

Sodus parishes draw varied flock

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

The Labor Day weekend is about over. I am in my room at Sacred Heart. Monday night football is playing (minus the volume). Every now and then I switch to the Yankees, who are trailing the Texas Rangers by 7-0. In an ideal world, the Yankees would rally for another win, and the Redskins would soften up the Cowboys in anticipation of Buffalo's visit to Dallas next weekend. But in an ideal world, it wouldn't have rained today either!

I can't complain at all about the weekend. Much to the contrary, I had a wonderful time visiting our communities at Epiphany, Sodus and St. Rose, Sodus Point. The weather was perfect, and the crowds at all of the six liturgies were large and lively.

You may realize that these two communities draw large numbers of seasonal visitors. I met people over the weekend from the dioceses of Syracuse, Orlando, Ogdensburg, Buffalo, Scranton, Albany, Norwich and Erie. In addition to those visitors, there were friends present from a large number of parish communities from our own diocese.

What you may not realize is that area orchards attract large numbers of seasonal workers at this time of the year. The great majority of them come from Mexico, and many of those workers and their families gathered at Epiphany for an early-afternoon liturgy celebrated in the Spanish language.

I had the honor of presiding at that liturgy. Father Charlie Mulligan, recently returned



A LONG THE WAY

after seven years of service in Chile, preached the homily. Also present with the community was Father Bob Kreckel, pastor of neighboring St. Mary of the Lake, Ontario. Bob recently completed a sabbatical program, a major portion of which he devoted to the study of Spanish so that he could minister more fruitfully among the farm workers.

Presiding over the whole weekend was Father George Heyman, pastor of Epiphany and St. Rose. George includes Spanish among the languages in which he has achieved a competency. I was grateful for that as he guided me through the baptism in Spanish of a beautiful little girl named Gabriella Reyes.

I admired his ease in communicating with the young couple who presented their child

for baptism. And I admired the way he related to the wide variety of people who were part of parish life all through the weekend. It reminded me of what a great blessing it is when there is mutual respect and affection between our pastoral ministers and the people they serve.

The great majority of people who formed those communities of worship over the weekend are probably back home now getting ready to go to work tomorrow. I hope that their memories of summer days and this past weekend are as happy as my own are, and that they can return to work or school tomorrow in good spirit. For my part, I have yet to recover from trying to keep up with George during my visit.

You seem to enjoy stories about children. Let me close with this: I met little Erin Putnam after Mass on Sunday. When I greeted her, her mother told me I had met Erin before, that meeting was at the Eastman Theater where we had gone for a presentation about the Olympics by Bausch and Lomb.

Mrs. Putnam told me that Erin had not been feeling well that evening, that when we met she had asked me to bless Erin. At that point Erin, at her mother's coaching, continues the story, "You blessed me. Then I threw up. Then I felt better. Thank you." I'm not sure that Erin continued the story just as Mrs. Putnam had thought she would, but I thought it was wonderful!

Thanks to the communities at Sodus and Sodus Point.
Peace to all.

BE SURE TO LOOK



inside this week's Catholic Courier to see what luck the Notre Dame High School Leprechaun has for you.

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Kids' Chronicle Answer Key

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. e | 6. b |
| 2. h | 7. d |
| 3. a | 8. f |
| 4. j | 9. g |
| 5. c | 10. i |

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