

# Teen Mass fuels faith among parish youths

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

GREECE — Father Dave Faraone understands that the struggle to reach teenagers is not limited to parents and teachers.

The church, he said, is involved in a constant effort to get and to hold teenagers' interest.

"The Sunday homilies need to be geared toward all different age groups. But it seems that the ones who get lost are the high schoolers," asserted Father Faraone, who serves as parochial vicar at Our Mother of Sorrows Church, 5000 Mt. Read Blvd.

So beginning about two years ago, Father Faraone attempted to find a vehicle for appealing to teen-aged parishioners.

In April of 1991, the parish's first-ever Teen Mass, geared exclusively for teenagers, was held. And it was received so well that the event has continued to take place on the first Sunday evening of each month.

Approximately 30 youths attended the most recent Teen Mass, held this past Sunday, Jan. 3. Pews were left vacant as the teens instead flopped down on the floor at the sanctuary's base near Father Faraone, who was seated in a chair.

Teen participants performed the readings, and during the homily they also had the opportunity to comment on Father Faraone's theme for the day: how to be a "star" in leading others to Christ, similar to the northern star which led the three wise men to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

Many teens' responses focused on the need to support their peers, who may be experiencing struggles in their lives.

"You have friends out there who

would never set foot in church. But don't ever underestimate the power of your own light (that you can give them)," Father Faraone reminded the gathering.

The Mass's most visually striking moment came during the offertory, when all of the participants stood in a circle around the altar. A hug-filled sign of peace soon followed, and the teens returned to their "floor seats" after Communion.

Many of the youths who regularly attend Teen Mass are either members of the parish youth group and/or preparing for confirmation.

The youth group, which had been dormant at Mother of Sorrows since the mid-1980s, was restored during the same period in 1991 that Teen Masses began.

Father Faraone noted that the informal concept at Teen Mass emphasizes that "it's OK to be comfortable in church, and it's OK to be comfortable with God." He added that Teen Mass "allows (youths') faith to be expressed more articulately."

Two young Mother of Sorrows parishioners, both of whom were instrumental in getting the Teen Mass and youth group off the ground, agreed with Father Faraone's comments.

"I go to a public school, and in school (religion) is something you don't talk about. So it was something missing in my life," said Amy Mietus, a 17-year-old senior at Greece Arcadia High School. "And if I needed it, I figured other people needed it too."

"We felt that a lot of kids weren't coming to Mass, or they weren't getting anything out of it," added Jennifer Consler, 19, who graduated from Our Lady of Mercy High School and is currently a freshman at D'Youville College in Buffalo.



Seated at the base of the sanctuary, youths reflect in prayer during the monthly Teen Mass at Greece's Our Mother of Sorrows Church Jan. 3.

With the intimate atmosphere the Teen Mass provides, "You actually feel a little closer to God ... you feel invited," said Consler.

Mietus recalled a similar experience the first time she stood next to the altar.

"You could see what (Father Faraone) was doing, and that's the whole purpose," she remarked.

Consler acknowledged that, initially, a number of Mother of Sorrows youths were wary about departing from the Mass rituals with which they had grown up.

"But once we experienced this, everybody was like, 'This is great,'" she said.

A smiling Mietus also pointed out two other reasons why the Teen Mass appeals to her friends.

"They don't have to go to church in the morning, and we get to come down (into the church hall) and have pizza after Mass," she said.

## Auditions are next week for Creative Response

ROCHESTER — Auditions will be held next week for the 1993 Creative Response summer international tours.

The auditions will take place on Wednesday, Jan. 13, at the Baptist Temple Church, 1101 Clover St.; and Saturday, Jan. 16, at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St.

Children ages 12-19, who would like to sing, dance, act or work as stage technicians, are invited to attend.

Creative Response, formerly known as the Peace Child Foundation, plans on conducting performances this summer in places such as Australia, New Zealand, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Finland, Hungary, Korea, Japan, South Africa and the former Soviet republics.

