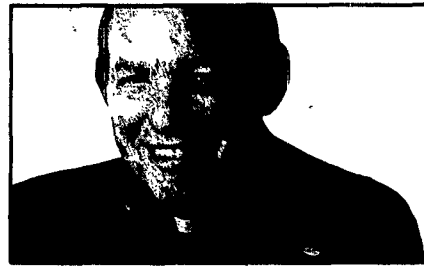


# Prayer helps focus the larger picture

About 200 people from our diocese met for Pastoral Planning Leaders Day at Keuka College in Penn Yan on Saturday.

This gathering has become a part of our annual calendar in recent years. Its purposes are to provide timely information to those engaged in this work, to offer enrichment opportunities in relevant theological and pastoral themes, to compare notes, and to enjoy the company of sisters and brothers who so generously contribute to this important process.

I took great delight in the event. We met on a very bright first day of spring. We gathered toward the midpoint of the Lenten season. Both of those realities speak to me of new life, brightened hope and much promise. But my assignment on this particular day brought the greatest joy. That assignment was to offer



**Bishop Matthew H. Clark**

## Along the Way

comments about the state of our diocese. I won't repeat my remarks. They are reported in another part of this week's *Catholic Courier*, and the full text is available on our diocesan Web site, [www.dor.org](http://www.dor.org).

I just want to say that the task was filled with blessings for me. Why? I think it is because it both allowed and required me to step back from the

details of daily living and engagement in particular issues, and to look at reality from a wider perspective, a longer view.

Stepping back like that is a healthy thing for me. It always has been. Otherwise, I can become so absorbed in one piece of reality that I lose sight of its relationship to other important elements that also should be part of my concern. When that happens, I am serving neither you nor myself very well.

Important in the ministry of the bishop is that he reminds the community of our relationship to those who came before us, and of our responsibility to those who come after us. It's not easy to do that if you're so absorbed in the demands of the day that you forget yesterday and tomorrow.

That fact comes home to me — more often than I like — when I get so worked up about a particular issue on a given day that it affects the rest of my work that day. Much more often than not, the next day I can't remember what it was that bothered me so much. And, if I can remember what it was, I don't understand why it troubled me as it did.

The best way I know to counter

such moments of forgetfulness is to be faithful to prayer. Among the graces that come to those faithful to prayer is a lively awareness that Christ is faithful to his promise to be with us always. We need never be alone. We need never trust only in our own personal resources. We need never fear that Christ will not sustain us even in our tough moments.

I invite you to spend some time as Lent continues to consider the themes I have touched upon here as well as the following questions:

Do I sometimes find myself so concerned about one piece of life that I let slide concern for other things that are no less important to me and my loved ones?

Do I experience the kind of spiritual amnesia that leads me to forget the active presence and compassion of Christ in my life?

Do I make prayer a regular part of my life in such fashion that I can locate life's daily events in the grander scheme of things?

I hope that you are enjoying a blessed Lent, and that you have been praying each day for those who will receive the Sacrament of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Peace to all.

### CATHOLIC COURIER CHANGES FREQUENCY

This is the last mailed, weekly edition of the *Catholic Courier*. There will be no issue on Thursday, April 1.

Look for the new *Catholic Courier Weekly* in your parish bulletin on Palm Sunday weekend (April 3-4), and for the new *Catholic Courier Monthly* to arrive in your mailbox Wednesday, April 7.

renew

April 7-10 HOLY WEEK RETREAT  
Wednesday evening 6:00pm (dinner)  
to Saturday evening following the  
Easter Vigil. Offering \$125

April 23-25 WOMEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT  
Friday evening 6:00 (dinner) to  
Sunday morning. Offering \$100

May 1 GARDENING AS PRAYER  
9:30am - 4:00 Offering \$25

May 5 GENUINE HAPPINESS  
Given by Dr. Terry O'Brien PhD  
6:00pm (dinner) - 9:00  
Offering \$20 per person, \$35 per couple



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