

Visit affirms appreciation for college

As promised last week, I want to tell you a little bit about my recent trip to the American College at Leuven, Belgium.

The focus of my experience there was the ordination to the diaconate of Ferdi Di Santos of the Archdiocese of Manila and Mark Bowers of the Diocese of Toledo, Ohio. It was a great pleasure to meet them and ordain them.

I can tell you that they are bright and committed men who will be a blessing to their respective dioceses when they return to them for a life of priestly service. Ferdi has a particular interest in philosophical studies; Mark's special academic specialty lies in the area of biblical studies.

Father Dan Tormey has been discharged from the hospital after his triple bypass surgery and continues his recovery in the friendly confines of the American College. Those who have known Dan over the years will not be at all surprised to know that he is highly esteemed and respected in the American College community. They were generously attentive to him during his hospital stay; I have no doubt at all that their loving care will extend through the rest of his recovery time.

Dan and I did not enjoy Leuven together in quite the way we had planned, but we did have several good visits in the hospital. Even after all he had been through, Dan retained his friendly and gracious spirit.

I am also happy to tell you that Joe Marcoux and Pat Van Durme, our two sem-

along
the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

inarians at the American College, are doing very well. They are active, well-respected members of the seminary community and are enthusiastic about their preparation for the ordained ministry.

They were kind hosts to their visiting bishop, inviting me to go to their favorite pub with a group of their fellow students, and to one of their classes. The course was "Creation, Grace and Eschatology" with Professor Jacques Haers, SJ.

I thought that the subject matter of the two-hour class was fascinating and that Professor Haers did a masterful job of teaching. We walked together around the city and had a meal in their favorite local restaurant. The fact that Joe is a professional chef makes it a special pleasure to dine with him. I am curious about food preparation and enjoyed picking his brain in this area of his expertise.

On my last full day in Leuven Pat, Joe and I were guests of Father David Windsor, CM, rector of the American College, on an

afternoon visit to Aachen, Germany, and a supper back in Leuven at the end of the day.

David Windsor arranged an opportunity for me to visit the archives of the university library during my stay. They have a remarkable collection of manuscripts that are available to scholars who come to the university from many parts of the world. Some of the illuminated ones are quite beautiful, but all of them leave me with a sense of wonder at the scholarship and care invested in them by people who labored so long ago. Remember that the university was founded in 1452!

A word to the people of Dansville: If the people of Leuven and the American College had not heard of your beautiful town before Pat Van Durme's arrival, you can be sure that he has long since corrected that omission. You could not choose a better ambassador for your community than Pat.

I returned home grateful for my experience at the American College, and happier than ever that we have students there. They attend a great university, live in a healthy community, enjoy excellent leadership and the opportunity to experience the church in other lands. I knew all of that before I went because of my experience on the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee for the American College. But you know that nothing can bring all of that home like a personal visit.

Peace to all.



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