

Easter season evokes grateful feelings

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

I am drawn this morning to write about some of the people and events that have been a part of my life during this Easter Season. They give me life and encouragement. They fuel my hope and remind me in very concrete ways that the Risen One is indeed alive doing wonderful things through us and among us.

In that spirit, I think of ...

- **The priests of our diocese:** When we gathered in Corning recently for our annual spring convocation, I was deeply impressed by the high spirit of our priests and by the great affection in which they hold one another. They are indeed a great blessing in our local church.

Day in and day out, they work quietly to serve God's holy people, daily offering far more acts of loving ministry than any one of us ever sees. I told them on that occasion and want to tell you that I am enormously grateful for their work and proud to serve with them in our presbyterate.

- **The catechists of our diocese:** These generous men and women are on my mind in a special way this morning because tomorrow I'll spend the day with a group of catechetical leaders from all over our diocese. I look forward to the event as offering some way of expressing my gratitude to them. They give generous care to our community, sharing the witness of their faith with our beautiful young people.

I offer particular thanks for their invitation to address them tomorrow. Their



A LONG THE WAY

request opened a door to the memory of people who made a difference in my life when I was a boy. It's a pleasure to remember them.

- **The Knights of Columbus:** My brother Knights hosted me at their state convention last weekend. As state chaplain of that fraternity, I was privileged to preside and preach at the opening liturgy of the convention and to address them at their formal banquet.

Their company reminded me of their generous support and encouragement in some areas very dear to my heart. Among them are education programs for our special children, promotion of vocations to the priesthood, and reverent care and support for the unborn.

- **Our beautiful young people:** Two

types of spring gatherings bring them to mind — our annual Bishop's Day with Youth and several confirmations we celebrate during these weeks. Both put me in touch with our young men and women. Both leave me deeply impressed by their goodness and their talent.

They are subject to some strong pressures, pressures that seem to me far more obvious and persistent than any I experienced as a young man. And yet these are delightful, hopeful people. To me, they are a great encouragement. I hope they are to you, too.

- **My family:** I always try to get home for Mothers' Day, and this year I made it. Our family gathered at the home of my sister and brother-in-law to honor the two mothers and to celebrate three birthdays — those of Grace, Mary Ellen (both May 13) and Father Tom Power (May 14).

In addition to those causes for celebration, we were mindful also that this week Jane graduates from Canisius College and Mary Ellen graduates from Hudson Valley Community College. It probably won't surprise you to learn that the two graduations are on the same day at the same time.

I am deeply grateful to my family and friends for the faithfulness of the years and for the joy they are to me each time we meet.

Dear friends, thank you for allowing me to share these memories of life with you. I hope they have been an invitation to you to take a moment to remember and thank God for the people who strengthen your heart, who bring you joy.

Peace to all.

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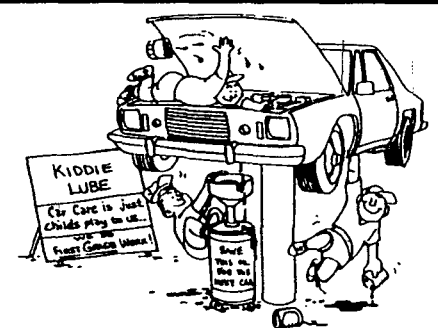
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