



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

Respite and work

I resume *Along the Way* after a peaceful and renewing vacation, I want to thank you all very much for your summer prayers and for your kind birthday greetings which made turning 50 a much happier experience than I ever dreamed it could be.

Howard Hubbard, Tom Powers, Mike Farano and I enjoyed a vacation in Rome and Sicily. I always delight in vacations, but since returning I have told several friends that I would rate this one the finest ever.

As I look back on it all now, I can identify with ease some of the factors that contributed to the delight of those days. I think of the fact that we were in a different nation and therefore had a much greater sense than we ordinarily have of being away from the routine of daily living. I also think of the beauty of the sea, the kindness of the Italian people, my superb vacation companions, old friends in Rome, excellent weather and, last but certainly not least, the wonderful food of Italy.

Important as all those factors were, I think the gift underlying all of the others and heightening my capacity to enjoy them was a sense of peace and freedom from worry about the events of daily life. For that gift, I thank our God, who is always gracious and kind. But I also thank you for your prayerful support and encouragement.

What happens now? I keep telling people that I am not going to look for any trouble during August. There is certainly work to be done, but so far it appears that this will not be as hectic a month as so many are. If that remains true — and I hope it does — I intend to spend some extra time praying, thinking, reading and writing in preparation for the coming months. Some of that will be related to specific projects and events.

Among them: a talk on priestly ministry which I have been invited to prepare for the priests of the Diocese of Albany; some reading on the theology of the papacy and the local Church in preparation for our brother John Paul II's visit to our nation next month; follow-up work on some of the important issues facing us as a local community of faith.

Another portion of those activities will, I hope, have no purpose or design other than to open my mind and heart to the reality of God's immense and personal love for each of us and for all of us as a community.

At the end of this first post-vacation column, let me ask you to continue your prayers for Father Jim Mooney. Jim remains in excellent spirits and is much strengthened by your support. As you read these words, he will be in the hospital for four days receiving a second round of chemotherapy.

A final request for prayers: please pray for Father Bob Miller, the pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral. Bob has been called to cope with the harsh reality of cancer. He does that as he does all things, in great faith, with wit and a freedom born of years of faithful prayer. He strengthens all of us these days by his trusting participation in the suffering of the Lord. I know that he takes heart from your prayers.

Peace to all.

C-J Letters Policy

The Courier-Journal wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome all *signed, original* letters about current issues affecting Church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the Church. We will choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letter writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters. Mail them to: Letters to the Editor, Courier-Journal, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.



C-J Letters

Alumni defend SBI as 'worthy' ...

To the editor:

After reading Father Cuddy's article in the July 23 issue of the Courier-Journal entitled, "Where there's a will," I felt the necessity of offering another viewpoint.

While it is true that St. Bernard's is no longer a seminary educating men for the priesthood, St. Bernard's Institute is providing a much needed and more comprehensive service for our diocese than ever before, and one that is much needed in the Church today.

Vatican II recognized that the priest, while the religious leader of a parish, cannot be expected, and indeed, should not be expected to run every aspect of parish life as had been done in the past. The Church does not belong to the priest, but to all the people of God, and they all need to take "ownership" of it, by investing their time and talents and not just their money in the operation of the Church's ministries. Today's highly educated laity possess not only the advanced degrees, but a wealth of business, social and family skills that equal or exceed those of the priest. The Church has called forth those skills and the knowledge and abilities of the laity as well as the clergy and religious, to work together for the common good in all areas of ministry.

St. Bernard's Institute helps the clergy, religious and laity to acquire a broad range of theological knowledge through their various graduate level programs, leading to several degrees in theology and divinity. Priests who were educated in the old St. Bernard's did not receive a degree at the end of their seminary education until the seminary was in its final years of existence. These men now have the opportunity to obtain master degrees in theology, thanks to the fine educational opportunities offered by SBI. In addition, it is the academic "home" of the Permanent Diaconate Program in this diocese, giving an excellent formational education to those men who will become our deacons. The diaconal candidates' wives also have the opportunity to study for degrees.

In our classes, many religious took courses along with lay persons who were interested in theology. One of the greatest opportunities for knocking down the prejudicial barriers between various denominations was the opening of registration for the course to those of other denominations, and the understandings that came about of each other's viewpoints certainly helped advance the Kingdom of God.

I would recommend that any person considering bequests or donations to worthy theological edu-

cational institutions seriously consider the great work for the Diocese of Rochester that is being done by St. Bernard's Institute. The church of today in America has a very great need for all the help it can get — clerical, religious and lay, and we need to lay aside the old idea that "Father can do it all" and realize that unless we all work together, united under Christ, that the Catholic Church in America is in great jeopardy. Every Catholic must do his or her part by participating actively in the life of the parish and di-

ocese, so that the Church may not only survive, but be strengthened by the enormous pool of talent that is available to serve the Church in large and small, but vital ways. St. Bernard's Institute needs our support to survive and grow, so it may continue to offer its excellent theological educational opportunities to all.

