



submitted thoughtful recommendations that the bishop was able to affirm. Local areas now take the lead in our planning effort, and we are all the richer for it.

Our new diocesan mission statement is in direct response to the Winters Group recommendation that the "Diocese must first articulate a strong mission that the majority of Catholics can buy into, and organize its functions and activities to be seen as relevant in today's social climate."

The statement approved by the bishop last month is challenging and specific. (The text of this statement appears on page one of this issue.) Based on this statement, we are now reviewing the organizational structure at the Pastoral Office.

The new emphasis on the *Catholic Courier* is another hopeful sign. Currently, 46,000 households are receiving the *Catholic Courier* each week. We intend to increase this circulation gradually to include more households, so that the *Catholic Courier* can become an even greater source of unity by helping us to know and feel more a part of the complex and exciting reality of our local church.

I think that we are on the brink of relegating the "Barge Canal Syndrome" and those other syndromes to the history of our diocese. Frankly we don't have any choice. For if we fail to get beyond "syndromes," we will have failed to respond to the marvelous opportunities modern technology is putting at our disposal. We will have failed to respond to the synodal process, new planning processes, our new mission statement, and to the new opportunities offered us through the *Catholic Courier*. And we will have failed to respond to the urging of the Holy Spirit to be one in Christ Jesus.

Those of us who serve our local church at the Pastoral Office are committed to doing all in our power to live out the clear call in our mission statement to "build up the community of faith and hope in the Holy Spirit ... continuing our diocese's century-old tradition of courage and creativity, and responding to the Second Vatican Council's call for the ongoing conversion of the Church." As the bishop's staff, we invite all members of our diocese to join the effort.

If you can suggest ways we can better serve your parish or community, please write to me at 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624.

how we might begin to conquer what

survey, a communications audit and from an organizational task force of ip Council all stated that our most d is better communication. Improved t will enable our key leaders to get us-and-them mentality, which has so long.

e key role of improved communica- ure, we brought Elizabeth Brown on oruary of 1989 as our first, full-time, m- munications director. Bishop Mat- and I meet at least monthly with Liz ew our progress.

e a long way to go, but I am confident lp the people of our diocese begin to what is going on at every level of our lp them realize that they are actively hurch.

Bishop Clark is modeling this in- the issues he brings to the Priests' tewardship Council and the Diocesan cil.

s Group found that each of the 130- we provide at the Pastoral Office is ome group of staff or clergy in the he overall quality ranking was only ove" at best. We believe that one e this quality ranking is to streamline and services. At this moment the ittee and our Priests' Council are just that.

ur other initiatives that make me ex-

tremely hopeful: our upcoming diocesan synod, our cooperative approach to parish planning, our newly adopted mission statement, and a new diocesan emphasis on the role of the *Catholic Courier*. Allow me to expand briefly on each of these initiatives.

As part of the upcoming synod, all 125,000 Catholic households that make up our diocese will be surveyed on how they think the Holy Spirit is calling us to journey into the new century. Once the response is analyzed and the themes are chosen for the synod, educational materials will be prepared on each theme.

Then parishioners in each of the 161 parishes in our diocese will come together to discuss these concerns and make recommendations to be shared and refined at regional synods and finally at a diocesan synod that will bring together Bishop Clark and representatives from every parish to chart a common future.

Our new approach to parish planning evolved out of three recent parish reconfiguration processes in the Southern Tier — the Eastside Catholic Churches; the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Communities; and the Catholic Communities of St. Mary's of the Lake, Watkins Glen, and St. Benedict's, Odessa.

Once parameters for reconfiguration of these parishes were outlined, the local planning groups asked to be left on their own so that the local communities could formulate alternatives from which Bishop Clark could decide the final configuration. They

Insight author's experience includes serving those on both sides of canal

Father John Mulligan is in an unique position to address concerns about Pastoral Center relations with parishes outside Monroe County.

The Rochester native spent 11 years serving in some of those parishes: Immaculate Conception, Ithaca (1964-66); St. Patrick's, Corning, (1966-71); St. Mary's, Auburn (1971-73); and St. Stephen's, Geneva (1981-83).

Father Mulligan has also been a part of the diocesan administration. From 1983-1988, he directed the diocesan Division of Urban Services, and in 1988, he became the moderator of the Pastoral Center.

During his years as moderator, Father Mulligan has overseen efforts to improve the internal offices of the Pastoral Center and to improve the lines of communication in the diocese.

The new diocesan mission statement illustrates ongoing efforts to improve services to the diocese's 161 parishes, Father Mulligan said.

"I think what it challenges us to do is to look at every program, at every department, at every division," Father Mulligan observed, "and say, 'Those four things are the things you are about.'"

Insight