

# Father-daughter ministry a blessing

When Courtney Braun took her place at the microphone before the assembly at the Eucharistic Liturgy at St. Joseph's, Penfield, on Sunday she easily gained the attention of all in the gathering. She brought to her task as commentator/lector a sense of poise and peace that was quite engaging. Her proclamation of the Scripture text entrusted to her care was carefully prepared. She knew the text. She used the microphone well. She engaged the assembly in a significant way.

She left me and, I would guess, all in the assembly with the sense that we had experienced not just a skillful reading but a gracious act of ministry. I enjoyed every moment of that ministry to us all.

But I was especially taken when, among her preliminary comments, she announced that her co-lector that day was her father, Charles Braun. Courtney is a freshman in high school.

You know I love it when our parishes invite young people to participate — in ways appropriate to their age, gifts and training — in all aspects of the life of the community. Such inclusion communicates important values to them and is a source of great blessing for the parish. Among those values and benefits I would identify the following:

1.) a recognition of the dignity and gifts even of the very youngest among

## along the way

BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



us,

2.) the creation of an environment in which such gifts can be identified, tested and developed,

3.) a sense of belonging in and being needed by the community,

4.) the possibility of mentoring relationships that are beneficial both to mentor and to the one to whom the mentor offers guidance and encouragement, and

5.) an enrichment to the community, which becomes the beneficiary of fresh gifts offered by new faces.

Another phase of my own prayer and reflection on that pleasant Sunday experience was on the changes that have occurred in our Church since I was a young boy. In those ancient days lay persons did not proclaim the Scriptures at Mass; much less were teenaged young women called forth for such ministry.

I think such changes have been won-

derfully beneficial for all of us.

And I could not help speculating about what must have been running through the mind of Charles Braun when his daughter introduced him as her co-lector for the liturgy that day. I know that, were I Charles at that moment, I would be nearly exploding with joy.

The ministry of the Brauns exemplifies the joy I experienced when at St. Joseph's but certainly does not exhaust it. The whole weekend was delightful. People participated in a spirited way and were involved with an extra level of enthusiasm when we celebrated the three Sacraments of Initiation.

The call to liturgical renewal has been with us for a long time. In my opinion, it will remain a lively challenge to our church long after we have passed to the fullness of Easter life. The work can be slow. We can lose the vision. Sometimes we lack the energy to pursue the vision. That's understandable.

Awareness of these pitfalls is one of the reasons why I am so grateful to parish communities like St. Joseph's. They remind me that the work of the years done by so many has been worth it. I thank Father Kevin Murphy and all at the parish for the helpful boost. I appreciate it very much.

Peace to all.

## Share a Great Compassion



*Sr. M. Lucy  
Native of: San Francisco, California  
Prior Experience: Medical Technologist*

*When I was in my mid-thirties, I felt myself drawn to God. One evening I had occasion to read closely the 25th Responsorial Psalm... "One thing I ask is to dwell in the house of the Lord forever... behold His beauty." The words hit me profoundly. It was as if they expressed my deepest heart's desire.*

*A few months later I applied to the Hawthorne Dominicans and here I am. In retrospect, how simply and smoothly Our Lord guided me along the journey of discernment.*

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