



Left photo, (from left) Sara Graham, Shahadah Humphrey, Tonikia Hall, and Shanika Graham from St. Bridget's Church in Rochester practice liturgical dancing. Above photo, Emily Rimere (left), from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Hamlin, and Jennifer Hosenfeld from St. Rita's Church in Webster.

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Heather Hubbell, from St. Leo's Church in Hilton, follows the example of liturgical dance instructor Nicole Ciamoga.

in a concluding Mass.

Biagio Zarcone attended "Call to Ministry" with several other teens from his parish, St. Andrew's of Rochester. Biagio, 16, said he's pleased with his parish's growing emphasis on youth participation in liturgies.

"Now that they're more involved, the kids aren't bored as much," remarked Biagio, a lector and musician at St. Andrew's. "We feel better as a whole about serving the Lord."

Nicholas Reeder, 13, performed a flawless reading during the concluding Mass. He said it was the first time he'd ever performed in a lector's role.

"I do believe I have that vocation," he said. "I felt a little closer to God through this experience."

Nicholas said he now hopes to utilize his natural abilities on a regular basis in the Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward. He recently approached Sister Saint Luke Hardy, SSJ, a pastoral associate in the cluster, about becoming a lector.

"She seemed pleased," Nicholas said. "She said she was going to get me on the list."

Leslie Krueger, 15, is another teen who made a liturgical debut during the April 27 Mass at Guardian Angels. After serving as eucharistic minister that day, she voiced hope that she can do likewise at Rochester's St. Boniface Church.

"It was a privilege to go from receiving to giving," said Leslie, a former altar server in her parish. "Hopefully, after I go back to St. Boniface, they'll let me continue that privilege."

The reports by Nicholas and Leslie illustrate a key to the success of this movement: Not only must youths be willing to become more involved with liturgy, but parish staff must be open to the idea.

"If we want youths to participate in Mass fully, actively and consciously, then we have to involve them in all aspects of that celebration," Theisen said. "We can't say, 'Embrace this; this is yours — but don't become involved.'"

Nicholas said he doesn't believe there's any reason why a youth shouldn't have the option of any liturgical ministry.

"A child can have just as much understanding of Mass as an adult," he stated. Jared encourages reluctant parish leaders to look at the benefits of added youth involvement in the liturgy.

"It's important for the community itself seeing different people; seeing younger people in a wider spectrum," Jared said. "I know people fear change and that tradition is important, but I think you have to look at it levelly. What's the difference between being traditional and being stubborn?"

Story by staff writer
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Photographs by
staff photographer
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Comments? — Now you can E-mail us at RochCour@aol.com

Proposed Diocesan guidelines for young people in Liturgical Ministry

1 Young people, particularly but not exclusively between ages 12 and 18, will be provided the opportunity based on their baptism, to volunteer for liturgical ministry in their parishes. (These ministries include lectors, eucharistic ministers, ushers, altar servers, greeters/hospitality ministers, and music and art ministers.)

2 The candidates should show physical, mental and spiritual maturity, appropriate to their age level.

3 The parish will provide proper, adequate, and age-appropriate training for their respective ministries. Those responsible for such training will keep in mind that participation in particular ministries requires certain physical abilities.

4 The candidates will be expected to wear proper attire that is age-appropriate, and act with proper behavior, showing respect and reverence.

5 The parish will provide ongoing support by the adult community that encourages a sense of welcome and advocacy as the young people move into these various ministries.

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ay 23rd & 30th editions, the Catholic Courier will publish a special classified ad that will help match young people looking for work with those that need help.

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