

Looking forward to a change of pace

The pace of life will shift for me before this weekend. On Wednesday, I'll be leaving for Tucson, Ariz., for the spring meeting of the National Council of Catholic Bishops.

You may recall that every fifth year, our spring meeting is more of an enrichment session than a regular business session, and it is longer than one of our regular meetings.

This year our theme will be the challenge of pastoral leadership as we come to the jubilee year and the new millennium. We will hear some interesting presentations on the theme, one by Steven Covey whose writing on leadership has influenced such a great number of people.

I look forward to hearing all of our speakers. I am interested in the topic and believe that it is one we can never exhaust. Speakers, reading, prayer, and discussing our experiences and those of others all teach us a great deal, but there is always something more to learn.

One of the very attractive features of these special sessions is the humane schedule developed for our days together. We have ample time to

along the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

think about what we have heard and much opportunity to compare notes with our brother bishops. For example, every evening is left unscheduled. That is a wonderful and welcome luxury in comparison to the normal rhythms of the year.

In addition to the opportunity to share experiences with the other bishops, this kind of meeting offers a special opportunity to make new acquaintances and deepen friendships. One of the things I'd like to do while in Tucson is to catch up with some of the bishops who have been ordained in the past two or three years. Thus far, I haven't had much chance to do that. Within that group there are some new bishops who were students at the North American College while I was on the staff there. I know these men,

of course, but look forward to finding out how things have been going with them in their new ministry.

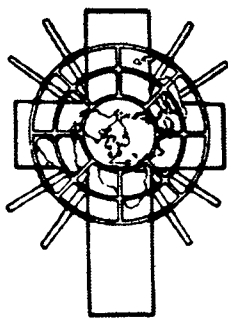
Following our meeting in Tucson, I'll be back for just a couple of days before I make my annual retreat. I always enjoy that experience, but look forward to it in a special way this year for a couple of reasons. One is that I'll be going to Eastern Point, a Jesuit retreat center at Gloucester, Mass. Friends from here and many parts have told me for years how much they enjoy the beauty of the place and high quality of its staff. The second reason is that this year I'll be making an eight-day directed retreat, something I have not done for about 10 years.

The retreat experience ends on July 5 when I join my friends Tom Powers and Howard Hubbard for a vacation together. As you know, that time has been an important one for all of us for over 30 years.

I will be writing next week's "Along the Way" from Tucson, and hope to tell you a little about our experience there. That column also will be my last until the first Thursday in August.

Peace to all.

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