Mission team visits Watkins Glen

WATKINS GLEN — Sister Gemma Fenbert, a Tiffin Franciscan, and Father Ben Markwell, a Capuchin Franciscan from Detroit, led an Isaiah 43 Mission March 19-23 for parishioners of **St. Mary's of the Lake Church** and **St. Benedict's Church** in Odessa.

Sister Fenbert, who serves in the Toledo diocese as the associate director of the Office of Spiritual and Pastoral Services, began the mission March 19 with an evening program on God's unconditional love.

She said that *who* people are — or even *what* they do — does not earn the love of God.

"I became a sister to save my soul," said Sister Fenbert, who is also associate director for Toledo's diocesan synod. "I thought that was the only way I could do it. I know now that that just isn't so."

Father Markwell, who has led several retreats for religious, married couples and high school students, added that since people possess God's unconditional love they should live and move in it.

The Isaiah 43 program builds each nightly program around the sacraments. The opening evening focused on God's unconditional love as it relates to baptism.

Father David Bonin, administrator of the two parishes hosting the mission, said that symbols of God's love for people in the Southern Tier communities are all around them.

"(W)ater is a rich symbol for us in Schuyler County," the priest said. "All we need to do is see the water that serves as such a beautiful backdrop for Montour Falls."

The water symbolism was carried through by a large basin of water that had been placed on the church's altar. After renewing their baptismal vows, parishioners carried lighted candles to the baptismal font in the back of the church for a blessing, and then returned to the front of the church where each person lit one of the small votive candles floating in the gold-draped basin.

Other themes of the week included "Conversion and Salvation" and "Jesus: Healer."

According to Father Markwell, Isaiah 43 was developed eight years ago by a Florida laywoman. A parish team comprising 15 to 20 lay people begin meeting six weeks prior to the mission to plan for the week-long event.

The opening night includes a witnessing talk from a lay member of the parish.

Father Markwell has been working with Isaiah 43 since October, 1989, and said he will continue traveling the country as a presenter through Easter. He added that he enjoys the program because it touches the hearts of people in the parish.

"If it doesn't touch our hearts, it doesn't mean anything," the priest said.

Father Bonin said the mission will continue after the team is gone. A six-week program titled "Coming Alive in Faith" will be offered as a follow-up to the mission on Sundays until May 20 (with the exception of April 15 and May 13).

The follow-up programs, which begin at 7 p.m., will take place in the Parish Center, 905 Decatur St.

— Leslie Anne Baynes

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Baynes is a freelance writer working in the Southern Tier.

Leslie Anne Baynes

Parishioners set lighted votive candles in a gold-draped basin after renewing their baptismal vows.

Canandaigua Knights plan clergy appreciation dinner

CANANDAIGUA — Father James B. Callan, pastor of Corpus Christi Church in Rochester, will be the featured speaker at the St. Mary's Clergy Appreciation Dinner, Friday, April 20, at the Lakeshore House, 158 Lake Shore Drive.

Sponsored by the Canandaigua Council 1445 Knights of Columbus, the dinner is scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m. A cocktail hour will precede the dinner at 6:15 p.m. Music will be provided from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Tickets, which cost $15 per person, can be obtained from St. Mary's rectory, 716/394-1220; Lake Country Fashions, 394-7110; or Karen and Terry Noaker, 394-5822, after 3 p.m.

Catholic scouters lauded

ROCHESTER — The Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Rochester diocese presented six scouters with the St. George Emblem and two priests with the Bronze Pelican Emblem on April 1 at the committee's 43rd annual recognition dinner.

Chosen by their peers to receive scouting's highest diocesan honor were: Otetiana Council — John P. Lenhard, Richard J. Ulrich and Marcia Staub; Steuben area — William M. Cassidy of Painted Post and Thomas Feehan of Corning; Finger Lakes Council — Carol Monsees of Williamson.

Father Robert T. Busteed, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Elkland, Pa., and Father Patrick L. Connor of St. Mary Our Mother Parish in Horseheads, were honored for their service to Catholic scouting.

Nineteen individuals and organizations were also recognized with certificates of merit for their assistance.

Trip to shrine scheduled

AUBURN — A one-day excursion to the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Mass., is scheduled for April 22 — the feast day of Divine Mercy.

Buses will be leaving the Auburn parking garage at 5 a.m., and return at approximately 11 p.m.

Cost is $30 per person. Call Debra Oster, 315/252-9072.

RECOGNIZING ...

[illegible]

★ [illegible] Knights of Columbus, recently donated $12,000 [illegible] to encourage anti-crime prevention and community outreach initiatives through local councils.

★ All those who participated in St. John's Church's Penny Social by Collection, which raised $310 for the Food Society.

★ Winners of the Self-Awareness Week Poster Contest at St. John the Evangelist School, Spencerport: Amanda Bogue, grade six, and Sarah Eichen, grade seven.

★ New officers of the St. Anthony Society of Geneva: Rose Venturi, president; Esther D'Andea, vice president; Catherine Perry, secretary; and Philomena Benedetti, financial secretary.

★ Germaine Wickes, who celebrated her 100th birthday on March 22. Mrs. Wickes was a member of St. Ambrose Parish for more than 60 years.

★ OPPY award winner Kathleen Reilly, director of cardiopulmonary, neurodiagnostic and endoscopy services at St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, recognized for service to the hospital and community. Chosen by lot from among former OPPY winners was Anne Brown, who was given the James E. Swartwood Award.

★ Urban G. Kreus, who resigned recently as executive director of the Nocturnal Adoration Society after serving in the post for nearly 35 years.

★ Jennifer Kling, a junior at Our Lady of Mercy High School, who has earned a 1990 Xerox Award in the Humanities/Social Sciences, based on her scholarship, leadership and community service.

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