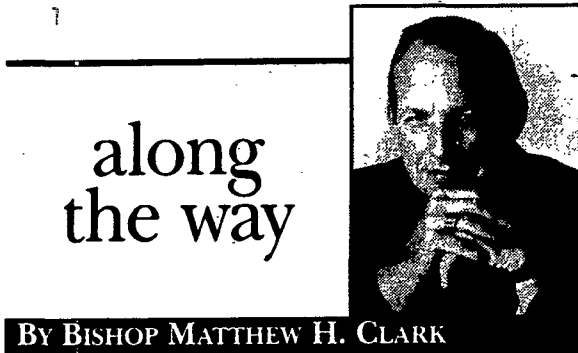


Installations remind it's a blessing to serve

St. Agnes Cathedral in the Rockville Centre Diocese is alive with quiet activity just now. Staff, volunteers and communications technicians are putting finishing touches on preparations for this afternoon's installation of James McHugh as coadjutor bishop of that Long Island diocese. As coadjutor bishop, Jim McHugh will automatically become Bishop of Rockville Centre when Bishop John McGann retires in December of this year. No further ceremonies or formalities are required.

It is customary for the bishops of our province — the eight dioceses of New York state — to be present for such celebrations within the province. The same is true when a bishop serving in our province is transferred to another area. For example, Paul Loverde, bishop of Ogdensburg, was recently named bishop of Arlington, Virginia. When Paul is installed on March 25, all the bishops of our province who possibly can will attend.

Obviously, today's event will be one of lasting significance for the church of Rockville Centre, as March 25 will be for the church of Arlington. Even this morning, in conversation with friends here, I heard expressed an honest curiosity about what changes might or might not occur under the leadership of their new bishop. That is certainly a most understandable issue. While it is true that the life of a diocese flows along before and after the term of any given bishop, it is also true that dur-



along the way

BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

ing his tenure the diocesan bishop contributes much to the direction, tone and style of his diocesan church.

That can certainly be said of John McGann. His commitment to the renewal spurred by Vatican Council II, his concern for his priests and sisters and brothers in ministry, his easy and gracious way with others endeared him to his local church during his 23 years of episcopal ministry.

Now Jim — also a gifted and accomplished person — will succeed John. That very fact, that change, likely will have an impact on their diocese in ways yet to be seen. I'll certainly be surprised if that is not the case. Change is what happens when a new personality replaces one who we know well and care about very much. But I'll also be surprised if the community here and Jim together do not find peaceful and satisfactory ways to negotiate this time of transition. Too much joins them at very deep levels for it to be otherwise.

A couple of personal notes that come to

me in the peace of this cathedral:

1) I have known John McGann since I served on the staff of the North American College in Rome. John came there in 1978 for his *ad limina* visit to the Holy See. I was impressed by his easy and friendly ways with everyone. In the years since 1979, as we have served together as bishops, I have come to admire his ability to keep clear vision and maintain pastoral balance in season and out. He has been wise in his counsel, generous in his support and inspiring in his example.

2) When these transitions occur Howard Hubbard will become our province's senior diocesan bishop in terms of continuous service. He will celebrate his 22nd anniversary as bishop of Albany of March 27.

Believe me when I say that realizing that fact provides much food for Lenten thought and prayer. The qualities for which I admire John McGann I also find and admire in Howard. And, since I know Howard well, I have a good sense of how his willingness daily to die and rise with the Lord during those 22 years have given birth to or strengthened much that I admire in him.

I have said to you often that it's a blessing to serve among you — people I very much admire. On this occasion thoughts of Jim, John, Paul and Howard also remind me of the blessing it is to serve with people for whom I have such great esteem.

Peace to all.

The Monthly Prayer Request For Priests

Will you pray for a priest each day?

LET US PRAY

Almighty and merciful God, who made Saint John Mary admirable in his pastoral zeal and in his constant love of prayer and penance, grant us the grace we implore Thee, to win for Christ by his example and intercession, the souls of our brethren, and to attain with them everlasting glory.

St. John Mary, incomparable laborer in the field confided to thee, obtain for the Church the realization of Christ's desire. The harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few. Pray to the Master of the harvest to send faithful laborers in His vineyard. St. John Mary, intercede for the clergy. May thy patronage, and thy prayer multiply true vocations to the priesthood. May the Holy Ghost grant thee imitators; may He give us Saints Through Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Prayer Suggestions: Mass, Rosary, Fasting, Day Offering, Eucharistic Adoration, Offering Sufferings, Divine Mercy Chaplet

March, 1999

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| | 1 Joseph J. Sullivan, Msgr. | 2 Regis Tompkins, OCSO | 3 Joseph A. Trovato, CSB | 4 John T. Walsh | 5 Eugene R. Weis | 6 Bishop Matthew H. Clark |
| 7 Pope John Paul II | 8 Sabbatical Priests | 9 William A. Burns | 10 Frederick W. Bush | 11 John P. Carriero, SJ | 12 Leon J. Hogenkamp, SJ | 13 David P. Simon |
| 14 Patrick J. Grace | 15 Thomas Miller CSB | 16 Dennis R. Sewar | 17 Otto J. Vogt | 18 Dennis M. Bonsignore | 19 Timothy T. Brown | 20 William J. Aman |
| 21 Ralph J. Fraats | 22 Joseph Grasso, CPPS | 23 John Healy, O. Carm | 24 Elmer J. McDonald | 25 M. Gerard Hafner | 26 George R. Norton | 27 Foster P. Rogers |
| 28 Elmer J. Schmidt | 29 Arthur Wendel CSsR | 30 Vocations | 31 Seminarians | Look for the April MPRP Calendar in the March 25th Courier. Mass for Shut-Ins WHEC 7:30am Sunday Mornings | | |

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