

900+ Youths Attend Day-Long Workshops At Bishop Kearney

By Terrance J. Brennan
More than 900 diocesan youths, including a small group from the Syracuse diocese, gathered Sunday at Bishop Kearney High School for Bishop Matthew H. Clark's Day with Youth.

The event was sponsored by the offices of Vocations, Youth Ministry, Youth Retreats and a group of youngsters themselves, and was organized to provide youths the opportunity of "exploring the ministry in the Church," as well as giving the bishop the opportunity to meet young people and vice versa.

In his keynote address, Bishop Clark asked those present to "begin to start shaping in your hearts the targets and goals you have."

The bishop also stressed friendship as a major point to be considered by his young audience. "I want you to know how tremendously important you are to each other," he said, "how important it is to drop the facade, the cover, so each can see the individual beauty in us."

"Part of the strength I get from you is your constant invitation for me to be your friend."

Following the bishop's address, the large group remained in the auditorium for a panel discussion featuring various members of religious life -- a diocesan priest (Father James Schwartz), an order priest (Father Joseph Gibino, SJ), a sister (Muriel Curran, SSND), and a brother (Raymond Powers, CSC) -- a married couple (John and Pat Young of Sacred Heart Cathedral parish), and a single person (Ms. Kebby Burnham of St. Mary Magdalene parish). Bishop Clark acted as moderator.



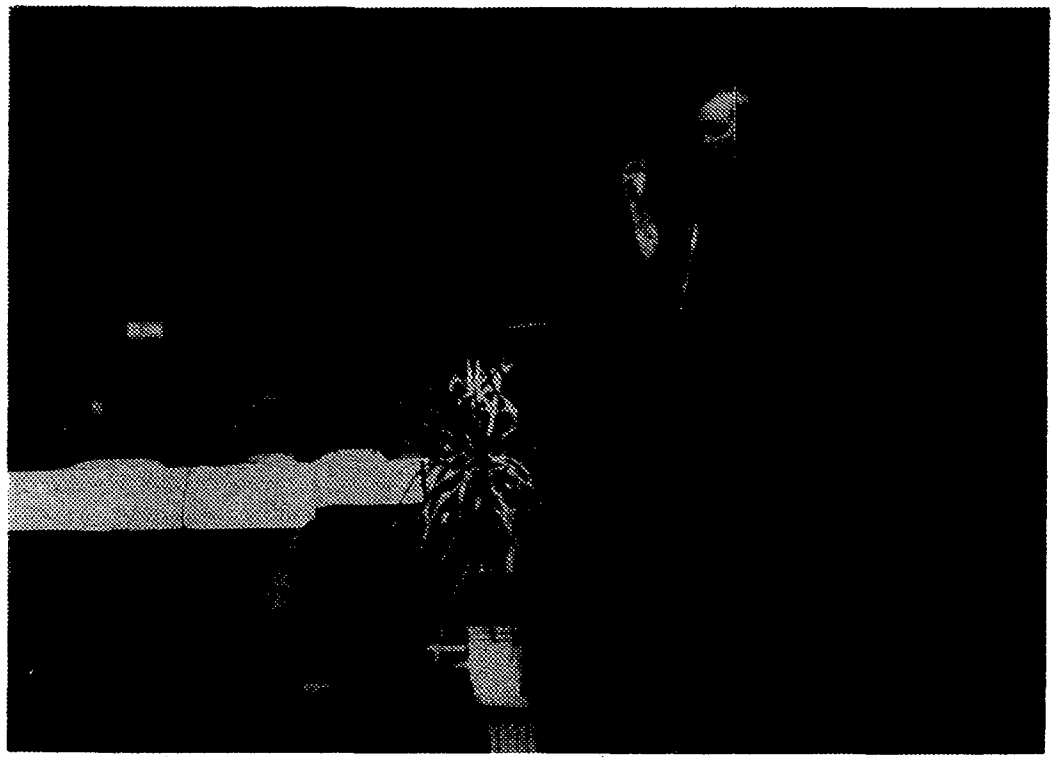
Father John Mulligan gives participants some pointers on "What You Can Do in the Parish and How to Do It."

