

## **“Equipping the Saints for the Work of Ministry”**

### **A Pastoral Letter**

At times, on matters of great importance a bishop writes a letter to the people of the diocese. History calls these “pastoral letters.” Normally, the bishop would write either in the newspaper, The Catholic Sun, or in a letter to be read from the pulpit on Sunday. This letter is being provided to you to share my thoughts about how our diocese will need to respond to change. The story of the diocese has involved growth and change. In 1911 on its 25th anniversary, its 150,000 parishioners gathered at 71 parishes and 31 missions. As we enter the third millennium, celebrating our 115th anniversary, the diocesan family of 350,000 people assembles in 170 parishes and 13 missions as the people of God to celebrate our life in Christ Jesus. We have continued to grow as a diocesan church, even as the people of our diocese living in Broome, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, and Oswego counties have grown in faith together.

### **Introduction**

As I pray about our local church, I am reminded of St. Paul’s reflection on the gifts given to build up the Church. He writes, “Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” (Ephesians. 4: 7, 12).

When St. Paul used the term ‘saints’ or ‘holy ones’ he was speaking of those who strive to live as disciples of the Lord. He was speaking of those living ordinary lives in challenging times while sharing the life of the Christian community and carrying on the mission and ministry of Jesus. Equipping the people of the Church for ministry is a priority for the local Church. The work of “equipping the saints” is fundamental to the Church whether in a relatively static time or in a time of dramatic change. The changes that have touched the lives of our individual families, the nation, and the community of nations are affecting our local church. They will continue to do so. But before I discuss these changes with you, I mention the words of the Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, published in 1964 by the bishops of the Second Vatican Council. “[The Church] also maintains that beneath all that changes there is much that is unchanging, much that has its ultimate foundation in Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Gaudium et Spes, no. 10; Hebrews 13:8)

We do not fear change. Indeed, one of the primary statements of the New Testament is “be not afraid.” Pope John Paul II has quoted this Scripture in virtually every public gathering since his election in 1978. Change is neither positive nor negative in itself. The changes we are undergoing can leave us a healthier, more vital and resilient community as we continue our pilgrimage to the Kingdom of God.

As I begin this reflection, I want to assure you that, whatever change may lie in the future, our goal will be to continue to be present in the lives of all the people of the diocese, and to leave no one behind. The issues that we are discussing are not faith challenges; they are institutional and structural challenges. The way that we face them will have a long lasting impact on how the next generation of local Catholic Christians will be formed and live.

## **There are Many Gifts, but One Spirit Ministry Born of Baptism**

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service, but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.” -- (1 Corinthians 12:4)

The world’s Catholic bishops gathered for Vatican II addressed among so many other topics, the life and the apostolate of lay people. “The laity derive the right and duty with respect to the apostolate from their union with Christ their Head. Incorporated into Christ’s mystical body through baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord himself.” (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, #3)

This Conciliar emphasis points to a renewed and strengthened importance of discipleship. It understands that all the people of God have a ministry that is born of baptism. The renewal of this baptismal understanding inspires and opens new avenues of involvement for everyone in the life of the Church.

In our diocese there are many signs of this renewed understanding of baptism:

- Over 1300 men and women have been commissioned through the Formation for Ministry program. The program prepares people for ministry in catechetics, evangelization, family life, liturgy, parish outreach, healthcare, respect life, social justice, youth and parish business administration. Once trained and commissioned, these new ministers have joined parish teams to serve in new and creative ways.
- In 1974 there were no ‘permanent’ deacons in our diocese; since then we have ordained 71 to this ministry of service.
- Over 5000 persons serve the diocesan church as catechists in our Religious Education programs and Catholic Schools.
- Many parishioners are trained as Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, Ushers, and Ministers of Music.
- Parish Pastoral Councils, Parish Finance Councils, Parish Trustees, and trained parish staff all help our parishes to be vibrant and effective.
- Programs such as Charismatic Renewal, Cursillo, Engaged Encounter, Marriage Encounter, Renew, Search and Teen Seminar have enriched many individuals who in turn renew their local parish.

