

heart

was that discipline mark, who were de-n by re-

"Some days I can't remember my middle name, but I can remember the words to some of the songs we sang in high school," he commented. (His middle name, by the way, is Harvey.)

Although he has risen to the rank of bishop, Bishop Clark did not enter the seminary until after his second year in college. Instead, sports were a big part of his growing up near Albany. He participated in basketball, baseball and football, and was a member of the Varsity Club, at Catholic Central High School in Troy.

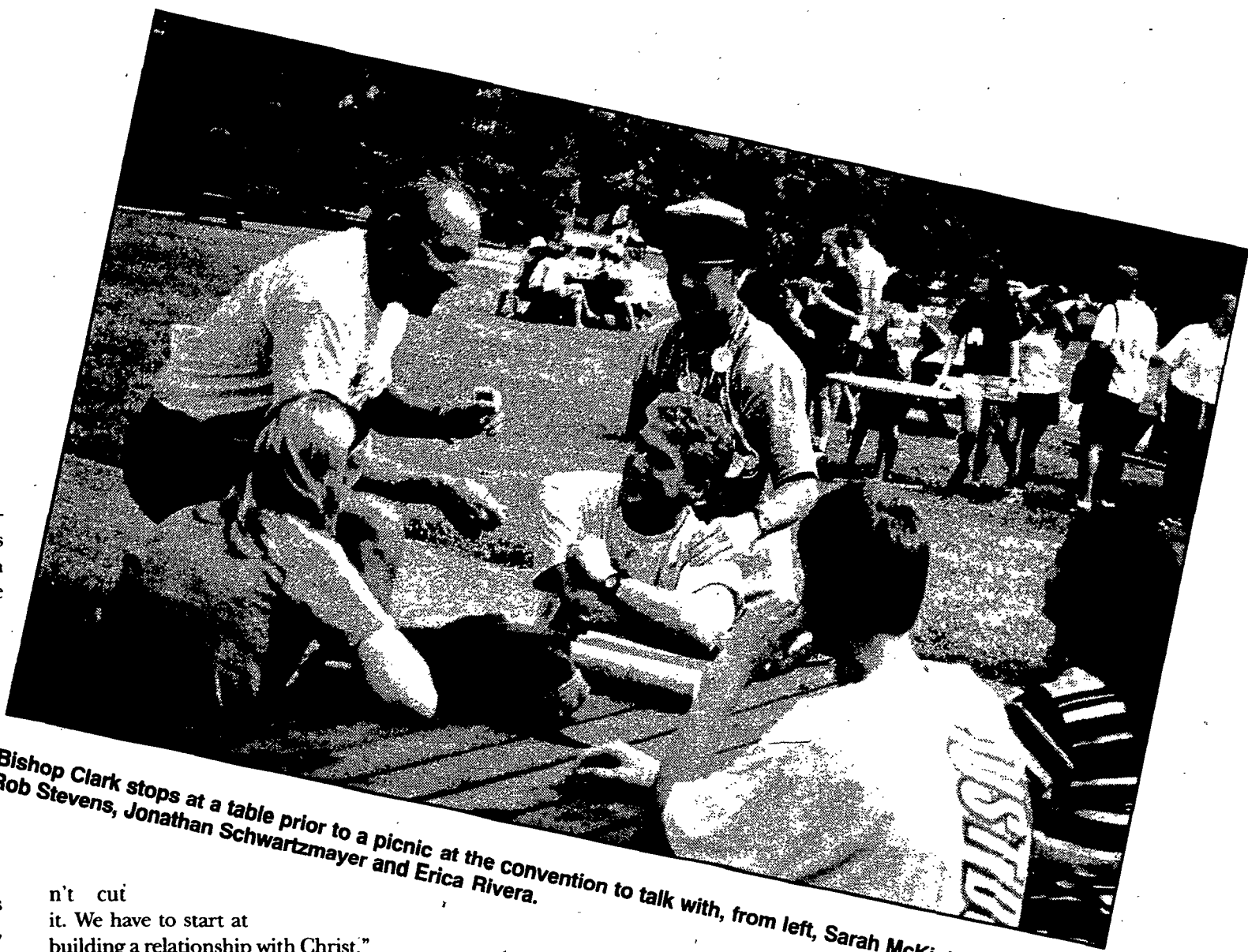
"The sports dimension of things was very important," recalled Bishop Clark, who graduated from Catholic Central in 1955.

Bishop Clark also continued altar serving into his high-school years at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Troy. His rapport with the parish priests, he said, influenced his decision to eventually pursue the priesthood.

"I remember how deeply important it was for me to have the encouragement, support and affection of adults," Bishop Clark said. "They made the time to show their regard for us."

He added that today's adults should provide similar affirmation for teens to help guide them through their faith journey.

"If they're introduced appropriately, they will have a life of prayer, church and service. Stopping at the rules and regulations does-



Bishop Clark stops at a table prior to a picnic at the convention to talk with, from left, Sarah McKinley, Mike Logan, Rob Stevens, Jonathan Schwartzmayer and Erica Rivera.

n't cut it. We have to start at building a relationship with Christ," Bishop Clark said.

Bishop Clark observed that teens of the 1990s are faced with greater obstacles and in other parts of their life.

"These people are forced to make choices earlier, and have less societal and

cul- tural support," he commented. He explained that the growing number of working mothers and single parents have provided teens with different challenges than his generation faced.

"Family life is changed and less stable," Bishop Clark said.

After hearing the bishop's observations, Becky said she was beginning to consider the bishop a trusted friend - even though she had never met him before.

"He was so carefree and opened himself up to everybody," Becky said. "It doesn't make him seem like he's older. It brings him closer to younger people. He's someone we can trust and talk to."

"He knows what it's like

to be a teenager. He remembers," added Tim Donk, 15, also from St. Patrick's in Seneca Falls. "He doesn't come just from the adult point of view, (whereas) some adults think they're older and smarter."

In recent years, Bishop Clark has deepened this connection with teens by making the convention his first official event as bishop after returning from an annual month-long vacation.

"I can't think of a better way to get my batteries charged for a three year than to spend the first two or three days of that year in your company," Bishop Clark told the teens.

COMING NEXT WEEK:
Social interaction.



Bishop Clark talks to some youths prior to one of his presentations at the convention, Aug. 2.

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