

Youth

Steubenville band preaches a hard-rock gospel to teens

By Rob Cullivan

Cardinal Mooney senior Eric Daniels likes the music on Motley Crue's album *Girls, Girls, Girls*, but he finds the hard rock group's lyrics disturbing.

In one tune, a singer explains how he must kill a woman who spurns his love. The singer "carried his death list under his crucifix," Daniels said. "It just turned me off totally."

He found lyrics more to his liking at the Spirit Song concert on Wednesday night, Nov. 9, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Greece. Spirit Song, a six-member group from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, performed a varied selection of contemporary Christian music designed to spread the gospel to youthful listeners.

Daniels and several other Cardinal Mooney students attended the show after Spirit Song performed at a school assembly earlier in the day. Patty Morabito also enjoyed the group's message. "I listen to words in music," she said. "I like when they relate to my life. It makes me more in tune with myself rather than just turning on the radio."

Spirit Song tuned in on Morabito's wavelength when they sang one number about Jesus called "Friend of a Wounded Heart." "I see (God) as my friend. I can talk to Him," she remarked.

Between numbers, the group's members testified to their own Christian belief. Senior Pina Zingaro was impressed by the musicians' openness. "There's something in them that brings

them up to what they're doing," she said.

According to Spirit Song, that "something" Zingaro noticed is their faith in Christ. Touring each fall semester throughout the northeastern United States and Canada, the musicians play at parishes and high schools hoping to open their listener's minds and hearts to the gospel. Band members rarely hear about the fruits of their labor until well after they've left a community where they played.

On at least one occasion, however, Spirit Song was a catalyst for a listener's total conversion. The group's keyboardist, John Luther, remembered one concert in Ohio when the musicians felt they weren't making an impact on their audience. Awhile later, their discouragement changed to joy.

"We received a letter from a young man who gave up drugs through Jesus Christ," Luther remarked about a listener at the Ohio show. "He wanted to start his whole life over. It was exciting to be at that point of conversion."

A similar conversion changed the life of Spirit Song's drummer, senior Harley Packer. When he was 17, Packer said his favorite activity was "getting stoned and sitting in front of the stereo. I listened to heavy metal all the time." But eventually, he grew restless. "It just really got empty. I had no responsibility. I couldn't hold down a job," he said.

Packer was invited to go on a weekend retreat. What he experienced there convinced him to accept Christ. "I was impressed by the love (the retreatants) had for one another," he



Linda Dow Hayes/Courier-Journal

The six-member band known as Spirit Song performed for an audience at St. John the Evangelist Church in Greece on Wednesday, Nov. 9. Members of the Christian musical group are Ron Jackson, Mary Beth Hotchkiss, Mary Ella Seibert, John Luther, Harley Packer and Jim Boulet.

said. "It didn't take me long to figure out it was their faith."

These days, Packer no longer smokes marijuana, but he still has a taste for a smokin' guitar. Like Daniels, the drummer enjoys heavy metal. "I still don't mind it as long as the lyrics are not trash," he said.

Yet, no matter how similar Spirit Song's musical tastes may be to those of their audiences, the group's bold proclamation of faith doesn't win over every listener.

Zingaro said that several students at the school assembly ignored or mocked the musicians. "Some of (the students) just talked all the time. They were not very open-minded to

it," she said.

Daniels, who is involved in peer ministry at the school, said that peer pressure may have caused some of the students to deride the group. Because he is open about his faith and talks about it regularly in his youth group, Daniels said he could enjoy the music.

Ironically, while those who heard Spirit Song may have ignored the message, one person who didn't hear the group was curious. One of Daniel's coworkers asked about Spirit Song's music and message, intrigued by the idea of a Christian rock group. Although she is not religious, Daniels said, "she is interested."

Harley Packer could relate to that feeling.

Coming of Age

By Robert Doolittle
NC News Service

Maybe you don't like rules, especially all the petty rules that benefit the rule-giver and do nothing for you but restrict your freedom. But a good rule does just the opposite: It unlocks your possibilities. It sets you free.

When Moses brought the Ten Commandments down, no doubt some folks thought these rules would cramp their style. But the brighter people saw that their little tribe of Israel was being given an awesome advantage in the game of life.

This potent little list of rules would put them head and shoulders above all their neighbors. God was now their coach; they couldn't lose. And they didn't, as long as they played by His rulebook.

When Jesus came, it was to coach us higher yet into life's possibilities for success and, yes, glory. He restated the old rules and added some new "commandments" of his own that would tap us into even greater power.