The diocese is different in this post-Vatican II era. Much of the change may be directly attributed to the renewed emphasis on discipleship born of baptism. No matter how many priests and religious are available to us, one of our biggest challenges is to encourage all Catholics in the diocese to affirm their own call in the Spirit and to respond to it for building up the local church.

### **A Whirlwind of Change**

The twentieth century has been a whirlwind of change. The politics of small nation states gave way to a global society. Communication, education, industrialization, science, technology and

transportation dramatically altered the ways in which we viewed humanity. The pace of change even in our seven counties has been breathtaking, and it seems to move ever more rapidly.

In the midst of multi-faceted change there is a renewed focus on community, faith, simplicity and human relationships. It is interesting to note that the Catholic Church is the fastest growing church in America. According to a 2000 CARA study commissioned by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, growth has been significant from 1950 to 2000.

**Growth since 1950**

Region	Growth in Catholic Population 1950-2000	Percentage of all U.S. Catholics in 2000	Percentage of all U.S. Parishes in 2000
Northeast	52%	34%	29%
Midwest	59%	24%	37%
South	196%	19%	20%
West	261%	23%	14%

Source: NCCB Study of 2000

In 1900 there were 1,759 Catholics per parish in our nation. By 1950 we had experienced a growth of 5% to 1,843 Catholics per parish. Today, there are on average 3,086 Catholics per parish, a 67% increase since 1950. But the seven counties of our diocese are demonstrating a different reality. Our population is declining, especially in the cities:

**United States Census Data**

City	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change
Binghamton	75,941	64,123	55,860	53,380	47,380	-28,561
Cortland	19,181	19,621	20,138	19,801	18,740	-441
Endicott	18,775	16,556	14,457	13,531	13,038	-5,737
Endwell	n/a	15,999	13,725	12,602	11,706	-4,293
Fulton	14,261	14,003	13,312	12,929	11,855	-2,406
Hamilton	3,348	3,636	3,725	3,790	3,509	161
Johnson City	19,118	18,025	17,126	16,890	15,535	-3,583
Norwich	9,175	8,843	8,082	7,613	7,335	-1,820
Oneida	11,677	11,658	10,810	10,850	10,987	-690
Oswego	22,155	20,913	19,793	19,195	17,954	-4,201
Rome	51,646	50,131	43,826	44,350	34,950	-16,696
Syracuse	216,038	197,270	170,105	163,860	147,306	-68,732
Utica	100,410	91,340	75,632	68,637	60,651	-39,759

County	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change
Broome	221,815	213,648	212,160	200,536	-21,279
Chenango	46,368	49,344	51,768	51,401	5,033
Cortland	45,894	48,820	48,963	48,599	2,705
Madison	62,864	65,120	69,120	69,441	6,577
Oneida	273,037	253,466	250,836	235,469	-37,568
Onondaga	472,746	463,920	468,973	458,336	-14,410
Oswego	100,879	113,901	121,771	122,377	21,480

*Please note that for the first time the 2000 U.S. Census Counted College students at their campuses rather than at their home addresses.*

When compared to earlier census results the 2000 U. S. Census note some interesting facts about the population of our seven counties:

We are graying, yet we enjoy a significant population under 25:

-14% are over 65 years of age

-23% are age 45 to 64

-28% are age 25 to 44

-11% are age 18 to 24

-25% are under 18

-The mean age is 37

- Our counties have experienced a significant loss of business, industry, and military presence. Our economy is becoming rooted in the information, travel, and service sectors.
- New immigrant populations of Bosnians, Hmong, and Vietnamese join the increasing number of Latinos in our communities. Also, our multi-national universities, especially Syracuse University and SUNY Binghamton, bring scholars from over 100 nations into our diocese where they become part of our tapestry for a time.
- Nationally, there is significant movement of people from the cities to the suburbs, and from the Northeast to the South and Southwest.

