

FEATURE

Discussion spurs new event ideas

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

Andrea Carosa, 24, figures Catholics in their 20s and 30s need all the spiritual help they can get. So she wants diocesan young adults to make a rosary novena on their own behalf.

"It'd be like a Generation X novena," she said. "We'd have to ask (the Blessed Virgin Mary) to help us and guide us with our voyage in life because we kind of get lost along the way."

Carosa, a parishioner at St. Catherine of Siena Church in Mendon, teaches English and drama at Honeoye Falls-Lima Senior High School.

"I'd be willing to organize the whole thing," she said of the novena. "All we need is a church and a priest."

Carosa's suggestion was just one of several made by young adults attending a brainstorming dinner in the Dugan Center of St. Mary's Church in downtown Rochester July 17. The dinner was sponsored by the Odyssey Planning Committee, a group of diocesan young adults.

Participants were asked for ideas for social, educational, spiritual and service activities geared toward young adults, according to Karen Rinefierd, diocesan coordinator for young adult, adult and family faith formation.

Each participant wrote a proposal for an event or activity on sign-up sheets, and the proposals were displayed on tables. Everyone then went from table to table, signing up for the various activities, and, in some cases, offering to help organize them.

Rinefierd said the Odyssey committee would pick five proposals with the most signatures, perhaps by July 25, and begin work on scheduling them. The committee will also consider other proposals that garnered significant interest, she said.

Joe Andres, 27, a parishioner at Holy Cross Church in Charlotte, said he wants to see a discussion forum for young adults that would tackle various church and social issues. Priestly ordination and church traditions are possible subjects, he said.

He added that he was with Literacy Volunteers for two years, teaching a woman from China how to read and helping her to obtain U.S. citizenship. Similarly, Andres would like Catholic young adults volunteer together on behalf of the poor.

"I think it's good for people to see how other segments of society live so they appreciate what they have," Andres re-



Kerry Huller

Mass in the park

Father Gary Tyman celebrates Mass outdoors, a highlight of an event sponsored by the Diocesan Young Adult Planning Committee at Mendon Ponds Park, June 21. More than 100 young adults from around the diocese attended, enjoying a picnic and activities including volleyball, hiking and music.

marked.

Frank Pimentel, 31, who attends St. Bridget's and St. Mary's churches in Rochester, had ideas similar to Andres'.

A public defender, Pimentel said his work for the poor has opened his eyes to the need for spiritual work in prisons. Pimentel said he would like to organize young adults to create Bible study groups in jails. He said he had read that ex-inmates who had participated in such groups tended to stay out of jail more than other ex-prisoners.

"So many of the people I represent are in dire need of a change in their lives," he said. "At some level that requires a belief in God and a willingness to change one's attitude."

Pimentel also suggested that young adults form their own Bible study groups. He added that he'd like young adults to volunteer for a day helping to build a home through Habitat for Humanity. That not-for-profit group works with low-income people to build their own homes.

Young Adult

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"Young adults are certainly physically more apt to do manual labor than other folks," he said. "But I also think it's a good habit to get into doing service."

Nadine Girard, 21, a parishioner at St. Agnes Church in Avon, would like to see

young adults get into the habit of going to church together. She suggested that a group of her peers attend Sunday Mass sometime and then go out for breakfast to discuss the experience.

"They could discuss how the sermon applies to their life," she said, noting that young adults are struggling with such concerns as getting jobs and maintaining relationships.

"It's nice to be able to talk to people who are in similar situations," she said.

For information on Odyssey events, call Karen Rinefierd at 716/328-3228, ext. 255, or, after Aug. 1, call 1-800-388-7177 and then press 1-5-375. Odyssey also has a Web page at <http://www.ggw.org/odyssey/>.



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