

# Query draws replies, but few suggestions

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

In my column of Oct. 15, I shared with you a suggestion made to me by a gentleman from Brockport. His suggestion was that we equip every church in the diocese with television monitors and develop the capacity to communicate by television with all of our parish communities on any given Sunday.

Following are some excerpts from letters sent in by readers in response to the question.

## 1). Responses in support:

"Not all priests possess all gifts — they're human with different talents and levels of ability. We need to utilize special talents to the greatest potential."

"Many of our priests are overworked. The availability of ideal homilies would lighten the work load."

"The people need more exposure to your spirituality. They need to be touched by your gifts more often. This would help to inspire greater confidence in you and make it easier for them to graciously accept the unpopular decisions you sometimes need to make as leader of our diocese."

"Where possible equip each church with a BIG SCREEN TV and a VCR. Send each parish video tapes. ... We could also use weekday evenings. ... Hold a pot luck supper followed by a 'video' followed by discussion/conversation."

"It would enhance communication regarding diocesan matters (quadrant). ... All of it could be reached by various speakers who give presentations in only one location. People like myself who have children at home can't always squeeze out time to attend valuable conferences. How great it would be to get the infor-



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mation in our local churches."

"... telecommunications during Mass, eg., a homily would have to be done rarely. In a big parish like ours, depersonalization is a problem."

"Our parish communities would develop a sense of 'oneness,' truly feeling parts of the diocesan family."

## 2). Responses opposing or raising questions about the idea:

"It seems terribly expensive to equip each church with TV monitors for use on an occasional Sunday or even every Sunday."

"There would be problems in seeing and hearing ... It's hard to hear when people cough or a child cries and the sound systems in some churches leave a great deal to be desired. Some people end up behind a pillar, too, either unintentionally or on purpose."

"Educators will tell you that the human

attention span is not too great. I am afraid, therefore, that much of TV message would be lost. Why not — better — prepare 'issues' statements in printed form to be handed out to all parishioners in the diocese at the same time?"

The above comments offer a fair sampling of the written response to the question raised by our friend in Brockport. Readers who have spoken to me since the column appeared presented a range of opinions similar to those expressed in the letters.

I thank all who wrote or spoke to me about the television idea. You have been most generous in sharing your thoughtful points of view.

## Some closing thoughts:

• At the end of the Oct. 15 column I asked, "What suggestion would you make to improve our communication efforts if you were allowed one and only one suggestion but were guaranteed that it would be carried out?" The idea about "issues" statements cited above was the only answer I received. I thought there would be a wide range of responses to that question.

• For several reasons I won't go into here, I think it would be inappropriate to plug a televised homily into the Sunday celebration. But I want to tell you how delighted I am to know the importance you give to good preaching.

• In the Oct. 15 column I referred to "Companions" and "Partners," two newsletters that are intended to help us to communicate more effectively with a variety of constituencies. I must tell you — and I can feel myself blushing as I do — that "Partners" was dropped in recent budget cuts. I was told that loud and clear. And I missed it. Whoever said good communication is easy?

Peace to all.

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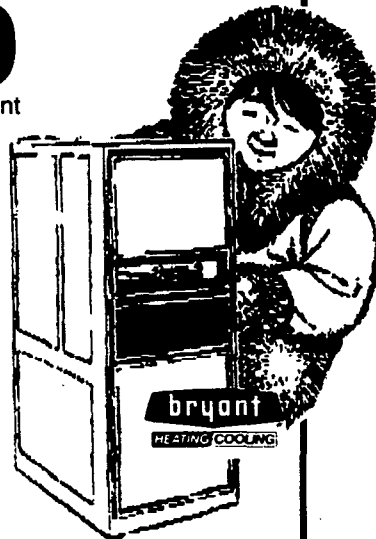
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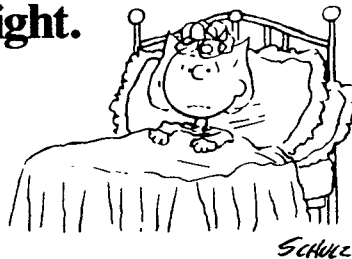
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