

FEATURE

Group to meet this summer, share scriptural views

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

Like most young adult Catholics, Teale Dominas has heard the Gospel story of Jesus washing his Apostles' feet at the Last Supper numerous times. But it was only recently that the home health aide felt the story really hit home.

"I was helping a patient with a foot bath," she said. "I got this mental image of when Jesus washed Peter's feet, and it floored me. It dawned on me right then how deep my spirituality went."

Dominas belongs to a small Christian community whose members attend the Newman Oratory, the Catholic community at the State University of New York College at Brockport. Her 11-member group had discussed the story of Jesus washing his Apostles' feet at its last meeting, she said.

"I think I'll remember all my life the moment that reading connected for me," she said.

Although she enjoys her small Christian community, which meets biweekly, Dominas noted that she is its youngest member, and the 28-year-old wants to share her faith with people closer to her own age.

"It's very important for me to connect



with people on that level, to receive affirmation from people my age," she said.

To that end, Dominas has volunteered to facilitate a faith-sharing group for diocesan Catholics in their 20s and 30s. At least six people have already expressed interest in joining the group, which will meet six times this summer, Dominas said. A meeting place and times are to be determined.

Karen Rinefierd, diocesan coordinator for Young Adult, Adult and Family Faith Formation, said the Diocesan Young Adult Planning Committee is tapping people like Dominas to help form small faith-sharing groups for young adults throughout the diocese.

"It's basically an experiment," she said. "It's kind of a shot in the dark."

Cathy Daniels and Mary Ellen Leahy —

both of whom attend St. Pius the Church in Chili — hope that the experiment works, and plan to join the group.

"I've been looking for something like that for a long time," Daniels said of the newly forming group. "A lot of my friends of other faiths have groups like this."

Daniels said many of her Protestant friends belong to singles' groups at their churches that combine social activities with Bible study. Daniels enjoys socializing with her peers, but she said she's looking for a more spiritual connection as well.

"I really like the idea of applying the Scriptures and the faith to current problems in (our) lives and today's lifestyles," she said.

Leahy said she's interested in the group because she wants a "richer understanding of our religion, and I'd like to hear how others think."

Dominas said the group will meet for two-hour sessions that will each begin with her lighting a candle and asking participants to focus on their breathing. This technique allows group members to let go of stresses and problems and open themselves to the Holy Spirit, she said.

Dominas said the group may talk about the Sunday Mass readings for that week, or about readings that relate to a particu-

lar issue. One technique her group at Brockport uses is to ask participants to identify themselves with a particular biblical character, she said. Then participants are asked to share how any recent events in their lives may connect with the reading, she said.

Rinefierd said young adults interested in forming small faith-sharing groups should call her office at 716/328-3228, ext. 255, or at 1-800-388-7177, ext. 255.

The Diocesan Young Adult Planning Committee is sponsoring a wine-tasting tour of Bully Hill Vineyards in Hammondsport on Saturday, July 19, at 11 a.m. For information, call Jim Schmitz at 716/271-2297.

Father David Mura touched many teens and young adults during his 24 years as a diocesan priest. Now, a Dansville woman has begun work on a book chronicling Father Mura's life and priestly ministry prior to his death in 1995 at the age of 50.

Nicole Puffer, 31, who staffed several retreats with Father Mura, is collecting anecdotes about the priest. Anybody who wishes to submit stories for the biography should call Puffer at 716/335-8759, or mail submissions to her at 8365 Reeds Corners Road, Dansville, N.Y., 14437.



In the swing

Catholic young adults join an evening of swing dancing June 13 at Covenant United Methodist Church, Rochester. Included were an hour of lessons and live music to accompany the dancing. (Below) dancers take a break to become spectators and (left) Micaela Gutierrez and Peter Silberman share a spin around the dance floor.



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