the Diocese until August 31, 1985. Then, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hollman were granted permission to have a Tridentine Mass to celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary.

On July 22nd, 1985, Mr. and Mrs. Hollmann wrote a letter to the Bishop asking permission to mark their wedding anniversary "to offer our thanksgiving for the many blessings God has bestowed on us in the same manner and with the same prayers that we might have asked at the time of our marriage."

Married in a simple ceremony in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, the Hollmanns did not have a wedding Mass, they told the Bishop, and they wanted "to celebrate the special occasion with a Mass such as we should have had 35 years ago."

They requested that permission for the Mass be granted for either August 24th or August 27th, so that their children, living throughout the United States and Europe, could attend, along with a small group of close friends.

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, Chancellor Michael Farano, replying for Bishop Hubbard, informed the Hollmanns the Bishop needed more information before he could grant permission.

On August 6th they replied to the chancellor, and on August 12th, Vice Chancellor Edward C. Pratt informed them: "It is felt that the strict criteria set forth by the recent guidelines issued by the Vatican have not been met. Bishop Hubbard is in concurrence with this decision and will not favor an indult in this case."

Pratt explained, "Your request does not respond to what must be viewed as the heart of the recent indult. . . . It is apparent that your request is based more on a desire to replicate the form of the Mass ritual of 35 years ago rather than upon deep spiritual need," and he explained the Diocese must follow "the very restrictive nature and intent of the Congregation document."

Hollmann, an attorney with General Electric, was not willing to accept that answer.

On August 16th, Hollmann telephoned Fr. Farano, and Farano explained that the Hollmanns had not filled out the necessary paperwork; that is, everyone attending the Tridentine Mass must fill out a statement saying they accepted the *Novus Ordo*.

Farano also told Hollmann that the Bishop had denied permission to a similar request from a priest celebrating his 50th anniversary. Farano explained that Hubbard felt the priest would not be able to tell those who were attached to the old Mass apart from those who were not.

Hollmann told Farano that he and his wife attended the *Novus Ordo* Mass every Sunday, but that their hunger for the old Mass was still present.

Fr. Farano then asked for more details on who would be attending, and would take the matter under consideration.

Later that day, Farano's secretary telephoned Hollmann to say permission was being granted.

On August 16th, Farano wrote to the Hollmanns, telling them they could have the Mass, but they must obtain the signatures of everyone attending the Mass, and that no public notice of the Mass must be made either before or after the event.

### **A Restrictive Interpretation**

On Oct. 1st, 1985, the Hollmanns wrote to Bishop Hubbard thanking him for allowing them to celebrate their 35th wedding anniversary with the Tridentine Mass. They asked him how much "progress" there has been in the Diocese's attempt to provide an opportunity for people "to participate occasionally but regularly in the celebration of the Tridentine Mass."

Replying for the Bishop on Oct. 11th, Fr. Farano said that any requests for a Tridentine Mass must

be “considered on a request-by-request basis” and that it would be “inappropriate to engage in a publicity campaign regarding those (Vatican) guidelines.”

On Nov. 19th, 1985, as the representative of 264 people, Hollmann met with Bishop Hubbard concerning the Tridentine Mass, but, as he told the Bishop afterward in a letter, “was not encouraged by your comments and your restrictive interpretation of the indult.”

Hubbard responded that the indult only allows the celebration of the Tridentine Mass “by way of exception for those who remain unalterably attached to the Rite,” and that he could not allow a Tridentine Mass on Dec. 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

He would, however, allow a Tridentine Mass on Monday evening, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>. Although that was a bitter cold and snowy night, more than 400 Catholics braved the elements to attend.

### **An Acerbic Personality**

On Dec. 8th, 1988, Hollmann, with three other lay people, met with Bishop Hubbard, Fr. Farano, and Fr. Diacetes, the judicial vicar, to discern what progress, if any, had been made in the direction of having regular Tridentine Masses celebrated in the Diocese.

Bishop Hubbard indicated that he was still studying the issue and was waiting for guidelines to come from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and that when he finished studying the issue, he would get back in touch with them.

Eleven months later, layman Hank VanDyke met with Bishop Hubbard, to discuss implementation of *Ecclesia Dei*.

“What impressed me most,” said VanDyke, “was the Bishop’s total lack of knowledge about the issue. He had delayed implementation, saying he was researching the issue with the NCCB and with the Vatican, but he showed at the meeting that he was totally unfamiliar with the entire issue.

But a month later, on Dec. 8th, 1989, Bishop Hubbard advised Catholics in Albany he would allow the Tridentine Mass twice a month in the Diocese, with this warning:

“The Roman Catholic Church is one and indivisible, which finds its unity expressed first and foremost in the Holy Eucharist. I pray that the celebration of the Eucharist will promote the unity of the Church, which is Christ’s Body. Never may we use the Eucharist as a sign of division or, worse still, use the Eucharist, in any language, as a banner for our own personal theologies, particular viewpoints, or the venting of frustrations arising from changes with which we do not agree. In the latter instances, the Eucharist will become a countersign and will lead to further division among Christ’s Body.

“I commend to you the words of St. Paul: ‘A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself’.”

“Then, two months later, he said that if he allowed the old Mass, the priest would have to face the people and use the new lectionary.

“The total other side of his personality came out in that conversation. He was very acerbic. He said that if we wouldn’t take it the way he was offering it, we should just forget it.”

### **Part VI** ***The End Of Catholic Education***

*“I went to Catholic school for 12 years, and my life-long dream was to have my children educated in a Catholic school. It broke my heart when I saw what they were learning” — Joanne Clough, mother of nine children.*

Ann Vicinanzo was a busy mother of seven children in 1977 when she looked through some of the religion materials her son Paul had brought home from Scully High School.

“There were questions like, ‘When you play football, what kind of sexual thoughts do you have?’ and ‘Imagine yourself sinking in quicksand. How do you feel?’ I was horrified.”

In December of 1978, she had her first meeting with Bishop Howard Hubbard, and told him of her concerns with the religious program at the Amsterdam, N.Y., school.

“He told me he’d take care of it. He said, ‘I’ll send a team to Scully to look at the religious educa-

tion program, and after I've done this, you will never be able to do this (come to me) again.'

"Well," Mrs. Vicinanzo recalled, "I thought he would take care of it. What did I know? And the next year I found nothing had changed."

The year 1980 was a nightmare for the Vicinanzos. They found themselves embroiled in a lawsuit with the Diocese of Albany after the Diocese refused to allow their daughter Marie to graduate from the school because they had withheld her from the school's religious education program.

The Vicinanzos claimed that the religion programs offered at Scully (banned by bishops in two other dioceses) distorted Catholic teaching, and they had the right to exercise their consciences with regard to the religious education of their children. The Diocese argued that Marie Vicinanzo could only be exempted from the religion program if she were registered as a non-Catholic.

The case went to civil court, and was tried on the grounds of breach of contract and discrimination. The Vicinanzos lost, and the Diocese refused to allow Marie to graduate with her class. "It was an extremely traumatic incident for Marie," said Mrs. Vicinanzo.

Marie, however, went on to Cornell University. Scully closed in 1990; eight high schools and 27 elementary schools have closed during the reign of Bishop Howard Hubbard.

What made the Scully closing a traumatic experience for the local community was that Catholics there had raised over \$500,000 in pledges, could raise an additional \$500,000, and increase enrollment to keep the school open.

### **Strong In Her Faith**

During the Vicinanzos' trial, there were few supporters in the courtroom.

"Many parents agreed with us, and offered their private sympathy," recalled Mrs. Vicinanzo, "but they were so afraid to be seen supporting us. They feared their children would lose their scholarships or would not be allowed to graduate."

One person from Scully High School did attend the court proceedings, and that was Scully's Latin teacher, Sr. Anna Roberta Benson. A Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Sr. Anna Roberta is a teacher recognized on many occasions by the New York State Education Department as one of the most outstanding educators in New York.

Sr. Anna Roberta had three brothers who were priests; one was a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission and a close friend of Pope Pius XII. She was recognized as one of the most superb Latin teachers in the state, and was frequently sought out by Albany priests who needed translations of Roman documents which had not yet been translated into English.

"Sr. Anna Roberta was a super, super teacher," said Al Geraghty, a lawyer who knew her well, and tried to interest the Vatican in her case.

"She had a very keen mind, she was very strong in her faith.

"People would come to her and ask her about abuses at Mass or about what their children were being taught, and she'd tell them if their Masses were valid, or what the Church taught. That's what started it. A priest went to the Bishop and complained about what Sr. Anna Roberta was telling people. . . . The terrible thing is that priest went off with another man, a hairdresser, and it was a scandal all over Amsterdam.

"Anyway, it was horrible what they did. She was a brilliant Latin teacher, and they gave her a detail cleaning toilets."

"The Diocese and the Sisters of St. Joseph put Sr. Anna Roberta through hell," said Mrs. Vicinanzo. "After the trial, Sr. Anna Roberta was so afraid they'd never let her teach again, and in July, after negotiating with the Diocese, she was asked to sign a list of conditions that would enable her to continue teaching for one more year."

### **Pure Venom**

The superintendent of diocesan schools, Jerome Porath, in a letter dated July 30th, 1980, informed her of the conditions she must agree to for continued employment at Bishop Scully. He told Sister she had ten days to sign and return the document.

Condition number one: "There shall be no discussions with students at the school and their families on topics dealing with the teaching of the Catholic Church. If an occasion arises in which students or parents present information which appears to be in error to Church teaching, Sr. Anna Roberta may call this to the attention of the theology faculty, principal, or diocesan school office, but shall not correct the error itself."

Condition number 2: "No provision. shall be

given by the school or diocesan school office for Sr. Anna Roberta to conduct a program of religious education for adults; nor shall (there be) permission for the use of the school building for such a program conducted by Sr. Anna Roberta under the auspices of some other Catholic school or Catholic parish or Catholic institute."

"This was a real blow not only to Sr. Anna Roberta," said Mrs. Vicinanza, "but to many Catholics, for she taught a very good and very popular adult religious education program."

Condition number 3: "Use of the 'Latin horseshoe style' curriculum may be used only if appropriate approval is given by the New York State Education Department. If such approval is not given, the school shall determine whether to rename the course or replace the program with a state-approved Latin program."

"This condition was pure venom," said Mrs. Vicinanza, "for the Diocese knew full well that Sr. Anna Roberta had received many accolades from the state for her innovative Latin teaching, and for her success."

The statement of conditions ended by saying that if the Latin teacher violated any of the conditions set forth, it would be "sufficient grounds for immediate dismissal."

### **A Chain Of Events**

Sr. Anna Roberta could not sign the document.

"I think it was the Saturday before Labor Day when Sr. Anna Roberta called me up," recalled Mrs. Vicinanza, "and she was in tears. They threw everything out of her room at the convent (by the school), and cleaned out her classroom, and put all her belongings and teaching materials out on the street."

"She was told to get out of Amsterdam, and never to set foot in Amsterdam again. She had no place to go. She stayed the first night in the local hospital, and then went to the Provincial House in Latham, where the other nuns were ordered not to speak to her because she was 'divisive.'"

"This incident set in motion a chain of events in the Diocese, and every orthodox teacher got the message that the same thing could happen to them," said Mrs. Vicinanza.

At the time Sr. Benson was fired, Tom Coffey of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics pointed

out, the Diocese of Albany had 12 persons identified with the Diocesan Religion Department blaming Pope John Paul II for his "inquisitorial spirit of regression. . . intimidation and injustice" for moving against dissident theologians.

### **Well-Known Dissenters**

In January, 1977, the William C. Brown Company and Peter Li, Inc., sponsored the first of what would be several Albany forums, gatherings of priests, nuns, and theologians that read like a who's who of American Catholic dissenters.

