

Three pastoral priorities to shape year

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

On the evening of this Labor Day holiday, I have just returned from a visit to Sea Breeze where I bade goodbye to this phase of summer by enjoying both the magnificent sunset and a rich and soothing frozen chocolate-almond custard.

Upon my return from that beautiful place, I took out the file for our first Priests' Council meeting of the new year to be held (Tuesday) at the Notre Dame Spirituality Center, Canandaigua.

I look forward to meetings of the council because they afford an opportunity to discuss the concerns of our local church. The members of the council bring a lot of pastoral wisdom and a great love for the community and their brother priests. Out of our discussions come a good deal of clarity and some excellent advice.

The first meeting of the year is especially interesting because we take some time to invite each member to speak of his hopes for our year's activity and to tell us what he hopes to offer to our work together.

I try to do the same and also take some time to comment on the main purposes of the group and the responsibilities we need to fulfill if we are successfully to realize those purposes.

This year I want to include a brief



A LONG THE WAY

presentation of three pastoral priorities, upon which I will focus in a particular way during the coming year and, very likely, beyond. I express them in this way:

1.) Support for pastoral ministers in the Diocese of Rochester and work to ensure high-quality initial and ongoing formation for all of us who are pastoral ministers.

2.) Work to improve the quality and fruitfulness of communication within and among the Roman Catholic community.

3.) Work to advance Synod Priority #1 by:

a. clarifying the present situation of Catholic schools

b. situating those findings within the context of our general education needs and resources

c. presenting that information to appropriate constituencies for review, analysis and recommendations for next steps.

Tomorrow I shall ask the presbyteral council members for their initial comments on the areas I have chosen as ways in which I can best serve our community and advance our Synod.

I shall also ask them for their suggestions and feedback through the year on how best to carry out these priorities. In similar fashion, I will seek the input of our Stewardship Council, Diocesan Pastoral Council and Synod Implementation Commission.

If you have comments, questions or suggestions about these three areas to which I'll be giving special attention, I would be very happy to receive them.

From time to time during the year, I'll comment on my activities in these areas in "Along the Way."

I hope that your return to the post-Labor Day season is peaceful and productive for you, and that we'll all be able to enjoy a lot more summer.

Peace to all.

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