

# Most common questions answered

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

In my pastoral rounds over the years, I have found that many people whom I meet are curious about our diocese — its history, size, personnel and programs. I enjoy such conversations and find that such inquiries about facts and figures often fold into conversations about our faith, our church and our journey of faith.

I thought I would share with you in the form of a quiz some of the questions I have received most frequently. Perhaps the answers to this quiz will satisfy some of your curiosities and help you to respond to questions you may receive from friends and neighbors.

**1. When was the Diocese of Rochester founded? And who was its first bishop?**

Our diocese was founded in 1868. Our first bishop was Bernard J. McQuaid, who served until his death in 1909. His 41-year term as bishop is the longest in our history.

**2. How much territory is included within our diocese?**

Our diocese includes 12 counties. They are Cayuga, Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne and Yates. We cover about 7,100 square miles.

**3. How many Catholics are there in our diocese?**

Of the 1.45 million people who live in our 12-county area approximately 397,000 (27 percent) are Catholic.

**4. How many parishes are there in our diocese?**

At the present time we have 149 parishes.

**5. And how many men and women religious now live and work in our**



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diocese?

We are blessed by the presence of 837 women religious and 136 men religious. Of the men, 51 are brothers and 85 are priests.

**5. How many diocesan priests do we have at the present time?**

We have 301 diocesan priests. Of that number 192 engage in full-time, active ministry within the diocese. Six serve in ministries outside of our diocese. The remainder are retired. All of the retired priests continue to serve, and a large number of them do so in active parish ministry.

**6. How many seminarians do we have, and where do they study?**

We have nine seminarians at the present time. In today's usage, that means that we have nine students who have finished college and have gone on to major seminaries for their theological studies. This time of formation normally includes four years of study and one year of pastoral service in one of our parishes. The student does his year of pastoral

service between his second and third years of theological studies.

At present we have seminarians at Theological College at the Catholic University of America; North American College, Rome; Saint Mary's Seminary, Baltimore; Saint Augustine's Seminary, Toronto; and St. Bernard's Institute.

**7. What about permanent deacons?**

The number of our permanent deacons has grown to 90 since our first ordination more than 10 years ago.

**8. How many Catholic schools do we have now? And how many students do they serve?**

The seven Catholic high schools located in our diocese serve 3,200 students. Our 56 elementary schools serve another 11,400 young people.

**9. How does the Diocese of Rochester compare in size and population to the other dioceses of New York state?**

There are eight dioceses in the State of New York: Albany, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Archdiocese of New York, Ogdensburg, Rochester, Rockville Center and Syracuse.

The three downstate dioceses — Brooklyn, New York and Rockville Center — all have Catholic populations well in excess of 1.5 million. New York is the largest both in population and area.

Geographically, Brooklyn is the smallest diocese in the state.

Of the five upstate dioceses, Ogdensburg is the largest in area and the smallest in population. Of the four lying along the broad East-to-West midsection of our state, Buffalo is the largest in Catholic population. Albany, Rochester and Syracuse are all roughly the same in both size and population, with Albany slightly larger in each category.

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**THE MONTHLY PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS**  
WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?  
A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Lord Jesus, you have chosen your priests from among us and sent them out to proclaim your word and to act in your name. For so great a gift to your Church, we give you praise and thanksgiving. We ask you to fill them with the fire of your love, that their ministry may reveal your presence in the Church. Since they are earthen vessels, we pray that your power shine out through their weakness. In their afflictions let them never be crushed; in their doubts never despair; in temptation never be destroyed; in persecution never abandoned. Inspire them through prayer to live each day the mystery of your dying and rising. In times of weakness send them your Spirit, and help them to praise your heavenly Father and pray for poor sinners. By the same Holy Spirit put your word on their lips and your love in their hearts, to bring good news to the poor and healing to the broken-hearted. And may the gift of Mary your mother, to the disciple whom you loved, be your gift to every priest. Grant that she who formed you in her human image, may form them in your divine image, by the power of your Spirit, to the glory of God the Father. Amen  
O Mary conceived without sin pray for us who have recourse to you. (3X)  
With permission of Most Rev. Felix S. Zafra, D.D., Bishop of Tagbilaran (Bohol, Philippines)

Or whatever the Lord inspires you to offer Him on behalf of His priests

**OCTOBER, 1994**  
DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, NY

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The Bible teaches the meaning and purpose of "gleaning," thanking God for a fruitful harvest by providing for the less fortunate. In modern times, gleaning is equally important. With its Oct. 13th edition, the *Catholic Courier* will publish a special *Fall Harvest* supplement to reinforce the principals and importance of gleaning in 1994. You can be a part of this process, while introducing your products and services to our readers this year.

For more information or to participate in the *Courier's Fall Harvest* supplement, call your sales representative or the *Courier* advertising department at 716-328-4340.

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