

# Corning student takes first place in oratorical competition



All Saints Academy eighth grader Catherine Abernatha won the seventh annual Bishop Matthew H. Clark Oratorical Competition Saturday, December 6, at Our Lady of Mercy High School in Rochester. The Corning student was rated first among 32 contestants who were judged on the basis of their subject matter, poise and appearance, and inflection.

Contestants were required to write and memorize a three-minute composition on the topic "To act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah, 6:1).

Finishing in second place was Alicia Wiggins, a student at St. Rita's School, West Webster. Anne McNelis of Sacred Heart School took third place. All three top finishers will receive trophies and scholarships to Catholic high schools. Prizes are donated from pledges that Bishop Clark earned by running in this year's Catholic School Marathon.

Although Abernatha is eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship to the Catholic high school of her choice, she is not sure she can take advantage of the award. The nearest Catholic high school, Notre Dame in Elmira, is a 45-minute drive from her home.

If she doesn't attend a Catholic high school, Abernatha will forfeit the scholarship, and the

money will remain in the oratorical fund for use next year, according to Evelyn Kirst, assistant superintendent for curriculum.

The following is Abernatha's first-place address.

...  
People can learn so much from the wisdom of the Old Testament. For instance in one passage, Micah, a prophet, was instructing Balam, an ancient Israelite, how to be a better person. Balam was asking Micah what he should come before the Lord with. Balam suggested calves a year old or his first born. But Micah stated to him, "You have been told, O Man, what is good. All God requires of you is to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God."

Now, what do these phrases mean? To act justly means to do works of justice as much

as possible. Being friendly with everyone, not just your own little clique, is one way you as an individual can act justly. Other ways are by not taking your problems or anger out on others, liking someone even when your friends don't, and not judging others.

You should also love tenderly, and there are various ways to do this. First, you should set aside your own troubles and open your heart to others. Then you can show your support by listening attentively, being understanding, and showing your support. A way to demonstrate love for people in need is by giving them food, money, and clothing.

Walking humbly with your God can be interpreted in many ways. I think to walk with God means to walk side by side with Him, helping yourself but agreeing with what He does. And to me, humbly means modestly and

not boastfully. So walking humbly with God means to accept what happens and realize that God has reasons for what He does.

Many people have fulfilled this quote. In particular, I think of Saint Gertrude, who had many visions. The most important was when she saw Jesus, and he said to her, "In my right hand, I hold health, and in my left hand, I hold sickness. Which of these do you choose?" Saint Gertrude said, "Whichever pleases you, dear Jesus." Saint Gertrude was a perfect example of a person who loved tenderly but mostly walked humbly with her God.

I think it is important and necessary for people to follow through on this quote. Unlike Balam, who did not know what God required of him, we do. Don't you think we should do God's will and "act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly" with our God?

## McQuaid grad

Continued from Page 6

just one of those dreams kids have, but it came true."

His dream has evolved ever since he was a seventh grader at St. Ambrose School, when he began to fall in love with English literature thanks to his teacher, Roseanne Rosica.

Throughout high school, other teachers, including Gerry Jaromin, Father Larry "Bubbles" Wroblewski, Robert "Bo"

Bradley and Father William O'Malley, nurtured his academic interest until, as Ouwelen put it, "I was caught."

Interviews for the Rhodes Scholarship are reputed to be grueling. Not so, said Ouwelen, who's been through them twice now.

"I think it depends on how well they (a six-member interviewing committee) think you've thought things out," he said. "Largely, I think they're trying to get to know you, to see how you handle yourself when you're pushed to think... I think it's an effort both to plumb your depths and to see how serious you are about all this."

Had he not been chosen this year, Ouwelen planned to apply to law schools and to investigate other ways he might be able to study at Oxford.

He still expects to study law, when he returns from England. But he also realizes that once he leaves for Oxford next October, all his plans could change.

"I don't expect to come back the same guy," he said. "I expect I'll be somebody who looks at things with a new perspective, an international perspective, that I'll be a lot better at thinking deeply quickly, and that I'll be more convinced than ever that the meaning of life lies in being for others."

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