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Encyclical calls faithful to end isolation

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

As I pause to write this column early on Tuesday, Feb. 5, I do so very much aware that Lent, which begins earlier than usual this year, is almost upon us. In fact, you will receive next week's Catholic Courier only after Lent has begun.

I want to wish you many blessings during this time of preparation for the Easter Feast. I hope that these weeks of repentance and conversion will be a time of new freedom and deeper peace for you, that in your prayer, fasting and almsgiving you

Organization seeks help

ROCHESTER - The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is seeking volunteers to help organize and promote the 1991 Stair Climb scheduled for Marine Midland Plaza downtown on March 14.

The event consists of a race up 21 flights of stairs - exactly 378 steps - within the Marine Midland building.

Volunteers wishing to help with the event can call Bonnie Bresnahan, 716/546-5890.

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will come to a deeper knowledge of and love for Christ, that you will know the support of the prayer of the whole church as together we enter this privileged phase of our ongoing spiritual journey.

It's important for us to remember always that we do not receive or express or celebrate our faith in isolation. Rather we live these realities as part of a people called to a loving relationship not only with our God but with our sisters and brothers.

Pope John Paul II developed this theme in a helpful way in his Lenten letter to the whole church. In his message the Holy Father pays particular attention to the 100th anniversary of Rerum Novarum, Leo XIII's great encyclical, which opened a new chapter in the church's social teaching.

The pope notes that a constant factor in this teaching has been "its untiring appeal for solidarity in working to overcome the poverty and underdevelopment in which millions of human beings live." As an mintolerable burden of poverty.

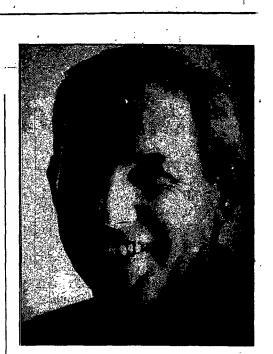
Only after he has located us within a deeply challenging social context does John Paul II call us to a deep and personal Christian asceticism: "There is an urgent need to work for the good of others and to be ready to lose oneself — in the gospel sense - in order to serve others, instead of using them for one's own advantage."

At the edge of the Lenten season I would like to second John Paul's invitation to all of us to be aware of our call to live in solidarity with our sisters and brothers, especially those who are poor and suffering. I don't have any magic way of going about that; no one does. We each need to read the signs of these times as best we can and pray for the grace to respond to them out of what is best in our Christian tradition.

But let me raise just a few questions which I hope might be of some assistance to you in approaching that Lenten theme:

In your daily rounds do you meet individuals, families or parishes or other particular groups who seem to live in isolation from other people? In your opinion what are the causes of that isolation? What are

Do you ever experience isolation in your own life? Its causes? Its effects? What ac-

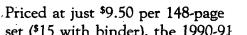


tions do you find helpful in dealing with that experience? What assistance do you need from others to move from isolation to belonging and participation?

However any of us may scan life's horizons to read the signs of our time, I am sure that we all remain mindful of the war in the Persian Gulf. Varied though our individual Lenten journeys may be, I know that among the streams of prayer which will join us as one will be our yearning peace.

Peace to all.







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portant means to this end he calls us to charity and a lived solidarity with the great part of humanity that still suffers under an the effects of that isolation? The Olive Branch Ltd. Inspirational Materials Both Christian & Judaic 1st Anniversary Celebration To thank you for your patronage we're offering and foreign \$15 plus postage. 10% off storewide N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340. (excluding 50% off merchandise) ester, N.Y. February 11-16 Valentine Refreshments on 2/14 377-7660 Rochester, N.Y. 14624. IF 6 N. Main St. Hours: Mon., Tues. Fairport BOX Wed. 10-5: Thurs. 8 ACTORY Fri, 10-9; Sat., 10-4



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