

From the choir loft, Nickolas Cintineo enjoys a bird's eye view of St. Paul of the Cross Church during 10:30 a.m. Mass celebrated by Father Otto J. Vogt on Oct. 23. The Honeoye Falls parish — established May 30, 1869 — is celebrating its 125 anniversary this year.

S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

## 'Moving' parish boasts friendly, active members

**Parish Profile**  
St. Paul of the Cross, Honeoye



By Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

HONEOYE FALLS — Ellen Hallahan discovered what St. Paul of the Cross Parish was like after her very first visit there.

Hallahan had moved from Buffalo to the Honeoye Falls area in 1986, and had spent several weeks checking out local Catholic churches. On the Sunday she attended Mass at St. Paul's, she recalled, Father Otto J. Vogt, pastor, announced from the pulpit: "If you're new today, drop your name and number in the basket, and we'll try to give you a call."

"I thought, 'Well, who will call me?'" Hallahan said. To her surprise, Father Vogt himself called a few days later.

"It never occurred to me that he would call," Hallahan remarked. "I think that was unique."

But the fact that Father Vogt did call is typical of the parish, noted Hallahan, who now serves as co-coordinator of religious education with Judi Cuffney.

Because of St. Paul's small-town atmosphere, Hallahan noted, "there's a friendliness, and a feeling of community in the parish."

"You get a feeling of comfort when you go to church, because you know more people than not," observed Parish Council President Roger Greiten, who became a parishioner 20 years ago. "It has that nice, rural small-town atmosphere, a closeness where everybody knows everybody else."

"I can look back to the back pew and know almost everyone," acknowledged Father Vogt, St. Paul's pastor since 1975.

Despite its small size — the pastor estimated the parish only has 350 enrolled families — St. Paul's is an active community.

"The beauty of the parish is the help and assistance of the people in the various ministries of our community, and the help they give others," Father Vogt said.

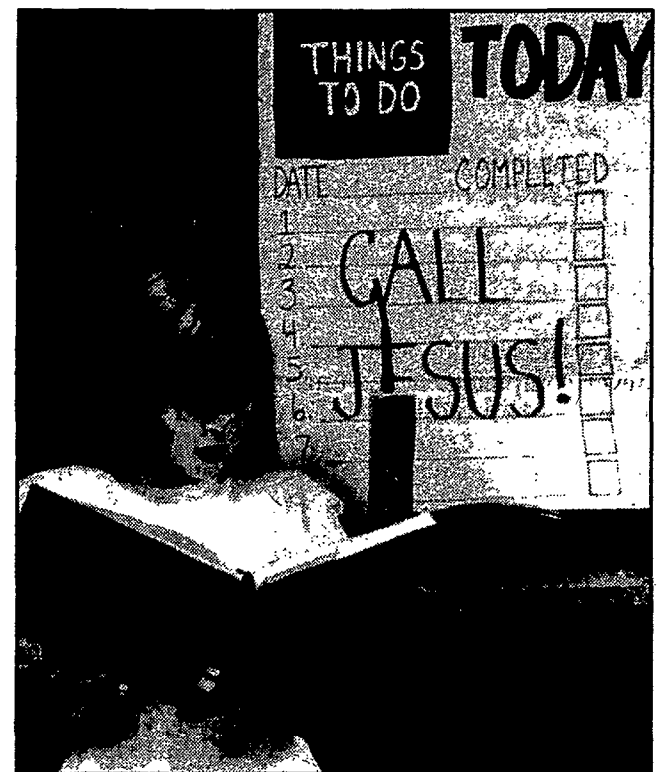
The parish, for example, helps supply

an ecumenical food cupboard. And last year, parishioners contributed 150 winter coats for a clothes closet in Rochester. In addition, St. Paul's members put together Christmas and Easter baskets, and collect Christmas gifts for youths incarcerated in the State School at Industry.

The parish also provides support and activities for parishioners — and outreach to new people such as Hallahan.

For the past three summers, it has held a parish camping weekend. In the spring, it holds a father-child breakfast. There are coffee hours after Masses, and a folk choir to lead music at the Masses. And as a result of discussions during last October's Synod, the parish in 1993 started a brunch for newcomers — to which they are individually invited — and an adult-education series which this year will focus on the "Catechism of the Catholic Church."

Meanwhile, the parish reaches out to the ecumenical community through such ways as a Thanksgiving service and pulpit swapping, as well as cooperating



Danielle Wanglien reads from Jeremiah 31:7-9 during St. Paul's Children's Liturgy of the Word. During the service, children also performed a sketch depicting the Gospel of Mark, chapter 10:46-52.

on such projects as the food cupboard.

"You can become involved very quickly if you desire to," observed parish Deacon Albro C. Wilson. "The people are active, and they are very inclusive of others."

Even as parishioners celebrate the present, they also have reason to celebrate their past. The parish was officially established on May 30, 1869, and is marking its 125th anniversary with a series of events — including a blessing of a relic of St. Paul of the Cross on Oct. 23, and a dinner scheduled for May, 1995.

The parish's roots, however, extend back far earlier than 1869. Masses were celebrated in homes as early as the 1840s. At first, the parish was a mission of St. Rose Church in Lima. The pastor of that parish, Father William A. Gregg, served as St. Paul's first pastor and supervised completion of the first church. He is also responsible in part for naming the parish after St. Paul of the Cross, founder of the Passionist Fathers. Father Gregg had been ordained a Passionist priest, but had later become a diocesan priest for the Diocese of Buffalo.

St. Paul's became an independent parish under Father Charles Rimmels, who also guided the mission parish of

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