

Events reflect blessings of Easter

Four updates and a correction:

1) You would have loved our diocesan gathering of the Junior High Youth Rally on Saturday. Some 250 of our diocesan sixth, seventh and eighth graders gathered at Seneca Falls to celebrate their faith, to learn more about it and to share it with their peers.

The theme this year was "Follow the Leader." Participants reflected on their relationship with Christ, our risen Lord, and on his call to all of us to serve in his name.

As usual, the program was well planned by Mike Theisen, Sue Versluys and our Diocesan Youth Committee. As usual, our beautiful young people — the young church — responded thoughtfully and generously to the opportunities prepared for them. There were games and music, prayer and group discussions. We celebrated the Eucharist together and shared a meal together.

I marvel at their energy and find consolation, encouragement and challenges in their faith. These are good kids who offer us much — who will offer even more as they enjoy the supportive love of the community.

No less impressive are the youth ministers and lay volunteers whose love and support of the young church make possible such growth-



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

filled events. I hope that you will find an opportunity soon to thank your parish youth leaders — the young and the adult for what they do for all of us.

2) The priests of our diocese are gathering in Auburn April 28-April 30 for our annual convocation. As I write this on the Sunday before that event, I look forward very much to their company. I am also eager to explore the topic of young-adult ministry with them.

We all know that God is always faithful, raising up gifted and faithful people in every generation. We also realize that times change, that fruitful relationships and good communication between generations are not automatic. They require mutual respect and an openness to one another that is rooted in faith.

During our time in Auburn, we'll enjoy the wisdom of experts in the field. We'll share our experience and ideas with one another. Most importantly, we'll spend time together — something that is extremely important for our presbyterate, but not always easy to achieve.

Thanks very much for your loving support of our priests.

3) Congratulations to Father John Gagnier, pastor, and the people of St. Dominic's Parish, Shortsville on the dedication of their new organ.

I'll be going to the parish for that event this afternoon, and am looking forward to hearing the new instrument and praying with Father John and the community.

I extend sincere congratulations to them for their generosity in support of this project. And, I thank them for reminding us all that music is an integral part of a full celebration when we gather for the liturgies of the church.

4) On the way to Shortsville, I hope to stop at the Mercy Motherhouse on Blossom Road for a birthday party. Birthdays are special and should always be celebrated. But we all know that some deserve extra special attention. Today's celebration honors such a special feast — the 100th birthday of Sister Julia Ryan, who was featured in the *Catholic Courier* of April 10.

It will be a pleasure to be in the company of her friends on this occasion. To be able to thank Sister Julia for the witness of her faith in vowed religious life and for her generous service through all the years will be a special Easter blessing.

Happy birthday, Sister Julia.

5) A correction: A reader notes that my reference last week to the 1957 and 1962 changes to Sacred Heart Cathedral as "inspired by Vatican Council II" is incorrect because the first session of the council did not conclude until December of 1962. He is absolutely right and I apologize for the error.

For the record: The 1957 changes included the replacement of the high altar (moved from St. Patrick's Cathedral) by the old former high altar of sacrifice and the addition of the large statue of the Sacred Heart.

Bishop Casey in a letter to parishioners asking their support for the project offers this reason: "In St. Patrick's the altar was an integral part of the Church's architecture, its crowning glory. Here, the 60 year old altar is backed up to the wall and does not, in the judgment of competent experts, fit in with the architecture of the sanctuary."

The reference to 1962 should rather have been to sometime between 1964-1966. At this writing I have not been able to pin down exactly when there was first used at Sacred Heart a temporary altar table that allowed celebrations with the priests facing the people. Nor do I know the date of the construction of the marble altar of sacrifice we still use. I'll try to fill in the blanks at a later date.

Once again, I offer thanks to the reader who caught the error and extend my apologies for any confusion I caused.

I hope that you are finding new and deeper life during this Easter season.

Peace to all.

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