

Participating in process deepens faith

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

I hope that these early days of Lent have been rewarding and life-giving for you. I hope above all that you have had a lively sense of the constancy of God's merciful love for you and of God's call to offer your love in return.

To be honest with you, I feel a bit spoiled in that regard these days. That's because I've had the privilege once again of presiding at the four Rites of Election we celebrated in our local church during the first full week of Lent.

It would be difficult to share in those experiences and not come away from them with a renewed sense that God's gracious love still speaks to the human heart and is calling us each day to deeper life.

One has only to spend time with our candidates and catechumens to realize that sense. They communicate enthusiasm, a sense of gratitude, a hope that is fresh and invigorating.

It is typical of our newly elected brothers and sisters to be deeply grateful for the hospitality, support and instruction of our communities. I could not agree more that such gratitude is well placed. They have indeed received much from those who, representing their respective communities, have walked with them and shared their faith during their time of preparation.

But it is also true that our new friends have already done much to deepen the life of our communities. I hear testimony



A LONG THE WAY

of that most often from those who have helped them prepare. Sponsors and godparents constantly describe their experience with our candidates as ones from which they have received much more than they ever gave. Having had the privilege of meeting the newly elect, I can well understand the truth of the statement.

But the statement normally reflects something more than a joy derived from watching growth occur in another person. That is present of course. But present also is a rich sense among our sponsors and godparents that through their participation in the process they, too, grow in their knowledge and love of the faith.

Often enough this growth leaves them thirsty for more of the same. They want to come closer to the Lord, they want to

know more, to understand more deeply and, very often, they speak of how their lives change because of the experience. The words vary from person to person, but many talk about changing priorities, about living more simply, about becoming more inclusive in their love for others and in their acceptance of them.

All of this is most encouraging in and of itself. But I find it especially heartening in light of the deep desire expressed by our community gathered in Synod for opportunities for quality, lifelong education in the faith. The sponsorship experience of which I have just spoken is one way in which such education occurs. And it happens in community, engages one's life experience, is age-appropriate and leaves those who participate hungry for more. In so doing, the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults offers us an effective model and also challenges us to learn from that model and apply it in wide variety of ways.

Those who will be baptized or received into our community of faith at the Easter Vigil now join us in this time of Lenten prayer and conversion. I invite all to keep them in your prayer and affection during these special days.

A personal update: I am happy to tell you that my back has improved enough to allow me to return to running. I confess to you that I missed that activity very much and am delighted to be at it again. My thanks to you once again for your kind interest.

Peace to all.

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)
Vol. 105 No. 21 March 3, 1994

Published weekly except the last Thursday in December.

Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$19.50; Canada and foreign \$19.50 plus postage.

Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340.

Second-Class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

St. Patrick's Day Smorgasbord

Sunday, March 13th
12 noon- 4:00 p.m.

St. Bridget's/St. Joseph's Church Hall

15 Church Street, East Bloomfield

Adults: \$6.00 Children under 12: \$3.00; under 5 FREE

For more information

Call: (716) 657-7626

Escorted Motorcoach Tours

Overnight Tours

Provincial Quebec & Montreal

April 17-21,
\$479 pp twin

Ottawa Tulips

May 18-21,
\$395 pp twin

"Suite" Life in Akron

June 14-16
\$275 pp twin



ONE DAYS

Maple Sugar - \$47
March 23

Beck's Grove Matinee

"Springtime"
March 30

Amish Grainery - \$51
April 27

"Showboat"
April 10 & May 22

Atlantic City

3-day Taj Mahal, April 5

3-day Bally's Park Place

April 18 - \$30 bonus

4-day Midtown

May 9 - \$185 p/p twin



Alexander Tour & Travel

384 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14607

232-4116



Nazareth College



Center for Lifelong Learning

offering courses for unretired minds

Courses range from \$25 to \$40 and include:

- American Impressionism
- Great Decisions, 1994
- Conversational German
- Dealing with Anger
- American Forum
- Italian Pentagram
- Great Books Discussion
- What is "Q"?
- Stories & music of well-known musicals
- Writing the children's story

(other courses available)

These non-credit courses begin the week of March 28

Classes meet during the day on the Nazareth College campus.

A brochure and mail-in registration form may be obtained by visiting or calling the Office of Continuing Education at Nazareth

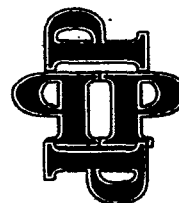
For More Information, call now!

586-2525 ext. 404

Nazareth College of Rochester • 4245 East Ave. • Rochester, NY 14618

St. Anne's Church
1600 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, New York 14650

Four P's In A Pod



Madrigalia presents a concert of sacred music
by Palestrina, Purcell, Pinkham and Poulenc.

Sunday, March 13, 1994

3:00 PM

Reserved seating \$10

Senior/Student \$8

Call (716) 482-1273

Madrigalia

Roger Wilhelm, Music Director