Brought together under the aegis of the Office of Religious Education, chaired by ex-priest Brennan Hill and dissenter Mary Reed Newland, the forums were designed to set the agenda for religious education not only in the Diocese of Albany, but throughout North America.

Among those attending the first forum, ostensibly on the "Ministry of the Catechist," were, to name a few, Bishop Raymond Lucker, former education chief of the United States Catholic Conference, and now Bishop of New Ulm, Minn.; Fr. Bernard Marthaler, who suggested that no one be allowed to become a catechist unless he had read Saul Alinsky's "little book on rules for radicals"; and such well-known dissenters as Jesuit Fr. James DiGiacomo, Dr. Gloria Durka, Gabriel Moran, and Fr. Matthew Lamb.

The proceedings of the forum were published under the title of "Theologians and Catechists in Dialog," and among the conclusions reached by "these fine people" were:

The Church needs to be "declericalized";

There is no distinction in the "hierarchy of values" between being a priest and a religious educator;

A counterforce needs to be developed to oppose Church structures;

Theologians must continue to oppose the "official positions" of the Church on the matter of birth control, "remaining active within the community until it is settled within the community at large";

Help youth understand that Church authority includes not just the *Magisterium*, but theologians and religious educators; and

Expand religious education for adults "to focus on the meaning of the darkness that surrounds them."

The Second Albany Forum, again sponsored

by William C. Brown and Peter Li, brought together such notable figures as Dr. Monika Hellwig, Fr. Philip Murnion, and Fr. David Murphy from Notre Dame, to discuss, "Why Be A Catholic?"

The dialog attempted to illustrate how Catholics "must now formulate their own personal commitment, deciding where they stand in the community vis-a-vis the institutional Church."

The Third Albany Forum was on "The Near Death Experience: A Christian Approach," and featured discussions on whether or not there was life after death, and if so, what it would be like.

The conclusion: Near death experiences "raise serious questions about whether we have traditionally been interpreting these doctrines (on Judgment, Heaven, and Hell) correctly."

### **Certain Reservations**

In 1980, when the Vicinanzos expressed their concerns that three religious education series used at Bishop Scully High School distorted Catholic doctrine on homosexuality, original sin, the divinity of Christ, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the meaning of the Mass, and other matters, the superintendent of schools told Mrs. Vicinanzo that "no textbook is complete in Catholic doctrine, and, at any rate, the Bishop is the final authority in the Diocese of what is authentic Catholic teaching."

In December, 1980, in a *Message of Love* to his people, Bishop Hubbard castigated critics of the religious texts at Scully High as "totally simplistic and unprofessional" (The Troy *Times-Record*, Dec. 25th, 1980).

In July, 1988, a Catholic of the Diocese wrote to Bishop Hubbard asking why permission was denied for the use of Ignatius Press' *Faith and Life Series*. That series is widely recognized as providing orthodox catechesis.

The Bishop replied: "This series is not recommended by our diocesan office because of certain reservations which the diocesan staff has about its pedagogical quality. . .The second-grade text alone presents such a wide range of subjects, it is hard to imagine covering all 34 topics in the course of the usual public school religion program. . ."

Even though the series bears an imprimatur, the Bishop asserted his right to prohibit its use: "It is the right and responsibility of a diocesan office to recommend which particular series is most appropri-

ate for use in the Diocese. . ."

In a December, 1988, meeting with lay Catholics, Bishop Hubbard was seeking to determine why many Catholics are leaving the Church. Lay people recited a familiar litany, which included the choices of catechisms approved for use in the Diocese.

At that time, the Bishop announced that he was "unalterably opposed" to the use of different catechisms, saying it might lead Catholics to religious programs outside of their regular parishes.

### **A Look At Parish Bulletins**

The current director of the Diocese's Religious Education Department is Sr. Danielle Bonetti, who has no appreciation for traditional methods of teaching the catechism. She said that the Albany Diocese doesn't require children to memorize, and that, today, Catholics are "looking at life and how our faith influences the way we live."

In the old days, she told reporter Tim Beidel of The Albany *Times Union*, "There might have been something on the Rosary, more devotional things. They didn't have a course on the Bible for adults, or making a marriage better, there was nothing like that."

Parish bulletins now, she said, are full of "all kinds of things going on, from religion programs to social events, to all kinds of educational programs and formation programs, helping people to be better people and also better Catholic Christians."

The trend in diocesan religion programs might be judged by a look at parish bulletins.

St. John the Baptist Church in Valatie, N. Y., announced one week that there would be a Stress and Discipline and Stress Reduction Techniques program, directly above a notice that Confessions would be held only one Friday a month.

"Because the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation should be clearly separate from the celebration of the Eucharist," stated the bulletin, "there will no longer be Confession on Saturday from 4:30 to 5 p.m. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated on the evening of the First Friday of the month, from 7 to 8 p.m. In addition, there will be communal celebrations of Reconciliation in Advent and Lent, and possibly at one other time of the year."

St. Mary's Church in Crescent has a tradition of running human sexuality work featuring dissenters

from Catholic morality, including Brennan Hill, the late Mary Reed Newland, and Fr. Philip Keane, S.S.

One Sunday, Catholics at St. Mary's were surprised to discover that instead of a homily, Rupa (her first name was given to her by her yogi) Linden, a holistic psychotherapist, led a "meditation for peace" sensitivity session, where Miss Linden tried to entrance parishioners.

Although she is not even a Catholic, as a practitioner of "an eastern religion," Miss Linden is frequently recommended as a guest homilist for parishes by the Religious Education Department.

### **Preparing To Suffer**

In 1980, among those offering spiritual support to the Vicinanzos during their trials with the Diocese was a priest, a native of Albany, who returned home after he was fired from his teaching position at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, allegedly for believing in the Real Presence.

He told Mrs. Vicinanzo, "Get ready to suffer. Things in the Church are going to get so much worse."

### **Pagan Religious Practices**

In *The Unicorn in the Sanctuary*, a revealing study of the spread of New Age ideas in the Catholic Church, author Randy England warns parents to look over their children's religion books.

"Look for minimizing of the deity of Christ and distortions of the facts of sin; look for the equating of Christianity with all other religions; or worse, the actual criticism of Christianity in comparison to the so-called higher religions of Hinduism and Buddhism. While you are looking, notice what is not there: the authority of the Church and the Scriptures, the reality of Heaven and Hell and Purgatory, the fact of the biblical miracles, and a general lack of guidance for the child's moral growth. ...That is the New Age religion."

Not surprisingly, among the texts Catholic students are often given — which England points out as particularly dangerous — is the William C. Brown Company's *Guided Meditations for Christians* by Jane Reehorst, B. V. M.

"In the Diocese of Albany," says Mary Kilcer, a young mother who fell under the spell of New Age gurus when a college student in Indiana, and who now informs other Catholics about the New Age, "Bishop Hubbard is actively promoting New Age."

"People who go to the Diocesan Consultation Center for counseling are brain-washed into New Age beliefs; the Religious Education Department vigorously promotes New Age programs; the retreat and prayer centers are totally New Age indoctrination centers. The Bishop is always sending priests to study at Fr. Matthew Fox's institute in California, and adults in the RCIA program are sent to New Age programs at the Omega Center in Rhinebeck — at parish expense."

In October, 1985, the Vatican announced that the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would begin an evaluation of the works of Fr. Matthew Fox, which, essentially, deny basic Catholic teachings, beginning with original sin, and promote pagan religious practices. Three years later, the Vatican ordered Fr. Fox to take a year off from his institute.

Just as the Vatican began its inquiry into Fox, the Albany Diocese began promoting Fox's work. Fox's first advertised visit to the Albany Diocese was in the fall of 1985, where he spoke to the Hospice Movement in Schenectady and afterward was interviewed by *The Evangelist* (Nov. 21st, 1985).

During the interview, Fox placed himself squarely in the Dominican tradition, and compared creation spirituality with the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. The reason for the Vatican inquiry into his works, Fox told reporter Peter Feuerherd, is because some "right-wingers in Seattle" sent his works to Rome, and that creation spirituality is something "European theology isn't going to understand right away."

While the Vatican began making its inquiry into Fox's "theology," Bishop Howard Hubbard began sending priests to Oakland to study at Fox's institute.

### **"Your Own Divinity"**

Among the priests who went there for a semester sabbatical were Fr. Brian O'Shaughnessy and Fr. Ken Tunny. When the pair returned from California, they began an active propaganda campaign for creation spirituality.

In the spring of 1988, Fr. O'Shaughnessy delivered these addresses on creation spirituality:

Feb. 25th, 1988: Corpus Christi Church, Clifton Park, "The Creation-Centered Spiritual Path: Rediscovering the Tradition."



March 7th, 1988: "Creation Spirituality: A Biblically Based Invitation to Your Own Divinity." This address, and another on March 21st, were delivered at St. John's and Union Presbyterian Church, "the first Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches to form a covenant relationship in the United States."

March 15th, 1988: "How Do You Befriend God? You Give Birth to Your Own Divinity," sponsored by the Peace and Justice Commission.

(That same day, Fr. Charles E. Curran was speaking on "Authority and Dissent in the Roman Catholic Church," at the College of St. Rose.)

March 22nd, 1988: "How Do You Find Salvation? You Expand in Compassion," also sponsored by the Peace and Justice Commission.

When Catholics of the Diocese began to show concern that the Diocese was spreading "alien and hostile forms of Catholicism" in promoting creation spirituality, Fr. O'Shaughnessy criticized the Coalition of Concerned Catholics, saying that its views are similar to those of the establishment Jesus had to face" (*The Record*, Troy, June 23rd, 1988).

The Concerned Catholics were upset for "the same reason Jesus bothers a lot of people. He bothered the establishment and all those that imposed unfair burdens on the people," said O'Shaughnessy.

O'Shaughnessy, now married, is no longer an active priest in the Diocese, though he still is a frequent resource person for the Diocese's Peace and Justice Commission.

Fr. Tunny, who took a sabbatical to Fox's institute with O'Shaughnessy, is now immersed in Native American Indian spirituality.

Another priest, Fr. John DeCaprio has publicly lamented the "distorted view" of the Indians that he grew up with from reading Fr. Francis Talbot's *Saint Among Savages* and other Jesuit records of their encounters with the Indians (*The Evangelist*, April 19th, 1990).

Despite the pace set by Fr. O'Shaughnessy in disseminating New Age Creation Spirituality and his subsequent leave from the priesthood, the Diocese continues to present creation spirituality seminars every month, and seminars on New Age occult practices; in the summer of 1990, Fr. Fox was in the area for a two-week seminar on creation spirituality, at the Omega Center in Rhinebeck.

In a typical month in the Albany Diocese, there are seminars introducing Catholics to the "spirituality" of Fr. Teilhard de Chardin and Fr. Anthony deMello, both Jesuits who, say New Age experts, should be classified with the theosophists.

There are seminars by Sr. Lynn Levo (and others) on reuniting sexuality and spirituality, "psychodramas, a Jungian approach, to recreate the conflicts of the many roles life calls us to play, redefine them and grow toward health and wholeness," programs on Indian spirituality, annulment forums, large selection of stress management programs, and programs on understanding Protestant and Jewish theology.

### **"Restructuring The Church"**

In November, 1982, Fr. Joseph Girzone, author of the immensely popular: "Joshua books," was featured in an article in *The Evangelist* as he put the finishing touches on his book, *Deacons: Permanent or Passing*.

Granted a leave from the priesthood for "health problems," Fr. Girzone told reporter Patricia Crewell that he had 15 books planned, including novels "exploring what Christ would be like were He living just down the block from you today. Next is a life of Christ from the psychological approach with an emphasis on spirituality.

"After that," continued Crewell, "will be a book on what the author calls restructuring the Church."

In 1983, Fr. Girzone was quoted by *The Schenectady Gazette*, asking why Jews and Catholics can't belong to each other's congregations.

