

Thankful for progress, prayers

I trust that you have already read on Page one of this issue of the *Catholic Courier* the news story reporting on my medical condition. The story indicates that I am in treatment for temporal arteritis, speaks of the nature of the disease, indicates methods of treatment and hoped-for outcomes.

I trust that the article also conveys to you the great care taken by my physician, Dr. Robert McVeigh, to arrive at a clear and secure diagnosis.

At this stage of the game, I am totally relieved to know precisely what we need to work on and to have every reasonable hope that we can achieve a complete recovery.

Adding to that sense of peace is the freedom finally to share with you what has kept me from doing "Along the Way" for the past two weeks and from meeting my normal, daily commitments for almost three. I had wanted to tell you even earlier, but it seemed unwise to do so without something clear and definite to say. I am sure you understand.

What happens now? The news story accurately reports some fatigue and weakness. At the same time I am happy to tell you that I am slowly but surely coming to feel stronger. It will be a matter of close

along the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

consultation with my physicians and, I expect, a certain amount of trial and error before I can return to a full schedule.

This morning, for example, I presided at the Eucharistic Liturgy at Sacred Heart Cathedral. I had not done so for three weeks and was yearning to return.

As it happened, there was never a moment during the celebration when I felt I would not get through it successfully. At the same time, I have to say that I had to push to do it. Just the effort to project my voice — something I do every day without even thinking about it — took a lot of energy.

I will learn from that experience and will be able to use it as something of a baseline for measuring progress in the days ahead. I expect that progress to be slow but steady, especially in the begin-

ning. But I do hope that I will be back to a normal, healthy level of activity within a few weeks.

A couple of further comments:

One of the blessings of this experience has been a renewed appreciation of how deeply I cherish the privilege of serving as your bishop. In this instance, I knew it from my yearning to share with you, my friends, what was happening in my life. It also came in the sure knowledge that you support me in your prayer, no matter what the circumstances may be. I cannot begin to tell you how much that means to me.

A second gift for which I have been grateful throughout this experience is a sense of solidarity with those for whom suffering is a part of daily living.

I would not choose for myself or wish on anyone what I have gone through lately. But I am mindful that all of that is as nothing compared to what others are asked to endure. When I was in pain or discouraged, I considered it a grace that the Lord joined me to them in a reminder of his fidelity to all of us.

I think that's enough for now, dear friends. I thank you for your prayers and support, and promise to keep you updated in the weeks ahead. I love you.

Peace to all.

MISSION NEWS

"John's work needs the priest to complete it, but there is no doubt that the priest and the parish are in great need of John."



Bishop Arap Korir of Eldoret is speaking about John Gicheru (pictured), a catechist for this East African diocese. John travels throughout the diocese on foot or by bicycle to teach children about Jesus, visit the sick and prepare people for the Sacraments.

The Bishop also noted that his diocese is in great need of the Propagation of the Faith.

"We would be very weak in many ways without your prayers and financial assistance, and we are very appreciative and very grateful."



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