

A child shall lead them



The choir that provided the music for the service was made up of third-, fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders.



First-graders Nicholas Fagan and Rachel Somerville peek out during the closing song, "Light of Christ."



Sister Diane Dennie, school principal, offers instruction to Mitchell Ryan (left) and Tim Wegman (right) during the dress rehearsal Dec. 6.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
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each other in the hallways, and slapping each other's hands as they pass each other," she said.

Petrella said preparing for vespers also allows the students to build each other's self-esteem through encouragement, rather than tear each other down through derision.

"Everyone helps each other," she said. "No one makes fun of each other."

While the creation of relationships between age groups may warm the hearts of their elders, one aspect of vespers seems to appeal to the students above anything else — the fact that they're acting it

out.

"It was fun," said Joanie Walinski, a seventh-grader in the speaking chorus. "You get to be with other people ... It's kind of boring just sitting there and saying stuff. This way you get to do more stuff."

The students also said performing vespers took their minds off the commercialization of the Advent season.

"It just gets me in the spirit for the true meaning of Christmas, not just the gimme, gimme, gimme for the presents," said Bob Russello, a sixth-grader who sang in the chorus.

The students seemed at ease during their performances, but C.J. Gremke, a seventh-grader who served as the commentator, confessed some trepidation about taking on his duties on the altar.

"I liked being up there, but I was nervous being up there in front of 800 people," he said.

But Jonathan Trotto, a seventh-grader who served as a lector, probably spoke for many of the students when he said the vespers brought St. Lawrence School's families together.

"Everyone had a part in it, and it just made it sound very nice," he said.

Then he added that his own personal satisfaction was rooted in something even more compelling than the unity of the St. Lawrence School community.

"My grandparents loved it," he said.



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