

File photo
Sarah Grout, of Lima's Elm Gospel Church, performed with her mime troupe, "Silent Word," during last year's Celebrate Life rally at Rochester's Manhattan Square Park. This year's rally will take place this Sunday, June 5.

Pro-life rally stresses youths' involvement

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — When Pope John Paul II talks, Julie Asam listens.

It was during last August's World Youth Day in Denver, Colo., that the 16-year-old Asam first heard the pontiff's comments that would spur her — as well as a growing numbers of friends — into action.

"We talked about forming a pro-life group on the way back. When he spoke to youths and said, 'You can be the next evangelizers and apostles for Christ,' that really struck us," said Asam, a parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Irondequoit.

Asam, along with her sisters Teresa, 14, and Jeanette, 13, have become part of a pro-life organization which now includes approximately 25 youths in New York state as well as additional members in Michigan, Connecticut and Florida.

Closer to home, the Asams will join with other Rochester-area youths this weekend in support of the second annual "Celebrate Life '94." This pro-life rally is organized by United for Life, a local ecumenical coalition of church and pro-life groups.

In keeping with the weekend's theme, "Year of the Youth," a number of youth organizations have been contacted to support the rally's pro-life cause.

According to Dr. Helen Owens, an organizer for "Celebrate Life '94," several youth groups from Catholic parishes will participate. Also involved are students from non-Catholic Christian schools such as Northstar Christian and C.G. Finney.

Owens added that she has already mailed thousands of plastic hospital bracelets — each representing an unborn child in danger of being aborted — to

area schools for distribution.

Owens commented that she is expecting at least double the participants from last year's first-ever "Celebrate Life." She estimated that about 350 people took part in the inaugural event last year.

"I just see it growing and growing," she said.

This weekend's agenda will kick off with a youth rally scheduled for St. Rita's Church in Webster on Friday at 7:30 p.m.

On Saturday, youth and adults will join in a series of appearances featuring the missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Mexico. This photographic replica — of which only two exist — travels throughout the world and is used in support of pro-life causes.

The image will be displayed at Highland Hospital (9:45 a.m.), St. Thomas the Apostle Church (11 a.m.), St. Louis Church in Pittsford (6 p.m.), St. Cecilia's Church in Irondequoit (7:30 p.m.), and St. John of Rochester Church in Fairport (9 p.m.).

Sunday's activities will begin with a 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Bridget's Church in Rochester. Youths will then lead a one-mile pilgrimage to Manhattan Square Park in downtown Rochester, where the "Celebrate Life '94" rally will take place from 2 to 5 p.m. Festivities will include music, games, food and guest speakers.

C.G. Finney student Matt Geldof, 17, is pleased with the structure of "Celebrate Life '94," since pro-life rallies don't normally include strong youth representations.

"I think it's important to hear what kids have to say," he remarked.

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EDITORS' NOTE: For additional details on "Celebrate Life '94," call Helen Owens at 716/467-5698 or Julie Asam at 248-0209.

Bishop Kearney offers driver-education course

IRONDEQUOIT — Bishop Kearney High School, 125 Kings Highway S., is offering a driver-education course from July 1 to Aug. 15.

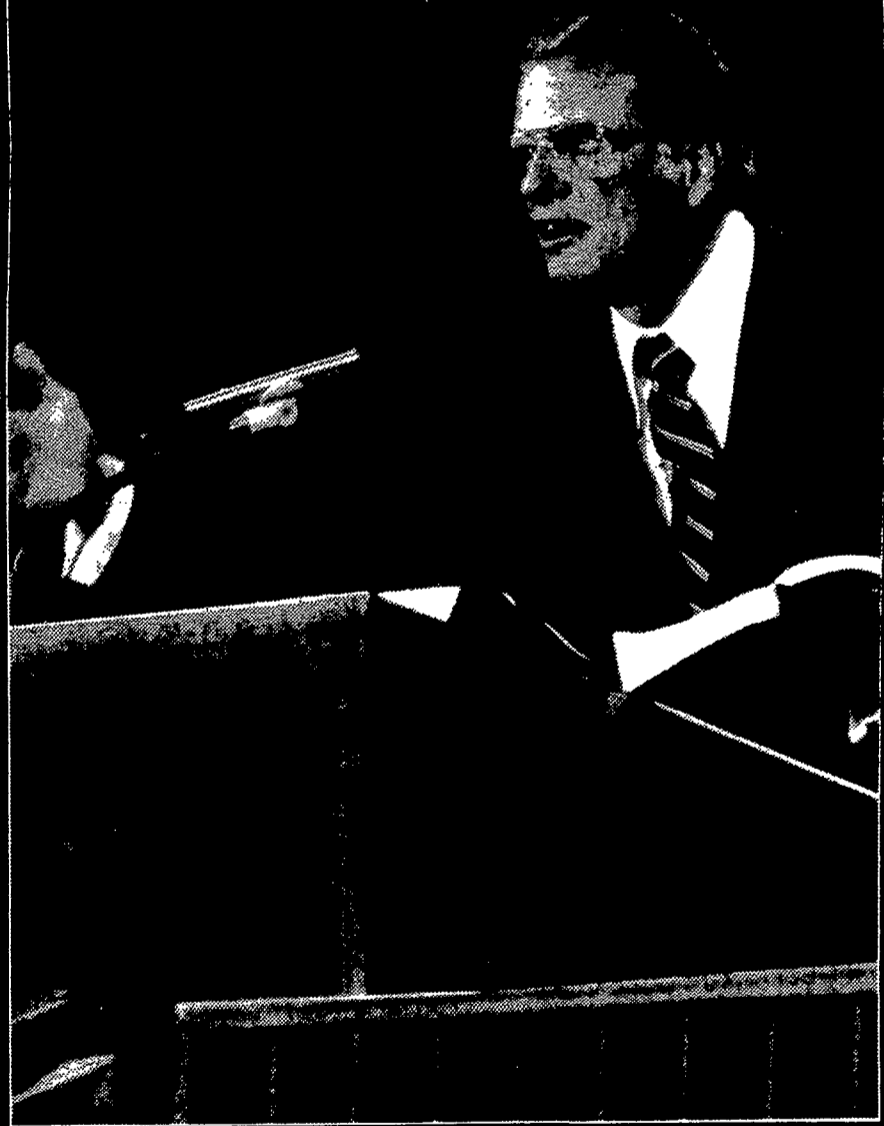
This course is open to students who are 16 years of age and have a valid New York state driver's license or permit by July 1. Registration deadline is June 24.

For details, call Judy Crosby at 716/342-4000.

"Circumstances or intentions can never transform an act intrinsically evil by virtue of its object into an act 'subjectively' good or defensible as a choice."

—Pope John Paul II,
'The Splendor of Truth'

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