

## Plan's publishing marks milestone

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

It is with a special delight that I begin Along the Way this week.

That is because with this issue we come to another significant moment in our Synod process — the publication of our diocesan Pastoral Plan. This plan, included with this week's edition of the *Catholic Courier*, has been developed through careful conversation with our parish communities and is designed to support effective implementation of our Synod goals in all of our parishes.

It is my strong hope that every parish community will review this document with great care. It is well worthy of serious, ongoing study because it says a good deal about who we are, about our values; about the way in which we want to relate to one another, within the Roman Catholic community, to our Christian sisters and brothers and all members of the human family.

Much has happened in our local church since we began our Synod process in 1991. You will recall that the first public step we took was to mail a substantial survey to everyone in our diocese. In that survey we asked you to identify what was most important to you in catholic life and to tell us how you thought we were doing in those areas.

Since that survey the gifted and



### A LONG THE WAY

generous people of our diocese have invested deeply in the work of our Synod. Thousands of you participated faithfully and thoughtfully in our parish, regional and General Synods. Our parish communities have generously accepted the challenge to bring alive at the local level the basic priorities that emerged with surprisingly similar force from all parts of our diocese. Our Synod Implementation Commission, diocesan administrators and parish communities have worked together in spectacular fashion to produce the plan you receive today.

To me it seems altogether appropriate that we mark this step in our Synod process by sending a copy of our

diocesan support plan to all those to whom we sent the survey which began the process.

If you have supported the Synod with prayer and activity through these exciting months, please accept this copy of our Pastoral Plan both as an expression of thanks for your good gifts and as an invitation to you to help make our Synod as fruitful as possible for all of us.

If you have not been participating in the process, please accept your copy of the plan as a sign of our desire to include and welcome you if you should like to become more active than you have been.

If you are new to our diocese, please receive our plan as an expression of our awareness that we are embarking on a new stage of our faith journey, that we very much want you to walk with us and recognize that we will be much the stronger if you do.

To all, especially to those who do not regularly receive the *Catholic Courier*, I extend an invitation to read not only our Pastoral Plan but this week's issue of our newspaper. I hope that you find it interesting and stimulating and want you to know that we welcome suggestions about how we might serve you better.

Please pray that God will continue to bless us as we continue our Synod journey.

Happy New Year and peace to all.



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