

# Visits offer occasion to reaffirm ties with pope

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concerned that some U.S. women religious were encouraging this kind of feminism, and he asked the bishops to call them to "honest and sincere dialogue."

During his Oct. 15 audience with Bishop Clark and the other members of his delegation, Pope John Paul touched on topics raised in *The Splendor of Truth*, his encyclical on moral theology that had been released Oct. 5.

Pope John Paul remarked to the bishops that when it insists that some activities are morally wrong, "the church is not being dogmatic."

Rather, the church's promotion of the truth about good and evil in human activity is a defense of human dignity, the pope said.

Pope John Paul said the church serves humanity through the activities of its members and institutions and through its proclamation of God's design for humankind.

"The church possesses a truth, a doctrine, a wisdom and an experience" which people need as they seek authentic freedom and good, he said.

The pope said his encyclical letter on moral theology, in which he reaffirms church teaching on morality, is "intended to help dispel the crippling confusion which many people today feel in relation to fundamental questions of good and evil, right and wrong."

The pope said he knew the U.S. bishops were well aware of the "widespread ethical crisis affecting contemporary society," and they also know they will

be "challenged and put to the test" as they try to defend the church's teaching.

But that defense is a defense of the truth about human beings who are able to know the truth about good and evil, he said.

"Because this 'law' is inscribed in our hearts, to accept it and to act accordingly is not to submit to some extraneous imposition," he said. "It is to embrace the deepest truth of our own being."

"By ensuring that the basic truths of the church's moral doctrine are clearly taught, we are offering a reaffirmation of the dignity of the human person, a correct understanding of conscience, which is the only solid basis for the right exercise of human freedom, and a foundation for living together in solidarity and civic harmony," the pope said.

He told the bishops that modern society will not be able to "pull back from its slide into increasingly destructive behavior involving the violation of the basic rights of the human person" without rediscovering and following the moral norms which should govern all conduct.

Pope John Paul repeated a call he made in Denver in August that the United States educate its children with "a value system based on truth."

For modern societies to serve the common good, he said, individuals must accept personal responsibility for their actions before God, others and their consciences.

...  
Contains reporting by Lee Strong.

## Bishop Clark calls his own 'ad limina' cordial, fraternal

Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — When Bishop Matthew H. Clark had a private audience with Pope John Paul II as part of his "ad limina" visit Oct. 15, both men's memories returned to the late 1970s, Bishop Clark said.

"The Holy Father ... always very kindly recalls that he ordained me as a bishop," observed Bishop Clark, who was ordained Rochester's bishop in St. Peter's Basilica May 27, 1979.

"I expressed to him best wishes on the anniversary of his election as pope," Bishop Clark continued, noting that Oct. 16 marked the 15th anniversary of Pope John Paul's election in 1978.

Bishop Clark recalled that he had been standing in St. Peter's Square the day John Paul II became the first non-Italian pontiff in 455 years. At the time, he was Father Clark, spiritual director at the North American College in Rome.

"I said I hoped he was as happy as the bishop of Rome as I have been as bishop of Rochester," Bishop Clark said.

The former Father Clark made his "ad limina" visit — the third since he became bishop of Rochester in 1979 — with other bishops from New York, Minnesota and North and South Dakota.

In addition to a group meeting with Pope John Paul and various Vatican officials during their visit, the bishops dined and celebrated Mass with the pope. Like Bishop Clark, each bishop also visited with the pope individually.

Bishop Clark's private meeting took place at noon Oct. 15. The pope had a map before him to familiarize himself with each visiting bishop's see, Bishop Clark reported.

The amount of time allotted for the individual visits — approximately 15 minutes — does not allow for much more than pleasantries and a few general remarks, Bishop Clark noted.

The bishop said, for example, that he told the pope of the diocese's recently completed Seventh Synod, but he did not go into detail about the recommendations because of time limitations. An official report on the Synod had not yet been submitted to the Vatican, Bishop Clark added.