The panel talked of the call to various vocations and answered questions from youths ranging from how difficult a bishop's job is, to the task of remaining celibate and loyal to the vows taken by religious.

The assembly then broke up into smaller workshops in the school's classrooms.

Topics of the workshops included: "Keeping Your Faith in College," "Peer Ministry -- Youth Responding to Youth," "How Can I Join the Military and Still Answer the Bishops' Challenge for Peace?" and "Sports and Ministry," as well as workshops on the priesthood, sisterhood and brotherhood.

Following a buffet dinner in the school cafeteria, the group assembled once more for Mass in the auditorium concelebrated by Bishop Clark and Fathers Thomas Valenti, diocesan director of vocations; David Mura, spiritual director of Teen Seminar; and David Gramkee, chairman of the diocesan commission on youth, among others.

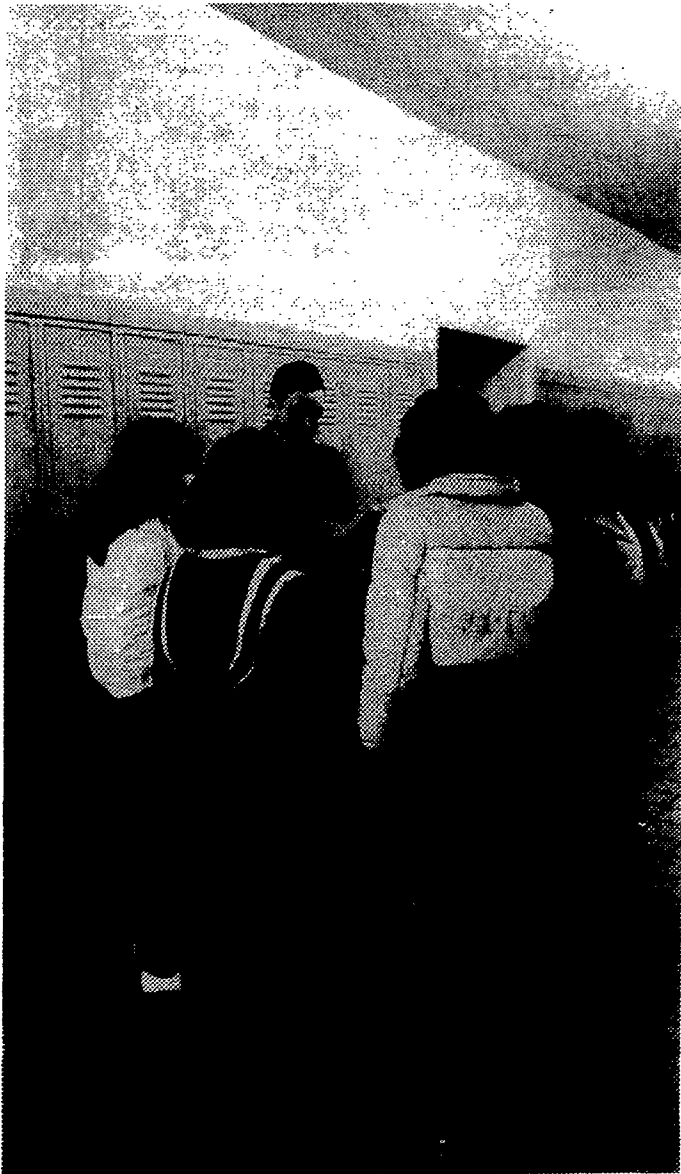


Bishop Matthew H. Clark during his address to the youths.

Photos by Terrance J. Brennan



Youths were invited to ask questions of the guest panel during a session in the auditorium.



Father Dave Mura assists some friends in finding their workshops.



Paul Swiatek leads a workshop on "Peer Ministry -- Youth Responding to Youth."

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