

## Youth, deacons both serve as inspirations

1.) When Shannon Von Hagn spoke to the congregation gathered at Saint Patrick's, Corning, Sunday afternoon she brought the last of our three Hands of Christ celebrations to a fitting and happy conclusion.

In her witness talk, this wonderful young woman from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Elmira, told us of the impact her peers on our Diocesan Youth Commission have had on her life.

Shannon spoke of her admiration for their lively spirituality and of her appreciation for the way they have made her feel so welcome and confident in their midst.

Shannon conveyed those thoughts in a way which engaged us who were listening to her. She shared her experience and her reflections on it so we could identify with her. She employed humor so we could laugh with her. She used poetry and imagery in such a way that we could join our dreams to hers.

My thanks to Shannon, to all recipients of the Hands of Christ award and to all in our diocese who so generously walk with our young people.

These three recent Hands of Christ celebrations lead me to look forward all the more to the National Catholic Youth Convention to be held next month in Saint Paul/Minneapolis. Our diocese will have a strong delegation in attendance.

along  
the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

2.) One day earlier in the same church we ordained Doug Della Pietra, of Saint John of Rochester, Perinton, and Frank Fusare, of Saint Anthony's, Elmira, to the Order of Deacon. God willing, both will be ordained to priesthood next year.

Each ordination holds its own joy. Throughout this celebration I found myself reflecting with great pleasure on the growth of Doug and Frank over the years of their seminary experience. They are different people with distinct personalities. That's for sure.

But it strikes me that both have been beautifully honest and open on their journey to priestly ministry. They are gifted, good individuals who will bring much to our community. I hoped then, and do today, that their way of dealing with life will attract other equally gifted individuals to consider if they too may be called to pursue a vocation to priesthood.

Regarding both 1.) and 2.) above, I add

a word of sincere thanks to Father Bill Spilly, pastor, and all in the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community for their warm and generous hospitality at both celebrations. They could not have been more welcoming.

3.) Between the ordination and the youth event I had the pleasure of participating in 150th anniversary celebrations in two of our parishes.

On Saturday evening the people of Saint Mary's, Dansville, gathered for a Mass of Thanksgiving followed by a festive parish dinner. On Sunday morning the community at Saint Mary's, Rexville, celebrated in similar format.

When I was driving home on Sunday evening, I thought about the two Saint Mary's parishes in a way similar to the way in which I had earlier thought about Doug and Frank. Each parish has its own distinct personality, a rich history and much vitality to bring to the opportunities and challenges of the future. I would add another common note. In Father Joe Catanise, the people of Saint Mary's, Dansville and in Father Steve Kraus, the people of Saint Mary's, Rexville, have pastors who clearly are very happy to serve among them.

My sincere congratulations and thanks go to both parish communities.

Peace to all.

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