"Nowhere in the Gospels does it show that Jesus ever intended to start a new religion or break with Judaism."

According to the *Gazette*, "Girzone suggested that the current pluralism in the Catholic Church which includes Catholics as communicant members who disagree with Catholic teachings, such as birth control, abortion, Papal infallibility, could also be extended to involve non-Catholics who embrace only some Catholic teachings. . . .

"The priest charged that the upper-level authorities of the various denominations and religions by their 'superficial' concern for doctrinal 'purity' were impeding the promising ecumenical movement of their less doctrinally conscious members."

In December, 1989, now experiencing national popularity and acclaim, Fr. Girzone opened a talk at St. Francis Hospital in Miami with this statement:

"It's amazing. Practically anybody that has had anything to do with "Joshua" seems to be Jewish. . .incredible. We've all become the best of friends. It's amazing. Peter Ginsburg contacted Macmillan, and the upper echelon people at Macmillan are all Jewish. And they've all read 'Joshua.' Totally committed to the book personally."

### A Frequent Guest Homilist

A year later, he told Paul Grondahl of *The Albany Times Union* that it has been four years since he has seen Bishop Hubbard.

"Our paths just don't cross anymore," he said.

This past Advent, however, he was a speaker at the parish staffed by Bishop Hubbard's judicial vicar, Fr. Anthony Diacetes, who told *The Times Union* there were no canonical problems with Fr. Girzone's heretical writings.

Girzone is a frequent guest homilist at parishes in the Diocese, and maintains a heavy speaking and retreat-leading schedule in diocesan retreat and prayer centers, where he offers his "new sense of Jesus."

In a retreat given July 28th—30th, 1989, Fr. Girzone told Catholics:

The Holy Spirit's main obstacle to freeing people from authority and law is the clergy, which is too rigid and law-oriented;

There are no scriptural or theological prohibitions that should stand in the way of ordaining women, and, that, just as Christ didn't condemn slavery, didn't mean the Church shouldn't, so Christ's failure to ordain women, doesn't mean the Church shouldn't;

As we get away from literal understandings of the Gospels, we can better understand the message of Christ;

The birth control will not be a problem in the in 50 years "because the way things are tending . . .the trending in the whole theology is that even the Popes will not make a definitive statement regarding birth control, because there is nothing in Scripture or Tradition that we can use as a basis for making a *de*

*fide* statement. The majority of theologians are opposed to what the Vatican bureaucracy is saying";

The "current traditionalist reaction is a last gasp, since they're threatened by the new sense of Jesus";

The Church is responsible for more evil than the civil authority;

The Vatican is paying too much attention to Catholics who write letters complaining about what is happening to the Church in the United States; and

When he was ordained a priest, he did not believe in God, and suffered through 10 or 12 years of a deep, over-whelming depression.

Among the various retreat centers where Fr. Girzone frequently speaks is Pyramid Life Center at Pyramid Lake, N.Y., in the Adirondack Mountains.

### "Rather Simplistic"

In June, 1988, the Coalition of Concerned Catholics in Albany began a public campaign to inform Catholics of the danger to the faith they might suffer if they attend Pyramid Life Center, and other prayer centers, especially Stillpoint and Abba House.

Attorney F.C. Robert Hollman was the spokesman for the group, as it tried to alert Catholics in Albany that creation spirituality was based on disbelief in original sin and, subsequently, Catholics didn't need a Redeemer.

Hollman told reporters creation spirituality was being investigated by the Vatican. Then-Chancellor Fr. Michael Farano retorted, "Because it's under study by Rome, they are saying it is guilty until proven innocent." He added that the coalition is being "rather simplistic by judging something of this nature through broad strokes of condemnation.

"Maybe the works are under study by Rome," added Farano, "but it's up to Church authorities to decide. The responsibility for permitting this or not permitting this does not lie with Hollman."

A few weeks later, the Albany Diocese responded to the coalition's appearance with a public statement published on the front page of *The Evangelist* which stated: "No authorization has been given for the formation of a new, official apostolate entitled the Coalition of Concerned Catholics in the Albany Diocese. . . (and) the Bishop's office will not respond to matters brought to its attention by the coalition, as coalition, because it does not enjoy the mandate of the

Bishop to so function.”

### **“Oh, That's Semantics”**

“It would take volumes and volumes to tell about everything that is going on in Catholic education,” Mrs. Vicinanza told *The Wanderer*.

Since 1978, Catholics in Albany have written hundreds of letters and voiced their concern over the use of certain catechetical materials, especially the series published by the Sadlier Company and William C. Brown.

Layman Robert McCauley, an economist at a local college, doesn't remember the precise date, but recalls a meeting he had with Bishop Hubbard, with another layman, Stuart Gudowitz, over religion texts used by ninth and tenth grade students, Brown's *Challenge*.

The ninth grade text in question taught that homosexual activity could be morally neutral, and the 10th grade text taught homosexual activity could be a positive moral action.

“First, the Bishop denied that it was even in the book, so we showed him. He pushed it away. Then he said, ‘Well, homosexual activity could be just holding hands, couldn't it?’

“I remember Stu Gudowitz telling the Bishop he was concerned about the teaching that Christ was a human person. The Bishop replied that Christ *was* a human person. Stu got excited and said, ‘Oh, no, Christ was a divine person with a human nature.’ The Bishop replied, ‘Oh, that's semantics.’ Stu said, ‘Oh no. That's the foundation of every major heresy’.”

While it is the common view of Catholics contacted by *The Wanderer* that orthodox Catholicism will not be tolerated in the remaining Catholic schools, and adult religious education programs, there is also the view that New Age religious beliefs are being pushed through with fanaticism.

### **“Why Do You Feel This Way?”**

Mary Kircer recalls an incident when she had children in a Catholic school.

She was concerned about “conflict resolution” programs recommended by the Diocese for all grades (K-6) at Holy Spirit School in East Greenbush, N.Y.

Objecting to a program on values clarification taught by Sr. Marie Vianney that undermined the con-

cept of absolute moral values; replacing them with psychological values clarification techniques, she talked to the principal of the school, who responded, “Why? Why do you feel this way? I assumed everything was all right. If it comes from the Diocese, it must be all right.”

“Students in the Catholic schools,” said Kircer, “are taught that all the Catholic truths are myths, and all the myths are truths. They study dreams; they have intensive journaling, death imagining: the schools and the counseling centers are specializing in New Age programs.”

### **A Key To Understanding**

As the Diocese continues promoting New Age beliefs and practices, and Catholics encounter them in parish bulletins, church services, retreat centers, and Catholic newspapers, many Catholics are educating themselves on the history of the New Age. They are circulating writings of major theosophists, thinking this will provide a key to understanding what is happening in Albany.

One item in circulation is an excerpt from theosophist Alice Bailey's *Problems of Humanity*, published in 1947 by the Lucis Publishing Co., a major theosophist publishing house (formerly called Lucifer Trust).

Bailey foresaw the time when men will rise up out of the churches to free them of their narrow doctrines “which hold the people in mental prison. . . .

“Let them have courage and cheer, optimism and joy, for the forces of evil have been greatly weakened and the masses of men are rapidly awakening to the true spiritual values. . . .

“The Church will then proclaim that men can draw near to God, not through the mediation, absolutism, and the intercessory work of any priest or churchman but by right of man's inherent dignity. . . .

“The structure of the New World Religion is being raised by the dissenting groups within the institutional churches, by the many world groups who present the concept of God immanent. . . (and) through the techniques of meditation whereby soul-awareness (or the Christ-consciousness) can be achieved. Prayer has been expanded into meditation; desire has been lifted into mental aspiration.”

### **A Difficult Process**

When Bishop Howard Hubbard became Bishop, he made it clear that he was going to change

the Diocese of Albany. Reflecting this year with journalist Tim Beidel on change, he said:

“You can change yourself with some degree of difficulty. But then to change families, to change a parish, to change a Diocese, to change the nature of the Church Universal, each of those steps becomes a much more difficult process.”

Despite the difficulties, he remains devoted to the process of change.

### ***Bishop Hubbard Announces New Plan To Determine Parish “Viability”***

—*Severe financial pressure on parishes raises question: “Where’s all the money going?”*

“Fasten your seatbelts. The stewardship teams are coming,” said Catholic layman Paul Kerin upon reading the news in *The Evangelist* that the Albany Diocese had issued a “new strategic plan intended to help churches.”

“We’re going to have ‘Hudson revisited’ all over this Diocese,” he added.

A deacon told *The Wanderer*, “The Bishop has killed the schools, he has killed the laity, now he is killing the churches.”

A new study issued by the Diocese, *Our Faith and Our Future: Guidelines for Parish/Pastoral Planning*, which allegedly will help parishes determine if they are vital and viable, was reported in the March 14th edition of *The Evangelist*.

According to *The Evangelist*, the study is the fruit of three years’ work by a 16-member committee that went through 11 previous drafts and was reviewed by 800 people. The planning paper is an outgrowth of Bishop Hubbard’s 1988 Pastoral Letter, *We Are God’s Priestly People*.

Again, according to *The Evangelist*, parish vitality and viability will be determined not only by the number of parishioners or by its fiscal health, but “according to the number of parishioners who contribute to the annual Bishop’s Appeal.”

Assistant editor David Scott reported that the new planning document “establishes criteria for evaluating the ‘recent status and future viability’ of parishes according to how they stack up against the mean of parishes in their category, be it urban, rural,

or suburban. For example, urban parishes which fall 40% below the mean of 644 contributors would be evaluated, as would those rural parishes which fall 50% below the mean of 275 contributors, and suburban parishes which fall 60% below the suburban mean of 1,052.

“Previous studies by the diocesan Stewardship Office have shown that only one-third of the 175,000 Catholic families in the Diocese are supporting the Church financially,” wrote Scott.

“Ninety percent of the families in the Diocese give less than 1 % of their income to their parish and no money to support the Diocese.”

### **“The Mission Of The Church”**

According to Fr. Randall Patterson, spokesman for the Bishop, “These recommendations are being sent to the local communities in the spirit of helping them to address the areas that have been identified as being needed to further the vision and mission of the Church as outlined in Bishop Hubbard’s Pastoral Letter, *We Are God’s Priestly People*.”

Sr. Nola Brunner told *The Evangelist* that no timetable had been set for parishes to comply with the new guidelines, but she hoped that parishes will make “every effort to begin implementing the recommendations as soon as possible.” She told *The Albany Times Union* that even parishes with healthy finances might find themselves falling short of what is necessary for viability.

In addition to the financial criteria established to help parishes determine how long they will remain open, there are also aids to measure the “quality of parish spiritual life.”

A parish must have “effective prayer and worship,” which seeks “to draw all members of the parish community into the ministry of worship, with the presider enabling the ministry of the total community.

“Included in the prayer life of a vital parish,” wrote Scott, “are good ecumenical and interfaith relations, a sensitivity to the inclusion of both males’ and females’ experiences in prayers and liturgical language, and the presentation of peace and justice themes as a basic component of prayer and worship.”

Viable parishes will also have “a number of

catechists appropriate for the number of parishioners"; will be a contributor to the parish school, and if none exists, a contributor to the regional Catholic school; will make *The Evangelist* available to every family; will "make budget provisions for a 'comprehensive Christian service agenda'," and will "have in place viable Church administration techniques and procedures."

*The Evangelist* did not disclose that every parish with more than 300 families has to hire a nun as a "pastoral assistant," and must pay for her apartment, buy her a car, provide her a salary, and also hire a full-time religious education coordinator.

"I can't afford that," said a priest, already crushed by parish assessments that amount to 28% of "everything that comes in on Sunday," and almost one-third of all money raised in the parish. This includes money from suppers, bazaars, craft shows, and other fund-raising projects.

The Bishop also demands one-third of all money raised for parish heat funds and building projects, according to a layman familiar with parish finances.

