

# Jubilee thoughts of a dear friend

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

The following is an open letter to Bishop Dennis W. Hickey on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood:

Dear Dennis,

When hundreds of your friends gather at Holy Family Church to celebrate your Golden Jubilee on Sunday afternoon, June 23, we will join you there not only with personal memories of your goodness to us, but also with a real sense that we will represent at that celebration the countless thousands of people whom you have served so humbly and so lovingly for the past 50 years.

I do not presume to speak for all of your friends, but I expect that if we were to take a poll of those who have known you over the years, they would mention among your many admirable qualities some of the following: your

delightful and wry wit; your steady, unflappable presence in moments of tension; your gracious receptivity, understanding and care for the many persons who see your good counsel; and the uncommonly generous commitment to God's people that you have offered in all of the ministries to which you have been called in your half-century of priestly service.

I know that I admire those qualities in you and many more. But what I most admire is what I think of as your wisdom. I won't try to define wisdom here, but I want to describe it as an openness to all that life brings and a willingness peacefully and lovingly to search for all that is good and hopeful in life's experience.

You have demonstrated such openness and curiosity in many ways during the years I have had the pleasure of knowing you. I think, for example, of your desire to become a pastor again after several years of administrative

service at the Pastoral Center. I remember your willingness more than six years ago to accede to my request when I asked you to oversee the *Catholic Courier* at a crucial time in this newspaper's history. You have done wonderful work in all of those ministries, and in each of them you have gained the affection and respect both of those whom you have served and of all of your co-workers.

But it's not only to your public ministerial roles that you have brought your thirst for new human experience. Your devotion to good reading, your weekly battle of wits with the *New York Times Magazine* crossword puzzle, your recent — and, I hear, successful — attempt to master the art of microwave cookery are signs to me of a person who lives out in the practical order a deep, interior awareness that each day God offers new life to each one of us. You do not talk a lot about that awareness, but it clearly is a part of your being and flows, I believe, from your deep and prayerful union with our Lord.

That sense you have of life's dynamism and flow — and of the Lord's presence in all of life — is the best explanation I can give for what I have often thought of as your remarkable sense of perspective and proportion.



You know the relative importance of things, and have a delicate sense of when to speak and when to remain silent; when to take action and when to be still.

I thank you, Dennis, for the gracious and generous ways in which you have shared those good gifts with all of us through the 50 years of your priestly ministry. I hope you have a rich sense in this Jubilee time of the affection and respect in which you are held by all of us.

Finally, let me thank you personally for the friendship and support, the wisdom and good counsel you have so kindly offered me in my years as Bishop of Rochester. You are a dear friend, and I love you. Peace to you always.

Gratefully,  
Matt

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### Groups to lobby for parental-notification amendment

ROCHESTER — In conjunction with diocesan Social Ministry, pro-life activists are urging Monroe County legislators to pass an amendment requiring parental notification for minors obtaining abortions.

A public forum on the proposed amendment, sponsored by William Polito (Rep.-8th District), will take place at the Monroe County Legislature's session at 6

p.m. on June 25.

The proposed amendment will be attached to a bill providing funds for pregnancy-counseling services. It would require parental notification before dependent minors — aged 17 and under — can obtain an abortion.

For information, call Robert Dorscheid at 716/586-3956.

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