

Differing walks of life, same mission

What do Giovina Caroscio, John Greisberger and Robert Schrader have in common? For those who know them the answer is easy. The simplest response is that they are all gifted, generous, loving people of faith who have given their lives to the praise of God and the service of others.

One could add other common descriptors to the list. They are also humble individuals. In their service, others come first, not themselves. They are all good leaders and, although all three are quite articulate, they lead more by action than by word. And they are all people of prayer.

I could add many qualities possessed by all of these great people and others that are especially notable in each. For example, I think of Giovina's deep spirituality and quiet generosity; of Bob's wonderful wit and remarkable organizational ability; of John's strong commitment to those in need and his ability to get things done.

I write about them because in recent days I have been at events at which they were honored and thanked by those whose lives they have made better. At a recent anniversary dinner, the Bishop Sheen



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

Ecumenical Housing Foundation recognized John's 35 years of distinguished service to those in need of support in their quest for affordable housing. It was recognition well deserved and gracefully received.

As John accepted the award, I was aware that his deep involvement with Sheen is but one of his many commitments. For example John has been a strong supporter of St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry all of the years of its existence. Indeed, his leadership was crucial to the establishment of SB-STM after St. Bernard's Seminary closed in 1981.

Giovina touched many lives for the good in her 20 years of service as executive director of the Finger

Lakes Office of Catholic Charities, called in its early days the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry. Her task was a formidable one. We all have some sense of the difficulty entailed in new ventures. But Giovina brought good measures of patience, vision and courage to the task and was able to enlist the strong support of outstanding board members over the years. Together, they have established strong foundations for a ministry which shows forth in wonderful ways the beautiful face of the serving Christ.

In addition to her remarkable contribution to the Catholic Charities movement in the Finger Lakes region, Giovina has been salt and light to the Catholic community of Geneva where she has made her home all these years.

Bob Schrader is one of our great priests. For the past 11 years he has served as pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Auburn. Immediately prior to that pastorate, he headed the Priests' Personnel Board of our diocese. Earlier, Bob served in a variety of pastoral assignments. To all of these duties Bob has brought his considerable gifts, including his above-mentioned organizational skills and good humor. His readiness

to offer his good gifts in generous fashion has been one of his great strengths.

Another strength has been his willingness to reflect on and learn from all of this pastoral experience. It has been a delight to observe his growth in pastoral skills and good spirit over the years. Many of us have found great encouragement in watching our brother priest grow in and through his ministry.

I wanted to mention these three friends because they have been special gifts to me over all the years, but in a special way during this Lenten season. We have known a lot of suffering these days. We've had painful experiences in our church and in our world.

This single laywoman, this married man and this diocesan priest all manifest virtues and values that offer great hope and encouragement in these troubled times. I am deeply grateful for the witness that they give to us all and for their friendship.

Let me close by inviting you to think about the people in your life who keep hope alive by the way in which they honor God and neighbor by their generous service.

Peace to all.



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