

Convocations have serious, fun moments

On this bright Saturday morning I look forward to next week's Convocation of the priests and pastoral administrators of our diocese. We will be meeting at the hotel on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca.

For the second consecutive year we will devote this special time to the centrality of the Sunday celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy.

We hope to agree on a number of practical, pastoral norms to guide our communities in some of the adjustments we need to make because of changing circumstances.

We have been preparing all year for this work in Ithaca. For that reason I am confident that the Convocation will yield a body of work that will be helpful in our local church.

We have tried to draw from the wisdom of our parish communities, to stay well-rooted in our tradition and to be responsive to today's pastoral needs.

When we have completed our work in Ithaca we will have an excellent opportunity to test its quality at our May 14 Ministry Day.

On that occasion we will ask pastoral ministers from all of our parish communities to endorse our efforts or to make suggestions for improvement.

After we have considered their input and made whatever amendments seem appropriate, I will call all pastoral ministers and parish communities or their

along the way



By BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

equivalent to consider the fruits of our work as normative in the pastoral life of our diocese.

Our time in Ithaca, filled as it will be by the work to which I just referred, will not be without its lighter moments. Thanks be to God, those who will be there have the gift of finding the humor present in most situations. They also know how to do serious work without taking themselves too seriously.

We will pray together. We will have time to meet new friends and opportunity for reunion with old friends whom we do not see as often as we would like.

I think all of us look forward to meeting members of the Cornell Catholic Community. Those wonderfully gifted young men and women have been most supportive of our visit and will be joining us for our celebration of the Eucharist on Tuesday afternoon.

Many of us will go to Ithaca earlier

on Monday than we had originally planned. We will be gathering to celebrate the Mass of Christian burial for our dear brother, Father Eugene Sweeney, at Immaculate Conception Church at 10:30 that morning.

His brother priests and pastoral ministers and the people of all the communities in which Gene served during his 37 years of priestly ministry will miss him very much.

His gentleness of spirit and generosity of heart were quite remarkable among the many gifts with which God blessed his ministry. So was the quiet, humble manner in which he offered those gifts to all of us.

By the time you receive this issue of the *Catholic Courier* our Convocation will be completed and participants will be back to their daily pastoral ministries.

As I do in these comments, I ask you to welcome them back and, in your own fashion, to say a word of appreciation for the daily ministry they offer in and to your community.

Most priests and pastoral ministers I know do not do their work for applause or thanks. But who among us does not appreciate, is not buoyed up by a word of appreciation for our efforts? I know that I appreciate such kindness and would guess that you do too.

Peace to all.

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