

# Our Jogging Bishop

By Carmen J. Vigucci

Rome — Not too many days before he received news that he was to be eighth bishop of Rochester, Father Matthew H. Clark was facing a different kind of challenge. Although obviously not as important or as enduring as his present one, it nonetheless was real. Ask any runner.

For on March 25, Father Clark ran the 18 miles from Rome to Ostia on the sea in the annual marathon here.

"Where did you finish," he was asked. "Oh, somewhere about 350th," he chuckled, remarking that the accomplishment was in the running, not in the order of finish.

The thousands of runners and joggers of Rochester will be pleased that their bishop-elect is one of them. He runs about five miles a day, sometimes seven or even 10, he says. He averages about eight minutes a mile, a pace which makes him something less than a speedster but definitely above the class of the average jogger.

"I set a goal of 1,000 miles over the academic year," he said. As of May 3, he had logged 952 miles and will easily attain his goal.

"Do you mind if we take your picture in your running gear," Tony Costello asked.

"Why not?" answered Father Clark. "I intend to keep at it after I'm bishop so everybody might just as well get used to it now," he said with his characteristic directness.

If it weren't for his calling and his deep spirituality, Matthew Clark might indeed be best known for his ability and interest in sports.

He played left end in football, forward in basketball and was the second baseman on the baseball team in high school, "until they found out I was a human sieve and put me in the outfield."

He was named to the all-city football and basketball teams in Troy. A friend said he also was an outstanding tennis player and although he played baseball instead he nonetheless could beat any player on the tennis team.

He has not stopped lettering. As a result of his marathon finish, the students at Marymount Girls School, where he is a co-chaplain, presented him with an "M."

In addition to participating he also follows



Photos by Anthony J. Costello

sports, much as Bishop Hogan, who once did a masterful job of broadcasting a couple of innings of a Rochester Red Wings game. In Father Clark's room, amidst the scholarly tomes one might expect from a college spiritual director, one also finds the

Sporting News. And atop the bookcase are a racquet and ball.

But to stress this aspect of his makeup would be a mistake. Even his running reflects his spirituality. He refers to it as his "private time." When he runs he

carries a one-decade rosary to make it easier to pray while striding along.

In addition to all the other talents and blessings Father Clark will be bringing to the diocese will be that of a first-ever title. He will be our first jogging bishop.

