

## MOST REV. MICHAEL KENNY R'57, 1937~1995

Usually when we receive word of the death of an alumnus, his name and year of graduation is listed in the "IN MEMORIAM" column. But, Bishop Kenny, the third Bishop of the Diocese of Juneau, met an untimely death and his passing was a shock to all who knew him. While vacationing in Jordan, he died suddenly of an aneurysm on February 19, and was declared dead on arrival in the hospital. His body was shipped to Juneau from Jordan and it took until February 28 for it to arrive.

Bishop Kenny was loved and respected by all who knew him, and his death was a great loss to the people of Juneau, as well as his many friends in the States. He came to several Alumni Days, and at the one celebrated in Santa Clara in 1984, he mentioned that he was always happy to return to California and spend time with his old classmates from St. Joseph's. He enjoyed the casual atmosphere of the barbecue and the opportunity to reminisce with fellow alums about their years at St. Joe's and learn about their present lives.

**Walt Harrington, R'51**, recalls the Alumni Day celebration in 1984 when graduates of St. Joseph's College put on a skit. Bishop Kenny did such a dazzling Michael Jackson performance, that **Lt. Governor Leo McCarthy**, sitting in the front row next to Walt, asked him who was the great performer. Upon hearing that it was Bishop Kenny, he exclaimed: "I am ready to send a white smoke up right now!"

Bishop Kenny's middle name wasn't spelled out until his death notice appeared. The Inside Passage, which is the Diocesan paper for Juneau, reports that at the end of Communion of the funeral Mass, six representatives of the community spoke briefly of what Bishop Kenny had meant to them. One of the chosen members shared a story of her young niece who always wondered what the "H" in the Bishop's name stood for. When she finally saw the name "Hughes" written out she was delighted to tell everyone, "Now I know his middle name - it's 'huggies'! Bishop Kenny was well liked by children because he "always made it so the kids could understand and he never ignored us" - a 5th grader's comment.

Evidently Bishop Kenny had problems in arriving on time. He was "always charging into the sacristy at the last minute for Mass, dashing through an airport for a plane, so Bishop Francis Hurley opened his remarks at Bishop Kenny's Mass of Christian burial with these words: "Michael, we got you to the Church on time." Perhaps he arrived ahead of time!

May he rest in the peace and the wonderful memories he left in the hearts of those who shared a bit of their lives with him.

