

Trip sees commitments end, begin

EDITORS' NOTE: This column should have run last week, but transmission difficulties delayed our receipt of it.

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I am writing to you from Washington, D.C., on Monday evening, Sept. 14. This has been a break day between a meeting of the National Advisory Council, which ended yesterday, and a meeting of the Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, which begins tomorrow morning.

This has been a pleasant and relaxing day. I did some reading this morning and spent a little time preparing for commitments I have when I return home.

In the afternoon I went to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. I am happy to have had the opportunity to visit that most significant place. But you will understand me well when I say that it is not easy to absorb the horror and inhumanity of the Holocaust as it is represented at the museum.

As I write this evening and think about the experience, I remember most the video presentations through which survivors of the concentration and death camps spoke of their experience. Men and women who had survived it spoke with power of cruelty and heroism, hatred and abiding love. They stressed most a call to vigilance, that such a thing never happen again. Their call to us is to oppose clearly and unequivocally at its

along the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

first signs whatever demeans or dehumanizes other individuals or groups of people.

The Administrative Committee meeting, which begins tomorrow and concludes Thursday noon, marks the end of my term representing the bishops of Region II to that body. And the weekend meeting of the National Advisory Committee was also my last. The time commitment to those bodies (a total of two full weeks each year for three years) was a heavy one.

The commitment was also very much worthwhile. It was wonderful to be exposed to the vitality of the church in our country through the members of the council. To serve on our Administrative Committee is always rewarding. A member has an opportunity to help shape the agenda of our conference. He can also enjoy a level of participation in substantive discussions, which is not possible at our plenary sessions.

Things work out in strange ways sometimes. Just as my tenure on those groups was coming to an end, I accepted an invita-

tion to serve as Episcopal Liaison to the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. That will also call for a significant investment of time and energy over a three-year period, but I am happy to do whatever I can to support and work with our young people. They already enliven our community. One day - sooner than later - they will be key leaders of our community of faith. More on this activity at another time.

One of the attractive features of our Administrative Committee's schedule is that we have no meetings at night. I am looking forward to a trip to Oriole Stadium at Camden Yards tomorrow evening to see the Orioles play the Texas Rangers. I am going with Father Brian Frawley, OSA, who is from Our Lady of Lourdes, Elmira. I had the honor of ordaining him 10 years ago and look forward to this reunion with him.

On Wednesday evening I am going to enjoy a meal with Father Chuck Latus, who finished 12 years as pastor of St. Catherine's, Mendon, in June and is now enjoying an opportunity for sabbatical study at the Washington Theological Union. I know from an earlier telephone conversation that Chuck is enjoying WTU very much. I look forward to hearing more about it when we meet on Wednesday.

I hope this post Labor Day, return-to-school time has been good to you and your loved ones.

Peace to all.

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