"If my priest gets an estimate from a roofer that it's going to cost \$10,000 to repair the roof of the church, he has to raise \$15,000 so that the Bishop can get his cut. Most parishes here have special collections each month during the winter for their anticipated heat bills. Priests have to figure not only how much the cost to heat the church will be, but also how much they will have to pay the Bishop.

"I wish I had somebody with the expertise or the time to find out where all the money is going," he said.

### **A Terrible Problem**

According to a lawyer who has prepared many wills for Catholics who wanted to leave money to the Diocese, there are even more serious problems in the diocesan financial picture.

He said there are people who want to leave a lot of money to their parishes to ensure their financial stability, but they are unwilling to give because they fear their parishes will be closed, and the Bishop will just take the money. People want to stipulate that their money will be used in their parishes, but they can't get that guarantee.

"A much worse problem," the lawyer said, "is that there are some people who want to leave humongous amounts of money to their parish when they die, for Masses to be said for their souls over the years.

"People are discouraged from having Masses said after they die, because, they are told, it causes too many bookkeeping problems. They are told to just give the money to the Bishop.

"It's a terrible problem," he continued. "In the Bishop's vision, we won't be having any Masses in the future, because we won't have any priests. This Diocese really discourages Masses."

One priest contacted by *The Wanderer* because he is reputed to have a great understanding of the financial situation of the Diocese — and a priest who has nothing but the highest personal regard for Bishop Hubbard — said that if it were not for wills and estates, "This Diocese would be in a lot of trouble."

He has no idea how the Church in Albany can continue to exist, even apart from its financial problems.

"Go to Mass," he said. "There are no young people. All you see are gray heads. Even the people who go to Catholic schools now do not go to Mass. Do you think they will be going when they graduate?"

### **The Answer Is In**

In February, 1980, Bishop Hubbard wrote, "Standing on the threshold of another decade, one cannot help but wonder what shape religious development and response will take as we rush toward the second millennium."

The answer is now in, say many Albany Catholics: There will be no priests, no Masses, and no churches.

### **Part VII**

#### ***The Establishment of Woman-Church***

*"This Diocese is against men" — Joanne Clough.*

The dissolution of the Catholic Church in

Albany has been faithfully chronicled by The Albany *Times Union* and by the other major newspapers that serve the Capital District.

Even though Bishop Howard Hubbard is referred to as “our Bishop” by the editor of the *Times Union*, Harry Rosenfeld, and praised as a “valiant leader who has moved mountains,” who “stays close to the people and hears their voices,” the *Times Union* presents an image of the Catholic Church in an advanced state of decay.

A Feb. 3rd, 1991 story in the *Times Union* told of a girl who was an A student at a Catholic high school, where she became a sex addict. Among her partners were three priests.

A Feb, 4th, 1991 story told about the spread of New Age beliefs through: Saratoga Springs. Last year alone, three new New Age shops opened there. “It’s a necessity — people are looking for something,” said Pat Lewis. In New Age, “You have all the answers.”

Almost exactly two years earlier, the *Times Union* ran a story on the large number of Catholics who are migrating to cults. John T. Biermans, raised a Catholic, joined the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon because, he said, the Catholic Church didn’t answer his questions about how to stop the moral decay in society.

“The Unification Church,” said Biermans, “gives very logical and powerful explanations, so it helps people to resist temptations.”

“Most of our people were Catholic at one time,” said Adra W.S. Lovley, director of a fundamentalist church. “And a great many people in Capital District fundamentalist churches were once Catholic.”

Other stories indicate the breakdown of the Catholic Church, such as the large increase in satanic activity in the Albany Diocese.

When a rash of satanic activity broke out in the Albany area in the spring and summer of 1989, the Diocese of Albany responded by saying in *The Evangelist* that much of the reporting was “media overkill” and that experimenting with Satanism “is to be expected” of teens, who are trying to deal with boredom.

“While the Catholic Church that could keep the Devil at bay and provide moral direction to society is allowed to disintegrate,” said one priest,

“Bishop Hubbard continues to promote his Woman-Church.”

Another priest said that the Bishop’s commitment to the feminist agenda “is the most serious problem in the Diocese. It explains everything: the planned extinction of priests; the promotion of lesbianism and homosexuality in Catholic schools; the corruption of Catholic education by feminists in the religious education department and his sex education programs; the violation of norms of the annulment process; the serious liturgical abuses. . . . It even explains the Diocese’s precarious financial predicament, in part.”

(In one convent alone, reported a layman who was shown the convent’s finances, there was an annual car rental bill of \$180,000 for the nuns, “and that didn’t even include gas and oil. These nuns had a beautiful motherhouse, but they all had their own apartments in Albany, and expensive clothing bills. If the people ever found out how much the nuns are spending to maintain their lifestyles, they’d stop giving.”)

Bishop Howard Hubbard had not been Bishop a year when, in January, 1978, an article by Sr. Mary Ann Walsh appeared in *The Evangelist*, reporting on the many women Religious in the Albany Diocese studying in various Protestant and Catholic seminaries. This was in the hope that “they will someday be ordained for priesthood in the Church.”

Sr. Caroline Wales, R.S.M., said their background and degrees will make them “equals, not adjuncts, on any ministry team.”

Sr. Walsh also reported that it is necessary for the Diocese to have nuns study for the priesthood because “with a declining number of priests to minister to the Church” trained nuns will be able to relieve priests “for more full-time service in the preaching and teaching of the Word and sacraments.”

In February, 1979, Bishop Hubbard told students representing Catholic schools that “I don’t think the argument that ‘if Jesus wanted women priests, He would have ordained them’ is valid. In Jesus’ social context, that would’ve been as impossible to do as to fly an airplane.”

“In terms of opportunities for women in the Church,” said Bishop Hubbard in his December, 1980 *Message of Love* to the Diocese, “I think there’s more and more recognition today that the role of women in the Church has been too long ignored, rejected., for-

gotten.”

He also said that women’s ordination is a “major theological question” and “not a closed question.” He added, “Even if theologically we had come to some consensus. . . I think we also need a sociological consensus around the issue. Otherwise we could split the Church.”

In February, 1991, Bishop Hubbard again stated that he supported ordaining women as deacons, as a first step to women priests. Despite the lack of ordination, however, in the past ten years he has given women a tremendous amount of power to reshape the local church.

In 1990, nuns dominated the chancery offices, directing the Prayer and Worship Office (formerly liturgy), Religious Education, Vicar for Religious, Peace and Justice, Campus Ministry, Catholic Charities, and they fill key positions in other offices, including the Vocations Office and seminarian evaluation programs.

“The Bishop feels very bad that he cannot ordain women,” said one priest, “so that is why he lets them have so much power in the Diocese, and why he places so many as pastoral assistants or administrators at parishes. It really is the nuns who have all the power here.”

### **The Views Of Students**

The campaign for women priests is carried out at every level of the local church. In *The Evangelist*, described by Bishop Hubbard as a “major source of ongoing adult religious education and faith formation,” the views of Catholic students are frequently aired, offering a revealing view of the education they are receiving.

Typical of the way students are enlisted as change agents is a Nov. 10th, 1988 interview with six Catholic young people, who were asked what they would do if they were the Pope.

Two called for married priests, three called for women priests, and one wanted to “change the Church’s image of being contradictory.”

Two weeks later, 13-year-old Meg O’Connor wrote an essay offering her “viewpoint.” She said that if she were Pope, she would have women priests.

She asserted that “women have just as good leadership qualities as men and should be given the opportunity to use them. I think that Jesus would have given them the opportunity to become priests.”

She also said that if she were Pope, she would not “stress so much on the negative to try to scare people because that does not work in our society today.” A few weeks later, another student criticized the Pope.

### **“Sexist Attitudes”**

In June, 1988, as the Diocese began its Women’s Listening Sessions, Baltimore Auxiliary Bishop P. Francis Murphy spoke at St. John the Baptist Church in Schenectady, and decried the sexism that is “within the structure of our Church and society.

“Sexism is a moral and social evil. We are called to recognize that sexist attitudes have colored Church teachings and practice over the centuries and still in our day.”

He made an urgent call for the ordination of women, saying, “We need to open both eyes to discover what God is showing us about the role of women in our time. For the Church to look exclusively to its past teachings for its current policies is futile.”

Throughout 1988, 1989, and 1990, as the Diocese conducted hearings on the women’s Pastoral, the propagandizing for women priests, the ending of “sexist language” in the liturgy, and Church acceptance of birth control were a constant activity in diocesan structures.

The Albany Diocese’s Women’s Commission was chaired by Sr. Nola Brunner, C.S.J., the co-vicar for Religious. She has subsequently been appointed vicar.

On August 15th, 1990, she met with seven members of the orthodox group Women Concerned for the Faith. The group expressed concern that the structure set up by the Diocese represented radical feminists in the Church who were more concerned with changing the teachings of the Church and introducing goddess worship than with promoting the teachings of the Church.

Sr. Nola was asked what is being done to teach the apostolic letter of Pope John Paul II on the dignity of women.

Sr. Nola responded that the women’s commission was too busy with the Bishops’ Pastoral on Women to do anything on that.

The Consultation Center of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany is described as a



“nonprofit mental health center which provides therapeutic services within a Christian environment, respecting the unity of body, mind, and spirit.”

Directed by Fr. John J. Malecki, it is a major teaching center for the doctrine of self-fulfillment, New Age meditation programs, and feminist ideology.

The Consultation Center was criticized by nearly every priest and layman with whom *The Wanderer* spoke. They related a number of outrageous incidents that occurred at the center.

One concerned a mother of five children who had been married for over 20 years. She was passing through a “mid-life” crisis, and sought counseling at the center.

When she arrived, she was told to write a biography of her life up to the time she walked through the door of the Consultation Center. The woman was then to visualize how she would like the rest of her life to be.

She was told that if she wanted to leave her family, the Diocese would help her find a job, an apartment, and would help her through the time of change. With coaxing like that, she left her family.

Among the program leaders at the center is Pearl Mindell, who leads seminars on “Old and New Images of the Feminine and Masculine.”

“We begin by examining dominant archetypes in our Judeo-Christian and Western mythologic tradition. Dominant masculine archetypes such as Sky, Father, King, and Hero, and feminine archetypes such as Earth Mother and Temptress will be translated into behavioral psychological and spiritual effects. We then look at myths, religion, and culture that introduce us to new configurations of feminine and masculine. We will do this by:

“1) Reconnecting with sacred stories that tell of the goddess as mistress of heaven, earth, the underworld and the life cycle from birth, death, rebirth; and the God as earth father, lord of animals, nature, and ecstatic life.

“2) Looking at the necessary interplay between feminine and masculine energies (irrespective of our gender and sexual orientation) for wholeness and creative life such as Shiva and Shakti and Yang/Yin.

“3) Working in practical ways to translate and integrate these transpersonal energies into our

everyday life. We will look at the tensions and conflict such changes evoke as well as the freedom and greater connectedness with our true selves that is possible.”

### “A Meditation Park”

According to Joanne Clough, the Diocese of Albany is also waging a war against the family in its promotion of feminism.

“I went to a four-part program by Fr. Ken Tunny on liberation theology, and the point he kept making is that ‘we’re not going to have the kinds of families we now have in the future. We’re going to have “seed families,” in which there is no paternalism, no authority figure’.”

In early 1991, she went to Stillpoint House, run by Sr. Sylvia Rosell, a “meditation park” that helps people become “aware of their relationship to mother earth.”

“I was really afraid to go,” Mrs. Clough told *The Wanderer*, “because I’d heard so many terrible stories. . .how they try to break up families.

“Sr. Sylvia is into liberation theology, and I think she wanted to liberate me from my family.”

Mrs. Clough attended a regular “Mini-Days of Recollection for Mothers and Care-Givers” at Stillpoint, and sensed that something was wrong when she discovered the Blessed Sacrament shortly after arriving. There was no tabernacle, but only a little silver box with a white cloth and crushed bread crumbs on top. “I was aghast,” she said.

