



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

Summer thoughts

I shall soon be leaving for vacation, so this will be my last column until the first week of August. I have mixed feelings about that hiatus. On the one hand, I find that writing every week helps me to think and pray, and provides an effective way to be in touch with a large number of people on a regular basis. I shall miss the sense of being with you, which writing brings.

On the other hand, there is a certain discipline to the effort and an occasional pressure to produce, which I shall not miss. I may do some writing on vacation, but if I do, it will be because and when I want to do it!

Before I sign off for a few weeks, let me offer a suggestion — which may be helpful to your prayer during these weeks of summer — and then make a request for your assistance.

The suggestion for your summer prayer is a set of questions that I have found helpful and have shared with some others. The questions are very simple, but I find that they draw me to Christ and, in doing so, sharpen my perceptions of present reality and help me to appreciate that reality as a new moment in a continually unfolding story. The questions are:

What is your most cherished memory?

Who is your dearest friend?

What is your fondest hope?

If these questions appeal to you at all, I suggest that you let them rest in your heart. From there, let them speak to you and lead you wherever they might. They may raise other questions for you and lead you to new paths of thought, but however they work in you, I think you will find them challenging and interesting.

There is no telling how long you may stay with them. But let me suggest that when you judge that they no longer speak to you, think of what your answer to the same questions would have been 10 years ago. Are the two sets of answers the same or do they differ? And, however you answer these questions, what will the answers mean to you?

The request is that you pass along to me any suggestions you may have about how I can improve *Along the Way*. I shall welcome all that you may offer and shall try to work with all suggestions that fall within the limits of my time and abilities.

Thanks for your consideration of this request and for so many other kindnesses. I write these words on the feast of John Fisher, the patron saint of our diocese. It is a day on which I am especially mindful of and grateful for the family of faith which is our local Church. We celebrated the Eucharist at the Pastoral Office today. My intention in that celebration was that God would continue to lead us as we strive to live out the gospel in this challenging, exciting and sometimes difficult time in our history.

Peace to all.

The Editor's Desk

Diplomatic dilemma

The controversy that has erupted regarding the pope's planned meeting with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim points to a particularly difficult public relations question: How does one manage to do something positive when — on the surface, at least — the effort may appear negative?

I'm no mind reader, but I can't believe that in his meeting with Waldheim, Pope John Paul II is going to praise the Austrian leader's humanitarian efforts. Nor can I believe that the pope will let Waldheim off without saying a few pointed words about religious intolerance, persecution and genocide.

As Cardinal John O'Connor noted in the National Catholic News Service article on page 4, the Polish government favored the idea of a papal visit — until John Paul II made his first speech, that is. "Mr. Waldheim might regret having importuned for this visit," the cardinal remarked.

Assuming that the pope does in fact plan to use the Waldheim meeting for purposes other than the simple "state visit" Vatican officials have explained, could he have handled the arrangements so as to avoid offending Jews throughout the world?

That question is also addressed in the NC article by Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations. Rabbi Waxman seemed to acknowledge that the pope could have an ulterior motive in agreeing to meet with Waldheim, but said Jewish leaders should have been briefed on the pope's plans before the meeting was announced.

That's a fine idea, but it does have one flaw — Waldheim doubtless would back out of the meeting if it became clear he was going to be chastized. Positive papal meetings have high public-relations value for politicians who represent large Catholic constituencies. But if the pope questions the politicians' morality, it's far better to stay home.

Nevertheless, it would have been possible secretly to inform Jewish leaders of the pope's intent, all the while keeping Waldheim in the dark. Covert maneuvers of that sort aren't terribly fair and probably would detract from the eventual impact of the meeting.

So the world will have to wait to see what the pope has in mind. I hope, however, that when all is said and done, the Vatican will release information on the substance of the talks, so that questions surrounding the pope's intentions may finally be resolved.

Letters

Battle rages between Mary, 'Satanic communism'

To the Editor:

Over the next few weeks, Americans will prepare to celebrate Independence Day, 1987 — time to dig out the flag, start up the grill and get ready for those holiday cookouts and fireworks. Our nation seems to be in fairly good shape, yet today, many don't totally realize how very threatened this country is.

Seventy years ago, Our Lady of Fatima came to request the rosary, the scapular and reparation. God's sign of approval came on October 13, 1917, when he wrought the great miracle of the sun, witnessed by 75,000 people.

Twelve years later, on June 13, 1929, Mary returned to tell Sister Lucy, by that time a Carmelite nun, that she wanted something else — the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart ("The moment has come for God to ask the Holy Father, in union with all the bishops of the world, to consecrate Russia to my Immaculate Heart, promising to save it by this means").

Our Lady also said that this consecration was to be collegial — that is, the pope and all the bishops — and its object was Russia. If the consecration was performed, Russia would be converted and there would be peace. If not, Russia would "spread its errors throughout the world, raising up wars and persecu-

tions against the Church. The good will be martyred, the Holy Father will have much to suffer, and various nations will be annihilated."

Jesus further warned Sister Lucy to make it known to all the bishops that if "they follow the example of the king of France in delaying the execution of my command and that they will follow him into misfortune." This refers to Jesus' command of June 17, 1689, to the king of France, to consecrate France to the Sacred Heart. The order was not heeded, and exactly 100 years to the day later, on June 17, 1789, the king was to lose his throne — and his head — when the Third Estate overthrew the French monarchy.

The whole battle of Mary vs. Satanic communism goes back to the Book of Revelation: "A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun ... and on her head, a crown of 12 stars ... Then, another sign appeared in the sky: it was a huge dragon, flaming red ... His tail swept a third of the stars from the sky" (Revelation 12-14). Mary is the "woman clothed with the sun," who appeared at Fatima, causing the great miracle of the sun. The "dragon, flaming red" is nothing else but Marxist communism.

