

Local faithful exemplify stewardship

I write on the last day of September, grateful for the blessings this month brought and marveling at how quickly these 30 days passed by.

September is a month of start-ups after the more relaxed schedule of July and August. Among the groups that reconvened this month were our Presbyteral Council, Stewardship Council, Catholic Courier Board, the Board of St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry and our diocesan Regional Board of Catholic Charities. We also had a meeting with ecumenical and interfaith partners to encourage individuals to prepare thoroughly for end-of-life issues.

The bishops of the eight dioceses of our New York province met for two days in Queens late last week. On the first day we met with the leadership of the congregations of religious women and men of our state and, following that meeting, we had a business session and dinner with the Priests' Council of New



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

York. On the second day of our session, the bishops met to consider a range of pastoral and public-policy issues.

Last Saturday I went to St. Mary of the Lake in Watkins Glen to celebrate a liturgy and enjoy lunch with the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. On Sunday, the people of St. Michael in Newark observed the 100th anniversary of their beautiful church. It was my pleasure to preside and preach at the liturgy, and to spend some time with parishioners at a delightful reception after the liturgy.

I write on Monday evening after a trip to St. Mary Our Mother in Horseheads for the first of two organizational meetings for this year's Catholic Thanks Giving Appeal. The second of those two meetings will be tomorrow afternoon at St. Patrick's in Victor.

There may be other events I might have mentioned that I have not already written about. I am in the embarrassing position of having lost my appointment book and am working from memory.

In any case, my intention is not to name all of the events of the month but to give you some sense of the broad range of activities participated in by members of our local church.

Association with people who make all of this work possible is an endless source of inspiration to me. Their generous example calls me to prayer. Their commitment to service helps keep me faithful to my own.

As I sit here thinking about them and their generous work, I realize that what they hold most deeply in common is a sense of stewardship. What I mean is that they share a vision of life that sees God as a source of life and all good gifts. Further, they have an awareness that such good gifts are placed in their care not only for their own strength and growth, but also for the good of others. Mindful of their relationships with God and neighbor, they are ready and willing generously to share of their time, talent and treasure.

I am grateful to them, to you and all of the women and men, girls and boys in our diocese who work for the common good, often at great personal sacrifice. They and you give life and renewed hope to our faith community - and its bishop.

Please pray to St. Anthony and the Little Flower that someone will find and return my calendar!

Peace to all.

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