After Sr. Sylvia guided the women through various meditation techniques, she singled out Mrs. Clough, and took her into a small room.

“She asked me many personal questions, about me and my relationship with my husband and my children, and she was trying to tell me how to act, even going so far as to say that if I didn’t feel like getting out of bed in the morning, I shouldn’t.

“She wanted me to break a routine that has worked for me in raising nine children. What was really strange is that I was the only one she tried to counsel. She just picked me out of the group.

“After that, we had more meditation, and Sr. Sylvia led us through breathing techniques, and then told us to let anything out of us that we wanted. If we wanted to blame God, go ahead, blaspheme God. It was horrid.

"She said the Bible was just a story, and we all have our own stories. The whole thing made one's whole being shake, and all I could think was I want to get out of here," she recalled.

"It took me three days of silence and prayer before the Blessed Sacrament to get over the ill effects of that retreat," said Mrs. Clough.

### **"A Transparent Instrument"**

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, the order that "put Sr. Anna Roberta Benson through hell," is a feminist powerhouse in the Diocese of Albany. An invitation announcing a celebration marking the temporary profession of Sr. Peggy Ann Hoerburger in May, 1985 had on its cover a detailed sketch of a woman's sex organs, with a circle of women dancing around the opening of the vagina.

The Rite of Profession was imbued with the creation spirituality of Fr. Matthew Fox.

Fr. John Schopfer read the "examination":

"Patricia, from the beginning of time, you share in the cosmic hospitality of Original Blessing. Through the Blessing at Baptism, you partake in the guesting (creating) of the banquet of faith. Blessing is the basic power of life itself. . . .

"The Spirit calls you to commit yourself. . . to direct the whole of your being with a vital intensity to God in prayer and love, making yourself available and free to share Her work of bringing all persons to harmony and resolution, freedom and oneness in Her. . . ."

Professing her vows, Sr. Patricia prays that she will become "a transparent instrument through which Your Creative Energy flows."

### **A Total Lack Of Faith**

No report of the feminist domination of the Diocese of Albany could be complete without noticing the significant role played by the College of St. Rose in the promotion of homosexuality.

"I pray every day to St. Rose of Lima that St. Rose will close," Lorraine Griesemer told *The Wanderer*.

Mrs. Griesemer, a graduate of the college, and the mother of ten children, described in sad detail how her children lost their faith while students at St. Rose, and how the school, with its large homosexual student population is in the vanguard of homosexual

liberation in the Capital District.

In the spring of 1990, Monica Grant, a "lesbian comic, singer, and songwriter" was a guest at the college for a "benefit" for the Statewide Lesbian and Gay March on Albany.

Her visit was followed by the appearance of Mary Daly, a radical feminist who espouses witchcraft. Her talk was "Be-Witching: Recalling the Courage to Sin."

The director of campus ministry at St. Rose is Fr. Thomas Berardi, who has signed every dissenting document carried in the national press, and who is outspoken in the local press about his defense of homosexuality and birth control. "Something even more disturbing than that," said a priest, "is the total lack of faith. They're not Catholic there. What they teach is against everything the Church and Pope John Paul II teach. They're gone. They don't believe."

Reflecting on the domination of the Albany Diocese by the feminists, the same priest said, "The Bishop insists that feminists be in charge."

According to Robert Griesemer, chairman of Schenectady Right-to-Life, that decision, has "financially and spiritually bankrupted the Diocese."

## **Part VIII**

### ***Catholic Pro-Lifers Think Bishop's Ecumenical Sensitivity Hurts Cause***

*"Every ecumenical figure he has met with is a flaming pro-abortionist" — Robert Griesemer.*

## **SECTION I**

Members of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics joined on Nov. 19th, 1989 in an ecumenical venture with the Ecumenical Coalition for Life to picket the appearance of Dr. Robert Lamar at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception here. Dr. Lamar was the principal "homilist" at an event celebrating the 25th anniversary of Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism*.

Lamar, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Albany, is the area's most prominent pro-abortion clergyman, and he had just recently initiated an advertisement campaign "to keep abortion safe and legal."

Five members of the Ecumenical Coalition for Life had met with Chancellor Michael Farano and

Fr. James Kane, director of the Diocese's Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, four days earlier. The pro-lifers were seeking to convince them that Rev. Lamar's appearance at the cathedral would cause grave scandal to Albany Catholics, and increase Lamar's prestige in the community.

The position of the chancery was that Rev. Lamar was the most suitable "homilist" because he was a "leader" in ecumenical affairs.

One of those criticizing the choice of Rev. Lamar was Rev. David Ketchen, pastor of the Duanesburg Reformed Presbyterian Church, who asked how the local Catholic Church could make "common cause" with a religious body that held views inimical to all that the Catholic Church teaches.

He pointed out that his own church had broken away from the mainline Presbyterian body not only because of its pro-abortion position, but also because of its rejection of core teachings, such as the divinity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, and the bodily Resurrection of Christ. He also said it seemed strange that most of the Diocese's ecumenical relations were conducted with "leftist-liberal" denominations.

Fr. Kane responded that Bishop Hubbard's ecumenical outreaches to Evangelical and fundamentalist churches were always rejected by members of those bodies who feel hostility to the Catholic Faith.

The dialog with the chancery officials did not lead to the withdrawal of Rev. Lamar's invitation, and Albany Catholics claimed to have one more example of Bishop Hubbard's willingness to accommodate pro-abortion spokesmen.

The coalition said that Lamar's appearance was part of a pattern in the Albany Diocese, where many prominent pro-abortion advocates have been given access to Catholic churches and facilities, while it never sponsored a nationally known pro-life figure.

Lamar's appearance was especially painful to them, they said, because it occurred almost immediately after the American Bishops in Baltimore had agreed to dedicate themselves to giving a more forceful witness against abortion.

### **"A Masterful Politician"**

Bishop Howard Hubbard takes umbrage when he is accused of being soft on the issue of abortion.

In fact, when ex-Jesuit Fr. Joseph O'Rourke, a former priest from Albany and one-time president

of Catholics for a Free Choice, told a television audience in 1980 that Bishop Hubbard "is a supporter of free choice on abortion. He is effectively a neutral voice in public, but behind the scenes he has actively supported the free choice position in New York state," Bishop Hubbard threatened to sue him.

Since 1979, however, Albany area Catholics have publicly complained to the local press about Bishop Hubbard's "softness" on abortion, his close public relations and diocesan involvement with Planned Parenthood, his unwillingness to lobby the State Legislature on the issue or to challenge Gov. Mario Cuomo's position on abortion rights and Medicaid funding, and his reluctance to appear in public at pro-life events.

Robert Griesemer is the chairman of the Schenectady Chapter of New York State Right to Life, the largest anti-abortion group in the Capital District. The father of ten children, he quit his job with AT&T to devote all his time to the pro-life cause. He has no doubt the Bishop has put abortion on "the back burner."

"I would have to say at the outset that our Bishop does not support abortion," Griesemer told *The Wanderer*, "but I will tell you what I have said on many other occasions.

"I consider Bishop Hubbard to be a liberal Democrat first, and a Catholic Bishop second. That helps explain a lot of things in this Diocese.

"He is a political animal, a masterful politician, a consensus builder. He says he wants to be a Bishop, 'in a circle.' He has an obligation to teach and to do certain things, but he is more concerned with his ecumenical contacts and his friends in high places.

"He has been manipulated and used by ecumenical groups. Every ecumenical figure he has met with is a flaming pro-abortionist. He's batting 1,000.

"Protestant pro-life leaders say to me, 'How much support do you get from your Bishop?,' and I say, 'None.' They are shocked. . . .

"I'd have to compare the Bishop to a lousy parent, one who is afraid to tell a child what's wrong, because the child will not like that. The Bishop is so afraid that people won't like him.

"He hobnobs with Cuomo; he hobnobs with Lamar; he hobnobs with Rabbi Martin Silverman, a board member of Planned Parenthood, and we can't

even get him to give the benediction at our annual right-to-life dinner — the largest event of its kind in the area.”

Because Griesemer publicly complained about Bishop Hubbard’s lack of interest in the abortion issue, he claims that there was an attempt by the Diocese to have him fired from his position with Right-to-Life.

### A Parish Scandal

In 1987, Griesemer had a phone conversation with Chancellor Michael Farano, in which he tried to clarify the reasons Schenectady Right-to-Life would not be allowed to continue putting its newsletters in local churches.

According to Griesemer, “Farano threatened me, saying, ‘If you ever accuse this Diocese of being soft on abortion, I will get you publicly and privately. I will massacre you.’ That’s quote-unquote.”

In April, 1988, Farano wrote a “confidential” letter to Geraldine Oftedahl, chairman of the New York State Right-to-Life Committee, complaining of Griesemer’s “attacks on the Bishop’s pro-life record,” and saying that Griesemer “opposes the Bishop on virtually every stand the Bishop takes.” Farano hoped that she could do something about him.

Griesemer is still in his position with Schenectady Right-to-Life, and in the fall of 1990 he wrote a letter to Bishop Hubbard advising him of a situation in his parish. Two families were publicly supporting a militantly pro-abortion political candidate.

In one family, the husband is both a lector and a eucharistic minister in the parish, and in the other family, the wife is a eucharistic minister. Griesemer first tried to persuade his fellow parishioners that they should not support the pro-abortion candidate. Then he tried to convince his pastor that it was inappropriate for two such visible parish lay people to be publicly perceived as pro-abortion. When these attempts got nowhere, he wrote to the Bishop, asking him to show some strong pastoral leadership to end this scandal in his parish.

Bishop Hubbard responded by saying that he “can well appreciate the difficulty which you present. . . .

“You have validly pointed out one of the serious problems of our times; namely, the obligation we have as Christians to transform every aspect of our

lives in terms of the Gospel. I and those in leadership positions in our Diocese consistently strive not to miss any opportunity to educate people along these lines. . . .”

Griesemer’s response to that letter: “Hubbard is a master at ignoring what you have to say.”

In addition to his pro-life work, Bob Griesemer and his wife Lorraine are leading a campaign to bring Eucharistic Adoration to Schenectady.

“Schenectady leads abortions in the Capital District,” he said, “and we thought that maybe one of the best ways to combat it would be to establish Eucharistic Adoration in our parishes.

“We’re still running into roadblocks. It’s refused by the priests, it’s not promoted by the Bishop. . . . In one parish, we were told it would interfere with the cleaning of the church.”

### SECTION II

“We’re all syncretizing here,” says Tom Coffey of the “ecumania” in the Diocese of Albany.

His files are bulging with news clippings detailing the ecumenical initiatives taken by Bishop Hubbard over the years, and these include the practice of allowing diocesan priests to concelebrate Mass with Protestant ministers, offering Communion to non-Catholics, as well as many well-publicized ecumenical “events” in the cathedral.

There is also the use of the diocesan newspaper, *The Evangelist*, to promote other religions — including Buddhism and Native American spirituality (growing rapidly in the Capital District region) — and to downplay the differences between Catholic and Protestant beliefs.

Interfaith services, not only among Christian churches, but also among other religions, are encouraged.

On Sunday, Oct. 28th, 1990, Bishop Hubbard hosted a “worship service” at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception that opened with a Hindu chant in Sanskrit; involved a rabbi who blew his shofar; permitted a Buddhist monk to drum his prayer; had a reading from the *Koran* by a Muslim; allowed a Christian woman to perform a liturgical dance; and had a prayer from a Protestant minister.

One woman in the audience, a Muslim who had converted from Catholicism, told *The Albany Times Union* reporter covering the event, “I never

expected to see anything like this here.”

Catholics like Tom Coffey are afraid that there will be many more events like that, not only in the cathedral, but in other parish churches, which are officially encouraged to hold ecumenical services throughout the year on various holidays and holy days.

