

Along The Way

With Bishop Matthew H. Clark



A friend of mine who is principal of a school recently sent me the work of some of her very young charges. Each little one was asked to write God a letter asking the question he or she most wanted God to answer. Among the questions were such as these:

"Dear God, did you have to go to school?" "Dear God, why do I have to go to school?" "Dear God, how old are you?"

I always enjoy the work of young children but got a special kick out of these efforts because they reminded me of a truth which I know I can so easily forget: that God is very close to us, that in Christ God became just like us in all things but sin.

The children may need to grow into a more mature appreciation of the mystery and majesty of God, but they offer us the wonderful reminder that we should never grow out of our appreciation of God in Christ as immersed in and caring deeply about our humanity.

As I write these words early on Monday morning I remember yesterday's events and the people whose warm faith

and rich humanity re-opened for me, as did the children with their letters, the realization that we are wonderfully holy in Christ. The gracious effect of that holiness is that all of our work and laughter, our sacrifices and celebrations, all of our human struggles and gifts of self in service extend the revealing, reconciling work of our Risen Lord.

At Holy Apostles Parish in Rochester the parish family and many friends gathered to celebrate the formal dedication of their church and their 100th anniversary.

The Liturgy of the day was prepared and celebrated with what I judged to be extraordinary spirit. Some of that may have come as the fruit of a most successful parish renewal week held as part of the centenary observance. Some came, I think, from the realization of the people gathered there that somehow on this occasion they were offering back to a loving God everything they had received, the work they had done with it and the great variety of human experience woven into all of that.

Later in the day at St. Stephen's in Geneva, couples from all parts of the diocese gathered to celebrate 25th and 50th

wedding anniversaries.

I hope the celebration was for the couples as it was for me a reminder not so much of the holiness of marriage in the abstract, but of their own holiness as married persons.

They are, after all, reminders and signs to all of us of Christ's love for His Church. They are also Christ revealers to one another in all that in any way expresses or serves their marriage bond.

The day closed at the Eastman Theatre in Rochester. A capacity crowd came to be entertained by Bill Cosby and to express moral and financial support for the work of the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester.

It was an absolute delight to be with this talented performer as he re-created with his words, facial expressions and gestures experiences which occur in every family. If those experiences at one time tested patience, caused anger or even tears, at Bill Cosby's hands they evoked delighted laughter. Perhaps that's because he was able to remind us that the experiences he mentioned are common, totally human and so — well... holy! Peace.

Reagan

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countries of Western Europe could mobilize massive troops and resources," but this "would require huge costs and commitments some European countries would be unable or unwilling to make," he said.

"The other alternative has been to defend our Western European allies by including them within the United States' strategic defense umbrella."

Discussing other defense matters, he also said that the U.S. program "is peace through strength, and it requires that we must achieve at least essential equivalence between the military forces of the U.S. and the Soviet Union."

He backed "an end to the arms race" and said his administration "has advanced the most ambitious arms reduction agenda ever developed."

On other topics, Reagan:

-- Said that the 1985 Defense Department budget is \$65 billion less than the budget for the Department of Health and Human Services and that "over the next five years" government will spend "53 percent more on 'people' programs such as Social Security, Medicare, food assistance, education and housing than it will spend on defense."

-- Declared he inherited "the worst economic mess since the Great Depression" but that thanks to his "bold, innovative plan for economic recovery," America has undergone "the strongest economic recovery in over 30 years."

-- Promised that by the end of 1989 his administration will be providing "rent vouchers" to low-income families to help them obtain housing anywhere in the nation. Moreover, he said, "our efforts to reduce mortgage rates have made the dream of home ownership a reality for 11 million low-income Americans who could not afford it" previously.

-- Said, in regard to international human rights, that "moral values and a commitment to human dignity are an important part of our foreign policy and a powerful impulse driving it" and that the 1984 incursion in Grenada affirmed America's role in protecting human freedom.

