

Ice storm brought many people closer

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

It was a wonderful sight to see the little ones tripping along to school this morning. With multicolored ski caps on their heads and book bags strapped to their backs, they were a welcome sign that we are on our way back to normal living conditions after the devastation of last week's ice storm.

People are rejoicing at the return of the electric power to their homes, and hoping for a speedy restoration for those who still lack adequate heat and light. As I write these words, reports indicate that 20,000 homes in the Rochester area still lack power. I hope that the number will be zero or close to it by the time you read these words.

Given the intensity of the storm, the amount of damage it caused and the long loss of the electric power, I imagine that the ice storm of March, 1991, will live in the memory of people for a long time. For years to come people will speak about it. "Where were you when the storm started?" "Where did you stay?" "How did you ever get your cellar bailed out?" "For how many days was your power

out?"

Parents will reminisce about how they coped with the kids. And just yesterday I overheard two teenagers discussing how they coped with their parents during those long days when people spent much more time together than they usually do — when they did it because they couldn't do much else; when they did it without the conveniences we so easily take for granted.

It will be interesting to discover what stories about the storm will be lasting ones — the ones that will be told year after year at the beginning of March. Just now the nerves of many are quite understandably frayed. It's difficult to be without heat and light for long periods of time. Very difficult. It's also dangerous. And it's difficult, tedious and dangerous work to restore the power. People are working themselves to exhaustion trying to do it. Many of our sisters and brothers need time to rest in body and spirit after this calamitous event.

But once things return fully to normal, I expect that much happier memories will emerge and become the ones that will be

told March after March for years to come. Memories of people welcoming others into their homes, helping to clean up their property, offering freezer space and extra food. And as so often happens, even some of the angry, frustrating moments will be sources of laughter sometime down the line. ("Remember Dad's reaction when they said they couldn't even find our street on the map!")

Time can be a wonderful healer and a good teacher. It allows jangled nerves to settle, tensions to ease and angers to calm. It also restores the perspective we can lose when we are worried or afraid or threatened.

It's been quite a year so far, hasn't it? A war and a storm have captured our attention for virtually all of 1991. Both caused enormous amounts of damage. Both are over. But the effects of both linger on. Many of our friends need time to recover from both of these events. And all of us, I am sure, will welcome some calm time to put in perspective the events of early 1991. We need time to discover anything good



that we can make of these exceptional events; we need time to look at these events within the larger framework of life.

I can think of no better time to engage in that kind of reflection than during this Lenten-Easter time of the year. I promise you my prayers as we think and pray about the deeper meaning of life.

Peace to all.

Loretta Doyle to perform at St. Patrick's Day celebrations

ROCHESTER — Loretta Cisterna Doyle will be the featured singer at several upcoming St. Patrick's Day celebrations in the area.

Doyle will sing at a Mass celebrating St.

Patrick's Day at St. Theodore's Church, 168 Spencerport Road, on Friday, March 15, at 7:30 p.m. Rita Manners will perform organ solos as well as accompany Doyle. Charles Dispenza will recite poetic readings. Father Gerald E. Dunn, pastor, will be the celebrant and homilist. Doyle's husband, Andy, will also participate by reciting The Lord's Prayer in Gaelic.

On Saturday, March 16, at 10:45 a.m., Doyle will perform at Rochester City Hall during flag raising ceremonies sponsored by the city's St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. This year's theme for the parade is "America: Gateway to Freedom." During the festivities downtown, Doyle will be accompanied by the Blackthorn Ceilidh Band.

All of these events are open to the public.

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A sign of HOPE ...with your help!

Bishop Paride Taban, pictured here with school children in Torit, Sudan, has stood at the cross of his people's suffering from the war in that African nation. He has bartered his clothes to feed the orphans, traveled life-threatening roads to bring his people food and to give them courage. As long as the Church is in Torit, the people know there is hope, Bishop says. *A gift of \$100 is a month's support for a mission priest, like Bishop Taban, support that enables him to be a sign of hope for his people. Won't you make that offering this Lent through the Propagation of the Faith?*

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