The changing population patterns have impacted the financial viability of a number of parishes whose Catholic populations have been significantly reduced. The impact of change invites our faith community to do serious pastoral planning. As your bishop, I have already asked you to commit yourselves to the renewal of your spiritual lives (Jubilee), renewal of diocesan resources (The Heritage Campaign), increased efforts at inviting young people to examine the priesthood and religious life (Parish Vocation Committees), and a heightened awareness of human life issues. Now I come to you asking that we support one another in love, as we embrace the challenges of the future. Some sacrifice will be required of each of us. However, I am encouraged by the fact that every time a bishop has asked the people of this diocese to respond to a serious challenge, you have done so with faith and grace. Now we must dedicate ourselves to the work of pastoral planning, evangelization, and stewardship.

### **Contemplating and Forming the Future**

Pastoral Planning means studying the challenges facing the Church in light of its membership, mission, facilities, and human and fiscal resources. The goal is to sustain the life of the community in the present and to prepare for the future.

Evangelization calls each baptized member of the church to become a disciple of Jesus, each Catholic community to integrate, share, and actualize the message of Jesus. Through evangelization, Catholics, both individually and corporately, become “ambassadors of the kingdom of God,” and act as salt, light, yeast and fire for the larger community.

Stewardship is the understanding that everything that we have is a gift from God and that our use of these graces is an offering to God. The resources entrusted to the Church are given to continue the mission of Jesus, to care for the people of God now and in years to come.

Our commitment to pastoral planning, evangelization and stewardship must begin and end in prayer! As the psalmist sings: “Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build.” (Psalm 128) Reaching the future as a vibrant faith community demands that we “keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.” (Hebrews 12:2)

**The Current Situation in Our Diocese**

“Every student of the Scriptures who becomes a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like someone who brings out new and old treasures from the storeroom.” (Mt 13:52)

In 1974, 906 sisters were engaged in ministry in our diocese. Today, only 474 sisters serve our people; that is a 53% decrease in the number of sisters over slightly more than 25 years. Religious brothers and priests working in our diocese have diminished even more rapidly. In 1974 we counted 49 brothers among us; now there are but 14. In the same time frame 114 priests from religious communities have been reduced to 45. At the end of 1974, there were 366 diocesan priests engaged in full time ministry in our diocese. Now there are 197 – a decrease of 46%

**Diocesan Priests, 1974 to 2001**

Year*	1974	1979	1983	1987	1992	1999	2001
Total Priests	400	401	377	368	340	288	281
Under 45	203	171	134	106	69	27	25**
45–69	161	192	190	206	217	171	164
70 and Over	36	39	53	58	54	29	24
Retired	34						68

\* The statistical years are not evenly spaced due to the availability of past statistics.  
 \*\* There are 10 priests under age 40, only 2 are under age thirty.

While declining numbers have been a consistent phenomenon, the pace has accelerated in more recent years. In eighteen years from 1974 to 1992 we realized a loss of 60 priests; in half that time, from 1992 to 2001, we lost an additional 60.

**Priest Personnel by Assignment**

	January 1993	July 2001
Bishops	2	2
Pastors	161	148
Parochial Vicars*	41 + 4 splr	19
Specialized Ministry**	65	28
Outside Diocese	12	11
Sick Leave/LOA	10	5
Sabbatical		1
TOTAL	295	213
TOTAL with Retired	340	281
TOTAL ACTIVE IN DIOCESE	273	197

*\*Parochial Vicars were formerly known as Associate or Assistant Pastors (spir-Senior Priests in Residence). \*\*Specialized Ministries include Campus, Hospital and Prison Chaplains, etc.*

Nor is the prognosis for the future very encouraging. Our best estimates suggest that on July 1, 2006 our active priests will be no more than 158, and they will be older. (Right now the median age of our diocesan priests is 63, as opposed to the 37 year median age which characterizes all Central New Yorkers.) They will bear increased responsibilities and even unrealistic expectations as they try single-handedly to match the level of ministry that was formerly provided by several priests.

Even as the number of lay ministers increases, the reality of fewer priests and religious will be with us for some time. Our efforts in promoting vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life are obviously of the highest priority.

We are blessed right now with the service of priests and sisters from several foreign countries. But this is no long-term solution to our challenge. We must invite people from our diocese to ministry. I have asked each parish to create a Vocation Committee to encourage enthusiastic affirmative responses to the calls to priesthood, diaconate, and religious life, which the Lord and the Holy Spirit are issuing. Every person in our diocese needs to be a “vocation recruiter.”

