

# Synod invites reflections on life

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Just a few moments ago I finished a quick, preliminary reading of the first draft prepared about three of our synodal themes: (a) How can we help those facing violence, addiction, burdensome pregnancy and terminal illness? (b) How can we support our parishes in being faith-filled, celebrating communities? (c) How can we as church help strengthen Christian marriage and family life in all its forms?

I was thrilled to receive the drafts because they represent yet another milestone in this extraordinary journey of prayer and study to which we have committed ourselves.

In my contacts with members of our writing committees, I have gotten a strong impression that they found their respective work assignments to be stimulating. Moreover, they were enriched by their often new collegiality with other members of their group.

As I read their work today, I caught their energy and excitement in what they had written for purposes of stimulating discussion at our parish synods which begin this fall.

The next step in our process will be to ask the members of our Diocesan Pastoral Council to review the three drafts already prepared. We'll want to know if the language and concepts of the papers are clear and sharp. We'll want to know if they will be sufficiently stimulating to generate good parish discussion — if they contain enough open-ended issues.

We'll ask the generous DPC members if our committees have fulfilled their task of (a) presenting the current situation in our 12-county



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diocese; (b) presenting an analysis of the situation in light of the Gospel, Vatican Council II and other relevant studies and papers; and (c) offering a series of specific recommendations designed to move us ahead in these areas.

Finally, we'll ask them to identify any gaps in the work and to make their suggestions for the improvement of these papers. I am certain their insight will refine the good work already begun.

I hope that you have been praying that God will continue to guide us all through this entire process. It is also my hope that you are being prayerfully observant of what's happening in your family, your parish, your workplace.

Please note what circumstances, issues, events, difficulties, resources and opportunities exist in those situations. Doing so will

enable us to enjoy your wisdom as we try to analyze our present reality as accurately as possible, reflect on that reality in the light of our faith tradition, and develop a pastoral plan that will strengthen our community for service in building the reign of God.

What are the factors in contemporary life that foster your human growth and strengthen your family/community? What are the elements that have negative effects on you? What can we do to help one another make things better?

In what areas is your parish community doing well? What improvements would you like to see, and what suggestions do you have for bringing about those improvements?

How can we in our community of faith help one another to resist the negative pressures of daily living, and build one another up so that we might truly be the salt of the earth and the light of the world?

Our parish synods will be fruitful to the degree that we all prepare as well as we can for them — by praying, by honestly and seriously reflecting on our faith and life experience; by carefully studying our preparation materials; by honestly expressing our own points of view; and by listening carefully to the points of view of our neighbors.

Please keep in touch with developments about the Synod through this newspaper and your parish bulletin. And please, dear friend, please participate in the process as fully as your life's circumstances allow you to do so.

Thank you.  
Peace to all.

Our monastic way of life focuses on the perfect love of God and neighbor which is effective in achieving the salvation of all people. Living apart from the day-to-day world, we

## CONTEMPLATION

eagerly study the truth, wholeheartedly ponder the Scriptures, pray intently, willingly practice penance, work attentively, live simply and rejoice in sisterly sharing. We thereby live in the midst of the Church and world, proclaiming that in Christ alone is true happiness found.

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A new monthly calendar will appear in the Catholic Courier on the last Thursday of each month.

## THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

### WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

The following prayer was dictated by Our Lord to Sister Josefa Menendez at Poitiers, France, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 3, 1921, with the instruction: "Josefa! Repeat these words every

#### JESUS PRAYER FOR HIS PRIESTS

O Jesus, by Thy most loving Heart, I implore Thee to inflame with zeal for Thy love and glory all the priests of the world, all missionaries and those whose office it is to preach Thy word, that on fire with holy zeal, they may snatch souls from the devil and lead them into the shelter of Thy Heart, where for ever they may glorify Thee.

*Imprimatur: E. Morrogh Bernard, Vic. Gen. Westmonasterii, May 5, 1953*

Mass  
Rosary  
Fasting  
Day Offering  
Eucharistic Adoration  
Divine Mercy Chaplet

Or whatever the Lord inspires you to offer Him

## APRIL, 1992

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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