

Thanks for a legacy of leadership

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

A letter to Bishop Joseph L. Hogan:
Dear Joe,

On Sunday at 3 p.m. your friends from all parts of our diocese will gather at Sacred Heart Cathedral to celebrate the 50th anniversary of your ordination to priesthood.

We'll gather in the rich unity of our faith, and we'll gather in warm affection for you and in deep gratitude for the richness of your priestly ministry through the years.

We'll all tell our own stories about you. We'll talk about your wonderful mind and your devotion to study, about your strong commitment to the vision of Vatican Council II, about your courage in leading our diocese in its generous response to that vision, about your wit, about your love for your students, about the untiring generosity of your service in every ministerial assignment you've held since your ordination in 1942.

I have known you for one-half of your priesthood. When our class arrived at St. Bernard's Seminary in 1957, it was shortly after you celebrated your silver jubilee.

I noted then and remembered through the years the warm human touch you brought to the classroom. You could kid yourself and you could kid with us. In those years, I appreciated your willingness to share your humanity and to encourage our growth.

As I remember it now, I realize that you were modeling in your own life, even then, the kind of ministry to which the church would call all of us just a few years later.

That earlier experience was brought back



A LONG THE WAY

to me when I was named your successor as Bishop of Rochester. No matter how many years on this earth the Lord may choose to grant me, I shall never forget your warm reception and the steadfast support you have given me ever since. On the night of my installation, you pledged to me your love and your support.

I want to thank you again for those words. More, I want to express my profound gratitude, my admiration for the way you have honored that pledge. You have always been supportive. I don't know how anyone could be more generous to his successor than you have been: I would want to honor my own successor just as you have honored me.

But if there is one portion of your priestly service for which I am most deeply grateful it is for your years of ministry as the seventh

Bishop of Rochester. I was not a part of this local church during those years, so I did not experience first-hand the challenges you faced. But I have had the privilege of succeeding you and have learned through the years just how complex and demanding the ministry of the bishop can be in today's church. From that perspective I want to tell you that you did an extraordinarily fine job as the bishop of this diocese.

Mike Conboy reviewed your remarkable achievements in his excellent article in last week's Insight section of the *Catholic Courier*. I won't name those accomplishments again here, but I do thank you for all of them. And I thank you from my heart and in the name of the community for all of the hidden things that you did and still do in service of the people of our diocese.

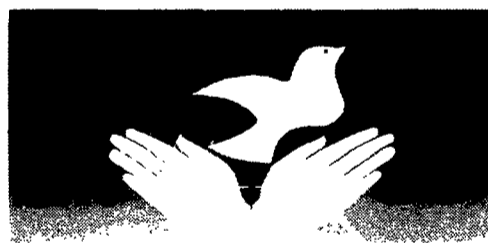
When another history of our diocese is developed, the author will write at length — as did Zwerlein and McNamara — about the incredible contributions of Bernard J. McQuaid, our founding bishop. Joe, the simplest way I can recognize and thank you for your legacy to us is to say that, in my opinion, that second volume will be less than it should be if the author does not devote a massive section to the courageous leadership you provided during a privileged but very demanding time of renewal.

Thanks, dear brother, for all that you have done and continue to do for all of us. May the Lord grant you many more years.

Peace to you.

Gratefully and affectionately,
Matt

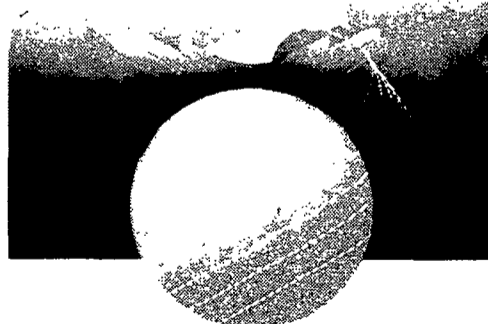
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— Acts 19:20

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