If you've never heard the Gospel put to you in such a way that you feel suddenly stronger and freer and ready for anything, then you're missing out on the Church's main purpose — to open up for you a great em-

powering current of truth that will shake you up and wake you up.

Maybe that sounds like a tall order for the dusty old Bible in this modern day. Well, let's see if I can do right here a bit of what I'm talking about.

Get ready, because here come 10 rules of Moses and Jesus, refocused to relate to the situations you face every day.

1) Treat tough questions as divine gifts and don't drop them until you have solid answers.

2) Bargain as an equal with your employer for a work schedule that respects both his/her priorities and yours.

3) When living hurts so much you can't bear it, tell someone you trust everything you feel.

4) Practice telling yourself daily what's wonderful about you — and do it just as often for others.

5) When someone hurts you, don't retaliate. Pray hard for love and then confront the person honestly.

6) Make it a point of personal honor never to lie to your parents, no matter what the price.

7) When you're in love, put it all into building a great relationship, and keep sex sacramental so Christ can make it glorious.

8) Attack your selfish habits with the sacrament of reconciliation, and use it to keep your heart peaceful.

9) Use weekly Mass to increase your power to love — and go alone to the tabernacle with your big decisions.

10) Stake your happiness and life plans on

the pleasure of giving rather than the pleasure of having.

Someone reading this is probably thinking, "That's very nice, but it's not the Gospel."

And I have to say take another look at your Bible. Every one of these adapted commandments is taken directly from Jesus,

Nazareth Academy

Do students spend too much time with the same social clique?

KRISTIE CLARK, senior:

No. I don't hang around with a "clique." I have had the same friends for four years and they are very close to me. It is my choice to have them as friends.

AMY COCKRELL, senior:

Yes, if students could interact with more than one social group, it might help the class as a whole group to be closer. There might not be as much dislike of others if we all knew each other better.

KAREN HENNING, sophomore:

Some people spend too much time with their same social clique all through those four years of high school. These are the first friends we made and they are the ones to stay with us all through our school years.

his followers and the way they handled themselves and their problems.

But here's a better way you can tell if these 10 rules are true to Jesus. Just sit down in a quiet spot and say, "Lord, would it help me to live this way?"

As Teens See It

WANDA REYNOLDS, junior:

Yes, in my opinion they do. When students enter high school in their freshman year, they tend to make friends which they may have for the rest of their high school careers. They tend to feel secure when they are around friends which they made during this most vulnerable year.

Speaking Out

By Anthony Wang
Notre Dame High School

Being a high school senior is comparable to living life in the fast lane. Everything is flying by so quickly that there is often not time to think. Although the high school year is still young, I have been feeling like I am steadily losing something. Taking a walk helped me find it.

My moment of truth happened as I walked through my neighborhood. I remember that day because I had struggled through a rough day at school. My frustration carried over from school to home, eventually reaching a point where if somebody even mentioned vector quantities or Herman Melville, I would have exploded. I decided to take a walk and cool down.

Yet my mind wouldn't let me forget that I was a high school student. All of the various burdens came rushing through me:

schoolwork, social relations, high expectations, etc. I seriously began to believe that high school was a trial. I couldn't live with it and I couldn't live without it.

Fortunately, I passed a little kid walking his dog. He kept on talking to the dog, and the kid acted as if the dog was responding. At first, I thought that the kid was a little weird, but then I visualized myself walking my dog. I wondered how often I smiled during this daily routine, and if I took advantage of such a simple pleasure.

Simple pleasures were all around me. Whether the joy came in playing a game or talking with a friend, a lot of great things were happening to me, but, like a fool, I was too caught up in my troubles to care.

I don't want to sound mushy or childlike, but I think there are students who miss very beautiful aspects of life. For these people, the benefits of enjoying life for its own sake are dampened. Being happy or satisfied with how you handle high school events is great, but still there is a lot more.

I know I am being too general and that what I just wrote could be refuted by many people. Yes, most students know how to get the joy out of being both a high school student and a teenager. However, not everyone stops and smells the roses, and if people don't do that often enough, the roses will wither and die away.

HOUSE OF GUITARS

Most New Album And Tape Releases Just \$5.98
CD's From \$8.98 - \$11.98 Each

We received 22 correct entries identifying Barbra Streisand as the person who sang "The Way We Were" in the movies.



The winner was
Roseanne Sellers
of Rochester

MUSIC TRIVIA

This week's question:

Name the country singer known as "The Man in Black."

A:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip Code _____
School _____

Rules:

Each week, the Courier-Journal, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question, fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable), cut out the coupon, and send it in to the Courier-Journal. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn.

If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave.

All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

The Courier-Journal
Music Trivia
1150 Buffalo Rd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14624