



Catholic Courier

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The year of the Holy Spirit



We turn to God as our Father, the Creator, the Omnipotent. We view Jesus as our savior who took on human form.

But how do we relate to, and connect with, the Holy Spirit — the third person in the Trinity, yet which is largely regarded as an invisible force?

To find and embrace the Holy Spirit, Father William Laird suggested, we should take a look within ourselves as well as the world around us.

"The Holy Spirit is God's realized presence in my life and the circumstances in my life," said Father Laird, administrator of St. Vincent DePaul Church in Churchville. "The Spirit makes it possible for us to express our faith — to view the world, live in the world and act in the world in a way that God doesn't."

A diocesan parishioner, Betty Bunce, said she felt the Spirit's comfort when she was treated for a lump on her breast. Although she had been very worried, she said that she suddenly felt a sense of calmness while sitting in the doctor's office.

"I know it wasn't something human that came over me. I just know that the Lord was with me in spirit; that the peace was a gift from God," said Bunce, a parishioner in Rochester's Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward. Bunce added that her lump turned out to be benign.

Although he said he experienced no outward signs, Bob Cirre was sure the Holy Spirit moved

through

him at one point a few years ago. He recalled, while pointing at his chest, that he "acknowledged Jesus Christ not from the head, but from here."

"Accepting him and being baptized in the Holy Spirit, and then asking that same spirit of Christ to guide me — it was a whole new relationship," remarked Cirre, from St. Charles Borromeo Church in Greece.

Bunce and Cirre are part of many local efforts to promote the Holy Spirit in 1998. They are members of the diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal liaison team that is planning to attend the Upstate New York Convention in the Holy Spirit, to be held Oct. 16-18 in Syracuse.

The conference is one of many ways that diocesan Catholics are following Pope John Paul II's wishes to ponder the Holy Spirit's presence in their lives this calendar year, part of a three-year phase leading up to the millennium.

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Story by Mike Latona

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