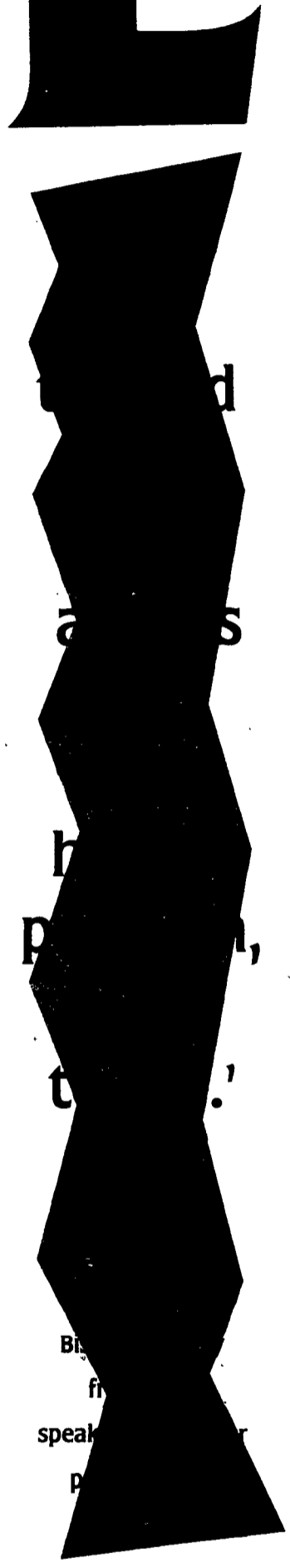


# More on the

**Coming Next Week:**  
Teens voice their views on the sacrament of penance.

# Lean On Me

Story by Staff Writer Mike Latona • Photograph by Staff Photographer S. John Wilkin



For all you know, that person two lockers over could really use your help. So could the person sitting alone in the lunch room, or in the library.

Or maybe it's the other way around sometimes. Maybe those people could be helping *you* work through a really big problem.

But day after day, for whatever reason, the two of you never wind up conversing. At most, there's an occasional quick smile and, "Hi."

And there might be a voice inside of you saying, "I want to talk more to that person, but what would people think?"

If you're leery about stepping forward, why not take a hint from Farrah Cherubin's Book of Interpersonal Skills: **JUST DO IT!**

Farrah, a senior at Nazareth Academy, said she doesn't hesitate to reach out — regardless of a person's age or appearance.

The 17-year-old recalls how, this past fall, she became aware of a freshman who was having "lots of problems" and seemed to be in need of a friend.

"I was going down the hallway one day singing, and she said, 'I like that song.' I said, 'Would you like to sing it with me?' Now we're real good friends," Farrah said.

Farrah is a peer mediator in the Teen to Teen chapter at Nazareth. This nationwide organization involves teens who provide moral support for their peers.

Farrah noted that Teen to Teen is valuable for high-school students who may hesitate to discuss their struggles with adults.

"They can't trust people, and they keep a lot of things to themselves," Farrah remarked. "A lot of people are having problems with their parents."

At other Catholic high schools in the diocese, students make similar efforts toward helping other students. Take the example of Pinar Tekbilek, a freshman at Bishop Kearney. As is the case of many frosh, Pinar struggled initially with the adjustment to high-school life.

"It was very scary," Pinar, 14, recalled. "It was a huge environment, and I didn't know what I was doing. I was scared I was going to get lost."

Through the school's Peer Ministry program, Pinar was assigned senior Mandy Bham as her peer minister. And it was only a matter of weeks before Mandy provided a big emotional lift for Pinar.

"I lost my grandfather in September, and (Mandy) was there for me. She supported me and helped me out," Pinar said. "I trusted her. She'd always say, 'If you have a problem, come to me.'"

Melissa Celento, a senior at Aquinas Institute, has noted the trickle effect of her school's Peer Ministry program. She said she was influenced to join the group due to her friendship with a former AQ student who had been her Peer Ministry mentor.

"I just knew I wanted to be a peer minister. I just wanted to help people, and I always looked up to my 'senior buddy,'" commented Melissa, 18.

Another AQ student, Missy Escher, said she became aware of Peer Ministry through her "big brother."

"He guided me through my whole year. I still write to him all the time," said Missy, a 16-year-old junior.

AQ senior Kevin Schwartz, 17, noted that Peer Ministry enhances his own personal skills.

"It helps you mature," he said.

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**MORE MYTHS ABOUT McQUAID JESUIT**

**MYTH**  
*You have to be a genius to attend McQuaid Jesuit.*

McQuaid Jesuit provides the atmosphere in which all students can reach their potential. Our program provides an advanced challenge to the high achiever, and remedial help to the student requiring it. And each year, our students are accepted into the best colleges and universities, usually with generous grants and scholarships!

**MYTH**  
*You have to live in a particular neighborhood to fit in at McQuaid Jesuit.*

The McQuaid Jesuit student body is wonderfully diverse! More than 11% of our students are minority. Almost one quarter of our students come from outside the Catholic faith. And McQuaid Jesuit students come from public and private schools throughout 33 different districts and across five counties of Western New York.

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