

# Extra Credit!

Seven Catholic teenagers were among the 12 recipients named to this year's Town of Greece Youth Hall of Fame.

These awards honor young people for their leadership and community spirit through volunteer duties and personal achievement.

Among the Hall of Fame honorees were John Caliguri and Matthew McLaren, parishioners at St. Charles Borromeo Church; Kristopher Clarke, St. Mark's; Jamie Beth Foos, St. Stanislaus (Rochester); Kristy Newell, Our Lady of Mercy; Megan Toy, St. Lawrence; and Chad Vogel, St. John the Evangelist.

A number of Aquinas Institute seniors were recently named scholarship winners. They are:

Lia Kuna, University of Rhode Island Centennial Scholarship; Carolyn Wrobel, National Merit Scholarship; Tufts University (Mass.); Mary Sullivan, Hope (Mich.) College Distinguished Artist Award; Brian Briggs, Ithaca College Merit Scholarship; Christa Muratore, Syracuse University Dean's Scholarship and Wegmans Scholarship; and Albert Gallmon, Sidney Souers Scholarship at Miami (Ohio) University.

Beth Anne Diiodato, a senior at Our Lady of Mercy, has been recognized by both the Junior League of Rochester, Inc. and the New York State Bar Association.

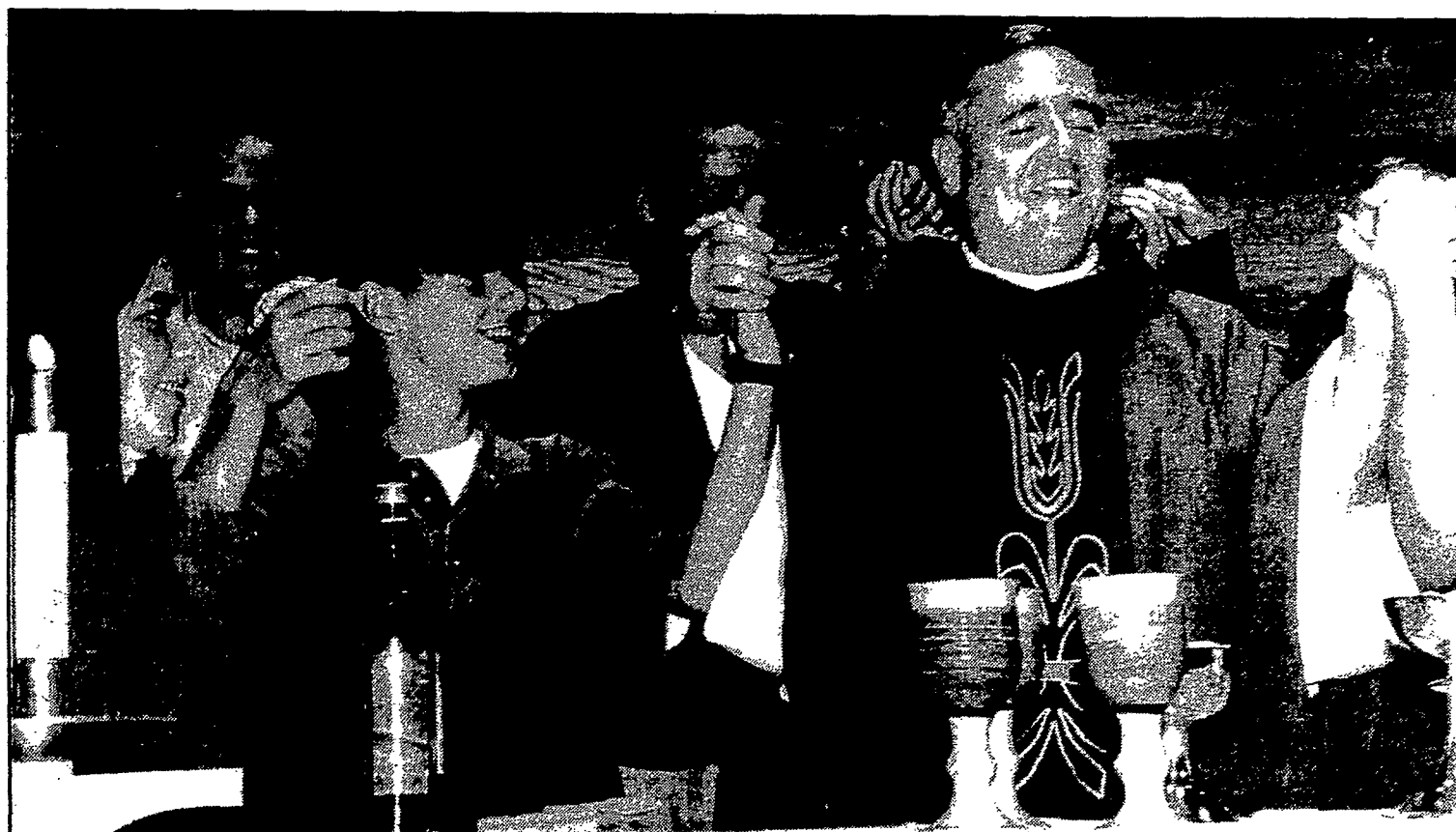
Beth Anne was named runner-up for the Junior League's 1995 Youth Volunteer Award and has also been chosen as district recipient of the state Bar Association's Community Service Award.

