

# Nazareth volunteers see different side of life

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Volunteering at an inner-city children's center isn't easy work, especially when you're new at it.

Yet there are so many Nazareth Academy students who want to be a part of the school's Tutoring Program that campus minister Terry Reeder can't use them all.

"Our Nazareth students are so hungry to get out and do things in the community," said Reeder, who serves as the program's coordinator. "I have 10 (students) who come regularly, and I have to limit that group to just seniors because there are so many people who want to do this."

Each Tuesday and Thursday, and every other Wednesday, the Nazareth students spend one hour assisting with the After School Program at the Corpus Christi Center, 142 Webster Ave.

Neighborhood children, ages 2 to 11, come to the center for tutoring as well as recreational activities. The program was originated in 1983 by Corpus Christi parishioner Diana Rivaldo.

Since Nazareth became involved last year, students come to the center in groups of three or four, spending time with 10 to 15 children.

"On the street there are liquor stores, bars and people using drugs. But it's safe in here," Reeder remarked. "And the kids love the attention. They soak it up."

The atmosphere last Tuesday was upbeat since the children were trying out new games recently donated by Nazareth College of Rochester. A raucous version of "Twister" seemed to be the hit of the day as volunteers and children alike got into the action.

Brittany Gray, 17, one of the Nazareth Academy volunteers, admits that her first trip to Corpus Christi Center was "a little frightening," but now she "likes it a lot."

"I really like the kids, and it's fun for me," she said.

Another volunteer, Amy Frech, 17, added, "Every week the kids look so forward to seeing you. It gives you a good feeling that you're helping them."

Tony DiPasquale, an 11-year-old who lives upstairs from the center, noted that being with the Nazareth students is "fun," and that "sometimes they help me with my homework." He's a fifth-grader at No. 25 School, 965 N. Goodman.

Gray has special memories from a Christmas party the Tutoring Program sponsored at Nazareth Academy for



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer

Nazareth Academy senior Amy Frech shares a playful moment with two girls in the Tutoring Program her school sponsors. Several days each month, Frech and other Nazareth volunteers spend an hour assisting with the After School Program at the Corpus Christi Center, 142 Webster Ave., Rochester.

the Corpus Christi Center children last month. Thanks to the volunteers' fundraising efforts, the group was able to present several gifts to the children.

"You would call out their name and they'd see three gifts, and their eyes opened so wide," Gray recalled. "For some of the children these were the only gifts they'd get for Christmas, so they'd didn't unwrap them there. They took them home so they could open them on Christmas Day."

Moments such as these provide a heavy dose of reality for the volunteers, many of whom had never been directly exposed to poverty before joining the program.

"I've had kids cry in the car on the way home (from the Corpus Christi Center)," Reeder related. "It's hard for my students. It is a culture shock, but that's part of the objective. I think that's what part of being a Christian is. You see the face of God in the poor, and you have to experience it."

## Play festival on tap at Our Lady of Mercy

ROCHESTER — Our Lady of Mercy High School, 1437 Blossom Road, is hosting the fourth annual Monroe County High School One-Act Play Festival this year.

The festival is scheduled for Friday and Saturday evenings, Feb. 7-8, beginning at 7 p.m. each night.

Eight Rochester-area high schools, including Mercy, Aquinas Institute, Bishop Kearney and McQuaid Jesuit, will perform in the Mercy auditorium. Local theater professionals will judge the skits.

The festival is open to the public. Tickets are \$2 at the door.

## Kearney to host Winter Guard competition

ROCHESTER — Fourteen color guard groups from upstate New York will perform at Winter Guard on Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7 p.m. The event will be hosted and sponsored by Bishop Kearney High School, 125 Kings Highway South.

Color guards from Kearney and Aquinas Institute will be among those

competing in the event.

Tickets cost \$4 in advance (\$3.50 for children aged 12 and under) or \$5 at the door. Admission is \$3.50 for children ages 12 and under.

Ticket information may be obtained by calling Ann O'Connell at 716/342-4000.

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED HIGHLAND HOSPITAL PATIENT INFORMATION RECEPTIONISTS

There are several exciting, high-visibility volunteer positions available at Highland Hospital, 1000 South Avenue. As a Patient Information Receptionist, the volunteer will be offered a comprehensive training program which includes computer operations, phone skills, and general hospital orientation. The volunteer should be friendly, courteous, enjoy working with people, and able to handle diverse activities. Available hours include weekdays 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 12:00 noon - 4:00 p.m. Training sessions are now available.

For more information, please contact Carol Steppe or Jodi Zaccour, Human Resources at Highland Hospital at 461-6700, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.