

Reflections

by the
Most Reverend Thomas J. Murphy



Getting to Know You

Some years ago, there was a great Broadway musical entitled *The King and I*. One of the hit songs from the musical was a delightful tune entitled "Getting to Know You." In a sense, I feel that has been the story of my life the last few weeks.

One of the great ways I have found of becoming acquainted with the great priests and people of our diocese is to celebrate the Sunday liturgy with them. Consequently, I have enjoyed very much the opportunity of celebrating Mass these past few weekends at St. Leo's in Lewistown, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Luke's and St. Peter and Paul in Great Falls. In each of these parishes, it was obvious that our people possessed a great faith and a deep commitment to the Church which reflects the life of the Church in Eastern Montana.

During these same few weeks, I have also tried to become acquainted with the various offices and services of the Diocese. There have been meetings with the Clergy Personnel Board, the Office of Education, the Matrimonial Tribunal, the Vocations Office, the Deacon Program, the Cursillo Secretariat, in addition to the opportunity to visit the Ursuline Convent and the College of Great Falls. One of the very enjoyable experiences has been the trip I took with the new students at the College of Great Falls to the Gates of the Mountains.

In the coming weeks, I look forward to the visits I will have with the priests and people of Billings when I will be attending the three-day meeting of the Council of Catholic Women in addition to the informal visits I hope to make to Billings Central High School and the priests, people and parishes of that area. I look forward to my visit to the Labre Mission in the middle of October which will include the dedication of St. Margaret Mary Church in Colstrip. These are but some of the travels that will be part of my life as I begin my service as Bishop to the priests and people of the Diocese of Eastern Montana.

One of my real regrets is my inability to be at five different places at the same time. I know I would like most to have the freedom to be with the priests and people of the parishes in the Diocese. Over the next few years, I hope I will have that privilege as often as possible. It has been very enjoyable these first few weeks "getting to know you."

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The column not only offers me the opportunity to share some reflections with you but also to focus our attention on other realities ... October 1st begins the annual celebration of Respect Life Week, a time for all of us to be conscious of the need to preserve the values of life in our society ... October is also a month dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and a time set for the recitation of the Rosary ... October is also the time which marks the beginning of religious education programs for our youth and adults throughout the Diocese. If you haven't registered your children for these programs or looked into opportunities for adult education in your area, why not do it now?