

# Bishop maintains youthful pace on Denver trip

## Spends time as 'one of the guys'

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

DENVER — Who was that "kid" dancing wildly in the stands at Mile High Stadium?

The "kid" making early-morning jogs and then walking distances of up to three miles during the daytime?

Whose attire rarely comprised much more than blue jeans, a T-shirt and sneakers?

This "youngster" was none other than 56-year-old Bishop Matthew H. Clark. The exuberance he displayed last week proved that World Youth Day is not just a celebration for youths, but also for the young at heart.

Rather than just take on the role of official dignitary, Bishop Clark spent virtually the entire week blending in with the 600 youths and chaperones from the Rochester diocese. He flew to Denver with the diocesan contingent, lodged with them, and provided companionship for a myriad of activities — including an overnight outdoor vigil preceding Pope John Paul II's closing Mass this past Sunday, Aug. 15.

Much of the bishop's commitment involved considerable sacrifices with his schedule-making in Denver. Michael Theisen, diocesan coordinator for youth ministry, noted that Bishop Clark passed on an opportunity to attend a Friday morning Mass with the pontiff and other bishops in order to stay with the diocesan contingent.

"It's not easy to give up a Mass with his brother bishops and the pope, but he did," Theisen said. "The model he presents to the youth, being at their level and being with them — it's an incredible statement about how he feels



Marsha Cox (left) takes a picture of Bishop Matthew H. Clark with a group of youths at the Greater Rochester International Airport Aug. 11, just before they departed for World Youth Day in Denver.

S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

about youth and youth ministry."

Those with whom the bishop traveled to Denver expressed similar sentiments.

"We see bishops at Mass with their garb, and they look more elevated. But he showed there's maybe not as much difference between us as we think," remarked Eddie Tracey, 17, a parishioner at Geneva's St. Francis DeSales Church, 130 Exchange St. Tracey's father, Ed, is principal of DeSales High School.

"It sort of puts you on the same

level. Priests are thought of as people you can't talk to like normal people," said Andrea Remmert, 15, a parishioner at St. Mary of the Lake Church, 901 N. Decatur St., Watkins Glen.

"The bishop honored us by being 'one of the guys,'" added Tom Anastasi, youth minister at Irondequoit's Christ the King Church, 445 Kings Highway S.

Bishop Clark, meanwhile, has had no second thoughts about the decision he made when World Youth Day was being planned several months ago.

"I had the option of staying with the kids or bishops, and quite spontaneously, I said I'd spend it with the kids," said Bishop Clark. "I've been very happy about that basic option I exercised."

A personal highlight, he noted, was rejoicing with the youths when they caught their first glimpse of the pope last Thursday during a welcoming ceremony at Mile High Stadium.

"When he came out they were just explosive. It was just a joy to watch them," the bishop observed.

# Catholic peace activist returns from Balkans conflict

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Somewhere over the rainbow lies peace for the war-torn Balkans, according to J. Thomas Malthaner, a parishioner of Corpus Christi Church, 864 E. Main St.

But to get to the other side of that rainbow, peace activists may have to suffer the hard rain and hail of discouragement and danger, something Malthaner experienced during a march in Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina. The city has been the sight of fighting between Croats and Muslims.

A member of both the national and local Pax Christi, a Catholic peace organization, Malthaner was one of 2,500 peace activists from around the world who attempted to march 100 miles from the Adriatic coastal town of Split, Croatia, to Sarajevo earlier this month. The marchers wanted to promote peace in the region and bring food and other supplies to the city's besieged citizens, Malthaner said.

Malthaner left for Italy on July 30, and traveled via ferry to Split on Aug. 2. He took the ferry back to Italy Aug. 13, and returned to Rochester Aug. 15.

Due to fierce fighting and a lack of protection from U.N. forces, only one bus load of activists eventually made it to Sarajevo, Malthaner noted.

The march, which began Aug. 4 in Split, Croatia, started as delicate peace talks among Serbs, Croats and Muslims were near collapse in Geneva over failure to agree on how to divide Bosnia into three separate ethnic republics.

Also at stake in the negotiations was

the partial lifting of the siege to allow relief convoys to enter the city. During the negotiations, the United Nations threatened to authorize NATO aircraft to bomb Serb positions overlooking Sarajevo if the Serbs did not agree to withdraw from key hilltop positions.

As the march progressed, the Geneva talks sputtered, with the threat of bombing becoming more controversial. Meanwhile, conflicting reports emerged as to whether the Serbs were withdrawing.

The result for the marchers was failure to get security guarantees. March leaders also reported threats from military along the route that they might be taken hostage if they continued their trek.

Nonetheless, Malthaner did join up with a group of activists who marched on Aug. 9 from Mostar to a Croatian checkpoint outside the city which lies southwest of Sarajevo. Under Croatian protection, the marchers had hoped to arrange a prayer service with Catholics and Muslims, but were unable to contact the Muslims, Malthaner recalled. He added that a service was held with only Croatian Catholics participating.

Rain had not fallen on the city in more than three-and-a-half months, Malthaner said, but the marchers were drenched in a powerful rainstorm. When the rainstorm ended, an "absolutely beautiful" rainbow appeared in the sky, only to be then interrupted by a fierce hailstorm, Malthaner continued.

"To me, it was a sign that there would be more pain in the peace movement," Malthaner said of the

hailstorm.

The Pax Christi member repeatedly used the word "pain" when describing his experiences in the war-torn region. Particularly agonizing was pondering a decision to go to Sarajevo, he noted.

Artillery shells had fallen within a few yards of one bus full of activists when they attempted to get to the city on Aug. 11, and a number of the passengers came back to Split, he said.

March organizers put together a delegation of 16 activists for another attempt to go to Sarajevo the next day. Malthaner was one of two U.S. citizens asked to go.

"I had to do a lot of soul-searching," Malthaner recalled.

He noted that he left the group's encampment to ponder whether to go when four Croatian soldiers he had met the week before happened upon him and asked him what he was doing.

He noted that the soldiers hated the war, missed their children, but felt they could not stop fighting without

## Catholic Courier to sponsor blood drive on Aug. 28

ROCHESTER — The American Red Cross is "looking for volunteers to lie around all summer and give blood." Well, here's your chance.

The Catholic Courier will sponsor a summer blood drive on Friday, Aug. 27, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The Red Cross Hemoliner will be located in the Pastoral Center's parking lot, 1150 Buffalo Road.

To donate, call Jeanne Morin at 716/328-4340 to slate an appointment.

some sort of international intervention.

"One of them said, 'I'm a soldier, I can't go to Sarajevo,'" Malthaner said. "He said, 'You can. We need your help.'"

"That's when I said, 'Yes, I will go,'" he continued.

Fate, however, intervened to stop Malthaner's trip when the Italian man who owned the bus the peace group was going to use for the Sarajevo delegation forbade the group to take it.

At that point, march organizers decided to return to Italy, Malthaner said. After arriving in Italy, he took part in an Aug. 14 demonstration at the main gate of a U.S. air base in Aviano. The protesters were voicing their opposition to potential air strikes against Serbs, Malthaner said.

"We don't think any armed intervention will help in this war," he said. "Violence will not get us what we want because of the hate we will get in return."

This article contains some information from Catholic News Service.

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