Lastly, what can we do? Vatican policy for 25 years has been dominated by Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican

Secretary of State, and his 1962 Vatican/Moscow Agreement, in which the Church promised to keep silent on communism, while the Soviets pledged to loosen their grip on the Russian Church. The Church has suffered in painstaking silence, while Russia has reneged on its promise time and time again. Pope John Paul II is breaking away from Cardinal Casaroli and his agreement. He wants to consecrate Russia, but needs to know of the support of his laity and pastors. This consecration cannot be done too soon, because, today, intelligence experts agree that Soviet Russia is now mobilizing for a major military confrontation in 1988 with the United States.

So let us petition our bishop and the Holy Father, to let them know what our spiritual needs are. Let us rise up in attack of the 1962 Vatican Moscow Agreement and of Cardinal Casaroli's policies. Let us petition for the revelation of the third secret, which Our Lady wanted done 27 years ago! In the meantime, let us continue to pray our rosaries and wear our scapulars — for, as Mary told St. Dominic, "It is through the rosary and the scapular that I will one day save the world."

Ted Crosby, 17
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Phelps

Kawiak conundrum conjures shades of 'banned in Boston'

To the Editor:

In response to your front-page article of June 4 entitled "Vatican letters revive issues involving diocesan priest," I would like to add a few words of comment.

I know nothing about the book, since I never was a parent. As a retired elementary teacher, I have resolved to try to locate a copy to read so that I can judge it for myself. Shades of "banned in Boston!"

However, I do have very strong feelings concerning the photograph of a children's liturgy at which Father Kawiak presided last December. What was wrong with a child bringing in a loved stuffed animal to share with a needy child? For children, isn't this more meaningful than a poinsettia?

I am reminded of the story "The Littlest Angel," which was recorded by Loretta Young. The angels had been asked to present their most prized

possessions at the altar for possible selection to become the Star of Bethlehem. The littlest angel's was the tooth-marked collar of his dog. He was ashamed when he saw and probably heard the reaction of the others. Then, to his surprise, it was his gift that was chosen. The Jesus Christ I love would smile upon the use of stuffed animals by an understanding, innovative Father Kawiak.

I'm personally tired of hearing about Michael Macaluso and his Catholics United for the Faith group. Where and who can other Catholics with alternative, viable opinions write to at the Vatican so that "they" may become aware that others in the Rochester diocese may think differently? I would appreciate this address.

On Friday, June 5, I had the privilege of hearing once again Sister Joan Chittister, OSB, of Erie, Pa., speak on "The Role of Women in Church and

Society: Critique and Challenge." A powerful speaker and a powerful message! It was sponsored by the Great Lakes Ministry Center and was well-attended. The men, except for a few brave souls, were conspicuously absent. Channel 10's motto — "If it concerns you, it concerns us" — might apply to this issue. Great Lakes has the address to write for her tape. As with the United States/USSR situation, it doesn't hurt to listen and discuss — women as well as men.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Ms. Straub and other interested readers are advised to express their opinions to Most Rev. Pio Laghi, STD JCD, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in the United States, 3339 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20008.

St. Elmo's fire kindles spark of curiosity in reader's mind

To the Editor:

I was born in Little Europe, Pennsylvania, where only the school teachers spoke English. I remember in religion class that St. Elmo was known by another name.

My granddaughter was sitting on the porch as a thunderstorm was approaching. We saw this bluish flame on the pole, and she asked, "What's that?"

"St. Elmo's fire," I replied. "Who's St. Elmo?" she asked. "I don't know," I said, "but I'll find an answer."

So far, I've asked five priests, and they didn't know. I would appreciate it if some of the readers of the

Courier-Journal would respond to this question.

John Yuhas
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EDITOR'S NOTE: According to the New Catholic Encyclopedia, St. Elmo is a legendary martyr, also known as St. Erasmus. His feast is June 2. The encyclopedia notes that, since the 13th or 14th century, St. Elmo "has been venerated as one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. He is reputed to have been the bishop of Formia in the Campagna, and Gregory the Great stated that his relics were preserved in the cathedral of that town. When Formia was destroyed by the Saracens in 842,

Elmo's remains were moved to Gaeta, where he became a patron of that city. Nothing else in the fabulous tales told of St. Elmo has any basis in reality; e.g., that he was the bishop of Antioch who underwent many tortures in Diocletian's persecution and died after being miraculously transported to Italy. As one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers he finally became a patron against cramps, colic, and all intestinal troubles, and even of women in labor. In Mediterranean countries he became the protector of sailors, and among Neapolitan sailors, the electrical discharges seen around mastheads before and after storms were called St. Elmo's Fire."

Prayer for World Peace video available

To the Editor:

For those who would like a home videotape of "Prayer for World Peace" — broadcast Saturday, June 6, from Rome, with 16 shrines joined together live by TV satellite — call (800)635-5442 or write Prayer for Peace, P.O. Box 2150, Los Angeles, Calif. 90051. The price by check or money order is \$32.95 for the one-hour tape. You should also enclose a note stating whether you

want VHS or Beta, and whether you want the tape in English or Spanish. Checks should be made out to Global Media Ltd.

In case you missed the original broadcast, it was in color, in many languages and from five continents. It would make a wonderful gift.

Mary Rita Crowe
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Guidelines

The Courier-Journal welcomes your opinions. Letters must bear the writers' signatures, full addresses and telephone numbers. They must be brief, typed (double-spaced, please) and no longer than 1½ pages.

Letters should be mailed to: Opinion, Courier-Journal, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

We routinely condense letters, edit offensive words and libelous statements, and reserve the right to reject letters. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made, and the letters will reflect the writers' own styles.