### “Sensitivity”

According to *Rooted in Faith*, the diocesan guidelines for ecumenical relations and education, “interfaith awareness” is to be a regular part of religious education for Albany Catholic children, beginning in the primary grades and extending through high school. The guidelines were published in 1989.

In the chapter on “Etiquette,” under the section on interfaith services, Catholics are advised to be particularly sensitive to others’ beliefs.

For example, in services with Jews, the name of God is not to be mentioned, and Catholics are to avoid saying “Christ,” or invoking the Holy Trinity. Also, Catholics are to make sure no hymns have references to Christ or to the Trinity, and the New Testament should be referred to as the “apostolic writings.”

### “Conflict And Confroliltation”

Bishop Hubbard’s good relations with Jews has been a hallmark of his episcopacy, and a priority since his installation.

In April, 1986, he stunned some Albany Catholics when, at a Palm Sunday service for Catholics and Jews, he blamed the Catholic Church for nurturing anti-Semitism.

Tom Coffey was one of the stunned. Coffey told *The Wanderer* that the Bishop said the Nazi Holocaust was basically a development of Christian attitudes.

“The Nazi Holocaust,” said Hubbard, who later printed his speech in *The Evangelist*, “is known by almost all Christians who find it to be a source of shock, shame, embarrassment, and revulsion. But what is not known, understood, or appreciated by the vast majority of Christians is the tragic history which paved the way for this atrocity. From the beginning of the common era, Jews and Christians have lived in an atmosphere of conflict and confrontation. The *Gospel of John*, for example, witnesses to the bitter opposition that enabled the evangelist to equate ‘the Jews’ with ‘the enemy,’ with little need to make distinctions or to qualify individuals.

“In the second century, Marcion contrasted the God of the Jews with the God of Jesus and pointed out that the Jewish covenant retained flaws that the Christian covenant had transcended, St. John Chrysostom, a Father of the Church, assailed Jews who, he maintained, were attempting to disrupt the unity of the young Christian community.

“Medieval philosophers and theologians intensified the conflict by presenting a vision of divine order wherein everything centered on the person of Jesus. In that vision, Jews and others had no place except as counterpoints to the harmony being promoted.

“Persecutions, therefore, took on a new and deadly vigor. . . and the denial of civil rights and imposed ghettos by Catholic governments through the last century all coalesced to support, at least implicitly, Nazi efforts to eliminate Jews from European society.

“It is imperative, therefore, that Catholics insert the complete and unvarnished record of Jewish persecution into our history books and religion classes, and acquaint ourselves with the systematic degradation of the Jewish people and with the fact that up to 10 million Jews were murdered in the centuries before the Holocaust.

“It is only when this history is understood — a history I must confess I never learned in my 16 years of Catholic school education — that we as Catholic Christians can begin to come to grips with the roots of anti-Semitism and the Church’s complicity with such, and then take the appropriate steps to rid ourselves of this appalling legacy of religious prejudice. . . .”

In April, 1989, it was announced that Bishop Hubbard would be the recipient of the Anti-Defamation League of B’Nai B’Rith’s annual Americanism Award.

“Everything he does in community work is an extension of a lot of work we do,” said Sandra Lee Klein. “It is natural we would commend someone of his caliber. . . .”

In October, 1989, it was made public that the former St. Lawrence Church and rectory across the river in Troy would be converted to a combination synagogue-school.

### “The Pretzel”

Also in 1989, a huge 16-foot iron “sculpture”

called “Portal” officially, but “the pretzel” by others, was erected adjacent to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. It is supposed to signify the historic reconciliation between Jews and Catholics that has taken place in Albany.

Catholics such as Paul Kerin point out that Bishop Hubbard is referred to as “our Bishop” by the Jewish community, and he wonders, considering the state of the Diocese, if these ecumenical outreaches aren’t weakening the faith of Catholics.

“From what I read in the Albany papers, and *The Evangelist*, the Bishop spends a great deal of time in ecumenical activities with Protestants and Jews. This would be a laudable activity as long as the focus is on teaching Jews and Protestants that the Church has the truth.

“When it’s ‘Let’s all be equals,’ and there is no effort at conversion activity or evangelical witness, it seems like a waste of time and causes a reduction of the Faith in the eyes of ordinary Catholics. . . .

“We’re living in an apostate Church here, and our Bishop doesn’t seem willing to teach the Catholic Faith to those who most need it.”

## Part IX

### *The Bishop And His Circle*

*“All the people in key positions are crazy . . . off the wall” – an Albany priest.*

When Bishop Howard Hubbard began his reign over the Diocese in Albany in March, 1977, he was hailed as another St. Ambrose, that Doctor of the Church from the fourth century who is justly famous as a liturgist, as a great moral theologian, who wrote treatises on virginity, and as a defender of the rights of the Church. St. Ambrose insisted that the state had the duty to protect the Catholic Church, and he eloquently preached against the heretics of his time.

The editor of *The Evangelist* stated: “Bishop Howard J. Hubbard would be embarrassed to be compared to Ambrose — or to anyone important for that matter, for humility is deep within his heart. But one can hardly miss the similarities: Ambrose was chosen because he was upright in administration, blameless in character, sterling in piety, tender to the poor.

“These qualities belong also to the ninth Bishop of Albany and explain the universal acceptance — even more the universal excitement —

which has greeted his selection.”

This view of the Bishop as a saint was again expressed to readers of *The Evangelist* when Bishop Hubbard marked his 25th anniversary as a priest, in December, 1988.

His sister’s niece, Caroline Kawola, a student at Bishop Maginn High School, wrote: “The most saintly person I know is Bishop Howard J. Hubbard.”

She revealed how “he has helped the Church and the community in every way he sees fit,” and how he “has the patience of a saint.”

Again, “I think Bishop Hubbard is saintly for all the work, time, and effort he has put into our communities and churches. Bishop Hubbard is definitely a man with enough saintly qualities to go around.”

She also upbraided those who criticize the Bishop for closing schools, saying, “I don’t see these people lending a hand in trying to keep the schools open. . . . Bishop Hubbard is a remarkable man for having the courage to do what his line of work entails.”

In the same special anniversary issue, Valerie E. Dillon (a dissenter from *Humanae Vitae* and a sex-education advocate), then president of the National Association of Catholic Diocesan Family Life Ministers, stated that Bishop Hubbard is “a good man, a holy man, and kind.”

Fr. Michael Farano, then chancellor, wrote that Bishop Hubbard “gives all that is in him to his God and the Son Jesus, whom he loves and serves with a passion.”

### “A Nice Man”

Though not ready to proclaim him a saint, even the Bishop’s most persistent critics give him very high marks for his excellent human relations skills.

Layman Tom Coffey admits, “Bishop Hubbard has always responded to my letters — and I’ve hit him with some real haymakers. He always makes me feel ashamed of myself, he’s so kind to me. After we have a meeting, before I leave, he takes my hands into his own, looks at me with those St. Alphonsus eyes, thanks me for my concerns, and I feel bad for ever questioning his leadership.”

“He is very popular, and the people love him,” says Edward Brietenbach, who with his wife Mildred, coordinated a Marian Tour of the statue of

Our Lady of Fatima throughout the Diocese. "People who meet him once say, 'He's such a nice man,' and the Bishop makes a point of meeting everyone at least once.

"He's a master at the Dale Carnegie method of pleasing people," adds Brietenbach.

When an Albany Catholic calls the Bishop to talk to him about any particular problem, the Bishop will always schedule an appointment. "He'll listen and listen, and let you talk all you want," says a priest, "and then when you're finished, he'll say — if you've been reporting a serious problem — 'Oh, I didn't know that. I'll look into it right away'."

The same priest continues, "The Bishop tries to see as many people as possible, to win them over. At the anniversary Masses for people who have been married 25 or 35 years, he'll take the time to personally greet every person. When he goes to Confirmations, he anoints the students, and talks to every one. He'll make comments to the boys like, 'Oh, you have such big shoulders; you must work out,' or he'll tell the girls how pretty they are."

### A Fantasy World

While Bishop Hubbard wins many with kindness, he has shown his temper at times.

One priest reported that when a lawyer in Albany went to the Bishop to complain about the goings-on at a certain rectory, where he saw a number of priests in various stages of undress chasing each other, the Bishop tartly replied, "What a priest does on his own time is up to him."

There are priests and people who unhesitatingly view Bishop Hubbard as a "charlatan," one who masquerades behind an expression of piety while he destroys the Church.

These Catholics see their Bishop not only as ambitious (upon his designation as Bishop of Albany, Hubbard allegedly told some priests he would only be there a short time, since he would be assigned to Washington, D. C., after Cardinal Baum went to Rome) but also extremely protective of his image as a leader of the Church, of the future.

In the words of another critic, "Bishop Hubbard lives in this fantasy world with himself as the 'boy bishop' who is a great leader. But that image is long gone. He still lives in this world of image, and that is why he becomes so vindictive when anyone spoils that image.

"The reality is that the Bishop has excommunicated himself and he knows it, and if enough people learn the truth of the situation here, he'll just leave. His ego depends on so much approval."

### Survival Instincts

It is often stated that a bishop's chancery is a reflection or an extension of the bishop's personality, carrying out his vision under his direction.

A key to Bishop Hubbard's personality is said to be revealed by looking at the major personalities who work with him in leading the Diocese of Albany.

A key figure is Vicar General Fr. Michael Farano, for many years chancellor of the Diocese. Described as "more Machiavellian than Machiavelli," he is regarded as "the Bishop's hatchet man."

"The Bishop plays the good guy and he lets Farano be the bad guy," said one priest, echoing the views of every other priest and layman contacted for this series.

While "Farano does the dirty work so that the Bishop's image as a kind and gentle leader will not be tarnished," Farano wins praise from many for his "instincts as a survivor."

"If we got an orthodox bishop in here tomorrow," said one Concerned Catholic, "Fr. Farano would be there in his cassock." Viewed as "extremely ambitious," Farano craves the Bishop's miter, and he has just received his first assignment as a parish priest, so that he can have the necessary pastoral experience a candidate for the episcopacy must have.

The judicial vicar is Fr. Anthony Diacetes, a graduate of the North American College, a former president of the American Canon Law Society, who once announced at a public gathering that he wanted to be a bishop. Diacetes is a friend of Fr. Michael Place, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin's theological consultant, and the reputed author of the rejected document *The Many Faces of AIDS*. The two, Diacetes and Place, are known to vacation together.

Diacetes was described by his brother priests as "extremely effeminate," and *The Wanderer* was told by several different sources a story concerning Diacetes and Chancellor Fr. Randall Patterson.

One day Fr. Diacetes showed a picture of a naked Fr. Patterson to persons who worked in the pastoral center. Diacetes boasted that he showed the photo to the Bishop and that Hubbard "thought it was



humorous.”

“When Hubbard gave Diacetes the tribunal,” said another priest, “it was like taking a law school grad and putting him on the Supreme Court.” He is also described as “shallow” and as one “who doesn’t know the law.”

As judicial vicar, he is considered to be instrumental in implementing the Bishop’s view that the indissolubility of marriage is only an “ideal” that the Church proposes.

When Edouard Cardinal Gagnon, then president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, offered some blunt criticisms of the annulment process in the United States, Fr. Diacetes responded by saying, “I think the Vatican is listening to a small, but very vocal, right-wing, radical minority that sees any change as a source and sign of disobedience and lack of tradition.”

The Albany Diocese grants about 320 annulments a year.

Of Fr. Randall Patterson, the Bishop’s spokesman and chancellor, one Catholic said, “It’s hard to judge people, but you wouldn’t have any question about Patterson.”

