

On the MOVE

Coming closer to Christ

For Michele Reno, Lenten contemplation inspires more than thinking about Jesus' love.

She said it has also helped her feel that love.

Michele, 17, was one of some 80 people who took part in a March 16 penance service for her youth group at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Scottsville. She was surprised, she said, at the calming influence this event had on her.

"There was a closeness I felt when I was done. I've never felt so good," Michele recalled. "The atmosphere was real warm."

She added that the timing of the penance service contributed to that feeling. Because we acknowledge in detail during Lent that Jesus died for our sins, Michele explained, she became sharply focused on the themes of forgiveness and reconciliation.

"It definitely makes someone appreciate what a single person

(Jesus) did — knowing you can be forgiven and have a second chance," Michele said. "It gives a lot of comfort to me. It happened at a good time, because I've been feeling a lot of stress lately."

Michele said the service reminded her that Christ died so that we may live. She marveled at how "someone could love so many people to have the strength to do that."

During the Lenten season, the church calls us to reflect upon Jesus' love for us through religious services, school functions and/or private reflection. Many teens across the diocese — like Michele — report that such actions seem to be deepening their relationships with Christ.

Paul Mahoney, for example, said he walked away from the St. Mary's penance service with a positive feeling as well.

"It was good. Everyone gets together to celebrate what Jesus did for us," Paul, 17, said.

Matt White has found that his relationship with Christ, also, deepens during Lent — especially during Holy Week.

"At the beginning of Lent it's kind of in your mind. But as Easter nears, it's more and more in your mind as you think about what (Jesus) gave up for us. What he had to go through makes you want to sacrifice more for the church," said Matt,

16, from St. Margaret Mary Church in Apalachin.

Matt added that Jesus' suffering has made him more sensitive to the persecution that other innocent people have endured.

"People didn't want to believe he could be as good as he was," Matt said. "People who have power, they feel threatened and try to get rid of someone."

Sara Weaver found that her reflection on the agony of Christ has helped her accept recent struggles in her own life.

"You realize what he went through. Then you think of all the stuff you're going through, and that doesn't even compare to his dying on the cross for all of us," said Sara, 14, from St. Charles Borromeo Church in Greece.

Sara delivered a short speech about Lenten devotion to Jesus during a March 7 Mass for students from Greece's St. John the Evangelist School. The First Friday liturgy was held at St. John the Evangelist Church.

"May all that we do every day show Jesus that we do love him with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. That we love our neighbors as ourselves ... as we move through the season of

Lent," Sara, eighth the stu Sara out th perfor teen pr creati amoun time and fa "I h than I there they n cific t said. made sacrifici peopl try to many as you so."

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Upcoming Supplements

MILESTONES

Publication Date: April 17 - Deadline: April 3

This third-annual supplement will honor the significant achievements of priests and religious celebrating jubilees of their vocations, and of those who are retiring from active ministry. It will provide biographical sketches of those in the diocese celebrating such milestones, and will focus on their lives as models for others considering vocations.

TRAVEL & PILGRIMAGES

Publication Date: May 15 - Deadline: May 1

As readers look ahead to summer plans, this supplement will tempt them with choice locations while serving as a planning guide for domestic and foreign journeys. In addition to offering tips for choosing sites and making arrangements, this supplement will highlight shrines and other religious sites of special interest to Catholic travelers.

GRADUATION

Publication Date: June 13 - Deadline: June 1

(Bonus distribution to graduating students)

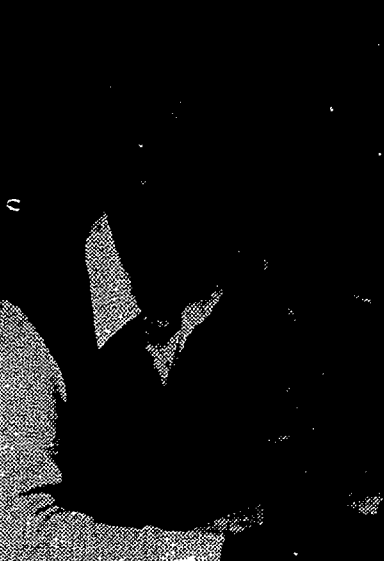
A look at the high school Class of '97 as its members prepare for life after high school. In addition to the annual listing of graduates' names, this special supplement also will contain feature articles on selected graduates, with special emphasis on their expectations and plans for the future.

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