

### Melifluous music

Following a year-long renovation of their church, parishioners at Holy Family in Auburn are now enjoying music from their new organ.



## Farewell old friends: a look at three schools

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Staff writer

ROCHESTER - A kindergartener at Our Lady of Good Counsel/Genesis Catholic Junior High limped into the schools' office, his knee bruised from a fall on the school stage.

Bandaging the boy's knee, Thomas Bahr, the school principal, told him not to cry. "Mr. Bahr is the old man here," he said, tugging at the child's cheek. "You've got to hold him up."

The principal is holding up better now than he did a few months ago when the school boards of OLG/Genesis announced that the two schools, both housed in the same building at 640 Brooks Ave., were closing due to declining enrollment and associated financial woes.

Bahr was recently named principal of St. James School in Irondequoit. Ironically, the school is slated to close next year as part of the reorganization of the northeast quadrant.

Why put oneself through another school closing? "I don't understand it myself," Bahr said. "Maybe partially it's because St. James is friendly territory," he said, noting that he taught there from 1975-79. "Maybe I know what the kids are going to be going through."

Bahr has gone through the finger, he admits as he opens a box containing a schoolhouse clock that the students gave him. Choking up, he said: "That little fellow with the bruised knee is one of the most charming kids."

His voice rose a little. "We've got a first grade here that would've been an unbelievable junior high class. That's the hard thing. It's so final. Kids whose lives you would've loved to have been a part of. They're just — All educators want to have their fingers in every kid's stew."

Bahr said he'll especially miss his junior high students, since St. James only goes up to sixth grade. "I just absolutely love junior high kids," he said. "They've got their own ideas. They argue with you in class. They keep you young, really young."

*Three diocesan school communities share the memories of their final days in this in-depth profile, which continues in the centerfold, pages 10 and 11.*

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Students at Our Lady of Good Counsel/Genesis found it hard to say goodbye to teachers and friends, knowing that they would not be seeing some of them in the fall.



Linda Dow Hayes/Catholic Courier

The day after the final graduation at Our Lady of Good Counsel/Genesis Junior High School, the building's hallways were silent, occupied only by decorations from concluded celebrations and the class portraits of Good Counsel students of years gone by.

### Case still pending; no issue next week

As the *Catholic Courier* went to press Tuesday, June 27, the Supreme Court had not yet rendered a decision on *Webster vs. Reproductive Health Services*, the case involving the constitutionality of a Missouri abortion statute. The case has the potential for far-reaching ramifications on the legal status of abortion in the United States.

The court is expected to issue some statement on the case by Friday, June 30, the last day of its current term. In accordance with the terms of our postal permit, however, the *Catholic Courier* will not publish again until Thursday, July 13. We expect to carry full coverage of any court action at that time.

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