

# CROSSROADS '87

By Father Thomas P. Mull  
Director,  
Office of Liturgy  
Lent of 1987 marks the fifth year Bishop Matthew H. Clark has undertaken a *Crossroads* journey. In 1983, when he began this program, the bishop was motivated to reach out during the holy season of Lent to those whom he would not see during the course of his regular activities. The *Crossroads* Program gives him the opportunity to make informal visits to prisons, jails, development centers, nursing homes, hospitals and colleges. It gives him the opportunity to simply sit and talk with people, in order to encourage their faith, and his own faith as well.



As the program developed, a number of ritual activities were incorporated into his journey throughout the diocese. The number of Rite of Election ceremonies was expanded to four because of the large number of people seeking admission to the Church. Although two celebrations of the rite are still conducted at Sacred Heart Cathedral, two other celebrations take place outside the metropolitan Rochester area. This provides an opportunity for people in outlying communities to gather for this rite and to meet the bishop. Also added to the bishop's itinerary was a day of prayer with adults who are to be confirmed in their local parishes at the Easter Vigil. Many of the people visited by Bishop Clark requested sacramental solace. In some places, he anointed the sick; in others he presided at Eucharist; in still others he offered the mercy of God through the sacrament of penance.

*Crossroads* became a model. It combined the traditional concepts of Lent — prayer, reaching out and deepening one's awareness of responsibility to the Christian community. The bishop invited members of the diocesan Church not to simply see what he was doing but to join in these activities as well. When, for example, people realized that Bishop Clark was visiting a nursing home or a hospital, this served as a gentle reminder that they too should visit the sick. The bishop's journey became the journey of the diocesan Church.

*Crossroads 1987* focuses on baptism and repentance. Traditionally, the liturgical season of Lent was a time for the renewal of baptismal commitments. In the early Church, Lent was marked with strict fasting, almsgiving and prayer. The ministry of hospitality was important, especially toward those who would become members of the Church at the Easter Vigil. Fasting was a means of preparation and purification, helping community members to appreciate their dependence on God and inviting each

member of the community to reflect on the richness of life. Prayer and liturgical participation were the work of the community and, as a result of the prayerful activity of the people, Lent became intensely holy. Emphasis was placed on hospitality — reaching out to the alienated as well as welcoming the elect. This, combined with expectation of the approaching Easter Vigil, filled those awaiting admittance to the Church with a spirit of awe and wonder. The faithful anticipated the entrance of the elect and, perhaps, reflected on their own preparation and baptism. The physical expression of outreach took the form of almsgiving — helping those who could not help themselves.

As time went on, however, the season of Lent took on a different emphasis. Lenten observations began to focus more and more on individual aspects — prayer, fasting and almsgiving — which Christians performed to save their own souls. The communal aspects of this season became clouded by this highly individualized perspective.

The Second Vatican Council restored the season's communal dimension. "During Lent, penance should not only be inward and individual, but also outward and social," the council fathers wrote (#110, CSL). Vatican II also emphasized the dual nature of the Lenten season. "Lent is marked by two themes, the baptismal and the penitential. By recalling or preparing for baptism and by repentance, this season disposes the faithful, as they more diligently listen to the Word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. The baptismal and penitential aspects of Lent are to be given greater prominence in both the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis." (#109, CSL).

The focus of the diocesan *Crossroads* Program this year comes from the Sunday readings, especially the gospels of Cycle A. They invite us to look to our community to see how we give proper dignity to our baptized members and how we invite a fuller participation in the life of this Christian family.

Each Thursday of Lent, the *Courier-Journal* will publish this column, in order to help the diocesan Church focus on Bishop Clark's journey and on our collective Lenten journeys.

During the coming week, Bishop Clark will travel to Brockport on Wednesday, March 2, to inaugurate the Lenten season by celebrating the Eucharist and distributing ashes among the Newman Community there. Also on Ash Wednesday, the bishop will preside at night prayer and distribute ashes at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

## Lenten regulations

Lent begins March 2, Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence, i.e. refraining from meat and from eating between meals.

Each Friday of Lent is a day of abstinence, on which Catholics must refrain from eating meat.

Abstinence regulations apply to all Catholics above the age of 14. Only people between the ages of 18 and 59 are required to observe days of fast.

## TAX PREPARATION

**Joseph D. Mantione**  
Accountant

"Providing professional, personal Tax service - Year Round"

CALL 244-9509

2171 Monroe Ave. • Rochester, N.Y. 14618

ABOVE MORAN'S PAINTS and WALLPAPER STORE

**LONG FORM SPECIAL\***

ONLY

\*Includes the following forms only: Fed. Form-1040  
Sch-A, B, and W  
NYS Form-IT 201

**\$45<sup>00</sup>**

New Clients Only  
EXPIRATION DATE 3-15-87

Monday, Friday, and Saturday 9-6; Tuesday and Thursday 9-9



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

# Along the Way

Sunday morning, St. Patrick's, Elmira.