One priest blamed the effeminate Fr. Patterson for most of the problems the Bishop encountered in Hudson, because Patterson gave the impression that Catholics of the three parishes would have a real chance of keeping their churches open if they could show the Bishop how they would do so, when, in fact, the Bishop knew at the beginning of the process he would close two churches.

The same priest described Patterson as “inept.” “He’s not going to last long in the chancery. . . the source continued. “He’s not doing a good job; he’s too blunt, and he puts his foot in his mouth. He’s going to reveal too much of the truth about how things really operate in this Diocese.”

### **“Purely Accidental”**

Fr. Thomas Powers is Bishop Hubbard’s director of Continuing Education for Clergy, and a close friend of Bishop Hubbard and of Bishop Matthew Clark since their days together at the North American College.

Known as “Tommy,” and “Ma Powers,” he is said “to want to be a bishop so bad he can taste it,” and once told parishioners at St. Agnes Church in Cohoes, “Howie’s a Bishop and Matt’s a Bishop and

I’m going to be a Bishop.”

He was once director of the Casa, the graduate school of the North American College in Rome, and there were reports he would be appointed rector of the North American, but that promotion didn’t develop. Currently, he is a part-time teacher of sacramental theology at Siena College, and one professor said of his teaching, “Any similarity between what the Church teaches and what Tommy teaches is purely accidental.” His fellow priests tell the story that when he studied for his doctorate, he boasted he had a female Polish scholar do his work, and when it came time to defend his thesis, he invited Archbishop Jadot to the hearing.

### **“Toned Down”**

Among the Bishop’s closest friends, though not working in Albany, is Fr. Kenneth Doyle, now stationed with the United States Catholic Conference. Described as a “genuinely nice person” by his fellow priests, he has “toned down” from his earlier radicalism, enjoying many special assignments, including liaison to the New York State Catholic Conference, a stint with the *NC News Service* in Rome, and editor of *The Evangelist* for many years.

Fr. Doyle and Bishop Hubbard have been friends since their earliest years, going back to their days at Mater Christi Seminary. Doyle even flew to Rome for Hubbard’s ordination to the priesthood. In 1978, after Bishop Hubbard made his first *ad limina* visit to Rome, at which time Pope Paul VI made a plea to the New York Bishops to stop the abuses of Communion before First Confession, and general absolution, Fr. Doyle printed in *The Evangelist* nearly the full content of Paul VI’s address, omitting the four sentences from the address in which the Pope called for “vigilance and unity” in dealing with the above abuses.

When asked why, by Tom Coffey in a letter to the editor, Fr. Doyle replied, “These specific comments of the Holy Father were not directed to any abuses within New York.” This answer prompted Coffey to ask, why would “the Pope address strong words about episcopal abuses of which each and every one of them (the New York Bishops) was singularly innocent?”

Doyle is viewed as “someone to be watched, and someone the Bishop will use to advantage.”

He is also viewed as a likely successor to Bishop Hubbard when Hubbard is promoted to an

Archdiocese.

There is Fr. Richard Fragomeni, who travels around the United States speaking to youth groups. On Feb. 14th, 1990 at St. Gabriel's Church in Rotterdam, he told a meditation group that "Jesus was a Christ, but you can't limit Christ to a first century Jew," and he proceeded to lead a kind of seance calling up spirits from the dead.

Another important priest in the Diocese is Fr. Richard Vosko, who for many years has been "on special assignment." Lay Catholics still remember when, years ago, during a 40 hours devotion, he ridiculed the Church's teaching on the Eucharist.

Vosko, in the words of one Catholic, "has lived as a layman for years." He runs his own architectural firm that specializes in renovating Catholic churches.

In 1990, when *The Evangelist* did a profile on him, it was reported he had renovated 170 churches over the past 20 years. In 1990 alone, he had 17 projects in 13 states and two Canadian provinces.

"The liturgical reform may be over," he said, "but the renovation is far from complete."

When Fr. Vosko goes into a parish he is about to renovate, he "educates" people on the changes churches will go through. The communion rail, he points out in places where he is going to remove it, "divided the sanctuary area from the people's area. In another age, it was actually used to keep animals from roaming freely in the churches. The church wasn't just for worship; it was a marketplace and the center of people's lives. There's no requirement for a railing today." Vosko, like many in important positions, is never seen in clerical garb.

And there is Fr. James Rosch, who heads the Scouting Office. Some parents are concerned that a priest with his reputation would be put in such a position.

One of the most important offices in the chancery is Religious Education, which is run by Sr. Danielle Bonetti, C.S.J.

She is viewed as "the most dangerous person the Bishop ever put in that office," and a "bizarre human being."

An advocate of women's ordination, she indicated early how she would run the Religious Education Department by bringing in radical lesbian Mary Hunt.

A concerned parent compared the arrival in a parish of Sr. Bonetti or one of her agents to the arrival of the Huns or the Vandals.

"You work hard to get a religious education program set up and working, and then someone from Religious Education comes here, and it takes two years to undo the damage they do in one afternoon."

One of her staff members is Boingo the Clown, Sr. Gail Rieth, R.S.M. The March 21st, 1991 issue of *The Evangelist* ran a feature article on Boingo, who, when she is not clowning around, is associate director for catechist formation in the Diocesan Office of Religious Education. According to the article which featured a large photograph of her in her costume, she often clowns around at the annual catechetical retreat for diocesan workshop leaders and other work-related functions.

Another prominent nun in the Diocese for many years was Sr. Mary Ann Walsh, for many years a reporter for *The Evangelist*, a contributor to *NC News Service* and to other Catholic magazines, and the TV commentator for Pope John Paul II's 1987 visit to the United States.

In 1980, Sr. Mary Ann Walsh wrote an article for *U. S. Catholic* featuring the views of such Albany priests as Fr. John O'Grady, Fr. Bertrand Fay, Fr. John Bertolucci, and Sr. Margaret Sickels, R.S.M., concerning their views on the Bible.

Her article in *U. S. Catholic* was praised by Ralph B. Shirley in *American Atheist* magazine because it demonstrated that Catholics now agree with atheists that the Bible was written "by ignorant people who knew very little about geography, history, or science," and that the Bible is "fiction."

Another important woman in the Diocese is ex-nun Judith Mazza, C.S.J., who was prominent in Bishop Hubbard's Women's Commission, leading discussions among Catholic women, and propagandizing for birth control and women's ordination.

A former family life coordinator for the Diocese of Syracuse, Sr. Mazza was an early spokesman for SIGMA, the Sisters in Gay Ministry Associated, which was formed to bring lesbian nuns into contact with each other, and to support lesbian nuns still living in Religious communities.

Questions are raised concerning many other priests and nuns, and former nuns, who hold positions in the chancery or serve the Diocese in some capacity.

"All the people in key positions," said one priest who is very knowledgeable about the inner workings of the chancery, "are off the wall. . .crazy. They are unorthodox, and it permeates all their work."

"As long as Hubbard is Bishop, the Diocese is going to get worse, and it is so bad now."

As reported in installment number 4 of this series on the crisis in vocations, a major concern among Catholic laity and especially priests is the quality of seminarians studying for the priesthood for the Diocese of Albany.

There is no doubt that Bishop Hubbard is drawing men from other dioceses who want to serve under him because they share his vision of the Church.

One such candidate is seminarian Desmond Rossi, who was featured April 18th in *The Evangelist's* "Focus on Vocations" section.

Rossi is from Garwood, N.J., and is currently finishing his fourth year of seminary at the Theological College at Catholic University, Washington, D.C.

He told *Evangelist* reporter Liz Urbanski that he wanted to be a priest in Albany "because I wanted to become a part of Bishop Hubbard's vision of Church. I've always been very pleased with Bishop Hubbard — especially his encouragement of people participating in their church, whether the ministry is ordained, lay, or Religious."

"The modern priest," continued Rossi, "is someone who is willing to talk about Christian values in the context of a society which contradicts those values. He is not a moral policeman but someone who walks beside you and helps you in your struggle with your humanity, as he struggles with his own humanity."

Some Albany priests were stunned when the profile of Rossi appeared in *The Evangelist*, because it is widely believed that Rossi was dropped from another seminary allegedly for homosexual activity, and that he chose Albany because his "significant other" was also studying for the priesthood for Albany, at St. Mary's in Baltimore. He is from Arizona.

A layman attended a Cursillo weekend where Rossi was present, and was disturbed by Rossi's explicit defense of his sexual orientation. The layman went to a priest in shock, and asked, "Is this what we're ordaining these days?"

"What is significant," a priest told *The Wan-*

*derer*, "is that in this vocations issue, we're hearing from Desmond Rossi and not from Bishop Hubbard."

Another candidate in training for the Albany priesthood is a man from the New York City area who was once married with children, and who left his wife to pursue a homosexual life-style. After a short time, he decided to become a priest for the Albany Diocese, and was accepted.

Bishop Hubbard's own view on homosexuals in ministry was expressed to *Times Union* reporter Tim Beidel, and printed Feb. 22nd in that Albany paper, "I believe the Church has a responsibility to all its members. . . . I don't think gays or anybody else should be excluded from the ministry. Indeed, I think we have a responsibility to reach out to them with sensitivity and compassion but at the same time I also believe that we have to proclaim the Gospel message as we understand it."

### **Part X - Conclusion** ***The Reporter's Notebook***

"A communicator must remain faithful to the truth," *Communio et Progressio, The Pastoral Instruction on the Means of Social Communication, January, 1971*

Twenty years and a month after the Vatican released the pastoral instruction *Communio et Progressio*, this reporter began writing the series "Agony in Albany."

That document of the Holy See, in many ways a Catholic journalist's handbook, states: "Every citizen is expected to play his part in the formation of public opinion. If need be, he must do this through representatives who reflect his own views. Those who exert influence because of the office they hold or because of their natural talent or for any other reason have an important part to play in the formation of public opinion; they do so whenever they express their views. The greater their quality of leadership, the greater is their responsibility to exert it in this way" (para. 28).

"Agony in Albany" is the story many Catholic laity and many Catholic priests wanted to tell. They think that the Catholic world must know the exceptional and extraordinary situation of the Church in Albany. These Catholics in Albany made available to *The Wanderer* tremendous amounts of information, and it was the reporter's task to condense it for this series. It must be emphasized that this reporter did not

first approach anyone in Albany, nor did he have any reason to “pick on” Bishop Howard J. Hubbard.

### **Exceptionally Well-Organized**

In the fall of 1990, Paul Kerin of the Coalition of Concerned Catholics of the Albany Diocese suggested that *The Wanderer* send a reporter to Hudson, N.Y., to look at the turmoil caused by Bishop Hubbard’s decision to close two of the three Catholic churches in the town.

At that time, he mentioned that the Concerned Catholics of Hudson had put together documentation for their appeal to the Vatican on the situation in the Albany Diocese, and he would send a copy of that same information.

A short time later, two loose-leaf note- books containing about 500 pages each reached this reporter. The material was exceptionally well-organized in categories such as “Abortion,” “College of St. Rose,” “Ecumenism,” “Education,” and “*Humanae Vitae*,” and with press clippings, letters written to the Bishop and his responses, transcripts of radio interviews duly notarized, and correspondence with Vatican officials all arranged in chronological order.

After studying that material, this reporter made the first of two visits to Albany to conduct interviews with members of the coalition and the clergy, either in person or by telephone. Catholics this reporter spoke with were told initially that the story on the situation in Albany would probably run four weeks.

But after interviewing various members of the coalition and receiving well over 1,000 more pages of press clippings and other documentation, as well as hearing reports of situations and conditions in Albany that have not been printed in the local press, it became clear that — to do justice to the entire situation in Albany — an expanded report was necessary.

### **An Objective Manner**

At this time, one of the primary difficulties in writing the proposed series emerged.

