

Prayers for blessings and of thanks

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

In this last pre-Labor Day column, I want to make some brief comments about a range of issues that has claimed my attention in recent days. I divide them into two categories: thanks for good gifts already received, and prayers for blessings that I hope are yet to come. The items to be found within each of the two categories are listed in no particular order.

1). Thanks to:

- Tim and Carol Dwyer and their daughter, Erin, for moving here from Michigan so that Tim can serve as our superintendent of schools.
- Jack Balinsky for agreeing to accept the position of diocesan director of Social Ministry.
- The thousands of women and men who have agreed this year to serve our faith community and its mission through volunteer service in our diocesan and parish committees, boards and councils.
- Our pastors, who day in and day out are so generous in their efforts to lead through loving service.
- The women and men religious of our diocese; it is difficult to imagine what our local church would look like without their past and present contributions to our life.
- The growing number of persons who have made a substantial investment of their time and talent to promote our Synod process.
- The catechists and youth ministers in



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all corners of our diocese who give the best they have in affection and support for our precious young people.

- Those who daily feed the hungry, clothe the naked, provide shelter for the homeless, console those who mourn, and speak up for those who are oppressed.
- Our friends who care so passionately about the gift of life in all of its stages and who challenge us to be tireless in our defense of life from its beginnings in the womb to its final moments.
- The Sisters at St. Joseph Convent Infirmary, who recently strengthened my faith with the witness of their own, and whose daily prayer is a strength for our church.
- All pastoral ministers — ordained, lay

and religious — in our diocese; their creativity, fidelity and generosity are unsurpassed.

- My family, which gathered in happy reunion last Saturday and, in doing so, reminded me of the ties that bind us all in faith and affection.

2). I pray for:

- The young men and women of our diocese who begin their college careers in these late August and early September days. Whether you stay near or travel far, our prayers are with you in these years of special growth and opportunity.
 - All of you who, by whatever definition, are entering into some new venture, phase of life or relationship that tests your self-confidence or finds you yearning for support.
 - For God's blessings for all who participate in our Synods in late September and early October.
 - That we will all continue to grow in compassion, patience and peaceful disposition in a world that can be so violent.
 - That we always will allow our level of comfort to be challenged by the needs of others.
 - An ongoing growth in our awareness that each one of us can make a difference for the better while we're alive and kicking on this earth.
 - Your growth and happiness for the Labor Day holiday and for the months ahead.
- Peace to all.

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