Deacon Eugen Edwards
Blackwell Lane
Henrietta

EDITOR'S NOTE: Deacon Edwards is an alumnus of St. Bernard's Institute.

... reject Fr. Cuddy's 'folly'

To the Editor:

Newspaper columnists are known to keep files of "future article" possibilities — ideas which are not compelling enough to be treated immediately, but which may be pressed into duty at a later date when a deadline is approaching and no fresh topic emerges to fill a column.

As months and then years pass, such topics not only become stale and lose their relevance, but also they can become downright misleading and damaging.

How else can one explain Paul Cuddy's "Where there's a will..." column in the July 23rd edition? Cuddy dredges up a five-year-old non-issue that is possibly rooted in his ongoing personal feelings about the conversion of St. Bernard's from a seminary to an institute.

Cuddy in effect suggests that funds originally intended to support the preparation of priests at St. Bernard's should now be diverted elsewhere in the diocese, or even as far away as Kenya — anywhere, it would seem, except to Rochester's own center for graduate theological study. One wonders if his suggestion is based on a limited and outdated notion of "priest."

Cuddy's pre-Vatican II mindset misses the essential point — a point he is perhaps avoiding: that the Spirit is indeed raising up a new kind of "priest" from among the religious and lay members of our diocesan faith community, and that upon their preparation and training lies the efficacy of ministerial activity in the diocese in years to come.

Stated differently, Cuddy's counterproductive suggestion is 180 degrees out of phase; it not only misses the point, but it is damaging to an extreme degree. I believe that the goal for all of us should be to increase our support of St. Bernard's Institute as it changes with the times and as it continues to prepare priests, religious, and the laity to better serve the Body

of Christ in this area.

In the same issue of the Courier-Journal, Sister Marie Augusta Neal, a professor at Harvard University Divinity School, is quoted as she described the decline in numbers of vowed religious and the assumption of their traditional roles by lay men and women. Sister Neal notes that: "Some of us think that this has only occurred because there are fewer priests and sisters, and (the laity) are simply filling in... That is not the case. The Church has affirmed their baptismal vows... and they are accepting it. The style of the Church's life in the future may be different, but the call of the Church will remain the same."

I hope that Paul Cuddy comes to see and accept the essential truth of Sister Neal's observation. Speaking personally, I can attest that the prisoners, recovering addicts, cancer patients, and others to whom I have been prepared to minister shudder at the suggestion that funds otherwise slated for St. Bernard's be instead diverted to some Third World country, precisely at a time when our shortage of ordained priests is reaching crisis proportions, and precisely at a time when non-ordained religious and laity are called to be "priests" in the truest Christian sense of the word.

What we are called to do, I believe, is to recognize the workings of the Spirit in all of this, and to embrace and support those from among us who attend St. Bernard's with the sincere desire of being more effective ministers to the remainder of the faith community.

To refrain from supporting such dedicated individuals at this juncture would seem to be the very height of folly.

J. David Lortscher
Springwater, N.Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lortscher is a May, 1987, graduate of St. Bernard's Institute.

Catholic official seeks sponsors for needy children

To the Editor:

Perhaps you will be good enough to share this with your readers. I write to you from Rome. From priests and religious with whom I am meeting here, we have in New York the photos and family histories of more than 4,000 children in the Near East — I repeat, four-thousand children — and some of them orphans who need food, clothing, school books and medical care.

What does it cost to take care of a child overseas? In most cases, \$15 a month!

The priests and religious ask me to find sponsors for these children. The child — or someone acting for the child — will write to the sponsor, and the sponsor is free to write, and even visit, the child. Every penny the sponsor gives for the child is used for that child — with nothing removed for "overhead."

What now do we ask of your readers? We ask that they write to

me and enclose their initial \$15 monthly checks. I'll immediately send the photo and family history of each sponsor's own "adopted" child. Sponsors may discontinue their sponsorship whenever they wish, of course.

The 4,000 children are in need,

and our priests and religious ask your help. We hope to hear from you.

Monsignor John G. Nolan
Catholic Near East Welfare
Association
1011 First Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10022

Courier rationalized missing coverage

To the Editor:

Your answer to Joanne Facci's letter (C-J June 18: "Coverage missed — of ceremony or issues behind it?"), regarding the lack of coverage of the St. Bernard's Institute graduation, seems to me, to be rationalization. The diversity of this year's class provided a wealth of material for one of your talented writers to create an interesting article. Not only did you miss one story, but 23!

As the shortage of ordained clergy increases — we will have half the current number in about 10 years — the Church is looking for creative

ways to respond to the needs of the People of God. St. Bernard's is in the forefront of this enterprise, providing the kind of education and ministry skills necessary to meet the challenge of the future.

The launching into the community of St. Bernard's graduates — men as well as women, priests, religious and lay — should be of interest to the greater community.

Deirdre M. Hetzler
Registrar and Director
of Admissions
St. Bernard's Institute