

Youth events fill schedule, spirit

I want to use this week's *Along The Way* for a few brief comments about a variety of issues:

1. With much gratitude for your prayers, I am happy to report that I am returning progressively toward a normal round of activity. This past week, I was delighted to resume my confirmation schedule at Chili's St. Pius X on Monday and Tuesday evenings, and at St. Patrick's, Owego, on Friday for their candidates as well as candidates from St. Francis of Assisi, Catatonk, and St. John the Evangelist, Newark Valley.

Through the years, I have taken great delight in the privilege of confirming. The candidates and those who stand in such loving support of them on such occasions always strengthen my faith and bring great joy to my spirit.

2. I want to extend my congratulations to the 550 high school seniors who recently gathered in three regional assemblies to accept The Hands of Christ Awards in recognition of their witness to the faith and their generous service.

In particular, I want to express my congratulations and personal gratitude to

along the way

BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



Eric Heaton of St. Patrick's, Owego; Michele Gammariello of St. Patrick's, Macedon; and Lisa Muscato of St. Helen's, Gates. Each of them spoke on behalf of recipients at one of the gatherings. I found their comments to be mature and wise and very helpful.

3. You may be aware that the biennial National Catholic Youth Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, Nov. 19-21. You may not be aware that our diocese will be represented by a group numbering more than 600.

My understanding — unofficial as it is — is that this number makes us the largest delegation to the convention coming from outside the Missouri region. I mention

that not to make comparisons, but to acknowledge with gratitude the participation of our wonderful young people and the generous support of their parish communities. We all know that both are necessary. I'll be participating in the event and look forward to sharing the experience with you.

4. I'll be making a quick trip to Toronto on Thursday to address the annual convention of the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators. I find such invitations rather challenging, but I accepted this one gladly because it will allow me to tell the story of the people of this diocese and the ways in which you have generously and faithfully participated in the life of our local church.

It will be a pleasure to tell them about what you have accomplished through our Synod process and about your tremendous work on Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium. Being so close to those realities, you may not realize that — important and significant as your work has been — the way in which you have accomplished it may ultimately be even more important.

Peace to all.

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