-- Said his administration has "slowed the rate of tax increases on lower- and middle-income Americans" whose taxes "have not decreased much only because our tax cuts were offset by the Carter-Mondale Social Security tax increases and their high rates of inflation that forced taxpayers into higher tax brackets."

-- Said that poverty is increasing at a slower pace under his administration and that a small "rise in poverty really represents a stalling of a trend to increased poverty that began during the previous administration."

-- Stated that "ours is the first administration in 20 years to reduce both the inflation and unemployment rates during a single term," that a federal job-training program for disadvantaged youths, welfare recipients and displaced workers is "one of my administration's crowning achievements," and that "the only thing" which could thwart the economic recovery he has obtained is "a return to the failed tax-and-spend policies of my opponent."

Mondale

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signed to help individuals, who, through no fault of their own, are unable to help themselves."

He said he supports "allowing eligible private school students to receive the benefits of federally funded (educational) programs" and that the "letter and spirit" of laws permitting such activities "should be fully carried out." Yet, he said, "I believe tuition tax credits for parents who send their children to private schools are unacceptable, and I strongly oppose efforts to impose them." He said such tax credits "would undermine" public education and contribute to the federal deficit.

Mondale also addressed questions of Central America, human rights, economic well-being, housing and unemployment:

-- He proposed to "strengthen the hand" of Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte in El Salvador "by channeling American aid through him and conditioning it on social justice." He also proposed working with the Contadora nations which have proposed steps toward peace in Central America, and he proposed seeking "agreements that would secure mutual non-intervention, the withdrawal of all outside forces, including the Soviets and Cubans in Nicaragua, and the ultimate demilitarization of Central America."

He claimed that "Reagan's strategy in Central America has failed" and that despite "more than a billion dollars in American aid," rebels opposing the Salvadoran government "are many times stronger" than three years ago and "the people much poorer."

-- Mondale rejected "the proposition that our friends and allies should be exempt from criticism for human rights abuses."

He claimed that Reagan, "by embracing anyone who stands against communism regardless of their human rights record...discredits our cause and diminishes our stature."

-- Mondale cited "the dangerous budget deficit -- \$175.3 billion this year alone" -- as the "most important domestic issue." He suggested changes in defense spending, "tough health care cost-containment," better management of agriculture programs, a cap on tax cuts for high-income taxpayers, a 10 percent surcharge on incomes over \$100,000 and other steps.

"Too often...the rich have gotten tax breaks while the poor have gotten heartbreaks," he said.

-- Mondale proposed reduction of the federal deficit to reduce high interest rates; a positive role by the federal government in helping assure "affordable housing for all Americans"; reaffirmation of "my commitment to...government-assisted housing" projects; enforcement of the Fair Housing Act, and other steps to provide housing.

-- To reduce unemployment Mondale set a goal of "a job for every American who wants or needs one." He recommended creation of "sustainable, long-term economic growth"; vocational training and retraining for displaced workers; revitalization of basic industries; putting people to work repairing deteriorating bridges, city sections and roads; investment tax credits for worker training and education, and other measures.

Latin Mass Nov. 4 at Corpus Christi

A sung Latin Mass will be celebrated at 3 p.m., Monday, Nov. 4, at Corpus Christi Church (East Main at Prince Street). Celebrant will be Msgr. George Cocuzzi, pastor of St. Francis Xavier Church.

The Mass has been scheduled to provide an opportunity for music history students at the Eastman School to sing the traditional Gregorian chants which they are studying. The Kyrie and Gloria

from Mass IX along with the Sanctus and Agnus Dei of Mass IV will be sung.

Chants for the propers have been selected from the Graduale Romanum. Except

for the lessons, the liturgy will be celebrated entirely in Latin. A booklet will be provided for the congregation giving translations and congregational responses.

Chorus Concert

Fairport — The Perinton Community Chorus and Orchestra, directed by Sister Virginia Hogan SSJ will open its concert season with "A Musical Kaleidoscope," 4 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 4 at Martha Brown Auditorium, 665 Ayrault Road. Tickets are \$4 at the door; \$3.50 in advance by calling 223-9006.



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