### **Options and Patterns for Parish Organization**

“A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church [a diocese]; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop.” (Canon 515.1)

We have considered ministers - ever expanding numbers of lay ministers, ever shrinking numbers of clergy and religious. Now it is helpful to consider the place of so much of our ministry – the parish.

The Code also states, “If the diocesan bishop should decide that due to a dearth of priests participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon, or to some other person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons, he is to appoint some priest endowed with the powers and faculties of a pastor to supervise the pastoral care.” (Canon 517.2)

I have reached several decisions about our parishes as I look to the future:

- By definition Catholic parishes have a strong priestly presence. Therefore, each parish will have a pastor, although at times, a pastor may be entrusted with the care of more than one parish. He may structure the parishes) and delegate authority and responsibilities in a way that assures the pastoral care of parishioners.
- Those assigned by pastors to care for individual parishes may be deacons (who will be appointed by the diocesan bishop), sisters and/or other trained personnel. The pastor will structure these teams based upon the resources available.
- Parishes will be aligned in such a way that there will be sufficient resources to provide for pastoral care while observing just employment practices and stewardship of our resources.



We have assigned some priests to multiple roles:

**Diocesan Priests by Current Full Time Assignment**

108	Full Time Pastors
10	Pastors with Missions
18	Pastors with Multiple Parishes
12	Pastors with Additional Specialized Ministry
28	Priests with Full-Time Non-Parochial Specialized Ministry
19	Parochial Vicars
11	Priests Serving in National or Military Ministry Outside the Diocese

The 40 priests with multiple assignments represent 27% of our pastors. Even if an aging presbyterate were not one of our challenges, the assigning of just, fair, and appropriate workloads for priests is an issue. In an earlier time priests would travel between several parishes to celebrate the Eucharist, sometimes on Sunday, sometimes at longer intervals. I have no desire to make our priests ‘circuit riders’; that phenomenon belongs to an age when distance and transportation conspired to make life difficult. Some commuting may be required of both priests and people. Ordinarily, I will not appoint a priest to more than two assignments – two parishes, or a parish and a specialized ministry. This boundary is essential for the health of our presbyterate and for the strengthening of our parish communities. We need to care for one another, shepherding all of our resources wisely.

**Options for Molding the Future and for Forming Parish Life**

There are provisions in the Code of Canon Law for framing the life of a Catholic parish. The Code intends to provide order to the Church so that development within the Church is easier both for individual Catholics and the Church itself. It does not substitute for faith, grace, charism, and charity, but strives to facilitate the fertile soil that nourishes the primacy of love. (Adapted from *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*, Pope John Paul II)

- “The diocesan bishop alone is competent to erect, suppress or alter parishes; he is not to erect, suppress or notably alter them without hearing the presbyteral council.” (Canon 512.5)
- “Care of several neighboring parishes can be entrusted to the same pastor due to a dearth of priests or in other circumstances.” (Canon 526.1)
- “When certain communities cannot be erected as a parish or quasi-parish, the diocesan bishop is to provide for their pastoral care in another manner.” (Canon 516.2)
- “When circumstances require it the care of a parish or several parishes together can be entrusted to a team of several priests “in solidum” with the requirement, however, that one of these should be the moderator in exercising pastoral care, that is, he should direct their combined activity and answer for it to the bishop.” (Canon 517.1) These canons suggest the following options for shaping the future:
- Neighboring parishes are encouraged to provide certain ministries collaboratively. Examples might be youth ministry, religious education, adult education, pastoral care at a health care facility, a common Mass schedule which offers a variety of options for people.

- A pastor may be assigned to more than one parish. Each parish remains a separate entity. Staffs may function independently of each other, or they may collaborate in response to the needs of the parishes and their resources.
- A pastor may be assigned to more than one parish with the intent that they be merged into a single new parish.
- Several parishes may be combined to form a new parish.
- A pastor or priest and team may be assigned to care for one or more parishes working from a central site. In some instances one parish may act as the ‘core’ or central church for weekend worship, while other parishes in the cluster are used for weddings, funerals, gatherings of the faithful, religious education, etc.
- Some churches may be designated as “devotional chapels”, at which the community may gather, but in which the liturgical life of the former parish is no longer celebrated.
- Parishes and Missions that no longer sustain a viable community or which no longer have sufficient resources to maintain the full life of a parish or quasi-parish may be “suppressed (closed) or notably altered.”

