

# Community reaches diversified membership



## Parish Profile Our Lady Queen of Peace, Brighton

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

**BRIGHTON** — A few years ago, Jeffrey Ingraham kept hearing from his older brother, Jamey, about youth group meetings at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church.

"He would always come back and say what fun he had," Jeffrey said.

So when he entered McQuaid Jesuit High School in fall 1996, Jeffrey also decided to join the youth group at Queen of Peace, a growing parish that boasts 540 households. Jeffrey, 15, said he's participated in a variety of activities made all the better because they're organized by the parish's youth minister, Peter Wozny.

"He's young, so he knows what's going to bore us, and what's going to keep us interested," Jeffrey said.

Wozny, 29, agreed with Jeffrey that the parish should be a place to have a good time,



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

**Maureen Barry, left, signs the 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass Jan. 11 at Our Lady Queen of Peace, as Father Joseph A. Hart presides. Below, a pot is placed at the church entrance, where parishioners may leave money and food for soup to be given to St. Martin's Kitchen, at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Rochester.**

and not just a place to spend time being good.

"I try to get a good mix of community service, church projects and all-around general fun," Wozny said, noting the group's 15 members meet biweekly. "I would feel that if they're not enjoying being there, it doesn't do any constructive good whatsoever."

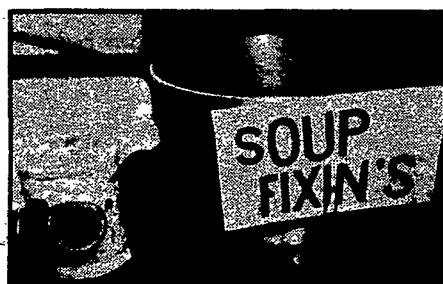
On Jan. 16 the youth group worked at Blessed Sacrament Parish's youth kitchen in Rochester. The group's efforts will be rewarded with a pizza party in a couple of weeks according to Jamey, 17, a senior at McQuaid. Although he likes such incentives as the pizza party, Jamey added that the youth group is teaching him more than how to get rewarded for doing good.

"I think it's important to be able to get out in the community to help people less fortunate," Jamey said. "I think it makes you feel good inside to help people."

Queen of Peace's longtime commitment to social outreach is exemplified by the volunteerism of Jamey, Jeffrey and the other teenagers. But it's a spirit of volunteerism shared by hundreds of parishioners, including Earl and Marge O'Connor.

The O'Connors have worked in the parish's social outreach for 15 years. Marge said, organizing such efforts as the parish's annual Christmas gift distribution to the Rochester Psychiatric Center.

"We hear that a lot of (patients) don't have visitors or families that pay attention to them," she said. "We wanted to make them happy at Christmas."



Sister Jacquelyn Reichart, RSM, senior pastoral associate, pointed out that parish is teaching its children to care about others less fortunate as well.

The parish's religious education students — as well as parish children attending diocesan Catholic schools — have been doing chores in their homes to earn money, as well as saving pennies, that they put into special envelopes collected each Sunday since last October, she said. Last week, the students voted to give \$200 they collected to Montgomery Neighborhood Center, Inc., a private outreach center located in inner-city Rochester.

"By saving their pennies, it helps them to know their contribution helps their brothers and sisters," she said.

Beth Watkins, the parish's office manager, also teaches religious education to Queen of Peace's kindergarten-age children. Like Sister Reichart, she said it was vital that the parish inspire its children to contemplate their faith.

"I think if you present anything from the Bible to them — at their level — they'll absorb it," Watkins said. "Children just look

at things in a very innocent and open way."

Frank Henwood, the parish's religious education administrator, noted that Queen of Peace also wants to make sure its children participate in liturgies. For example, he said, the parish's religious education students continually learn hymns throughout the year.

The parish's pastor, Father Joseph A. Hart, added that he celebrates a family Mass once a month, and that he invites the parish's kids up to the altar to listen to his homily. Children also serve as ushers and lectors at the Mass, he said.

"I think it draws the families together, and it encourages everybody in the community to greater participation," he said.