In these quiet moments of morning prayer, I have been, drawn to the memory of God's goodness to me this week, especially to ways in which God had extended and deepened the experience of my recently concluded retreat at Guelph.

I summarize that awareness as the discovery of gifts for which I prayed hard during the retreat, but which now are present to me in such a way as to leave no doubt that they are purely gifts from a gracious God. They are of such a nature that I know I could not have produced them myself. (Were I able, I would have enjoyed them years ago!) And they are present with a clarity and surety considerably beyond my power of generation. (My own creations are inevitably hollow in the middle and fuzzy around the edges!)

I won't bore you with details about those gifts. Let me say only that they relate not to questions of ministry and the Church so much as to my appreciation of Jesus, His genuine, full humanity and the reality of his personal love for me. A deeper awareness in my heart of these realities overflows into a renewed sense of peace and freedom in the other relationships in my life. And I appreciate in a renewed way what I have at once always believed, but always struggled with; that is, when we find Jesus we find our God and we find ourselves.

I believe this because I know deep down in my heart that I have nothing that I have not first received. My life, faith, ministry, friends, health, abilities, all gifts and possibilities find their origin in God. They come to me by virtue of the sustaining love of God, which is active in others or within me. Even my

capacity to work and to sacrifice for someone or something is in itself God's gift. I know that God is the giver of all good gifts and that I am God's creature — more surely than I know that there's a black pen in my hand just now or a foot at the south end of each of my legs.

But, no matter how strongly I believe all of that, I am very much aware that I easily slip into patterns of life that belie that belief. What kind of patterns? I can best share them with you by offering some examples of how I "speak to myself" when these patterns emerge in my life:

"Don't stop now; this is only very good. It's got to be perfect."

"If you were really serious about ministry, you'd never take this time out to go to a concert. After all, there are people in pain right here in the diocese."

"Easy now; take your time. If you think and pray hard enough, you'll find a way to please everyone."

"Don't be foolish. If you say you don't know the answer or manifest any kind of uncertainty, you'll lose the confidence of the people. Act absolutely convinced or certain, even if you are not."

All of the above and many others exemplify ways in which I try to flee the reality of my own humanity. Each statement denies real human limitations. Each in its own way leads me to count myself as the center of things. Only God is that. That's not such a hard lesson to learn; I know it's true. It's a hard lesson to live; I can forget it so easily.

Perhaps you have similar experiences yourselves. If so, I hope we can be one in prayer for the grace to be still and let God be God.

Peace to all.

## St. Rita's schedules variety of adult-enrichment programs

The Office of Religious Education at St. Rita's Church in West Webster will offer a number of adult-enrichment programs during the coming weeks. A 10 a.m. session on Thursday, February 26, will consider biblical perspectives on the theme "People of God;" Denise Mack will preach about World Prayer during a noon session on Friday, March 6. On Thursday, March 19, the topic will be death and resurrection in Scripture. All three sessions will be in the church, 1008 Maple Drive.

A special series will consider the history and meaning of three Lenten observances. On March 18, Sister Barbara Moore will discuss Holy Thursday. Father Sebastian Falcone, dean

## Rosary Society in Greece schedules March meeting

The Rosary Society of Our Lady of Mercy parish on Armstrong Road in Greece will meet on Monday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m.

The business meeting will begin with a prayer service, followed by a slide presentation on the history of Charlotte.

Refreshments will be served. All the women of the parish are invited.

of St. Bernard's Institute, will present the March 25 session on Good Friday. The April 1 session, to be offered by Dr. Joseph Kelly, will consider the significance of the Easter Vigil.

For information, call the Office of Religious Education, (716)671-2079.

## Ithaca parish announces D/S/W dinner, Lenten programs

The divorced, separated and widows/widowers group at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Ithaca has scheduled a pre-Lenten party for Tuesday, March 3, at 6 p.m. in the parish center. Participants are asked to bring a dish to pass and their own table services. Beverages will be provided. For reservations, call Eleanor Taras, (315)257-1328, or Tutta Colquitt, 277-1127.

Several sessions remain in St. Catherine's Sacramental Theology Program for adults. Remaining dates and their topics are: February 26, Eucharist; March 5, reconciliation and anointing of the sick; March 19, morality and conscience; and March 26, holy orders and marriage.

"Glory of God"

with

Fr. John Betolucci

sponsored by the Media Communications Office of the Rochester Diocese

Has changed it's time from 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Mondays on G.R.C.

Channel 16 in the City & Webster

Channel 2 in the suburbs



This program is made possible by your contribution to the Catholic Communication Campaign.

"O Lord, my God,  
forever will I  
give you thanks."

Psalm 29, verse 13

**Trant's**

Church Supplies and Religious Articles thanks you for making us 80 years young.

Always here to serve your needs at:

696 South Ave.  
Rochester, NY 14620  
(716) 442-7120