

The Virgini

A mother & a friend

Kim Frearson writes to Mary in her daily journal.

Catherine Gorre honors Mary by reciting the rosary every night with her family.

Kristopher MacBeth talks and prays to Mary at night. He also says prayers to her while he is playing soccer, asking her to protect him from injury.

As these three youths demonstrate, devotion to Mary can be practiced in many forms: individually; as part of a group; through formalized prayer; or in a casual setting.

And, although the recent Marian Conference attracted mostly adults, there was enough interest in Mary among younger Catholics that nearly 50 youths took part in the

daylong event as well. The fourth annual conference took place Oct. 11 at Theater on the Ridge in Rochester.

a prominent place

Kitty Peterson, who organized a youth program portion of the conference, said that Mary's offering of love and compassion are essential reasons Catholics should place her prominently in their prayer lives.

"Mary is your friend. You should go to her for help; you should sit and talk with her the way you would with your mother," said Peterson, who also serves as youth minister at St. Patrick's Church in Seneca Falls.

Catherine said she frequently turns to Mary to provide her with such assistance.

"If I'm having a hard time at school with tests, or if I have any sort of problem, she's like a second mother to me," said Catherine, 17, a parishioner at St. Jude's Church in Gates.

Peterson emphasized that Mary should not be regarded as a mystical, unapproachable being.

"Some people have put her up on a pedestal. But in the Bible, it depicts Mary as ordinary. She is a powerful person, but a simple person," Peterson



From left, Kellen MacBeth, 10, Kristopher MacBeth, 12, during the Marian devotion of Mary Oct. 11 during the Marian Conference.

remarked. "She cried, she laughed. Why wouldn't you be able to go up to that person and say 'I need help?'"

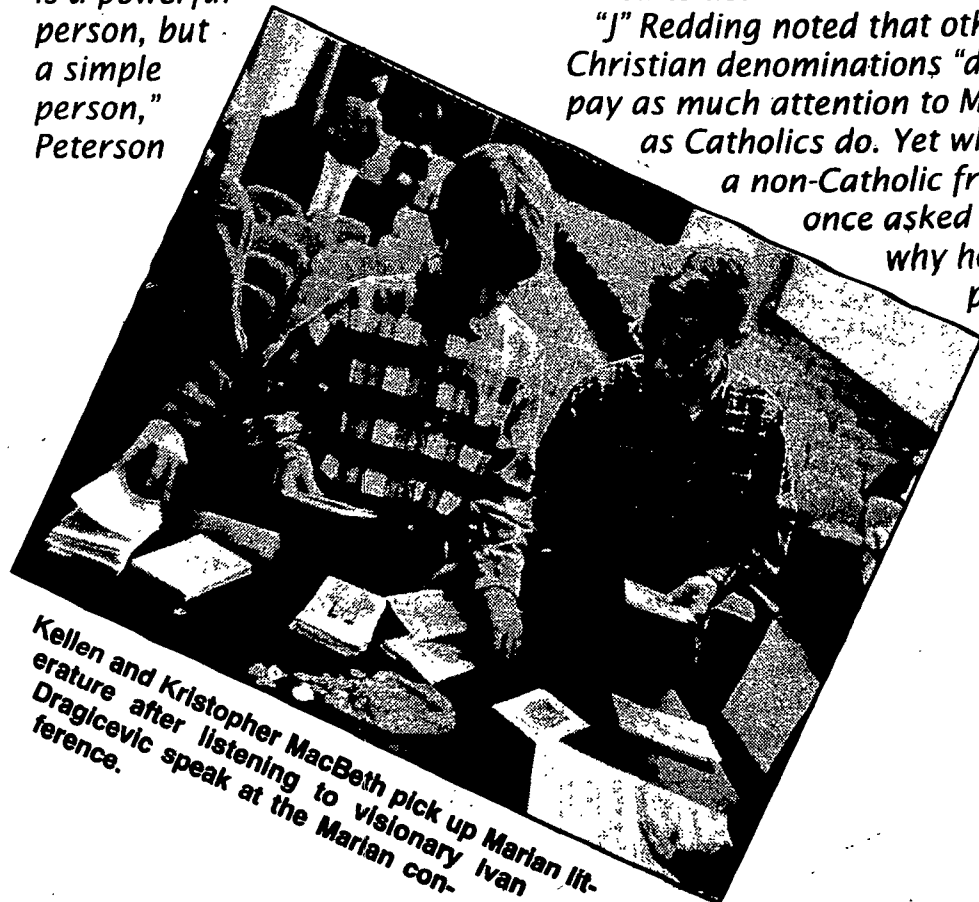
Kristopher remarked that the full impact of Mary's importance may not come through in the Bible, because Mary largely remained in the background in the Gospels.

"Christ is so much more visible, more powerful," said Kristopher, 12, from St. Anne Church in Rochester.

However, Kristopher pointed out that Mary deserves special recognition because she faithfully accepted the responsibility of being the mother of Christ — even though she was uncertain about what she was being called to do.

"I" Redding noted that other Christian denominations "don't pay as much attention to Mary" as Catholics do. Yet when a non-Catholic friend once asked him why he puts

so



Kellen and Kristopher MacBeth pick up Marian literature after listening to visionary Ivan Dragicevic speak at the Marian conference.

Upcoming Supplements

PARENTING/FAMILY LIFE

Publication Date: November 28 - Deadline: November 14

Expanding on its monthly Parenting/Family Life feature, the Courier will publish this section to offer a closer look at raising Catholic children in the 1990s. This section will feature the church's insights on such topics as discipline, education and faith development. Other topics may include developing strong communications with teenagers and letting go of maturing older children.

BOOKS, MUSIC AND VIDEOS

Publication Date: December 4 - Deadline: November 18

Just in time for Christmas shopping, this exciting new supplement will highlight some of the latest offerings in inspirational and thought-provoking literature, music and movies available on videotape. It will include profiles of writers, musicians and performers — especially ones with local ties — and reviews of recent releases.

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