Call Julie Gelfand at 716/482-6880 for details.

### BOOKS FOR THE FAMILY

By Father Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D.

- LIVING THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE—Instructions on family life ..... \$5.00
- FOR EXPECTANT MOTHERS—Instruction and prayers ..... \$1.00
- LOVE IN COURTSHIP—Principles for chaste love, Prayers ..... \$1.00
- SEX IS SACRED—Instruction for youth ..... \$1.00
- WALKING WITH ST. RAPHAEL—Angel of the family and youth ..... \$1.00
- ST. JOSEPH—The Family Saint. A Novena ..... \$1.00
- KEEPING YOUR MARRIAGE HAPPY—family prayers ..... \$1.00
- ST. ANNE—Patroness of the family. A novena ..... \$1.00
- OUR BABY—New baby record book ..... \$12.00
- ST. MARTHA'S COOKBOOK—347 favorite mostly ethnic recipes ..... \$6.00
- CATHOLIC PICTURE BIBLE—Stories from the Old and New Testament. 110 pictures in color ..... \$8.00
- THE LORD JESUS—The life of Jesus with 140 pictures ..... \$6.00
- ST. JOSEPH'S FIRST CHILDREN'S BIBLE—Highlights from the Bible with pictures in color ..... \$7.00
- MY PICTURE PRAYER BOOK—64 pages of prayers with pictures in color. Hardbound ..... \$7.00

### CASSETTE TAPES FOR THE FAMILY

By Father Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D.

- Two meditations of a half-hour are recorded on a single cassette tape. Each series in a vinyl album container.
- MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY SERIES—Four cassettes ..... \$20.00
  - RECITED ROSARY—WAY OF THE CROSS—Two cassettes ..... \$10.00
  - HOPE SERIES—Three cassettes ..... \$15.00
  - KINDNESS SERIES—Five cassettes ..... \$25.00
  - CATECHISM STORIES—Four cassettes ..... \$20.00
  - BIBLE STORIES—The Old Testament. Four cassettes ..... \$20.00
  - The Gospels. Four cassettes ..... \$20.00

(Add \$2.00 for postage)  
Address all orders to:  
Father Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D.  
211 West 7th Avenue  
Tarentum, PA 15084



**Don't Miss  
The  
CATHOLIC  
COURIER**

**1993 Wedding Package**

Each year, more than 3,000 couples get married in the Catholic Diocese of Rochester, and they'll turn to the *Catholic Courier's* 1993 *Wedding Package* for information on the merchandise and services to make their special day perfect. If you're not reaching this large market with word of the products and services you offer, the *Catholic Courier* can help!

The package includes a larger advertisement in our wedding-oriented issue on Thursday, February 11 1993. In addition to being mailed to nearly 50,000 *Catholic Courier* subscribers, this issue will be distributed — throughout the coming year — to all couples taking marriage-preparation classes in the Diocese. These are the very people who will need your services most.

In addition, the package includes 12 one-inch advertisements in the *Catholic Courier's* monthly *Wedding Guide*, where your company's name can be seen all year long!

Don't miss out on this opportunity.

**Catholic Courier Wedding Package  
Call (716) 328-4340  
DEADLINE 29TH, 1993**

### Marketing Representative

Catholic Charitable Organization serving the poor in the Third World and in the USA desires regional representative, full and part-time, to work in a marketing, promotional, and public relations capacity. Fair pay, expenses covered and car allowance.

Write: **Walt Campbell**  
CFCA  
206 Fawn Ct.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15239

Or Call: 1-800-862-6935

### BARTOLOMEO FUNERAL HOME, INC.



Peter W. Guillari, Jr. Philip P. Perotto Michael P. Perotto  
Personalized service in the community since 1922.

1425 Lexington Avenue Rochester, NY 14606  
conveniently located near 390  
**(716) 254-5400**