### **Pastoral Care Areas**

Experience has proven the value of working together with others for the “common good.” A sharing of ideas, resources, talents, and even staffs or volunteers has enriched our parishes. Up to this time we have used “cluster” groups in our planning processes and in our collaborative efforts. Collaboration exemplifies the church’s belief in collegiality and in subsidiarity. Simply put, we believe that every decision should involve consultation with those affected by the decision.

Last year I approved the creation of Pastoral Care Areas (PCA), specifically designed to promote the collaboration necessitated by the change addressed in this letter. Pastoral Care Areas have three primary rules. They are:

- to be the core planning group for their area
- to develop collaborative ministries within their area
- to assure that all the pastoral needs of the area are served

The members of the group are the pastors, trustees, pastoral council presidents and vice presidents of each parish. Parish staffs (parochial vicars, deacons, sisters and other parish ministers) should work with PCA representatives for planning purposes. Parish teams do well to share and collaborate with others in the PCA who share a common ministry or common interest. Religious education directors and others have been particularly successful in such “birds of a feather” activities. We have made two initial requests of our 35 PCA groups: to draft an honest parish profile and share that profile with the other parishes of the PCA, and to identify five areas of possible collaboration within the next three years. PCA teams are advisory, not administrative bodies. They are charged with making recommendations for the pastoral care of their areas now

and in the future. They will offer advice about the distribution of priests, Mass schedules, specific needs of the area, the development of collaborative parish staffs and other pertinent issues.

Every parish is to be active in its PCA, and every parish, regardless of size, is to work to develop collaborative ministries with its neighbor. Ultimately, decisions that are made will serve not only local interests but the overall good of the diocese as well.

### **Principles and Strategies to Guide Our Decisions**

Our dialogue about 'reconfiguration' and the future really began in 1983. It has produced several principles that we now reaffirm as we strive to "equip the saints for the work of ministry." • Our decisions should care for all the people of the diocese, being especially mindful of the next generation of Catholics in our seven counties.

- Every parish and pastoral agency, regardless of influence, history, or size must participate in the process of pastoral planning.
- Our focus is on creating or maintaining "viable" parishes.
- Appropriate stress will be placed on the centrality of the full celebration of the Sunday Eucharist.
- Appropriate stress will be placed on the importance of the parish as community.
- We will encourage and actively promote vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and vowed religious life.
- All Catholic Christians will be invited to live their baptismal charisms to build up the people of God in our diocese.
- We will select, educate and form individuals for church leadership positions based upon their competence, charism, and training.
- Parish collaborative bodies - the Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Council - will be strengthened.
- We will strive to honor the principles of collegiality and subsidiarity, collaborating as widely as possible. When a consultative process stalls or significant conflict develops, the diocesan bishop will intervene to shepherd the process to conclusion.
- We will live the principles of Christian Stewardship. Everything that we have is a gift from God, and the people of God. These gifts will be used with due care for the sake of all.

### **Several Strategies that Flow from these Principles**

- Recommendations and decisions will be made with the future in mind. Wherever possible, we will avoid short-term decisions that need to be repeatedly revisited.
- Once the pattern of pastoral care in an area has been charted, we will allow sufficient time for the new model to succeed before considering further modifications.
- Measurable standards defining parish viability are being developed for future promulgation. A vital and self-sustaining parish must maintain a full range of activities and services.
- In parishes and pastoral care areas we will consolidate weekend liturgical schedules to provide a variety of Mass times within easy travel distances. We will encourage parishes to explore a variety of prayer opportunities.
- Parishes will develop, guide and support the creation of ‘small’ Christian communities within the larger parish.
- We will emphasize adult religious education, Formation for Ministry and also professional training opportunities.
- The diocesan bishop will define the role of parish pastoral councils and pastoral care areas in serving present and future needs of the diocese.
- Through staff, the bishop will monitor all capital projects with a view to serving future needs.
- The principles of good stewardship will call the diocese and each parish to review the utilization of resources and facilities. We acknowledge that changes in leadership style may have a significant impact upon the fiscal viability of some parishes.

