

Spirit shines in youth, life efforts

A few notes on recent and coming events:

1. From time to time I mention how much I enjoy opportunities to be with the young people of our diocese. I want to do so again, stimulated by the experience of confirming many of them during the month of January.

In the Rochester area, those confirmations have been at St. Salome, St. Francis of Assisi, the parishes of the 19th Ward (Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Monica and St. Augustine), St. Margaret Mary, and Mother of Sorrows.

Others have been at St. Michael, Penn Yan; St. Mary, Honeoye; and St. Paul of the Cross, Honeoye Falls.

The confirmands are different from one another, of course. Part of the joy of being with them is noting their manifest differences in personalities, interests, talents, challenges, hopes and dreams.

Another part of the pleasure of being with them is the sense I get that they are gifted and generous young people who value their faith

along the way

By BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



and want to grow in their knowledge and love of the Lord. It is most encouraging to be with them.

These young people are not the only ones who strengthen my faith in such moments. I mention also our pastors, catechetical and youth leaders and the many women and men in our parish communities who give themselves in a generous, often sacrificial, manner to support the growth of our young friends.

The adults realize how important it is to develop communities in which our kids feel welcome and respected. That means communities in which our youths can find opportunities to develop and share their gifts, ask their questions, and participate actively in the worship and

service of the parish.

I thank our young men and women, boys and girls for their goodness and gifts to us. You add life to the church and give us all great hope.

2. It has most encouraging to note the level of activity this month in support of expectant mothers and unborn lives.

Abortion and the range of complex questions that relate to it are not easy ones.

We can make a difference for the good only with faith, patience, hard work and the willingness to search for practical and constructive next steps to help those who struggle with pregnancy and its implications in their lives.

All of us can do something to help — prayer, educational efforts, material and spiritual support for expectant and new mothers, assistance of programs and agencies committed to this issue, advocacy for social policies and legislation that serve life. It is important that all of us assist in some way.

Peace to all.

Upcoming Supplements

ARMCHAIR COLLEGE FAIR

Publication Date: Feb. 19
(Bonus distribution to high school juniors & seniors)
It's never too early to begin planning ahead for college. This supplement will look at ways families can find and set aside the needed money, help students discover the colleges and programs that are right for them, and also explore the growing opportunities for people who delayed college, or want to stimulate and challenge their minds later in life.

RETIREMENT

Publication Date: March 26
The "golden years" are a time of unique opportunities and challenges for seniors. This supplement will explore such issues as financial planning and money management, volunteering in church and community as a way of keeping active, traveling for pleasure and enrichment, and maintaining good health.

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MISSION NEWS

India's young and poor Diocese of Sivagangai is blessed with some 100 priests. More than 300 Sisters are serving there also, as nurses, teachers of the faith and social workers. Lay catechists and volunteers serve among the Catholic people and bring the "good news" of Christ to others in the villages. Bishop Edward Francis of Sivagangai sums up the spirit: "We are doing our best to proclaim the good news, to bring the people of this region closer to Christ our Lord." This holy work goes on worldwide today—and must continue in the future. Through a Gift Annuity with the Propagation of the Faith, you can help the future missionary work of the Church—and you benefit as well. A Gift Annuity with the Propagation of the Faith can provide you with income for the rest of your life at a favorable rate of return. Please write for more information.



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