

'You've Got the Best'

Rome — Deeply spiritual. Open. Honest. Human. Accessible.

These are the qualities attributed to Father Matthew H. Clark by those who have known him over the 13 years he has spent in Rome, the last seven at the North American College.

Christiana Brusselmans, a leading Church catechist who is presently putting in a short stint of teaching at the North American, said of Father Clark:

"He is deeply spiritual. A

very moving person. A man of great simplicity and of great depth."

That note of spirituality is the common denominator of all descriptions of our next bishop.

Msgr. William Murphy of Boston, a member of the Vatican Commission on Justice and Peace and co-chaplain with Father Clark at the Marymount School for Girls in Rome, told the Courier-Journal, without being asked, "You've got the greatest."



Photos by Anthony J. Costello

While selecting his bishop's robes, Father Clark was joined by friend and associate Msgr. Murphy of Boston.

It seems almost eerie that Msgr. Murphy, as well as Father Clark's aunt, Margaret Carter, both predicted, though unbeknownst to each other, that the Waterford priest would become the bishop of Rochester.

At the Marymount School, an international school for high school girls, the Sisters are as overjoyed as were his seminarians or working colleagues.

"You are very fortunate," said Sister Therese Martin.

the guidance counselor, in a remark directed to the Rochester diocese. "Count your blessings."

Sister Margaret Treacy of Ireland, a teacher and a charismatic, made a point of telling the Courier-Journal,

"You've got the best there is."

Father Clark was slightly embarrassed by the compliments but also said, "Isn't it wonderful that so many can share in the joy of the appointment?" Viglucci.



Photo by Bishop-elect Clark

Father John MacInnis, a colleague at the North American College.

"When I heard that St. Petersburg and Rochester were both open I told my friend, 'Wouldn't that be a great place for Matt to go?'" Msgr. Murphy recounted.

"And," he adds, "they couldn't have made a wiser choice."

Mrs. Carter said, "When I saw the announcement of Bishop Hogan's resignation in the Albany newspaper I told my daughter I had feeling Matt was going there."

A seminarian at the North American College volunteered his view that "he will be very well respected for he is very open. There is tremendous respect for Matthew on the part of the students."

This kind of unrestrained tribute for Father Clark was echoed by another seminarian, James Sysko of Scranton, who offered that Father Clark "will be a great presence in Rochester."



Three friends enjoy news against backdrop of beautiful Roman greenery. From left, Sister Clare Horn, Father Clark and Sister Margaret Treacy. Sisters are on the staff at Marymount School.



Students and staff at Marymount School were ecstatic at the news.



The bishop-elect has lunch with seminarian Joseph Busch of Albany who himself was ordained a deacon on April 26. The scene is the dining room at the North American College.