

New video focuses on Becket Hall discerners

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — You won't see any special effects or elaborate sets in this video. No surprise endings, either.

"I've seen a lot of Madison Avenue-type videos, and frankly, they're not realistic," said Father Thomas Valenti, assistant to the bishop for vocations.

Instead, the soon-to-be-released, 10-minute video about Becket Hall — a residential, diocesan pre-theology program and center for diocesan priesthood vocations — takes a very straightforward approach. Utilizing several interviews of people connected with Becket Hall, 314 Gregory St., the video attempts to define Becket's purpose in a way that will relate to teens.

Produced over the past year, the video should be available to the public within a month, according to Father Valenti, who is also rector of Becket Hall. Copies will be distributed to young men through high schools, colleges, youth groups or religious education programs in the diocese.

The video opens with footage from Father Paul A. Bonacci's June, 1991 ordination at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Father Bonacci is currently serving as parochial vicar at Fairport's Church of the Assumption.

Several members of Becket's high school/college discernment program follow moments later with answers to popular questions. These discerners describe why the priesthood is important to them; what discernment is; how they got involved with Becket Hall; and what people interested in Becket should do.

"I asked (the discerners) to speak from their own hearts," Father Valenti said.

Noel Franus, a member of Becket's discernment program, did the video's narration and interviews. Franus currently attends Loyola University in New Orleans, La.

Interspersed with the interviews are scenes inside Becket, showing the discerners praying and socializing. More shots from Father Bonacci's ordination are shown along with an appeal by



Mike Abate (left) and Matt Thielmann, members of Becket Hall's discernment program, participated in an forthcoming 10-minute video presentation about the facility — a diocesan residence for men in pretheology and discernment programs.

Kellie McCann/Photo intern

Father Valenti to find out more about Becket.

In the video, discernment-program member Matt Thielmann notes that joining the 25-member group does not necessarily reflect a commitment toward entering the priesthood.

"Discernment is trying to explore your vocation ... trying to figure out what your call in life is," said the 18-year-old Thielmann. "Basically, just letting God guide you in whatever route you're supposed to take."

A freshman at Rochester Institute of Technology and parishioner at Holy Trinity Church in Webster, Thielmann has been in the discernment program for three years.

In an interview with the *Catholic Courier*, he said, "They're really concerned about you as a person. I'm sure the diocese made this (video) hoping to get more priests, but they also want you to figure out what you really want to do. If this isn't what you were called for, you wouldn't be a very good priest."

Mike Abate, a 17-year-old junior at Webster High School, added, "I just hope (the video) draws more people into thinking that if they care about answering God's call they'll come to Becket and get involved in the discernment program."

Abate, who is also a Holy Trinity parishioner, has been a member of the discernment program for about two years.

Both Thielmann and Abate said that they're still unsure whether they'll eventually take the next step forward, which is to move into Becket Hall as a priest theologian. The move signifies the last step of discernment before entering a seminary. Currently, four priest theologians reside at Becket.

Thielmann is hoping that the video will encourage those who have even just a casual interest to stop by Becket for one of the discernment group's Tuesday-night meetings.

"Even if you have the slightest inclination, why not go find out ... I think that people think you have to almost be in a seminary to go there," he concluded.

DeSales students will perform play May 16-17

GENEVA — DeSales High School students will present the musical, *The Apple Tree* the weekend of May 16-17. The performances will take place in the school auditorium, 90 Pulteney St. Times are 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. for the Sunday performance.

Part one, *The Diary of Adam and Eve* is based on the story by Mark Twain. Part two, *Passionella*, is based on Jules Feiffer's story.

Admission for both shows is \$4 for adults and \$2 for students. Tickets will be sold at the door only. Call 315/789-5111 for information.

Nazareth outdoor concert to feature variety of music

ROCHESTER — Nazareth Academy will present Concert on the Lawn '92 on Wednesday, May 20.

The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a picnic — people are asked to bring their own food — at the high school, 1001 Lake Ave. The concert, which is scheduled to start at 7 p.m., will feature a concert band, folk group and several choirs.

In case of rain, the concert will be held in the school auditorium. For more information, call Nazareth at 716/458-8583.

Thursday, May 14, 1992

YOUTH BRIEFS



Egypt's former first lady to speak at NTID ceremony

HENRIETTA — Dr. Jehan el-Sadat, former first lady of Egypt, will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters from Rochester Institute of Technology during the RIT-based National Technical Institute for the Deaf's academic awards ceremony.

The event, which is open to the public, is scheduled for Friday, May 22, at 2 p.m. in the Robert F. Panara Theatre, located in RIT's Lyndon Baines Johnson Building.

The author, educator and activist on behalf of disabled people, Sadat is currently a distinguished visiting professor at Radford University in Virginia.

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