

# Class of '96

Special section of the Catholic Courier - June 13, 1996

## Heads of the class

**W**ould it be all right to miss several days of school each year so she could ride horses?

When Kathleen Burke made that proposal upon enrolling at Elmira Notre Dame High School, it couldn't have been music to the ears of school officials. On the surface, it seemed like a surefire case of twisted priorities.

Kathleen, a nationally ranked rider, travels each January through November to equestrian competitions throughout the United States. She planned to compensate for missed school at Notre Dame by hiring tutors and faxing in her assignments.

"I felt I kind of had to prove myself to my teachers, so they wouldn't get upset when I left," Kathleen said.

Nearly four years later, it's clear Kathleen didn't horse around with her studies. She has earned the distinction of being named the 1996 Notre Dame senior-class valedictorian.

Keeping a hectic schedule, Kathleen noted, may have been more of a help than a hindrance in finishing No. 1.

"I get things done better when I have everything to do," remarked Kathleen, 18. She will attend Georgetown University this fall to major in either biology or psychology.

Sean O'Donnell is another valedictorian who successfully balances schoolwork and outside activities. The Geneva DeSales senior has participated in golf, track, yearbook,

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Katie Dougherty, the co-valedictorian at Aquinas Institute, has already earned acceptance into Albany Medical College.

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