

Bishop realizes renewal through recreation and retreat

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

It is Monday evening, July 31, the day on which the church celebrates in a special way the holiness and spiritual legacy of St. Ignatius of Loyola. I am sitting in the living room at Sacred Heart trying to put together my first post-July column for the *Catholic Courier*. It's quiet here just now. Tom Mull is meeting with Joan Winter, Sacred Heart's new Parish Council chairperson. Stan Kacprzak is on vacation, and Paul Tomasso is out for the evening.

I drove in from Waterford early today to get myself organized for work tomorrow after what has been an enjoyable retreat and vacation experience. I have been sitting here for a while thinking about the month. I reflect on this period with gratitude because the memories of these weeks leave me with a great sense of God's gentle touch and healing power. The weeks weren't all that complicated. I made an eight-day retreat at Guelph, spent some time with my family, and spent two weeks at the ocean with Howard Hubbard and Tom Powers, longtime and dear friends.

When I remember the days, I recall no great insights or extraordinary experiences. I do recall the beauties of nature, the love and loyalty of family, the kindness of friends, the quiet and healing of prayer, the

renewal that comes from rest. Let me share with you a few specific July memories that lead me tonight to rest with thoughts of God's gracious and abiding presence with us.

When I think of my retreat at Guelph, I remember the understanding and encouragement Paul Dungan offered so generously as he walked with me through that graced experience. And I recall the companionship and witness of Karlien Bach, RSM, of St. Rita's, Webster. Karlien and I traveled together to the retreat. She was a blessing to me during those days, not only because of her own presence but because of the reminder she was to me each day of all the women and men of our diocese. I also think of the 40 other women and men on retreat and how we grew in and through the prayer of the community.

When I remember the time I spent at home, I think of the generosity and love of my mother, sister and brother-in-law, and my nieces. They made the days at home happy ones and were especially generous in making the completion of my 52nd year much less painful than it might otherwise have been. I think of walking with Margaret to the new pizza parlor in town when she applied for a job and of her joy when she was hired. I think of going with my

mother to have lunch at the restaurant where Mary Ellen works. She did well, but I was too nervous to eat! I remember going to the Snow Man with Kathleen to bring home ice cream sundaes for the family and the delight with which we shared them. I remember Mary Ellen, who treasures her sleep, coming to my mother's at 7 a.m. this morning to say goodbye to me.

When I remember vacation days at the shore, I remember most of all Howard and Tom, longtime and very dear friends. Their company is always healing and encouraging. I am sure you have gathered, from my comments over the years, that we are not the world's most creative or imaginative vacationers. But we did go whale watching this year and to the Cape Cod Baseball League All-Star game. Otherwise we did the usual things like going to the beach, reading and watching an occasional Red Sox game on television. All of those things were enjoyable, but our conversations — and silences — were the greatest of vacation pleasures to me.

Thanks for your retreat and vacation prayers and for your kind birthday greetings. I am grateful for them all and assure you that I remembered you with great fondness through all the days.

Peace to all.



Along The Way

Unborn children deserve to be treated with dignity, not just as 'refuse'

To the editor:

On Friday July 7, in the *Democrat and Chronicle* under the "Nation" section, was a little article regarding a Federal judge, David Doty, who struck down a 1987 Minnesota law requiring dignified and sanitary disposal of aborted and miscarried babies. The judge stated that the law could interfere with a woman's right to abortion by elevating the status of an unborn child to that of a person or human body thereby creating a psychological burden for the woman seeking an abortion. As a mother who has lost 8 children in early pregnancy to miscarriage, I am sickened that this self-appointed "diety" has chosen to ignore all logical and scientific evidence of the humanness of an unborn baby — what does he think it is, a cat, a dog or a rock??? — and denigrate God's most beautiful and innocent creation to the status of garbage. Anyone with any sense knows that the combination of human sperm and human ovum makes another individual human being, not canine, nor plant life and certainly not garbage.

This type of racist thinking is not new to this world. As William Brennan writes in his book *The Abortion Holocaust*: "Demeaning designations of the victims as trash, rubbish, debris, garbage or some kind of disposable waste places them at the very bottom of the subhuman scrap pile."

In *The Rubbish Heap* (1942), Lucien Rebatet's depictions of Jews as rubbish provided the basis upon which he advocated their deportation and destruction. In 1967, *Obstetrics and Gynecology* published an article by Dr. Dorothea Kerslake and Donn Casey wherein they described a baby torn apart by suction abortion as "debris from the conceptus." This type of degrading terminology continues into the 1980's with renewed vigor by the anti-life crowd. In 1980 a Finnish doctor, Dr. Martti Kekomaki used the garbage terminology to justify the grisly and inhuman experiments which involved cutting off the heads and slicing open the stomachs of live aborted babies. The doctor — and I use this term loosely — explained "An aborted baby is

just garbage and that's where it ends up. You must see it like this; These fetuses are just refuse."