The information became too overwhelming, too sickening, too depressing. Spiritual advice was sought. This reporter contacted a Catholic priest and moral theologian with an unsurpassed reputation for holiness, and confessed all the reservations and doubts he had about doing such a story. Almost certainly, he told the priest, the series would be viewed as an attack on a Bishop, the reputations of Catholic officials would be at stake, and the Church in Albany

would be discredited.

The priest was also informed of particulars and the nature of the information in the reporter’s possession, and also something about the sources who supplied it.

The priest’s suggestion was to “tell the truth,” but to do it in an objective manner.

Another difficulty that presented itself was the sheer weight of the evidence. There was too much to assimilate, and too much to organize. The problem of arranging and selecting from over 2,000 pages of information in such a way as to make certain facts readily accessible when the time came to compose the articles, perhaps explains how a few errors slipped through.

### **The Experience Of Many Dioceses**

Before the writing started, this reporter contacted Bishop Hubbard, requesting an interview. It was the intention to inform him of the nature of the information presented to *The Wanderer*, and to obtain his responses.

The Bishop said that he would not permit a telephone interview, but if questions were presented in writing, he would answer them.

Ten questions were presented to him, and he responded within two days.

In response to those questions, on issues covered in previous articles in this series, Bishop Hubbard stated that he believes that “by and large the teaching of the Second Vatican Council has been well-disseminated, implemented, and accepted in the Diocese of Albany,” and that the shortage of vocations to the priesthood is due to factors similar “to the experience of many other dioceses,” and the causes “are well-documented in research conducted by our Bishops’ Conference and other credible research projects.”

Concerning *Humanae Vitae*, the Bishop said, “I have never called into question the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* and have affirmed my adherence to this magisterial teaching both in the diocesan and secular press as well as in numerous talks with parishioners and school groups throughout the Diocese. My commitment to promote the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* is evidenced by the integral way this document is incorporated in our diocesan curriculum on human sexuality, which I approved.”

The Bishop did not, however, supply the

“specific references” indicating his support for *Humanae Vitae*, as requested.

In response to a question concerning his role vis-a-vis Gov. Mario Cuomo as an advocate of abortion, the Bishop supplied two lengthy articles he had previously written.

One question concerned the views lay people have with regard to clerical homosexuality and pedophilia, and his response was that “I do not view clerical homosexuality and pedophilia as a major problem in the Diocese of Albany. We do, however, have a policy and procedure in place developed in accordance with Canon Law to address any issue of clerical misconduct which might arise.”

### **“Almost Universal Approval”**

Concerning allegations made by lay people that members of the Bishop’s official family, and others in leadership positions, dissent from Church teaching, the Bishop replied, “I am not aware that any members of my official family or those in leadership positions in this Diocese have expressed disagreement with official Church teaching.”

Asked if he shared the concern lay people have that the Diocese is promoting forms of Eastern spirituality that are antithetical to Catholic spirituality, the Bishop responded, “The Diocese does not offer programs through its offices which are antithetical to a Catholic Christian understanding of authentic spirituality. . . .”

Regarding liturgical abuses even in his own cathedral, he replied, “I take seriously all reports of liturgical abuse and any allegations which surface in this regard are investigated. In the majority of instances, however, these allegations are not found to be substantiated.”

The last two questions concerned the Albany sex education program and the complaint of lay Catholics that religious texts were defective. The Bishop responded that the Albany Curriculum “has been well-received by parents, pastors, and religious educators,” and that religion textbooks “are the same as those utilized in the majority of dioceses,” and that he receives “almost universal approval for the catechetical thrust in our Diocese.”

It became apparent that Bishop Hubbard sincerely believed that the “crisis situation” described by the Coalition of Concerned Catholics simply did not exist.

### **An Illustration**

With his responses in, it was time to begin writing the articles.

Faced with so much information, a method had to be devised to present it.

Some members of the coalition suggested that the key to understanding Bishop Hubbard is to read Pope Pius X’s encyclical on Modernism, *Pascendi*, and to describe his actions and statements in light of what Pius X wrote.

Another member suggested that the series be composed in light of the Code of Canon Law, with different articles illustrating what Canon Law says about bishops, priests, laity, the sacraments, and so on, and compare those to what is happening in Albany.

Both of those suggestions were rejected on the basis that a journalist (with some exceptions) is not an expert in Canon Law or theology, and such a proposed analysis should be left to an expert.

It was decided that the best approach would be to take material that has appeared in print (except for the installment on the Crisis in the Priesthood), and to place the comments of various Albany Catholics in the appropriate places, to flesh out the narrative.

This report on Albany would have been vastly improved if many of those priests and lay people who spoke with *The Wanderer* would have allowed their names to be used, but they simply would not allow that. The Bishop’s “viciousness and vindictiveness” has made him a power to be feared. One story illustrates why.

When Sr. Anna Roberta Benson was being “put through hell” after the Vicinanzo trial, retired Bishop Edward Maginn tried to intercede on her behalf with Bishop Hubbard. According to several sources, Bishop Hubbard retaliated.

At the time, Bishop Maginn was very old and feeble, and required the assistance of a younger priest to help him dress and to hold him while he celebrated Mass. Hubbard reassigned the young priest, leaving Bishop Maginn to complain, “The Bishop has taken away my legs and my eyes.” He was rendered unable to say Mass.

The case of Sr. Anna Roberta herself, also testifies to a persecutor’s “mean streak”; there are other similar stories as well.

## Calm And Mild Mannered

A note on sources: In addition to clergy, the Catholic lay people consulted for this series would be considered by any Catholic as credits to their Faith. Most, if not all, attend Mass daily, make use of the Church's sacraments and devotional aids, are well-informed concerning Church matters, know and understand the teaching of the Church (including Vatican II), and tend to be well-educated and professional people. Most importantly, they all strive for holiness.

They are not fanatics, nor are they "bizarre." The lay people *The Wanderer* spoke with also tend to have many friends among the clergy and Religious in Albany and in other dioceses, and they have contacts in the Church, even at the highest levels in Rome. In fact, their greatest source of frustration is that they are convinced that Vatican officials at the highest level are well-informed of the "Agony in Albany," but that Bishop Hubbard is protected from critics and from correction.

Neither are the critics "mean-spirited." The Catholics *The Wanderer* spoke with are extremely calm and mild mannered, and they pray daily, sometimes for hours, "that the Bishop will be converted."

They cringe when articles in the secular press quote diocesan officials and priests and nuns in prominent positions (especially in local colleges) denying every Catholic teaching on faith, doctrine, and morals. They shiver in horror at well-publicized sacrilegious liturgies.

"Agony in Albany" is their story. Bishop Hubbard enjoys a favorable press in Albany. He is greatly admired by the liberal media there; all his actions are applauded, his detractors are ridiculed or ignored, and the decline of the Church in Albany — so accurately chronicled by the same liberal press — is presented as a positive development.

## Serving The Truth

Putting this story together has been an agony for the writer, but despite that, every effort has been made to maintain professional objectivity.

The facts speak for themselves. If it is alleged that the series has been a "propaganda campaign" against the Bishop of Albany, *Communio et Progressio* provides the best response:

"The process of promoting what is some-

times called a 'propaganda campaign' with a view of influencing public opinion, is justified only when it serves the truth, when its objectives and methods accord with the dignity of man, and when it promotes causes that are in the public interest. These causes may concern either individuals or groups, one's own country, or the world at large."

## A Note About

### The Coalition Of Concerned Catholics

The Coalition of Concerned Catholics in the Albany Diocese (CCCAD) is an independently formed lay-apostolate founded in 1988. Our goal is to help Catholics living in the Albany Diocese learn more about the authentic teaching of the Holy Catholic Church (through our newsletter, informational forums, etc.). We also seek to keep local Catholics informed of their rights and obligations within the Church. The overall emphasis of the CCCAD is obedience to our Holy Father the Pope and fidelity to the Sacred Magisterium of the Universal Church.

The "Agony in Albany" series provides a painful, yet necessary, reminder of the challenge facing all faithful Catholics living the Albany Diocese. We look forward to hearing from like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ who can help us meet this challenge.

We offer ourselves and the work of our apostolate to Our Lord Jesus Christ, through the hands of His Holy, Immaculate, and Ever-Virgin Mother, Mary, to whom our Diocese, as well as our apostolate, is dedicated.

If you wish to contact The Coalition of Concerned Catholics in the Albany Diocese write: P.O. Box 13-532, Albany, N.Y., 12212-3532 / or call 1-518-477-4329 / email: cccad@capital.net.

For extra copies of this newsletter to hand out at your Albany parish send \$1.25 per copy plus postage to:

**Roman Catholic Faithful, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 109, Petersburg, Illinois 62675-0109

Phone: 217-632-5920 / Fax: 217-632-7054  
[www.rcf.org](http://www.rcf.org)



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**P.O. BOX 219 NORTH BENNINGTON VERMONT 05257-0219**  
**802-447-7504 FAX 802-442-6620**



**Rev. Edward Howard, S.J., Pastor**

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

The **CONFIRMATION RETREAT** takes place on April 2, 3 and 4. This is Palm Sunday weekend. A retreat is mandated for those who are to be confirmed. Please keep these young people in your prayers as they experience this retreat.

**FISH FRY**, Friday, March 26 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Bennington Firehouse on River Street, Bennington. The cost is \$6.00 which includes fish, french fries, cole slaw, beverage and dessert. Take out orders will be available by calling 379-6433 and if necessary they will deliver. The Sacred Heart School Playground Improvement Fund benefits from your help.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS IN THE COMPANY OF CLOWNS**, a unique and uplifting Lenten prayer experience, presented by Clown Ministry Associates takes place at Immaculate Conception Church, Main Street, Hoosick Falls, NY on Friday, April 2nd at 7 p.m. Clowns have the ability to touch the hearts and souls of people of all ages. This experience is designed to appeal to everyone, from the oldest to the youngest, as well as those in between. **COME ONE, COME ALL!**

**TAIZE SERVICE** - Tuesday evening, April 6 at 7 p.m. Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Church. Participating in the Taize style, enables those who attend, to become "invited to the living springs of the Gospel" through song, meditation and prayer. Everyone is welcome.

**MEDITATION GROUP** will meet on Wednesday, March 31 and April 14 at 4 p.m. Call 442-3632 for more information.

The **YOUTH MINISTRY GROUP** THANKS EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED THEIR 30 HOUR FAST FOR WORLD VISION. Thanks to your generous support, they raised \$720.00. World Vision has secured a matching grant so the \$720.00 becomes a total raised of \$2880.00 which will feed 8 children for one whole year.

**MENT**

**ptist Catl**  
**ple who**  
**serve**

**the I**  
**Spiri**  
**enter**

**ospe**  
**ican C**  
**ting**

# The Way of The Cross

in the company of

**CLOWNS**

**LENTEN SCHEDULE**  
**2004**

**CONFIRMATION RETREAT** 4:30 P.M. SUNDAY 9 A.M. AND 11 A.M.  
**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**: SATURDAYS AT 3:30 P.M. AND 5 P.M.

**HOLY DAY MASSES**



**An unrepentant sinner has a distorted view of the Church.**

**They deny the truths of the Church while turning to "Social Justice" to ease their conscience.**

**They use "ministries," "programs," "parties," liturgical abuse, and even clowns in an attempt to bring back or hold on to a following.**

**They represent themselves as something they are not.**

**The proof of their corruption is the result of their works. Look at the Church today.**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**RCIA**

**PARISH SUPPORT:**

**NEW PARISHIONERS:**

**RELIGIOUS**

are asked to contact the priest. Communion can be given to the sick and elderly on a regular basis. Sr. G. is available for a parishioner is hospitalized, p

**OF THE CHURCH:** In cases of serious illness or advanced age, please call the priest. Communion can be given to the sick and elderly on a regular basis. Sr. G. is available for a parishioner is hospitalized, p

**RELIGIOUS**

**Su**

**g**

**offic**

**not h**

**offic**

**ny s**

**ek.**

**nn's**

**e par**