

Ten principles offer food for reflection

I try to go to the Last Friday luncheon in Rochester as often as I can. On that day each month people gather for an extended lunch break. We share a meal and listen to a speaker reflect on some aspect of Catholic life. For example, in recent months Carl Carballada spoke about Catholic education to the group; Sister Janet Korn, RSM, addressed our call to stand with and serve the materially poor; Mark Hare spoke about expressing one's values in one's professional life; I spent some time on the theme of vocations to diocesan priesthood.

Last Friday Father Jim Schwartz, pastor of Saint Louis, Pittsford, spoke to the group about developing a solid spiritual base and maintaining a life of prayer when life can be so busy, complex and demanding. The experience of being there was rewarding. I certainly could identify with the theme and found Jim's comments to be quite realistic and helpful. What interested me even more was the clear and evident interest the entire group had in the theme. Evidence of that interest were the high level of attentiveness Jim's audience offered to him and the range of questions they put to him when it was their turn to respond.

One present for the event knew from the response that the men and women at the luncheon had at least two things very

along the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

much in common: They are busy people and they have a strong desire to root themselves in lasting spiritual values. Jim's gift to them that day was to share what 30 years of pastoral experience have taught him about how to live a solidly rooted life in the midst of a rapid-fire world.

With his permission I share the list of 10 principles or presuppositions Jim offered for the consideration of the group. He elaborated each of them with story and experience of his, and that helped each of us to do the same. I do not fill them out with thought or experience here but hope that you might find thinking about them to be as interesting as we who heard him on Friday did:

God is in all. Do not distinguish or separate the sacred from the secular.

We should continually be in touch with two sources or references — the Sacred Scripture and the *New York Times* (or what-

ever best puts you in touch with the signs of the times).

Human experience is the "stuff" of the spiritual life. (See No. 1 above.)

Cultivate your inner resources. The rooting of self-discovery and our capacity to enjoy enriching relationships.

All is relational. Think of the Trinity. Cherish appropriate and life-giving relationships (See No. 4 above.)

Try to be free from perfectionism. It prevents us from enjoying the very good. Builds in failure.

Letting go is a part of growing. Change pushes, hurts sometimes but it also opens new possibilities for growth and we all need that.

We can be service- or ministry-rich but wisdom-poor. What is the meaning of what I do? How do my activities "hang together," lead me and those for whom I offer them to deeper and lasting things?

We should center more on collaboration than on competition.

Ours is a future of hope (See Jeremiah 29:11).

I invite you to spend time on what any or all of these 10 may mean to you, to amend the list in light of your experience, to talk about such things with people whom you love.

Peace to all.

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Kids' Answer from page 12: 1. c 2. d 3. b 4. a 5. f 6. e



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