

Tour gives teens taste of diocese

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Dick Rosati, a parishioner at St. Paul of the Cross in Honeoye Falls, arrived at Sacred Heart Cathedral this morning with about 20 young men and women from St. Paul's who are candidates for confirmation this year.

Dick, three other volunteer leaders and the 20 candidates came to Sacred Heart as the first stop among many they would make during a day devoted to helping our young friends become better acquainted with the size, makeup, scope and variety of our local church. They were interested that the kids, who experience the faith in the context of a small-town parish, should be aware of experiences in other localities. So, they started their journey at Sacred Heart.

I was there to greet them when they arrived at the cathedral this morning. After some introductions, the kids had a few questions for me and told me something about their plans for the day. When I left, Father Tom Mull, pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral, gave the group a tour of their cathedral church.

Their tour also included a visit to Our Mother of Sorrows, one of our large suburban parishes. There, Father Tom Statt, pastor, was to tell them about the life and activity of his parish community. Later they were to visit



A LONG THE WAY

Father Bob Werth, pastor of our parishes in Rochester's 19th Ward. Bob was to tell them about parish life in the city and acquaint them with some of the challenges and opportunities city communities have faced in recent times.

Another dimension of the day was conversation with men and women who choose to live the Gospel in consecrated religious life. And so there was a visit to Sister Kathleen Wayne, RSM, who would tell them about the vocation and ministries of women religious in today's church. And there were plans for the group to visit the Abbey of Our Lady of the Genesee, where they were to join the Trappist community for evening prayer.

You'll be happy to know that the group

from St. Paul's were catholic not only in the range of people and places they were visiting but in the care they took to be sure that they would be nourished in body as well as in spirit. Prominently noted in the day's schedule were plans to visit McDonald's for lunch and Ponderosa for a supper concluding the day.

I want to congratulate Father Otto Vogt, pastor of St. Paul of the Cross, Dick Rosati and the other members of today's team, and the whole parish community for supporting this kind of activity for our young people. In doing so they say a lot about the reality of Catholic life: that it is rich and diverse; that it is lived in a wide variety of circumstances; that people of all ages, economic and ethnic groups are a part of it; that it always calls us from our isolation into communion with others; that we are always the richer for it when we come to know better and understand more deeply the realities that join people together.

Last but not least — my thanks to the kids. You gave your bishop a great shot in the arm just by stopping by to say hello. You remind me of what a blessing the good gifts of our young people are to us now, and of how many reasons we have to be hopeful about the future. And — just think! — you did all of that on a day off from school.

Peace to all.

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Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)
Vol. 106 No. 2 October 13, 1994

Published weekly except the last Thursday in December.

Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$20.00; Canada and foreign \$20.00 plus postage. Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340. Second-Class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

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