



RELIGION

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Religion Editor, Portland Observer
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Bishops listen to the public

by Robert Lothian

Portland's Roman Catholic bishops listened to the poor of Northeast Portland at St. Andrew Community Center Sunday.

Archbishop Cornelius M. Power and Bishop Paul E. Waldschmidt attended the two-hour forum "tell it to the bishops" to gather background for the Catholic bishops' historic pastoral letter on the economy. A draft of the letter, which called for changes in the distribution of the world's wealth, sent shock waves through the church and nation when it was released in November. The bishops are taking a year to discuss the letter with parishes, and then issue a final draft in November, 1985.



Discussing the plight of Portland's poor are (l-r) William Thornton, Johnny Ratliff, Portland Auxiliary Bishop Paul E. Waldschmidt, Teresa Followell, Terry Holladay and Archbishop Cornelius M. Power, head of the Catholic Archdiocese of Portland. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Sunday, the bishops and a gathering of about 100 citizens heard a depressing litany of recession, unemployment, lost hopes and poverty-related crime.

"I'm fighting with the utility companies all the time," said a woman who supports herself and four children with a job that pays \$4.95 an hour. "They tell me that if I make \$100 a week, I ought to be able to pay my utility bills, but there's no way," she said. "Some months I make it and some months I don't."

An American Indian woman cried as she told the gathering about how a friend of hers had to abandon her four children because she couldn't afford to raise them on welfare. The woman accepted the children into her family even though she already had four of her own.

Curtis Taylor, 35, a Vietnam veteran, was laid off from two jobs recently. He said he was forced to leave his wife and two children so they could receive welfare, which denies benefits to two parent families in Oregon. "I can't live with my family because of the government. I don't

know why," said Taylor. He finished by singing a verse of "Jesus Loves Me."

Another Vietnam veteran, Terry Holladay, thought nothing would result from the meeting with the bishops. "Bishops live up on the hill, and somebody mows their lawn for them. They don't know what's going on," he said. Holladay said he was laid off from his job as a school janitor in California because of budget cuts. "I was laid off and left California due to Ronald Reagan," who was then governor, he said. He worked as a welder in Portland for five years but was laid off in 1983 and hasn't worked since," he said. "I don't have to turn to a life of crime," said Holladay, because of the help his family, including a wife and three children, receives from neighborhood churches.

"If it were not for the many churches in this area, we'd be hurting a lot more than we are," said Teresa Followell, whose military benefits

were cut recently.

Teenager William Thornton talked about the lack of training, jobs and entertainment for the area's youth, who find themselves directed toward drugs and crime. "There's nothing to do, no jobs. . . . not really anything to look forward to," he said. "I know a lot of people without money, and no place to stay. That's all they have — the streets," Thornton continued. "What position do you put yourself in? You see that diamond necklace in the window, you break the window and grab it."

"There's no poverty at all like not being able to do for yourself. . . . the long term problem is to find ways to generate jobs so that people can help themselves," Archbishop Power responded.

The bishops were looking beyond the emergencies, he said, "because that is not always so important" compared to long-term solutions. "Give the person a fish and they will eat

for a day, teach the person to fish and they will have fish for a lifetime," he said, quoting a proverb.

Bishop Waldschmidt reported that demands for social services from St. Vincent de Paul are up 377% and the number of families seeking help is up over 1300% since 1979. "We know there is something wrong," he said.

Waldschmidt said the bishops are calling not only on President Reagan, but also Congress, business, churches and other "haves" in American society to recognize an "absolute minimum right" of all people to food, clothing, shelter, rest and medical care. "You can't just look at the bottom line of profit and loss. You have to keep the human element in mind. . . . everyone has the right to be a productive member of society."

"It just bleeds to sit here and listen to your stories," he said to those who offered testimony. He told them he hoped the results of their meeting and the pastoral letter would be "somehow beneficial, maybe not to you, but pray God to the next generation."

Classical concert to raise funds for hymnal

A dinner and concert celebrating Black composers will be held at St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Church at N.E. Rodney and Knott Streets on Saturday, February 9, 1985 at 6:00 p.m.

The concert will present classical and popular music by Black composers. Included will be the music of two local Portland composers Richard C. Moffatt and Terry Snowden. Richard C. Moffatt is the former organist-choirmaster of St. Philip's. His music has been widely performed both locally and nationally. Terry

Snowden who is the current music director at St. Philip's has produced an album of his music that is being distributed nationwide. He has also been given a grant by the Metropolitan Arts Commission for an original work that was performed last September. Among the performers will be Margaret Heil, Terry Snowden and the professional singing group Time-Sound.

The celebration will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a social hour followed by the dinner at 7:00 p.m. and the concert at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10.00

and can be obtained by a tax-deductible check payable to St. Philip the Deacon Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 12184, Portland, Oregon 97212. Be sure to include your phone number. Tickets may also be purchased at the door.

Proceeds from the dinner-concert will go towards purchasing 150 copies of the Episcopal hymnal, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," a collection of hymns from the Black church tradition. For more information call 281-5802.

Love Breakfast and Black History Exhibit slated

The Oregon Association of Colored Women's Clubs will hold their annual "Love Breakfast and Black History Exhibit" on Saturday, February 9, 1985, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, 116 N.E. Schuyler Street. Donation is \$3.00.

Special program presentations will be given during the breakfast with

performances by the Grant High School Gospel Choir, dramatist Mrs. Ernestine Broadus, vocalist Mrs. Patricia Howard, readings by Mrs. Evelyn Hariston, poetry by Mrs. Wanita Colbert, special artifact displays by Mrs. Julia Fletcher, The Black Educational Center and Ms. Colbert. Black history as well as history of OACWC and its federated clubs will be on display.

OACWC, organized in 1911, is an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, the oldest Black women's organization in the world which was founded in 1895. Mrs. Pauline Bradford is State President. Mrs. Carrie L. Holliday is General Chairman for the breakfast with Mrs. Jean Blocker, Historian and Mrs. Queen Ann Deloney, Second Vice-President, Program Chairman, assisting.

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