

WEATHER

Snow flurries and a little warmer. High in 20s.

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OUSTED—The Rev. Bernard L. Meyer, on curb, is held by Cleveland police as the Rev. Robert T. Begin shouts against his and Father Meyer's arrest at St. John Cathedral yesterday. Plain Dealer photo (James A. Hatch)

Priests Face Trespass Charge

Two Roman Catholic priests — ejected by police from St. John Cathedral as they celebrated an unauthorized midnight mass Saturday to protest what they call "church hypocrisy" — face a preliminary hearing on trespassing charges at 9 a.m. today in Municipal Court.

The Rev. Bernard L. Meyer, 31, assistant pastor at St. Agatha Church, and the Rev. Robert T. Begin, 30, assistant at St. Gregory the Great Church, were suspended during the mass by order of Bishop Clarence G. Isenmann and carried from the cathedral.

Father Begin and Father Meyer entered the cathedral, E. 9th Street and Superior Avenue N.E., with about 50 members of Christians Who Care (CWC) — a group formed recently by the priests to oppose what they and members consider the church's passiveness toward the war in Vietnam, white racism, poverty and liberalization of the church called for by the Second Vatican Council.

A STATEMENT detailing the group's criticism of "the leadership of the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland" was read by a member in place of a sermon at the mass.

Bishop Isenmann could not be reached for comment. Auxiliary Bishop William M. Cosgrove said in a statement that race, poverty and peace are critical issues but deplored "the strategy this group has chosen to dramatize the need for action."

THE PRIESTS were told of their suspension by a monsignor who said he had spoken with the bishop by telephone.

Albin A. Gorisek, Plain Dealer religion editor, recognized by Msgr. Francis W. Carney — who was to have said the scheduled 12:30 a.m. mass — was ordered removed from the church. Gorisek was shoved out the door and kicked by a patrolman.

Jack Grochot, a Plain Dealer reporter, remained seated in a front pew and was hoisted by police and pushed out a side entrance when he was seen taking notes after the priests were carried off.

The priests, dressed in

green mass vestments, led their followers up the main aisle to the altar, about 12:20 a.m.

Some of the CWC members sat in pews and about a dozen — including three nuns — crowded around the priests in the sanctuary as

they began the mass.

Msgr. Carney and about eight priests immediately announced over the CWC members' voices — now singing hymns — that everyone should go home.

"THIS IS NOT a mass," the monsignor said "These

are not priests. Your day obligations have not been fulfilled. Please leave."

About half of the 200 persons present left by rear doors.

Lights were turned out, but CWC members lit candles. Continued on Page 7, Col. 1

127 of Foe Slain in 4 Viet Battles

SAIGON (AP) — Allied and enemy troops battled at four points on two sides of Saigon yesterday.

Enemy units struck at two American bases and a South Vietnamese outpost along the Cambodian border 40 to 60 miles northwest of Saigon. A fourth fight swirled in palm trees 20 miles south of the capital.

U.S. and South Vietnamese troops, supported by helicopter gunships, tanks and artillery, reported killing 127 of the enemy. U.S. casualties were at least nine dead and 17 wounded, and preliminary reports put government losses at one dead and four wounded.

BATTLEFIELD communiques also reported a minor ground attack on a U.S. airfield at Phan Rang, 160 miles northeast of Saigon, an assault on a civil defense office in Saigon, more than a dozen shelling of allied installations

across the country and a half dozen small skirmishes in which 82 of the enemy were killed.

The fiercest battle was reported 40 miles northwest of Saigon when an estimated 200 troops from the Viet Cong 9th Division tried to overrun a government outpost two miles from the Cambodian border. About 100 government militiamen withstood an intense mortar, machine gun and small-arms barrage Saturday until reinforcements arrived.

ABOUT 1,000 infantrymen, tanks and armored personnel carriers encircled the Viet Cong and killed 42 in fighting that continued through the night. Four Viet Cong were captured, three of them wounded.

It was this battle that claimed the 1,000th U.S. helicopter lost in the war. The loss was announced Saturday, but details of the ground action it was supporting were not known at the time.

U.S. headquarters also announced the loss of two more American helicopters to enemy ground fire. Casualties were six wounded.

ABOUT 20 miles from where the government outpost was struck, enemy gunners slammed about 10 mortar shells and rockets into a base camp of the U.S. 25th Infantry Division at Dau Tieng. Officials said casualties were light.

A small enemy force operating under the cover of night was reported to have been destroyed by the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry Division 20 miles northwest of Saigon.

Helicopter gunships and artillery blasted the enemy, killing seven. U.S. spokesmen said three Americans were wounded.

IN THE MEKONG Delta, 20 miles south of Saigon, a reconnaissance patrol from the U.S. 9th Infantry Division ran into Viet Cong soldiers Saturday afternoon and touched off a fight that lasted until morning.

About 750 infantrymen swept through the area of palm trees later and reported finding the bodies of 78 enemy soldiers. U.S. losses were seven killed and seven wounded.

Nixon Offers Aid

California Rains Ease; Toll Is 86

LOS ANGELES (AP) — As rains finally subsided, southern California's worst flooding in 31 years left tens of thousands stranded yesterday and about 6,000 persons evacuated from their homes.

Property damage of \$35 million was estimated by Gov. Ronald Reagan.

President Nixon declared California a major disaster area and provided \$3 million in federal funds for relief.

At least 86 deaths were attributed to nine days of rain from back-to-back tropical storms. The latest four-day storm brought 37 deaths.

As much as 34 inches of rain fell in isolated areas of the state, the weatherman said. Some light rain was expected today.