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# CATHOLIC COURIER

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

## Our bishop

### Prior newcomer offers advice on how to settle in

Interview by Mike Latona, Staff writer

**EDITORS' NOTE:** This week's issue features our Newcomer's Guide, which begins after page 8. In the following interview, Bishop Matthew H. Clark offers his views concerning the Rochester diocese — which he has led since June, 1979. In addition to touching upon its history and his own experiences as a newcomer, the bishop comments on current and future developments within the diocese.

**As a newcomer, I might be interested in what makes dioceses different from one to the next. In your travels and experiences, what do you think makes the Rochester diocese stand out from the others?**

I think that this diocese, from its very foundation 125 years ago, has had a very strong commitment to quality education. That has been manifested, for example, in the foundation of St. Bernard's Seminary 100 years ago this year, and its continuation as St. Bernard's Institute. I also think it's manifested in the very early and strong commitment to Catholic-school education for the many immigrants who came to this country.

Over the course of its history, this diocese has been quite progressive. Most recently, I think this diocese has done a very fine job with the sometimes difficult work of absorbing and integrating the direction of the Second Vatican Council. When I came here, that work was well underway ... I'm very proud of our diocese on that score.

For its size, this diocese is a very well educated one and highly skilled, with a considerable diversity. The last thing I'd say is that I've found a great sense of service and generosity among the people here. I think the level of commitment, on a volunteer basis, is very strong.

**You have lived here for nearly 14 years as bishop of the Rochester diocese, and you studied at St. Bernard's Seminary prior to your ordination in 1962. Could you please talk about your own experiences as a newcomer here, both from your days at St. Bernard's and upon your return in 1979.**

I came in 1957 as a third-year college student and spent two years here. However, because of the nature of seminary training in those days I was on the grounds virtually 24 hours a day, and made virtually

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Portrait by Babette G. Augustin

