



Concelebrating Mass at Teen Seminar closing are, left to right, Msgr. Gerard Krieg and Fathers Gerard Hafner, David Mura, Richard Snyder, Robert Hammond, Edward Palumbos, William Michatek, and James Hewes.



Group shares personal insights. Lowery, Jeff Kinz, Mary



Father Robert Hammond checks names and addresses.

Text by B
Photos by S

Exhilaration Reigns at Teen Sem

"Oh, yes! You can ask me anything... Seminar? How can I put it into words? Exhilarating!"

"I'm lost for words and going to cry."

"Seminar brings you closer to Christ, reality, friends."

"The test of all this comes when we get home."

"Everybody should make seminar."

"Fantastic! What more can I say?"

Excited teenagers exclaimed after their Teen Seminar experience at the Notre Dame Retreat House during Easter vacation. Father Robert Hammond, diocesan director of Teen Seminar and related programs, helped to explain their exuberance. "Church is a joyful place to be. Teen Seminar is setting up church for 40 hours."

Mrs. Dottie Hoysic, chairperson of the Teen

Seminar board, estimated that in the past four years 4,000 youth have made seminar. "A lot of kids are leaving the church today," Father Hammond said. "That's an easy thing to do if you know nothing about the faith... Teen Seminar is a time for high schoolers to examine the four sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, Penance, and Confirmation, and learn how to live out their commitment to Christ day-to-day."

Teen Seminar grew out of a retreat movement in Minneapolis and was brought to the Rochester diocese by Father Richard Moran, CSSR, in the late 1960's. The program as it has developed here is unique to the diocese and to the British Isles where, according to Father Hammond, it thrives under the direction of a priest who participated in the youthful renewal movement while in the Rochester area.

Teen Seminar became a diocesan program four years ago with Father Hammond's appointment as director, but with the exception of Father's salary, the program has chosen to operate without diocesan support. Costs are met through contributions. "The Lord keeps providing," Dottie testified.

The bimonthly seminars are staffed by volunteers who include youth that have made seminar and continued in the Christian walk, laymen, many of whom are active in other renewal groups, and clergy. Mrs. Hoysic said that the people in Teen Seminar are thrilled with the support priests give the program.

Under Father Hammond's direction additional programs have been developed to meet the needs of teens coming out of seminar and of others who have not yet made seminar or are too old. Genesis is an in-parish retreat program geared for youth that have not yet made seminar. Father Hammond described its content as more low-key than that of seminar, but hopefully one that will mark the beginning of a way of life that will lead to seminar. Genesis is almost entirely youth run, operated by youth who have made seminar or Pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage is a new program less than one year old. Dottie said that 95 individuals have gone to one of the three pilgrimages that have been held. To attend Pilgrimage, which leads one beyond the Teen Seminar encounter with Christ, strengthens morality and doctrine, and according to Father Hammond, deals very scripturally with the ministries of teaching, healing, prayer, and liturgy, a person must meet certain requirements. He or she must attend Mass more than once weekly, preferably daily, and receive the Sacrament of Penance at least monthly. The written recommendation of one's Reality leader is also required.

Reality is the weekly follow-up program back home that gives teen seminar veterans an opportunity to share and to readjust to ordinary living after their mountaintop experiences. Father Ham-



Peter Loewenguth reading from the gospel during Mass.



Deacon Thomas Valenti fills the chalice at the offertory.



Families may come to the teen seminar closing but must be wishing he were older.

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