

RANDOM COMMENTS

As computers and websites become more and more a way of life for us today, it would be irresponsible of the Church, including the Diocesan Church of Altoona-Johnstown, not to use that medium for the promotion of the Lord's Good News. I believe that Saint Paul the Apostle would have done so, had the Internet been at his disposal during his time.

The world is moving at a fast pace. So many issues involve the Church one way or another. I would like to think that the Faithful are interested in knowing what the Church says in regard to these matters. Many are, particularly, interested in hearing their own Diocesan Bishop's views. While I do write a column for *The Catholic Register*, our diocesan newspaper (which also gets posted on our diocesan website), that comes out only every two weeks.

Consequently, I have launched somewhat of a blog on our diocesan Website, entitled the *Bishop's Random Comments*. The site will give me an opportunity to speak out immediately on any given issue that may be of interest. Some of you may recall that my biweekly column was once called *Random Comments*. That title seems appropriate for this new venture, as well, for it will be exactly that. I will comment randomly. My comments will usually be brief. And, not all of my musings will be of interest to you or of grave import to our Diocese.

This new site, therefore, gives the Faithful of our Diocesan Church an opportunity to hear from their Diocesan Bishop in another forum, on subjects that are somewhat current. This they can do by simply logging onto our diocesan website and then clicking on the icon in the upper right-hand corner. By the way, the address of our diocesan site is www.ajdiocese.org.

The new link to the *Bishop's Random Comments* will also give you an opportunity to communicate with me by using the e-mail address provided. If and when you do, I ask that you be brief, to the point, and identify yourself by name and address. I will try to respond, either on the site (without using your name) or directly by e-mail.

I am especially hopeful that young men thinking about answering the Lord's call to study for the priesthood will use this medium to communicate with me. We do have a Diocesan Director for Vocations, whom they should contact. However, at times, a possible candidate might wish to share his thoughts with the Diocesan Bishop (and, even, to ask him a question), and to do so directly and in a non-threatening way.

There, already, are a number of individuals who have e-mailed me from other states, even as far as Texas. Some once lived in our Diocese and reminisced about that with me. All of them have been positive, several reflecting on the formation that they received while in our schools and how that has been instrumental in their success. Those are wonderful messages to receive! If it were not for the new site, I would not have received the following.

"Bishop Joseph I have to tell you that if I had not followed my calling to service as a police officer I would have become a priest and I attribute that to the many conversations and opportunities I had to worship with Fr. Alan. I also attribute my strong faith and devotion to the church to you. I had spoken to you several times while at Bishop Carroll about the priesthood and although I followed a different calling I would like you to know how much you had influenced my life and for that Thank You!"