## Christian rocker will play at June 3 concert in Tier

PAINTED POST — John Schlitt, lead singer of the Christian rock group Petra, will perform at 7 p.m. Saturday, June 3, at Victory Highway Wesleyan Church, 150 Victory Highway.

Schlitt began his professional music career in 1973 when he headed the band Head East. He left that group in 1980 before joining Petra in 1985. Schlitt's first solo album, *Shake*, is currently in the top 20 on *Billboard* magazine's Christian Contemporary Album chart.

For ticket information regarding the June 3 concert, call 607/962-7000.



File photo

Teenagers joined the late Father David W. Mura at the altar during one of his typically upbeat liturgies — the Monroe County Youth Mass held last October at Irondequoit's Christ the King Church.

## Priest's enthusiasm electrified teens

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

It may have been through Family Camp. Perhaps a youth retreat or Scouting weekend.

Or a teen Mass. Or high-school lecture. Or through clown ministry.

One way or another, Father David W. Mura had a rare gift for guiding teenagers toward a deep connection with their Catholic faith.

By the time he died May 2 at the age of 50, Father Mura had already witnessed countless examples of full spiritual blossoming from the seeds he had planted in young souls several years earlier.

Many who attended services for Father Mura are now young adults who owe their extensive involvement in the Catholic Church to the late priest, who was serving as pastor of Rochester's Holy Apostles/St. Anthony of Padua Parish Cluster when his untimely death occurred.

"The legacy of him are all the people who are now active in ministry," said Johan Engstrom, who serves as youth-ministry coordinator at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Brighton.

Engstrom met Father Mura during a 1981 teen seminar while he was an exchange student residing in Penn Yan. He converted to Catholicism later that year in his native Sweden, and eventually staffed retreats with Father Mura

before becoming active in youth ministry.

"He really was a catalyst in my life," Engstrom said of Father Mura. "He helped me to a connection with my faith and showed me there was a role for me."

C.J. Potter's first encounter with Father Mura was at a 1982 retreat when he was a high-school freshman. Initially, he said, he was caught off guard by the jovial, informal manner in which Father Mura conducted his Masses.

"It really surprised me and blew me away that there was humor in explaining to teenagers about Jesus," Potter remarked. "That got me excited as a teenager about learning more, instead of being bored at church."

Potter was youth minister at Rochester's Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church from 1989-92 and is currently involved with the Family Camp program at Kamp Koinonia in Yates County.

Another person who draws a link between Father Mura and her ties with youth ministry and Family Camp is Sue Versluys, youth-ministry coordinator at Spencerport's St. John the Evangelist Church.

Versluys began her association with Father Mura in 1981, just as she and her husband, Rich, were beginning the youth program at St. John's.

"He constantly challenged me to go further with the kids," she said.

Versluys, a program-committee member with Family Camp, said discussion has taken place among Family Camp leaders to establish a memorial fund in Father Mura's name.

"Everybody's committed to keeping the place going," she said.

Meanwhile, 16-year-old Paul Nagy may eventually follow in Father Mura's footsteps by entering the seminary — which would be especially appropriate, since he's Father Mura's nephew.

Paul said the possibility of religious life is not strictly due to his uncle's example, "but a lot of it is."

A parishioner at Hamlin's St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church and a member of the Diocesan Youth Committee, Paul pointed out that Father Mura has already had a positive effect on a whole new generation of teenagers.

"I know lots of people who will be in the church a long time because of him. Millions of kids will back me up on that," Paul said.

And those numerous kids would probably back Paul up by uttering the single-word response Father Mura always encouraged his young congregations to shout:

"A-A-A-MEN!"

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