Meanwhile, the pope did ask about the diocese's young people. In addition, he inquired about vocations and religious life here, Bishop Clark reported.

Visits to the various Vatican departments prompted more detailed discussions, Bishop Clark said. But these discussions also took place in group settings. With so many bishops present

there was little opportunity for in-depth comments about individual dioceses, the bishop observed.

Bishop Clark noted that one of the more interesting visits for him was to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, where the prefect, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, asked the bishops to comment on the Pope's recently published encyclical on morality, *"Veritatis Splendor"* (*The Splendor of Truth*).

Bishop Clark said he had only just read the document, published Oct. 5. He said he had assured the cardinal "that it would receive very careful attention and that it would generate discussion."

In addition, Bishop Clark told the cardinal that, based on his own reading, the encyclical would most likely prompt discussion of moral development in individuals, the role of conscience and "theological plurality" on "disputed issues."

Meanwhile, Rochester's diocesan Synod briefly became a topic of discussion at the Congregation for the Clergy when its prefect, Cardinal Jose Sanchez, asked "what are the reflections of our people on clerical celibacy," Bishop Clark said.

The bishop mentioned that one of the Synod's prophetic recommendations had called for the church to change its current rules on married priests. But,

the bishop added, "We didn't have a wide-ranging discussion."

As for the report concerning the diocese's status — submitted months before his visit — Bishop Clark said diocesan officials will have to wait until the report comes back in "the indeterminate future" to see specific comments and recommendations from Vatican officials.

On the whole, Bishop Clark observed, the "ad limina" visits are not designed to deal with specifics or — as some groups have suggested — to chastise bishops.

"By no description would one call them unpleasant or the kind of thing that would put anybody on the spot," Bishop Clark said. "They are cordial and constructive and fraternal."

The "ad liminas" are intended, rather, to help maintain the ties between the world's bishops and the Holy Father, he acknowledged.

Indeed, Bishop Clark said, "the heart of the 'ad limina' visit is the nourishment it can give through sharing the Eucharist with the Holy Father."

"I think you can't underestimate the powerful — at least symbolically — experience of visiting with the successor of St. Peter," Bishop Clark said, adding, "I think it's important to recognize the centrality of the Roman See to our tradition."

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## Obituary

### Raymond Reif, longtime member of Sacred Heart in Rochester; 91

Raymond P. Reif, a longtime parishioner at Rochester's Sacred Heart Church and Cathedral, died at St. Ann's Home in Rochester on Monday, Sept. 20, 1993, after suffering a stroke. He was 91.

Mr. Reif graduated from the former St. Francis Xavier Elementary School and Cathedral High School in Rochester. In 1936 he married the former Margaret E. Connell, and for most of his adult life he was a parishioner at Sacred Heart, 296 Flower City Park. He served as an usher and Legion of Mary member at the city parish.

Mr. Reif was also a plant supervisor for more than 40 years for Rochester Telephone Inc.

Following the death of his wife in November of 1988, Mr. Reif took a two-week trip to Germany with his only child, Father John T. Reif, pastor of St. Rita's Church, 1008 Maple Drive, Webster. Father Robert C. Bradler, pastor of St. James Church, 130 Brett Road, Irondequoit, accompanied them on the trip.

According to Father Reif, the Ger-

many excursion marked his father's first journey ever by plane. In addition to spending time in their ancestors' town of Urmitz, they visited a house in which family members still reside.

"The trip was sort of the event of a lifetime for him. And it was for me, too, to be able to share that with him," Father Reif said.

In addition to his son, Mr. Reif is survived by a niece, Jeanette Crowley, niece Lorraine Sajonc and her husband, William; niece Virginia Hauck and her husband, Edwin; niece Dorothy Wallenhorst and her husband, Clarence; and several grand-nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Rita's Church on Sept. 25. Interment was at St. Mary's Cemetery in Waterloo.

Mike Latona

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