### **Enabling Care and Change to Occur Together**

It is important to evaluate our progress assuring that no one is left out and that the ministries of our parishes continue to serve all the faithful. I have asked the Vicar for Parishes to meet regularly with the Regional Vicars for this purpose. The Vicars may select a representative group from their regions to assist them in this task. Normally, the changes will occur in a natural way, as they are needed, especially when pastors retire or come to the end of a term. I, too, will be watching the changes to make certain that the life of our parish communities continues and that the educational, sacramental, service, and spiritual needs of our people are being addressed. I am certain that the Holy Spirit will guide us.

### **Impediments that May Hinder Us As We Strive to Work Together in Faith**

There are several potential obstacles to a successful response to our challenges:

First, some may be tempted to say that these things won't happen in “my parish.” One may take this position because it seems that the parish is self-sufficient, ethnic, well placed, or uniquely staffed. We know that these realities will impact every parish regardless of history, location, or size. Every Catholic should give immediate attention to helping his/her parish - large or small,

urban, rural, or suburban – challenge all Catholics to accept their baptismal role in building up the body of Christ. We all should invite every parishioner to a discipleship that is evangelizing and involves collaborative ministries with neighbors.

Second, we will be tempted to lead in little ways, to implement small, incremental changes that require us to address the same issues year after year. The signs of the times seem to be inviting us to be as creative in fashioning the church of the third millennium as were our great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers. They responded effectively to the issues. We are called to continue in their tradition by responding to the needs. Our situation requires that we take the long view and, where necessary, make the difficult decisions about leadership and the stewardship of resources in the diocese.

Third, we will be tempted to minimize the impact of these leadership changes. We will need to work together to invite many to ministry, to offer creative solutions to complex challenges, and to be committed to a changing Church. We should not relax our standards. We must carefully select, effectively train and enthusiastically motivate those new professionals and volunteers who will help lead our church in the future.

Fourth, we will be tempted to procrastinate. It will be easy to ignore the need for collaboration and the importance of its having a timetable. But issues that face us will not wait for any length of time to be resolved. Proactive steps must be taken in a timely fashion as we realize together all the implications of these changes.

Fifth, we will be careful about rumors and misinformation. Rumors kill genuine dialogue. All official information will be released from the Chancery.

Sixth, some may be tempted to blame the messenger and those who try to guide these necessary changes. It is important that we work with our pastors and others who will facilitate change. They will find these transitions as challenging as you do. Yet, they will do their best to work with you to assure quality pastoral care in our diocese. Please understand that they are working with me to assure the care of this local church. They will and must facilitate change. Working with them lets us all facilitate efforts to build a stronger healthier diocese.

Seventh, shifting leadership styles, the reorganization of parishes, and the development of pastoral care areas may well beget a sense of uncomfortable ambiguity for some members of our Church. The sense of loss, even of mourning, can be very real. We must support one another in love.

A sixteenth century Polish monk, Friar Kaminski wrote, “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.” His words should be kept in mind as we strive for unity in Christ.

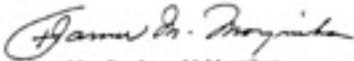
### **Beginning**

Let us never forget our roots. We are the people of God, living in the Diocese of Syracuse; ours is a rich heritage of faith and friendship. We are first and always disciples of the Lord engaged in

continuing His life and ministry for all of God's people. Jesus reminded the people of his time of the problems of being more concerned with facilities than with mission. (Luke 21:5)

I assure you of my prayers and I ask your prayers for me and for our diocese. Please know that the pastoral care to which you are accustomed will continue, even if it is modeled differently. Challenging years lie ahead of us, but prayerful and creative disciples of the Lord will find ways to respond to those challenges. All of us can take courage from the words of St. Paul, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13)

Faithfully yours in Christ,



Most Rev. James M. Moynihan  
Bishop of Syracuse

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Bishop of Syracuse  
Feast of All Saints November 1, 2001