

Positive work fills a busy January

I generally think of January as a relatively quiet time compared to the rest of the year. People tend to defer meetings until the weather is less likely to be severe and the roads less dangerous.

That seems not to be the case this January, notwithstanding the fact that our weather has been tough — lots of snow and extremely low temperatures. There is indeed much activity this month, and it's heartening to review the January schedule to note the good things that are happening.

Some examples: We have annual meetings with our state legislators during which we converse with them about matters of common interest, including public-policy and legislative priorities developed by



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

the New York State Catholic Conference and our Diocesan Public Policy Committee. We met last Friday with our legislators from the Southern Tier; this week we'll have conversations with those who represent the people in the rest of our

diocese. Experience indicates that it is good to have these conversations because they foster mutual understanding and constructive relationships with these generous public servants.

Our Women's Commission met at the Pastoral Center on Saturday for their quarterly meeting. I enjoyed the opportunity to hear about their initiatives, including some work on spirituality in the workplace. They had asked me to update them on the work of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church. I was happy to do that and to brief them on a conference I'll be attending this spring at Boston College. Several of us who worked to develop a pastoral letter on women for the USCCB in the '80s and early '90s have been invited to reflect on what has happened since that effort. I look forward to that event.

We have two very special parish anniversary celebrations this month. One, the 100th anniversary of Rochester's Our Lady of Perpetual Help, we celebrated early in the month. The other, the 150th an-

niversary of St. Bridget's, will take place on January 25. Such gatherings are always a source of joy for these parish communities; they are also reminders to all of us of God's faithful love.

There are several meetings on this month's calendar. Our Priests' Council, the bishops of New York state, the Partners in Faith Campaign Cabinet and the Executive Committee of our Stewardship Council are on the docket this month. So are visits to Our Lady of the Genesee Monastery, Bethany House, St. John of Rochester School, Nazareth Hall and to Geneva for a meeting of our Vocation Awareness Team.

Liturgical celebrations include confirmations at Holy Ghost Parish, Gates; St. Mary, Auburn; and St. Margaret Mary, Irondequoit. In addition, I celebrated the Eucharistic Liturgy at St. John of Rochester, Perinton, on Sunday. During that liturgy we installed candidates for the permanent diaconate into the ministries of lector and acolyte.

Next week I'll be going to Austin, Texas, to meet with the board of the National Conference of Catholic Youth Ministers. While there, I'll also be helping the members of the NCCYM with a day of prayer and reflection on ministry.

In addition to the events and meetings listed, there will be many appointments and conversations about a wide range of pastoral concerns and activities for this winter month. Some are easier and more enjoyable than others, but they all represent some piece of Catholic life and the tremendous amount of good our people and pastoral leaders achieve every day. Given the heavy but important and necessary message I offered in this space last week, I am particularly delighted to remind you of such positive realities.

Peace to all.

MISSION NEWS

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Served with sour cream and applesauce

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Dinner: Monday-Saturday 4:30pm to 10:00pm

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Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)
Vol. 115 No. 14 January 15, 2004

Published weekly except the first Thursday in January and the last Thursday in December.
Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$20.00; Canada and foreign \$20.00 plus postage. Offices: 1136 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624, 585/529-9530. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624.