

# New year begins for many of us

It has been fun these past few days to run into young people who are just beginning a new school year. In so many there seems to be mixed feelings.

One of their feelings is regret that the summer, if not yet over, has entered a new phase. They know that the freedom of this wonderful season is about to come to an end. It will be a long time before it returns.

Their other feeling is the happiness that comes from a combination of seeing old friends again and taking up the fresh challenge of a higher grade. Even the young ones seem to realize that life is not all play, that there really is some satisfaction in work. To put it another way, hard as it may be for them to admit it: Even summer can be b-o-r-r-i-n-g.

Whether my impressions of these beautiful children are accurate or not, I have found my summer meetings with them to be happy and rewarding. I suppose that is because my own end-of-the-summer feelings are much like I imagine theirs to be.

There is something wonderful about the measure of freedom these weeks have provided. I loved the slower pace, the chance to read some books I've wanted to get at, to vacation with friends, and to see a few ball games. And, I have appreciated the respite from multimeeting, travel-from-place-to-place days.

## along the way

By BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



But now we are at it again. The year-round meeting schedule has heated up again, and we are well into the normal routine even at this early date in September.

And, do you know what? I'm loving every minute of it. It's productive activity and the best part of it is that every day it places me in relationship and collaboration with the wonderful people of this diocese. I wouldn't trade that for anything.

The challenge I experience now is that of trying to combine the best of the summer with the best of the rest of the year. I mean finding a better, more consistent balance between a generous level of work and a healthy measure of recreation, prayer and study.

The components of that balance are probably different for each of us at any given time. And, I would guess that we all need to adjust the balance as we age and/or the circumstances of our lives change.

I best judge that balance in my own life by the way I feel and behave. When the balance is good, I tend to keep things in proportion and think before I act. I can see the humor even in difficult situations and am much less inclined to think and act as if everything depended on me.

When things get out of whack I do such unproductive things as worry needlessly, keep things inside me when I should not, and miss the opportunities for laughter and hope that are so abundant in ministry.

How about you? How would you describe the rhythms of your life to a friend in whom you can place great trust? Just like you want them to be? Too much work and too little time for loved ones, recreation, prayer, intellectual pursuits, other activities that nourish your spirit? Too little work that challenges your abilities and tests your spirit?

If the balance is not just right at the moment, what is a practical and constructive step you might take to make things better for you? With whom might you speak for good counsel and encouragement?

I hope that this time of year, which calls many of us to a heightened pace, can be a time of growth for all of us, that we can be generous in our work and still recognize our own need to be nourished in body, mind and spirit.

Peace to all.

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## MISSION NEWS

On Christmas Eve 1932, two missionary priests baptized the first 12 members of the Church in Wa northwest Ghana. Today, just a little more than six decades later, Catholics in Wa number 156,000, or 24% of the total population. ♦

Anselm Bemile was in one of the first baptism classes in the area. Later, he would become a catechist in the Wa Diocese and the father of eight, including a son, Paul, who is today Wa's newest bishop. ♦ "As I look back, I see the finger of God at work in my life," Bishop Paul Bemile said. "I also see God's work being accomplished in me and the whole diocese through the Propagation of the Faith. It is the Propagation of the Faith which is at the very heart of the growth of the Church here, and which helps it continue to grow. I rely on those who so faithfully support the Propagation of the Faith for the future growth and evangelization of this vibrant local church."



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