

Along The Way

With Bishop Matthew H. Clark



On Tuesday, Aug. 23, I began a six-week study program during which I shall think of you often and for which I ask your prayers.

I'll be joining 85 other American bishops in Rome in a study program in sacramental theology.

Called a theological consultation, this program is sponsored jointly by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine and the North American College in Rome. This is the fourth to be held, the first was in 1973 and was attended by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan.

I have been excited about this prospect for a long time -- we made our commitment to it last December -- and became more excited as departure time drew closer. Let me offer you some of the reasons for that.

● I have never had an experience in my life which has more strongly motivated me to prayer and study than my experience of the ministry of bishop. The developing life and practice of the Church (e.g. the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the Revised Code of Canon Law) as well as the changing pastoral needs of our people constantly challenge me to seek new information and to let that challenge former ways of thinking. We'll have the insights of several expert theologians to help us with that and I am anxious for their assistance.

● The company of the other bishops will be for me another enormously attractive element of the program. I have said many times to friends that I am enriched when I spend time in the company of my colleagues.

Often enough that is true because we're at work on some project like our pastoral letter on peace. Sometimes it's true because it allows time to compare notes -- Are you doing this? What's working for you in this area? Can you help me think this question through? I just goofed up! How do I work it out?

The fact is I learn best when strong interaction and pastoral reflection with peers are added to the necessary components of lectures and reading. That kind of interaction is built into the program but it will also occur in a great variety of informal ways.

● To have as long as four weeks of solid study will also be a blessing. In August of 1980, I studied for two weeks in a similar program in New York. At Collegeville, Minn., last summer we had 10 days for pastoral reflection on the ministry of bishops. Both were important for me and I am sure that the expanded time will provide for an even richer opportunity.

● Lastly, you know something of my history in and affection for Rome. It will be a joy once again to visit the places and speak with the friends who have been so much a

part of my own life.

The four-week program begins on Aug. 29 and concludes on Sept. 25. My earlier departure will allow for vacation time with Father Tom Powers of Albany with whom I have spent a week of vacation each year for the past 20 years. Tom now directs the graduate house where we'll be gathering and so was not able to come home this summer. Now we'll have our vacation on his side of the ocean.

From Sept. 25 to Oct. 2 (the sixth week), we conclude the program with a trip to the Holy Land. Father Raymond Brown, the renowned American scripture scholar, will be our lecturer for those days.

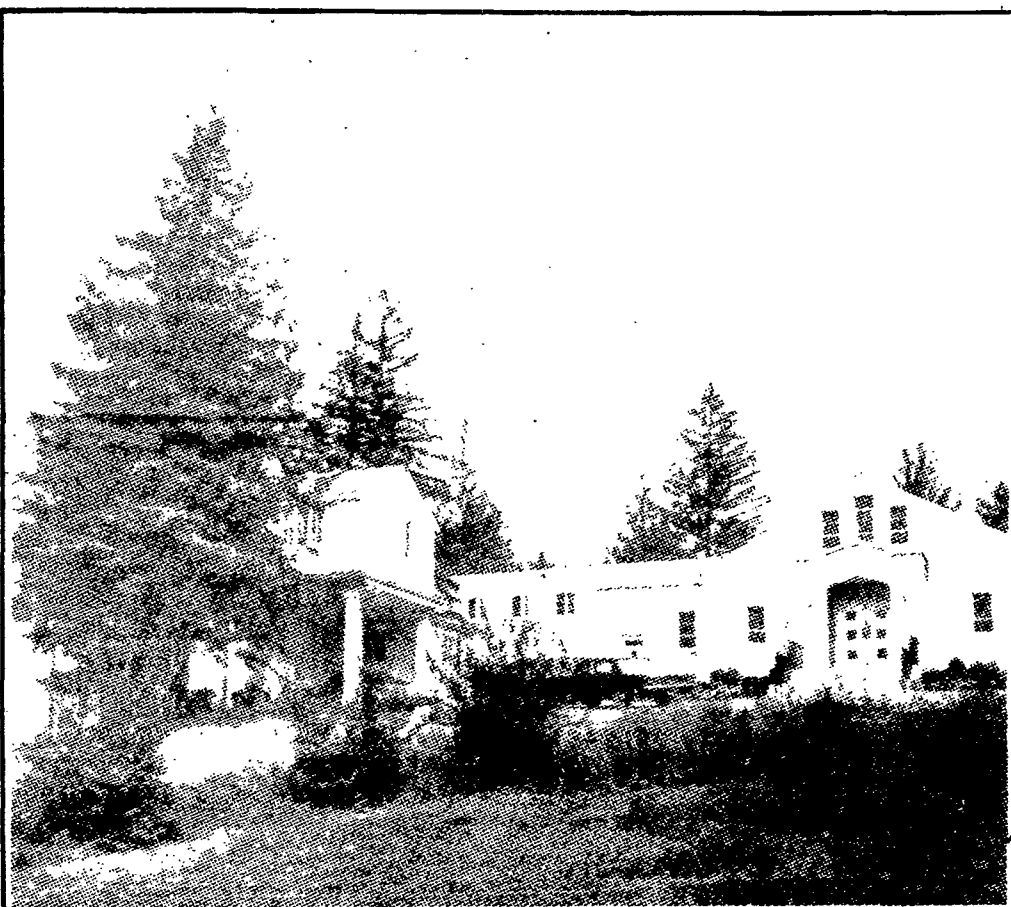
And so, dear friends, that's what I'll be up to for the next six weeks. I shall be praying for you and thinking of you as always -- and perhaps especially throughout this unique opportunity I have to study and pray about our common life.

