

Kemmy rejected invitation to attend ordination

By RON KIRWAN

LABOUR Party chairman, Jim Kemmy, then a city councillor, refused to attend the ordination of Bishop Newman in 1974.

In a letter to the secretary of St Munchin's College, Cllr Kemmy said: "I have received your invitation to attend the ceremony of ordination of Dr JN Newman as Catholic Bishop of Limerick, and the reception afterwards at St Munchin's College. I wish to inform you that I shall not be present, at either of these events for the following reasons:

"That religious ceremonies of this kind should be the primary concern

of each particular Church and its own members and not of the State, local authority or vocational bodies;

"That the affairs of State and local government should not be seriously and unnecessarily interrupted by the presence of various Government Ministers, public representatives and civil servants at such ceremonies;

"That the event with its ostentatious pomp, elaborate rituals, ornate vestments, extravagant reception and wealthy influential guests, clearly shows how far the Catholic Church in Ireland has departed from the simple Christian message, and how it has shackled itself to the economic and political ruling class;

"That it is impossible to reconcile

this expensive event with the life of the carpenter's son, who, the Catholic Church teaches, was born on the straw floor of a stable among farm animals, reared amid the sawdust and shavings of a primitive workshop and lived his life in frugal conditions;

"That the total cost of the occasion in terms of food, drink, wages, vestments, transport, catering and general organisation expenses for the Bishop and the estimated 1,500 guests will, at a modest calculation, be upwards of £6,000;

"That the sum could be more usefully spent in helping to relieve some of the hardships being suffered by

local people in areas such as St Mary's Park, where £6,000 could provide bathrooms and general repairs for a block of houses;

"That the new Bishop's priorities could be seriously called into question when he visited a local newspaper office as one of his first official visits in Limerick, instead of visiting people living in deprived areas, some of whom, according to a recent St Vincent de Paul statement, are suffering greater poverty than has been seen since the 1730s".

Dr Newman said in reply: "Mr Kemmy is entitled to express his opinion. I have no further comment to make".



The late Dr Newman with his parents on the occasion of his ordination at Maynooth, in 1950.

21 years in charge of the faithful

By RON KIRWAN

SUNDAY, July 14, 1974 was a proud and memorable day for the Diocese of Limerick, when Dr Jeremiah Newman, the 48-year-old former president of Maynooth College, became Bishop in succession to Dr Henry Murphy, who died in the preceding October.

Thousands turned out to pay tribute to Bishop Newman, and many stood for a considerable time in the rain to be blessed by his Lordship after the two-hour ceremony in St John's Cathedral.

For some time before the ceremony started, hundreds of people gathered round to gain entrance to the cathedral, which was packed to capacity.

Children formed a guard

Kerry, and formerly a curate at St John's, and former Bishop of Galway; Very Rev L Newman, PP, Sallins, a cousin of the Bishop, and Rev Andrew Barry, CC, also a cousin of Bishop Newman.

President Childers headed the distinguished attendance of the laity. He was accompanied by his wife, Rita. The Mayor, Ald Patrick Kennedy, wearing his robes and chains of office, and members of the City Council were also in attendance.

The Taoiseach, Liam Cosgrave, was also present, as were the Minister for the Gaeltacht, Tom O'Donnell,

Apostolic Mandate of the appointment of Bishop Newman was read by Mgr Patrick J Lee, PP, VG, St Mary's, and was as follows:

"Paul, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to my beloved son, Jeremiah Newman, priest of the Diocese of Limerick and chosen to be Bishop of the Diocese of Limerick, health and apostolic benediction. Mindful of the esteem in which you are held by the people of Limerick and of your great achievements in education, especially among the young, we confidently look on you as most worthy to be Bishop of the Diocese - to be its pastor,

loyalty to us and to our successors - these oaths to be taken in the presence of any Catholic Bishop and the forms for the oaths, duly signed and sealed, to be forwarded to the Sacred Congregation for Bishops.

"We also ask that this letter of ours be read publicly in the presence of the clergy and the people in the cathedral of the diocese on a holy day of obligation.

"We urge the faithful of the diocese to welcome your appointment as their Bishop and to give their fullest co-operation to your ministry on their behalf.

"Finally, beloved son, we wish you to bear in mind the dignity of the office of bishop and the duties and the obligations that go with it. Remember, particularly, that it is directed towards the glory of God and the service of the Christian people. We are confident that 'he who began the good work in you will bring it to completion in the day of Christ Jesus'. (Phil 1-6). Given in St Peter's, Rome,



DR JEREMIAH NEWMAN: 1926-1995

and the Minister for Education, Richard Burke.

Ald Steve Coughlan represented the Tanaiste, Bren-

its teacher, its father.

"We also consider you most worthy to succeed the late beloved and deeply



HAPPY DAYS: Bishop Newman poses for a Confirmation picture at Ballybricken with Dolores O'Riordan, now lead singer with The Cranberries.

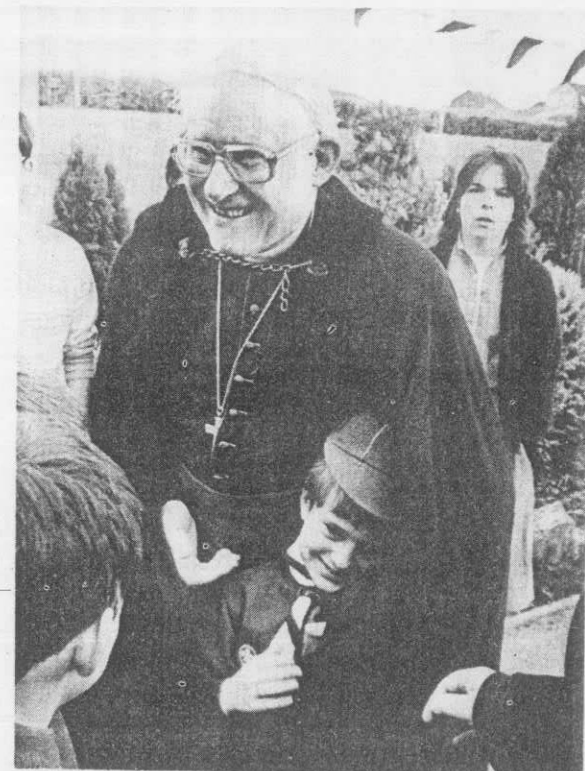
How news of trip to US was broken

THE following is the text of the letters sent to clerics in the diocese announcing Dr Newman's decision

"God knows that I think of nothing else, day and night, than the service of souls which is the service desired of me by the Sacred Congregation and the Holy See."



Dr Newman with the former Papal Nuncio, Dr Gaetano Alibrandi. (LL)



Dr Newman playing and joking with children after Confirmations in Limerick. (LL)