

Season offers possibility of greater things

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

I was invited recently by Rochester's Fox Television Network affiliate, Channel 31 (cable channel 7), to tape a Christmas message for broadcast during the holiday season. The invitation included details about such items as time, place and parking arrangements. It also informed all of us who received such invitations that our message was to be no longer than two minutes in duration.

Channel 31's invitation was a welcome one because it afforded an opportunity to share a thought about Christmas with the station's viewers. But I was to discover that it was a rather challenging one as well. How does an individual express in two minutes or less what Christmas means to him or her? It's not easy. That's because the feast is so laden with meaning. And I think it's also because our appreciation of Christmas changes as the number of our years increases and our experience of the human condition broadens.

What follows is what I wrote in an attempt to express for myself and to share with others in the community what Christmas means in my life just now. I know that I would not have written the same thing last year; and, I'm quite certain that, given a similar invitation next year, the focus of my reflections on Christmas will



A LONG THE WAY

have changed:

"In the Christian tradition we recognize the birth of the Christ child as a profound affirmation by our Gracious God of the dignity of every human person.

And, we recognize in that affirmation a reminder of both our capacity and our responsibility to work as best we can for the peace, freedom and security of all in the human family.

Surely, Christmas is a time for reunion, gift giving and good cheer. That kind of peaceful activity creates an environment in which we can remember and celebrate God's love for us in Christ. We need such moments for renewal and refreshment.

But Christmas is also a time of challenge. It calls us to levels of solidarity with and care for others which we might not easily choose for ourselves:

- Christmas dares us to care passionately about realities which hurt others — even if those realities do not directly effect us.

- The feast insists that we be open to the discovery of richness in the poor, that we be ready to recognize that riches can leave us empty.

- This holy day tells us not 'Rejoice! All things are as they should be.' It says rather: 'Rejoice! Great things are possible if you work together in mutual respect for the common good of the human family.'

It is in that spirit and with great affection for all who hear this message that I wish you blessings at Christmas and peace for the new year."

As it turned out, the message you just read took one minute and 39 seconds to record.

Please let me extend to you the same kind invitation Channel 31 extended to me: Take some time during these busy days to think about the Christmas feast and, when you have done that, express the fruit of your thinking in two minutes or less. I found it to be a wonderful experience. I hope you do, too.

Merry Christmas and peace to all.

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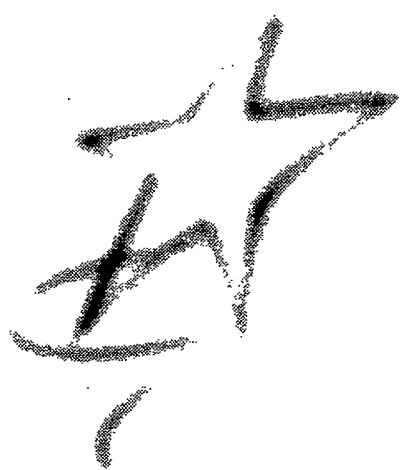
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Kids' Chronicle Answer Key

1. c, 2. f,
3. a, 4. h,
5. d, 6. b,
7. e, 8. g



May the light
of Christ's
Love
Illuminate
your Holiday
Season

Church of the Holy Ghost
220 Coldwater Rd.
Rochester, NY



Season's
Greetings
from

MCQUAID
HIGH JESUIT SCHOOL

1800 S. Clinton Ave
(cor. Elmwood & So. Clinton)
473-1130

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MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR

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In The Rochester
Catholic Diocese
from



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210 Marsh Road
Pittsford, NY 14534
(716) 586-5250



Peace

St. Joseph's
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Auburn, NY