I do most sincerely ask your prayers for me and all of the bishops who will be gathering in Rome.

If you're interested in this venture, keep an eye on this space. I'll keep in touch with you as scheduling and distance allow.

And -- a final word of thanks to those whose work will be increased because I am away. I am very grateful to you.

Peace!



The monastery as it looked in 1969.

Dominican Monastery, Elmira Our Pilgrimage Churches Holy Year 1983-84

By Father Robert F. McNamara

The Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary opened their monastery at 1310 West Church Street, Elmira, almost 40 years ago -- Aug. 17, 1944. Since then they have continued their life of contemplative prayer, particularly the recitation of the rosary around the clock. Thus, their monastery has become an important spiritual powerhouse in the Diocese of Rochester.

Before his untimely death in 1933, John F. O'Hern, the third bishop of Rochester, had wanted to introduce these Third Order Dominican nuns into his diocese. In 1944, Father Gerald Lambert brought the fact to the attention of Bishop James E. Kearney. Bishop Kearney soon invited the nuns of the Perpetual Rosary Convent of Buffalo to make a foundation in Elmira.

The sisters were able to acquire quite reasonably the former clubhouse of Elmira Country Club. Purchased on June 15, 1944, it was remodeled for its new purpose. Eight nuns came down

from Buffalo to establish this residence. The founding prioress was Mother Mary Teresa of the Infant Jesus. (Born Florence Kelleher in Canisteo, Mother Teresa died only this past July 6 at age 90.)

Since the original small monastery opened, it has been enlarged by the addition of a residential wing containing the public chapel in 1965. The community not only engages in private and public prayer, but, to support itself, does sewing and art work. Friends also help with their alms.

Pilgrims to this dynamic little house of prayer should call to arrange the hour for their visit (607/734-9506). We suggest that if the group is fairly large, they park at Our Lady of Lourdes Church (a short distance west on Church Street) and, headed by a crossbearer, walk in devout procession to the monastery. Call Our Lady of Lourdes (607/732-6261). N.B. West Church Street has one-way westbound traffic.

New State Divorce Law Not Affecting Catholics, NYCC Spokesman States

Albany, N.Y. (NC) — A New York law, requiring a person filing for civil divorce to guarantee there are no barriers to his or her spouse's remarriage, will not force Catholics before Church marriage tribunals, a New York Catholic Conference spokesman said.

The law signed Aug. 9 by Gov. Mario Cuomo says a divorce complaint must include a signed statement by the petitioning spouse saying that "all steps solely within his or her powers" have been taken to "remove any barrier" to remarriage of the other party.

The statement will be required in all cases in which the marriage was performed by a rabbi, minister or priest.

But Catholics seeking a civil divorce will not be bound under the law, New York Senate Bill 6647, to go

through marriage tribunal procedures, a spokesman at the New York Catholic Conference said.

The bill was amended in late June, according to the spokesman, to insure that the phrase "all steps solely within his or her powers" should not be construed "to include application to a marriage tribunal or other similar organization or agency of a religious denomination which has authority to annul or dissolve a marriage under rules of such denomination."

"The New York Catholic Conference has no objection to the bill as amended," the spokesman said.

Gov. Cuomo said he hoped the measure would alleviate the "tragically unfair condition" of several thousand Jewish women who were forbidden by Jewish law to remarry because their

husbands had divorced them in civil courts but would not grant them a "get" or divorce under Jewish law.

The legislation was drafted so that Jewish law was not mentioned.

Some Orthodox Jewish groups hailed the law but Reform Jewish groups and the New York Civil Liberties Union, which had urged the governor to veto the measure, are expected to challenge it in court.



Newly Professed

Brother A. Stanislaus Brach, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. Brach of Nichols Street, last week made his first profession of vows as a member of the Congregation of Christian Brothers. A graduate of Bishop Kearney High School, Brother Stanislaus attends Iona College in New Rochelle.

Nazareth Graduate Wins Again

Ermelinda Bonaccio, a 1983 graduate of Nazareth Academy has recently learned she is a recipient of the Educational Communications Scholarship Foundation Scholarship, a prize worth \$1,000 in college tuition. Miss Bonaccio won the award on the basis of her academic record.

During her high school days, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Bonaccio received several awards and scholarships, including a Bausch and Lomb Science Award, a Wilson Scholarship to the University of Rochester, a state Regents Scholarship, a national scholarship from Harvard University.

In addition, she received a grant to do cancer research at Roswell Park Memorial Hospital in Buffalo.

Through advance placement credit, Miss Bonaccio will enter the sophomore class at Harvard this Fall.



Sister Named U.R. Chaplain

Sister Margaret Mary Fitzpatrick, SSND, has been named a Catholic chaplain at Strong Memorial Hospital of the University of Rochester Medical Center, joining Father Anthony J. Valente, whose appointment was announced earlier this year. Sister Pat, as she prefers to be called, holds a degree in sociology from Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport, Conn., and a master's degree in pastoral ministry from the University of Dayton. She took her CPE from St. Francis Medical Center in LaCrosse, Wisc. She has most recently been pastoral assistant at Annunciation Parish.