

Pentecost weekend: from birth to graduation

Brady Thomas McDermott and Catherine "Cappy" Collyer framed the Pentecost feast for me. The great feast of the church's birth, which speaks of love and unity, found me baptizing the 6-month-old Brady and joining the celebration of Cappy's 90th birthday.

Both events had the touch of Pentecost to them — the tiny baby reborn in the Spirit, the woman of generous years so much attuned to the Spirit of life and holiness. It was good to be with both of them and with the loving people who gathered from many places to share the joy of these occasions.

Such events are wonderful invitations to be aware of life and the precious gift it is. I know that Brady's innocence and openness to life touched my spirit in deep places and so did Cappy's joyful maturity and peace of heart.

I found myself deeply curious about what the other people at these two parties were thinking. My guess is that their thoughts and mine were not substantially different. To celebrate life in such ways is to be in touch with that precious gift as we have known it in the past and as we hope it will be in the future. Brady helps me to be confident about tomorrow. Cappy helps me to recognize and to give thanks for yesterday's blessings.

If Brady and Cappy framed this Pentecost weekend for me, others filled it with their goodness and thirst for life.

along the way

BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



On Saturday morning, I had the privilege of spending a couple of hours at the Monroe County Jail with 14 women who were making a weekend retreat. Margie Mayk, who directed the retreat, invited me to listen to the women while they spoke about what it means to be a child of God, and to share with them my own thoughts on that theme.

I truly wish you could have been there to hear these women speak both of their experience of God and of their yearning to grow closer to God. Though held captive, many know a deep freedom and peace of heart because of the way they honestly open themselves to God's touch in their lives. I shall remember for a long time the closing moments of my time with these women, when I was invited to place my hands on the head of each and ask God to bless them. It was easy to do that for individuals who had so richly blessed me by their honest sharing.

Remembering a blessed Pentecost week-

end I think, last but not least, of two groups of young people. One group I mentioned to you last week — the junior high school boys and girls who gathered at the rally held in Seneca Falls on Saturday. Recall that the weather that day was spectacular and then imagine what a joy it was to be with those bright and gifted young people. It was a delight to hear their thoughts about how they have known change in their lives, what that experience has meant to them and how they have matured through it all.

The second group of young people was the Class of 2000 of McQuaid Jesuit High School, who graduated from the stage of the Eastman Theatre on Pentecost evening. From my catbird seat on the stage of that great auditorium, I had the joy of seeing 140 generous and talented young men pass across the stage as they received their diplomas. Some I knew. Some I did not know. But I thought as each one of them walked by how blessed we are to have in our midst such gifted individuals who are committed to being, in the language of the Jesuit tradition, "men for others."

On Pentecost I was blessed by infant and nonagenarian, by those in jail and by those ready to take on life's new challenges. I am grateful to them all, and to the Holy Spirit who daily renews their lives.

Peace to all.



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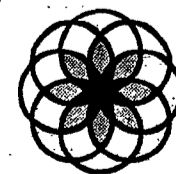
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