

Support, kindness acknowledged

In this last prevacation Along the Way, I want to thank you for your kindness and support during this very challenging year. And I want to tell you about what lies ahead. Let me do both in a series of short comments:

1) I recently returned from St. Louis from the spring meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. I am happy to report to you that one year after our adoption of the "Charter for the Protection of Children," our conference and individual bishops in their own dioceses have made a great deal of progress in the implementation of the charter.

We are well-prepared for the audit that will assess our compliance with the charter and will welcome what-



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

ever suggestions they may have. And, we will be fully involved in the research projects being done to identify the scope and nature of the problem and measures to avoid it in the future.

2) I am deeply grateful to the pas-

tors, pastoral leaders and volunteers of our parish communities who have worked so hard and in such good spirit to make our diocesan capital campaign, Partners in Faith, so successful in its early stages.

This is the first venture of this scope in our diocese in almost 40 years. Thus for most of us, this task is an unfamiliar and, therefore, a daunting one. But we have done well so far. I am convinced that we will do very well if we continue to rise to the challenge with faith and good spirit, if all will consider making a sacrificial pledge when asked to do so, and then make an honest effort to be faithful to the method offered to us by our consultants.

I was much encouraged by a chance meeting at St. Louis with Bishop Bernard Harrington of the Diocese of Winona, Minnesota. I knew that his diocese was engaged in a capital campaign very similar to our own — including the renovation of their cathedral church. And, I knew that Winona also had engaged Community Counseling Services as their consultant. When I asked Bernie how it was going, he grinned a great grin and said "We finished yesterday and realized 33 million dollars against a goal of 20 million dollars."

I know full well that Winona is Winona and Rochester is Rochester. We cannot take it for granted that if one succeeded so beautifully, the

other will also. At the same time, it was good to hear that they had done so well in circumstances much like our own.

3) Early in July, I'll be off to the ocean with Tom Powers and Howard Hubbard. I've got some books lined up and have been picking out some simple recipes I might try out on them. I do long for the peace and quiet of those days. Notwithstanding my satisfaction and gratitude, this has been a difficult year, and I will welcome a change of pace and scenery.

On July 3, vacation will start with a bang. On that day we'll be celebrating the birthday of my brother-in-law, Jim Early. This year the party will be an especially full one because all five of Helen and Jim's daughters will be there. That fact alone makes my heart sing. But there will be a quintuple bonus as well — the presence of their grandchildren Julie, Megan, Patrick, Liam and Sean. I can't wait to see that gang assembled for such a happy occasion.

Thanks, dear friends, for your countless favors, your understanding and your prayers. Through God's grace you make daily ministry a joy and bring hope to my heart even on the toughest days.

I wish you a blessed summer until the August 7 issue of the *Catholic Courier*.

Peace to all.

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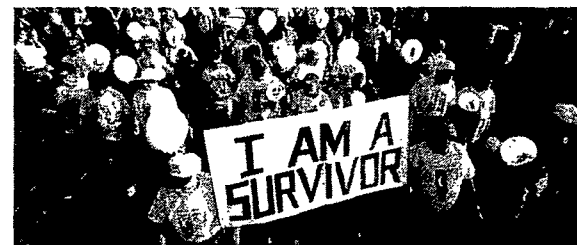


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