Faith pervades a variety of events

Bishop Matthew H. **Clark**

Along the Way

This week I will offer updates and comments on several August events:

1) Early in the month, I installed two new pastoral administrators — Michelle Bertot at Holy Name of Jesus, Greece; and Sister Doreen Glynn, CSJ, at St. Mary of the Lake, Ontario. This experience of pastoral ministry is a new one for both women and both parishes.

The joyful spirit and enthusiastic participation by everyone involved left me with the strong impression that this new experience will be beneficial to all. The people are generous, open and faithful; their new administrators are well-educated, rich in pastoral experience and want nothing more than to serve their parishes in love and fidelity.

I add a word of thanks to Father Ted Metzger, who will be the primary sacramental minister at Holy Name, and to our pastors in western Wayne County — Fathers Rob Bourcy, Peter Clifford, Bob Gaudio and Lance Gonyo — who will serve the sacramental needs of St. Mary of the Lake.

2) I had the chance to celebrate liturgy with the community at Camp Stella Maris on Aug. 6, the Feast of the Transfiguration. I love to preside at liturgy under any circumstances, but there is a special joy in experiencing the spirited and enthusiastic participation of more than 300 children. They reminded me that reverence and prayer have many expressions, and that the structures and options available in liturgical books encourage full and active participation by all in our sacred rites.

3) We had a meeting of the campaign cabinet for Partners in Faith and also a report meeting that gathered men and women representing parishes that are participating in Block 2 of the campaign.

I was much encouraged by those gatherings. A detailed accounting of our progress soon will be communicated, but thus far — because of the sacrificial work and gifts of many — we are showing solid results! Mind you, we will be successful only if we work hard to the very end.

I am aware that the challenge before us is a major one. I just want to renew my thanks to you for your generosity, and encourage you to pray every day that God will continue to bless this effort.

4) Last Saturday, I joined the people of Rochester's St. Philip Neri Parish for a liturgy on the occasion of the parish's formal closing.

Those who joined the celebration had deep and mixed emotions. They dealt with grief and loss and the powerful impact of uncertainty about the future. But they were consoled by happy memories, a sense of new possibilities in their experience of faith, and their unshakable conviction that the Lord is always with us.

It will be a long time before I forget the incredible spirit they showed at a picnic on the parish grounds after the closing liturgy. I thank all of them for their strength of spirit and for all they have taught me about faith through the process leading to Saturday's event.

5) The irony of life is that the morning after that celebration, I went to Scottsville to celebrate 150 years of God's grace experienced at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish.

This parish, too, has a pastoral administrator, Irene Goodwin, who began her service just a short time ago. As was true at St. Philip Neri, the experience at St. Mary's reminded me of the enormous beauty and richness of the Eucharist. There is a place for everyone at the table — those giving thanks, suffering, craving healing or searching for a sure path. I was mindful that both celebrations created a sense of belonging to a family larger than their own. We all need the consolation of such awareness.

6) When I finish writing these words, I'll be on my way to St. Vincent DePaul Parish in Churchville to formally receive Edison Tayag as a candidate for priesthood for the Diocese of Rochester. Soon, Edison will be leaving for the North American College in Rome to begin theological studies in preparation for ordination.

Also starting his theological studies this year is Paul Flansburg, who will study at the Theological College at Catholic University in Washington.

I am delighted that Paul and Edison are taking this step. I ask you to join me in daily prayer for them and for young men like them who are considering a vocation to priesthood.

I repeat my hope that you are finding some renewal this summer.

Peace to all.

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