

A day in the life...

of a young priest



By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

At the age of 28, Father Doug DellaPietra has done what few of his peers have in the United States — committed his life to serving the church and the Lord as a priest.

Ordained by Bishop Matthew H. Clark in June 1996, Father DellaPietra is in his second year of a three-year internship at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Greece. He is the diocese's youngest priest.

Father DellaPietra grew up attending St. John of Rochester Church in Fairport. He graduated from Bishop Kearney High School and from St. John Fisher College in Rochester, with a business management degree. But he felt a strong calling to the priesthood.

"I just love being with people," he said. "I didn't want to be stuck in an office."

Today, he spends about 55 hours a week on priestly duties including celebrating the sacraments; counseling parishioners; working with a committee supervising the parish's five small Christian communities; and visiting at the diocesan school at the parish.

The *Catholic Courier* followed Father DellaPietra Saturday, Sept. 27, and also heard his thoughts on the priesthood:

•On priestly celibacy: Celibacy is a "tradeoff."

"One day it really hit me that I was not going to be a part of a person's life. I had a conviction in my heart that this was what God was calling me to. I had the freedom to say 'yes' or 'no,' but I wanted to do what God wanted me to. There was some grieving (because) I was going to lose the chance to have a family. But there was a sense that I was also gaining a lot — to be able to



Before 8 a.m. — Crossing from St. Charles Borromeo rectory to church for Mass.

enter into people's lives is tremendous."

•On staying humble: "Most of our physical needs are provided for us (priests). I try to remember other people's physical needs are not provided."

•On homilies: He likes to give homilies extemporaneously. Then again, he's not one to ramble.

"I try to do five to seven minutes on weekdays, and eight to 10 minutes on weekends."

•On celebrating Mass: Consecrating the Eucharist is a high point.

"I think the greatest thing for me is being able to be there with people of faith. There's a sense in me that I'm here at this parish for these people. I

know some of their lives and their situations, and I'm called to serve them."

During his morning homily Sept. 27, Father DellaPietra spoke about spirituality in a way that could reflect his attitude toward the priesthood.












"It's a way of living with the Lord and a way of recognizing how God works in and through us," he said.



7:30 p.m. — sharing a la Blighton.

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Journeying in Prayer & Service with God's People 1997

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