As I see it, we humans learn nothing from history. The Germans — and the rest of the world because of their silence — denigrated the Jews and other groups they chose to label inferior or garbage. The white slave owners and those who supported subjection of another because of skin color, dehumanized the black race to the level of "chattel." Now, the human race has turned vengefully upon its own offspring desperately trying to assuage feel-

ings of responsibility and blood-guiltiness by neat, efficient dehumanizing terms such as product of conception, uterine debris and pregnancy tissue.

To those with any sense or ability to use logic, an unborn child is human and therefore should be treated with at least dignity that one decent human owes another. This semantic camouflage that the anti-life bunch consistently utilizes must be torn down if we are to survive.

Mary Ellen Frisch
Gillett Road
Spencerport

Catholic schools foster faith throughout day

To the editor:

I wish to respond to the June 15 letter of Jerry Callan for the closing of all parish schools and replacing them with religious-education classes (*Courier*: "Writer says develop religious-education programs").

I, too, was educated in Catholic schools from elementary through graduate school. I spent three years teaching in a city Catholic school and one year as a substitute teacher in the Catholic and public schools. When the first of our three children was born I chose to leave the teaching profession and remain at home to care for my family. My husband is self-employed and we send our three children to area Catholic schools.

In response to Mr. Callan's plea for "religious-education classes more than once a week" I see my children studying their faith each day. Their religious training does not end with religion class but moral and spiritual values are stressed throughout the entire day. It is not unusual for the entire school to start the day with a decade of the rosary (especially during the months of October and May). During Advent and Lent daily acts of kindness are encouraged. Most important in my eyes are the liturgies. When the entire school gathers in the church to attend Mass to celebrate the beginning of a new school year or a feast day, and the children take part in the Mass it is clear to me that there can be no substitute for our Catholic schools.

In all fairness I have to agree with Mr. Callan on the issue of fundraisers. Yes, the Catholic schools do have several fundraisers on a yearly basis. However, so do the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts. There are bowlathons, walkathons and rockathons for MS, MD, Diabetes, Cancer, and the list goes on. It is not uncommon for me to answer my door to find children from area PUBLIC schools raising money for

their senior trip to Toronto or the band trip to Europe.

If Mr. Callan does not wish to support his parish school through the church collection basket or through school fundraisers that is his privilege. No one can force him to give financial support.

My husband and I will continue to pay our taxes that support the public school system. We have no choice. We do have the freedom of choice of what type of education we want for our children. We have chosen Catholic Education. I hope and pray that this freedom of choice is never taken away from us.

Diane Heberger
32 Bucky Drive
Rochester

Abortion takes innocent life

To the editor:

Our Governor points to the possibility of putting an innocent person to death as a major reason for opposing the death penalty.

Shouldn't that rationale be considered by those who support abortion? Are they so very, very certain that the fetus is not a baby — and if they are so certain; what logic leads to that certainty? I really don't believe that anyone can be absolutely certain that abortion is not the taking of a truly innocent life.

So then, if indeed the possibility exists that abortion is really the taking of the life of a baby ought we all not be very, very careful about encouraging such an irrevocable action as abortion? Certainly whether it be a blob of protoplasm or a human life, it sure is "killed" by this process.

Kevin & Anne Kelly
Bellmawr Drive
Rochester

Letters Policy

The *Catholic Courier* 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: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.



Flag burning not worth ban

To the editor:

I've got to disagree with Father Shamon (*Courier*, *A Word for Sunday*, June 29: "An Independence Day look at liberty's misuse). Because some character wishes to burn a flag, it's no reason to make a crime of it. There are worse things than that, that are not banned.

Patrick Henry's voice spoke for the white Anglo-Saxon Protestants. Blacks were in bondage, Indians were pushed back and Catholic, Jews and Foreign Born were poorly represented.

I disagree with flag burning very much — just as I would burning a person in effigy. God, Family and Country in that order and hope for the best. And I think Father Shamon is a great priest.

Thomas H. Dady
Brett Road
Rochester

Si
Sist
McQue
Mercy
Moone
teacher
conges
at Au
Hospit
An A
born N
Aubun
duated
1951.
degree
Colleg
ucator
a mast
the Un
Siste
congre
perpet
In 1
teachr
School
three y
for sti
chester
Fo
Contli
cies, s
ity and
The
SWEN
to hear
or are
anothe
bled, I
percen
ers are
Corr
ing the
food c
gust is
tioning
The
board
it to t
was a
Sup
ROC
mily P.
Center
port g
iencing
The
and tra
well a
groups
week 1
colleg
For
volunt
or Mar

JAN
Paym
Mace
N
Thur: