

# New committee targets teen input

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

They attend high school, and their chief focus is on people in their own age group. Yet the work performed by teenage members of the Diocesan Youth Committee involves many responsibilities normally reserved for adults.

This new committee was formulated last spring. Its current membership comprises 14 youths and eight adult leaders from various parts of the Rochester diocese.

Michael Theisen, diocesan youth ministry coordinator, created this program so that youth-related activities could gain increased input from their actual participants during preparatory stages.

"I felt there was a void in the voice of the youth in the planning of diocesan programs," said Theisen.

Youth participants are nominated by their parishes. These committee members serve for up to two years. According to Theisen, members' chief responsibilities are: planning the diocesan Junior High Youth Rally as well as the Youth Convention; coordinating the Hands of Christ awards ceremony; and advising adult committee representatives on issues affecting diocesan youths.

Another inherent responsibility, Theisen emphasized, is for these youths' accomplishments to help promote increased involvement in youth leadership roles at the parish level.

"One of their jobs is to model to parishes how youth councils can work," said Theisen.

The Diocesan Youth Committee meets monthly at a centrally located diocesan parish, usually in the Finger Lakes area. For instance, the most recent DYC gathering took place on Saturday, Feb. 12, at St. Stephen's Church, 48 Pulteney St., Geneva.

Meetings involve ice-breaker activities and prayer, as well as some intense brainstorming during the planning sessions.

Anne Kidera, 16, noted that the Feb. 12 meeting focused on formulating the agenda for the second annual Junior High Youth Rally and first-ever Diocesan Youth Convention to be held this summer.

"We were trying to think up new ideas



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Diocesan Youth Committee members gathered at Keuka College last July. Pictured (from left) are Ivonne Martinez, Anne Kidera, Amanda Mastin, Bill McGuire, Jane Krooze, Dan Kwiecien, Bryon Lockhart. Also shown are Lee Anne DiTucci and Jeanne Kidera of St. Thomas More in Brighton.

for games, and also more creative ways to celebrate the liturgy — like having decorations and youth witnesses," said Kidera, a sophomore at Our Lady of Mercy High School, 1437 Blossom Road, Brighton. She is also a parishioner at St. Thomas More Church, 2617 East Ave., Brighton.

Kidera observed that the committee functions nicely as a collaborative unit.

"We all really get along. We're a close community," said Kidera. "We do everything by consensus, so even if we have different opinions, we agree by the end."

"I've found them to be very, very helpful to me, because I know we're going to do things that will be in touch with today's youth," said Theisen.

Other youth DYC representatives, along with their parishes, are: Molly Bayer, Our Lady of Lourdes, Brighton; Jessica Colon, St. Mary of the Lake, Watkins Glen/St. Benedict, Odessa; Tom Cranker, Holy Ghost, Gates; Anto-

nia Danzy, St. Bridget's, Rochester; Mark DeNeve, Our Mother of Sorrows, Greece; Sharon Kollar, St. Mary's, Canandaigua; Jane Krooze, St. Casimir, Elmira; Dan Kwiecien, St. Mary of the Assumption, Scottsville; Bryon Lockhart, St. Helen's, Gates; Amanda Mastin, St. Mary's, Honeoye; William McGuire, St. Louis, Pittsford; Kevin Morriss, St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport; and Renee Riley, St. Mary of the Lake, Watkins Glen/St. Benedict, Odessa.

Joining Theisen as adult DYC members are Angel Alicea, youth minister for parishes on the city of Rochester's northeast side; Sharon Bricks, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Perkinsville; Sue Koch, St. Theodore's, Gates; Carmen Quinones, St. Louis, Pittsford; Andrea Record, St. Dominic's, Shortsville; Nancy Roy, St. Mary of the Lake, Watkins Glen/St. Benedict, Odessa; and Sue Verstuys, St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport.

## Theatrical events slated for Mercy auditorium

BRIGHTON — Our Lady of Mercy High School will host two theatrical events in its auditorium, 1437 Blossom Road.

The Mercy Children's Theatre will present "The House at Pooh Corner" on Friday, Feb. 11. A 10 a.m. show will be held for Rochester-area grammar school children. The public is invited to attend an additional performance that evening at 7:30 p.m. Tickets for the 7:30 show are \$2.50 at the door.

Mercy also will host the Monroe County One-Act Play Festival this year. This two-day fest, scheduled for Feb. 18-19, will feature high-school students from Mercy, McQuaid Jesuit, Aquinas Institute, and four public high schools in the Rochester area. Performances begin at 7 p.m. each night.

For details on either event, call 716/288-7120.

## Anti-violence play set at Rochester parishes

ROCHESTER — "Different and Alike," a musical dealing with violence issues among youths, will be presented at St. Helen's Church, 310 Hinchey Road, and Corpus Christi Church, 864 Main St. E.

The St. Helen's performances are scheduled for Friday, Feb. 26 and Saturday, Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. each evening; and the Corpus Christi show will take place on Sunday, March 6, at 7 p.m.

This play is a combined effort of St. Helen's and Corpus Christi youth groups. The musical centers around inner-city youths who encounter a wise eccentric man named Sam, who challenges their beliefs and changes their lives.

Tickets are \$3 for students and senior citizens, and \$6 for adults. Children under the age of 4 will be admitted free. A \$15 family package is also available. Call 716/235-2407 for details.

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