The parish's desire to include all its members in every event extends to Jamey and Jeffrey Ingraham's parents, William and Mary Jo, who are deaf. The couple attends 9:30 a.m. Mass every Sunday. Most of the time they can follow along with parishioners who hear because fellow parishioner Maureen Barry interprets the liturgy in sign language.

"With an interpreter, it's a wonderful blessing," Mary Jo said of the Mass.

Inclusiveness also means making more room for women in liturgical celebrations, according to Margaret Ostromecki, the parish's pastoral associate.

The 1993 Diocesan Synod made insuring the dignity of women in the church a diocesan priority, and Ostromecki pointed out that Queen of Peace is trying to fulfill that priority by using non-sexist language in its liturgies. The parish also encourages women to serve in various roles, including preaching, at its Masses, she said.

The parish's elderly population includes 100 people who live in area nursing homes, and Queen of Peace members make sure they are included in parish life as well. Staff members said the parish has 10 eucharistic ministers who take the Body of Christ to senior citizens living in such homes.

Speaking of home, it was in an attempt to get out of her home once a week that Esther Whelehan volunteered to do office work at the parish shortly after it was founded in 1960. Such a desire is especially understandable when she explains that she had 11 children — five of her own, and six stepchildren.

"I just worked by myself," Whelehan said. "It was therapy to be by myself and be able to think."

Eventually, the parish began paying her, and Whelehan became Queen of Peace's bookkeeper. She's seen the parish's population go through an initial growing period in the early 1960s. However, it then aged rapidly when Catholics did not move to the area in the numbers originally expected by the church's founders, according to a parish history.

But things have been turning around for Queen of Peace for quite some time now. Donna Greene, parish secretary, moved to the parish from Texas 12 years ago with her two sons and husband. She remembered walking into the church and hearing one of her sons remark: "They all look like my grandparents."

Yet, it turns out Greene and her family were the beginning of a wave of Catholics who have been moving into Brighton and joining Queen of Peace since the late 1980s, Father Hart said, a point echoed by the staff members.

"There's a lot of younger people in the parish now," Whelehan said. "It's an up-and-coming parish, I'd say."

Father Hart explained that the parish's population grew 10 percent in the last two years alone, and that he looks forward to a bright future for Queen of Peace. As it becomes a larger community, Queen of Peace will grow on the foundations laid by a smaller, yet highly dedicated, membership that preceded it, he said.

"Pretty much anything you want to involve them in, they're here," he said of his parishioners.

## SNAPSHOT

**Our Lady Queen of Peace**  
601 Edgewood Ave.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14618-4329  
Phone: 716/244-3010  
Founded: Sept. 14, 1960

### Ministerial staff:

Pastor: **Father Joseph A. Hart**  
Deacon: **Albert P. Bergeron**  
Senior pastoral associate:

**Sister Jacquelyn Reichart, RSM**  
Pastoral associate:

**Margaret Ostromecki**  
Religious education administrator:  
**Frank Henwood**

Youth minister: **Peter Wozny**  
Parish secretary: **Donna Greene**  
Religious education secretary:

**Beth Watkins**  
Parish bookkeeper: **Esther Whelehan**



### PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- All medications
- 24-hr. nursing service
- Full medical care & health maintenance
- Two delicious meals
- Modern apartments
- Housekeeping service
- Cable TV
- Social & recreational activities

## THE HERITAGE

*More than the comforts of home.*

At The Heritage, you'll enjoy living in a friendly, caring community of physicians, nurses, and friends. Plus a range of services, like our pharmacy, hair salon, country store, chapel with interfaith services, and recreation all under one roof! The Heritage offers many more comforts along with the freedom to plan your own days. So call (716) 342-1700 today for a tour and consultation. We'll be happy to explain how we can accommodate your schedule, financial situation, and the services you desire.

**\$94**

**A DAY**



1450 PORTLAND AVENUE, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14621  
(716) 342-1700 ext. 276 Eileen Ryan-Maruke  
Web Home Page • <http://www.stannsrochester.org>