

Many events add meaning to Easter time

Easter life has been full since the great feast. Every day the people I meet and the events in which I am privileged to participate strengthen my faith and renew my hope.

I write this evening in my room at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel at the corner of East Main and St. Paul in Rochester. We just finished the first session of our annual convocation of priests and pastoral administrators. It is good to be with them to absorb their lively spirit and to draw renewed strength from their obvious love of the people they serve.

We'll be here until Wednesday noon. During that time we will be working on ways to minister together more effectively so that we can help shape the church of tomorrow. That is not an easy task because there is no easy or pre-paved road to tomorrow. But I am confident that our experience here will be a solid step in the right direction because the women and men here are faithful, generous and love you very much.

Being here today reminds me of being here for another event on Saturday. More than 350 of our incredible high school students came to this hotel for the annual Diocesan Youth Convention. You may recall that for several years we have held that event on the first weekend of August, usually at the State University of New York College at Geneseo.

This year, close to those August days, the pope is coming to Toronto for World Youth Day. For that reason our youth leaders decided to shift our diocesan event to April.

along the way

BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK



I was delighted that they did so because these events can be very important in the lives of the young people who participate. Our conventions provide our youths with a special experience of Christ alive in their peers and contemporaries. And that is no less important to them than it is to us.

I was not able to spend as much time with them as I like to and usually do. Part of the reason was the press of other activities at this time of the year and another came from a scheduling error I made. Judging from what I experienced and observed, the event began beautifully. I have not had a chance as yet to ask how it turned out, but my guess is that it continued in the same way.

Another wonderful weekend event was the celebration at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany of the 25th anniversary of the episcopal ordination of my dear friend Bishop Howard Hubbard. I cannot tell you what a joy it was to celebrate that feast with him and so many from the diocese who came. Thank God for the witness to the Lord's own care that Howard

has been in their lives.

As such celebrations usually do, this one evoked countless happy memories even as it shored up our hopes about our capacity to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. Howard's kind invitation to me to preach the homily for this occasion only deepened the memories and hopes to which I refer. To prepare for that homily was to relive a raft of memories of this gifted, gentle and generous man.

You are aware that the Diocese of Albany is the local church in which I was initiated into the faith and the community for whose service I was ordained a priest nearly 40 years ago. So, you will understand that Howard's jubilee day meant a great deal to me from several different angles and at many different levels.

Finally, I want to thank my friends Dr. Robert and Ida McVeigh and all of Unity Health System for including me in a magnificent celebration of Unity's work. More than a thousand people gathered at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center in support of Unity's mission in the community. I was happy to be with them and wish them well in their continuing service.

You can understand, I think, why such activities nourish my spirit and keep me hopeful amid the challenges, problems and disappointments we all experience in this life. To all of the people I mentioned, I extend sincere thanks for being such beautiful signs of Easter life to me.

Peace to all.

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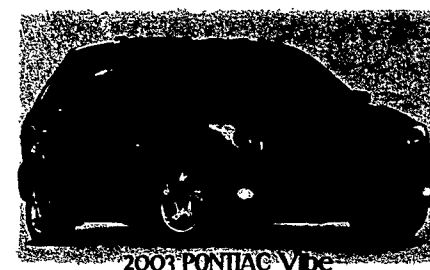
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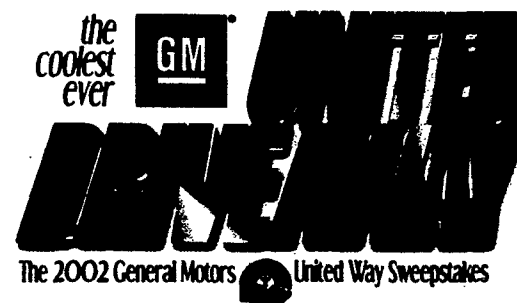
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