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Catholic Courier

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Fo[illegible]volvement

[illegible] for a Feb. 10 vespers service at Church [illegible] in Fairport, they were greeted by 13-[illegible]

[illegible] 60 worshipers enjoyed the violin [illegible]de to Joy" by 10-year-old Amy Boyd.

The children's parents, Joy and Robert Boyd, led the people in prayer.

And at the end of the service, the participants clapped for the family.

"We were honored," Joy Boyd remarked. "It was a wonderful experience for us to do it as a family."

As for the people's reaction, she added, "They were just glad to see a family do it. It was something someone else could see themselves doing."

More people may be seeing themselves taking leading roles in church services in the future – if diocesan efforts bear fruit.

Indeed, in parishes throughout the diocese, lay people are being invited to take on increasing responsibility for ensuring their parishes' liturgical life.

The diocese has nurtured that movement: The diocesan liturgy office last fall produced its first "Training Manual for Parish Liturgy Ministers." The manual is designed to help parishes recruit and train lectors, eucharistic ministers, hospitality ministers and sacristans.

The manual also incorporates the liturgy office's 1996 document, "Gifted to Serve: Young People in Liturgical Ministry." The document promotes the acceptance of youths in such ministries as eucharistic ministers, lectors, greeters and musicians.

The diocese is also urging parishes to be more open to people with disabilities being active in such ministries.

Parishes submitted plans to the diocese in December for dealing with emergencies when priests are not available for Sunday services. The diocese has begun training lay presiders who will be able to conduct services in such situations.

Moreover, some parishes have already begun using lay presiders for weekday Communion services and paraliturgical services, such as the vespers at Church of the Resurrection.

In looking at these and other strands of eucharistic planning, training and outreach, Joan Workmaster, diocesan director of liturgy, commented, "For me, the tie in all of it is looking for all the different ways in which we assist parishes in fostering full, conscious and active participation in the Sunday Eucharist. How do we help parishes' liturgical ministries and involve as many people as possible in that celebration?"

Centrality of Eucharist

Although efforts to strengthen liturgical ministry have been going on for years in the diocese, Workmaster acknowledged that those efforts received an added push with Bishop Matthew H. Clark's 1996 pastoral letter on the Eucharist, "From East to West: A Perfect Offering." The document was distributed to Catholic households in the diocese in the Oct. 24, 1996, *Catholic Courier*, and many parishes held follow-up discussions of the pastoral.

In that letter, Bishop Clark urged reflection on "the place of Communion services," and the need to develop "alternative celebrations when a priest is not available," and to foster "leadership for alternative celebrations."

At the same time, though, he emphasized that "the reception of Communion can never replace the action of celebrating the Eucharist."

"I think that it's the touchstone, it's the centerpiece of everything that's come since the letter was issued," Work-

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