

The Senior Clark... ... a Spiritual Presence

By Carmen J. Viglucci

When an interviewer recently asked Bishop Matthew H. Clark who were his most important mentors, he answered immediately, "My father and my mother without question."

The proud mother of the bishop, Mrs. Grace Clark has been very much in evidence in the events since May 2, including last night's installation, but M. Harvey Clark has been present in spirit only. He died in August, 1977, at the age of 68.

But that is not to say that his presence though spiritual in nature, is not strongly felt.

Bishop Clark told the same interviewer, "My father had a great influence on me. I admired him so much, for his kindness, for his sense of humor -- he would bring laughter to this occasion."

The bishop had reflected on his father's role soon after he found out that he would be appointed to the episcopacy. "He could always see the light side of things. If there were a crisis he would make it bearable."

Bishop Clark's sister, Mrs. Helen Early, when asked how her father would take all this recent activity, said, "With great joy. No matter what the situation he'd get us laughing. Every thing was always all right when he was around."



M. HARVEY CLARK

M. Harvey Clark was U.S. Customs port director at Albany and never liked being called Harvey.

His wife remembers that he would say, "The only people named Harvey are rabbits and idiots."

The bishop's father was a graduate of Waterford High and not long before his death enjoyed attending the 50th anniversary of his high school graduation.

He apparently was largely accountable for his son's interest in sports. "Living in father's house," remembers Mrs. Early, "you'd have to like sports. He never pushed it but his enthusiasm was contagious."

Mr. Clark was mainly

interested in basketball and at 5 feet 11 enjoyed playing that sport.

"He was a good tennis player, too," Mrs. Early said. "Once someone talked him into playing in a big local tournament. Since he didn't have a racket he played with a borrowed one. Well, he won the tournament and was given for a prize, you guessed it, a racket case."

"Yes, he was a great sportsman," Mrs. Early said. "He started the boys baseball league in this town and also was a regular bowler."

Standing in the kitchen of her Waterford home, his widow said that Mr. Clark "was born right in this house and lived most of his life here," except for a brief spell when they moved nearby.

Something of consistency is inherent in the statement and just outside the kitchen stands another such reminder. It is a huge maple tree, some 36 years old, and planted as a sapling by the then 5-year-old resident of the same house, Matthew H. Clark, now the bishop of the diocese of Rochester.

And when the younger Clark was installed as the eighth bishop of Rochester last night, the joy, spirit and holiness of M. Harvey Clark were very much a part of the proceedings.

Our Prayers
And
Best Wishes
To

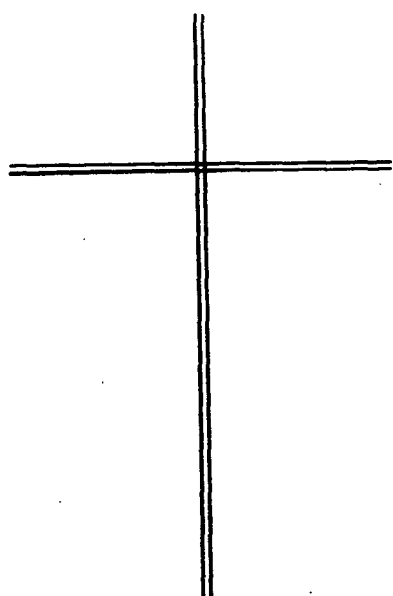
Bishop

Matthew H. Clark

HOLY CROSS CHURCH
Ovid, New York

The Parishes of Tioga County Welcome

BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



St. Francis, *Catatonk*

St. James, *Waverly*

St. John's, *Newark Valley*

St. Margaret Mary, *Apalachin*

St. Patrick's, *Owego*

