

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Sister Therese Richardson, RSM, a staff member of the Mercy Prayer Center, has a little advice for young adults dealing with difficult changes — be grateful.

Every day, Sister Richardson said, it's a good idea to take some time and reflect on what happened for which you are most grateful. It also may be helpful to reflect on that for which you are least grateful, she added. Continually reflecting on what God has done for you can help you weather such changes as job losses, family deaths and residential moves, she noted.

"The question of faith comes when things fall apart in our lives," she said. "I think our capacity for change is enhanced when we allow God in."

Sister Richardson shared her insights during a May 19 presentation, "The Challenges of Being a Young Adult," put on by Odyssey, the diocesan-sponsored young adults network. The presentation took place at McGinnity's Restaurant & Party House, 534 W. Ridge Road.

Life is filled with change, Sister Richardson explained, pointing to how the turning of the seasons represents how people can learn to accept change.

"We've got to decide whether to let go of the old life ... and allow a new one to be born," she said.

She stressed that improving one's life takes a number of small steps, and used the example of a woman who spent decades slowly planting flowers after flower in her garden. After a number of years, the beautiful garden was huge, and attracted admirers and visitors, she noted, all of whom were amazed by the seemingly monumental effort it took to create



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Micaela Gutierrez, a planning committee member of Odyssey, the diocesan-sponsored young adult network, listens to Sister Therese Richardson, RSM, during her May 19 talk.

the natural wonder.

Sister Richardson's presentation drew a handful of young women she counseled to cultivate faith through regular prayer and talking with God. But modern society's many distractions often work against such reflection, she noted, so young adults need to deliberately carve out time during each day to reflect on their lives. She added that it was also important to nurture hope, since it is often all that sustains a person through a crisis.

"Hope is a conviction that God will always be with us when (a crisis) happens," she noted.

Women present shared various stories of changes they had faced in their lives. One participant, Ellen Hughes, said faith was an important part of the way she approached changes.

"Faith is the only constant," she said. "It's during times of crisis that I cling to it. I need that grounding pull."

Upcoming events

Father James Schwartz, pastor of St. Louis Church in Pittsford, will address "The Spirituality of Everyday Living" at the Last Friday Luncheon on Friday, May 29, from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Genesee Valley Club, 421 East Ave., Rochester. Sponsored by the Catholic Leadership Forum, admission is \$12. Call Nancy Nash at 716/328-3228, ext. 278.

• Between eight and 10 people are needed to work at Blessed Sacrament soup kitchen at 534 Oxford St., Rochester, on Tuesday, June 2. People are needed to work in two shifts: 4-6 p.m. cooking, and 6-8:30 p.m. serving and cleaning up. Contact Tracy McCabe at 716/473-5328, or Cathy Daniels at 477-8716.

• Diocesan Catholics in their 20s and 30s are invited to "Crossroads Retreat Day" at Gorham Lodge, Onanda Park, Canandaigua, on Saturday, June 6, from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Retreat participants will explore how they can recognize God working in their lives, and how they can make good decisions.

Cost is \$15 per person and includes breakfast and lunch. People with surnames that begin with the letters A to N are asked to bring a dish to pass for dinner, and O to Z, to bring a dessert or snack item to share. Participants may stay overnight, but if they do, they are asked to bring a breakfast item to share.

• Odyssey will hold its second annual

picnic and Mass at Hopkins Point Lodge in Mendon Ponds Park outside Rochester on Saturday, June 13, at 1 p.m. Activities include volleyball, hiking, softball, board games, a late afternoon Mass, followed by a dinner. Cost is \$5, and includes meat, rolls and cabin rental. Bring a beverage or snack to pass. Registration deadline is Monday, June 8.

• "Walking On Water," a diocesan-sponsored convention for Catholics between the ages of 18 and 22, will take place at Letchworth Dining Hall on Saturday, Aug. 8. Workshops and small group discussions will focus on such issues as making good choices; building relationships; where the church stands on various issues; and balancing the demands one's life makes.

The convention will also feature a keynote speech by Bruce Deaton, a contemporary Christian musician, storyteller, dramatist and humorist.

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. Convention participants will attend a 4:30 p.m. Mass with participants at a diocesan youth convention taking place the same day at Geneseo. The convention will end with a 6 p.m. pizza dinner.

Cost is \$15 per person, and includes lunch and dinner. Registration deadline is July 31. Convention organizers are looking for people to sing in the choir for the Mass and who can make at least two of the three rehearsals slated for July 16, July 23 and July 30, all from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at St. Joseph's Church, 43 Gebhardt Road, Penfield.

For information on the Crossroads retreat, the picnic, or the Walking on Water convention, call Karen Rinefield at 716/328-3228, ext. 255, or 1-800-388-7177, ext. 255, or e-mail her at krinefield@dor.org.

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For Information, Call 224-5620