

St. Anne Parish presents tradition in 'grand style'

Parish Profile St. Anne, Rochester



By Kathleen Schwar
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Every Sunday morning when John Weinmann and his family drive in from Honeoye Falls for Mass at St. Anne Church, they pass three Catholic churches.

Still, St. Anne is their church of choice, Weinmann said.

"It's a comfort, and Father (Frank Lioi) lets you get as involved as you want," he remarked.

"He can't improve on it," said Loretta Toolan, also referring to the pastor.

Weinmann, an active Knight of Columbus, has been chairing the parish's pastoral planning for the new millennium. In a self-assessment for the process, St. Anne parishioners affirmed, in part, that they consider the parish distinctive for its formal style of worship and classical church music.

"It has a very reverent atmosphere," said Toolan, who has been at St. Anne more than 30 years.

Father Lioi explained that Mass commonly features processions and incense. The liturgy tends to be formal and the choir is vested.

The parish is also traditional in sponsoring a novena to St. Anne every July 17-25, ever since 1930. People from throughout Monroe County are drawn to the novena, "one of the oldest and most revered traditions" in the parish, according to a St. Anne's history.

Feasts of Christ the King and Corpus Christi feature solemn vespers services and Benedictions. "They are done in the grand style," Father Lioi said.

The parish assessment also affirmed St. Anne is a force of stability in its southeast Rochester neighborhood, and attracts people from a variety of professional and ethnic backgrounds.

In fact, the congregation commonly includes individuals from Asia, Europe, South America, Africa and the Pacific Islands.

Meanwhile, about 25 Koreans attend a Korean Mass begun last fall at St. Anne. Father Dominic Jung of Buffalo offers the Mass at 6 p.m. the first Sunday of every month.

In light of the usual ethnic mix at most Masses, the parish provides eight-language missalette in the pews for churchgoers.

"We don't find many of them using it," Father Lioi commented, "but at least it



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Brian Buerke practices with other members of the St. Anne Choir May 13.

shows them they are welcome, that we know there's a diverse congregation there."

Surrounding the church — and helping to contribute to its ethnic diversity — are Strong Memorial Hospital, the University of Rochester, Monroe Community College, Monroe Community Hospital, Monroe Developmental Center, the Al Sigi Center and Rochester Institute of Technology.

Despite the mobility of some of those institutions' students and employees, St. Anne's sees increasing stability among its parishioners.

"This is the first year 12 of our 13 Communion class children were baptized here," said Alice Leistman, director of religious education. She reported that documents for only one had to be sent back to another church, in Slovakia, to be recorded in a home parish.

"Usually we send out about half of the class (documents)," she said. "Now, a good number of confirmands were baptized here too."

The parish was created in 1930, separated from St. Boniface Parish on Gregory Street. The new parish's wood frame church was dedicated Feb. 9, 1930.

"I recollect coming down with my dad to put nameplates on the pews the night before the church was dedicated by the bishop," said Bob Radell, a member since the church was started. He and his wife Virginia were married there 50 years ago, and were blessed at St. Anne's altar last month. His family's farm is where Monroe Community College is today.

In 1959 St. Anne's frame church was dismantled and moved to Greece for the

first St. Lawrence Church. The current St. Anne's church, a yellow-brick building that could seat 800 people, was built in 1958-59.

In early 1993, the interior of the new church was renovated. At that time the parish installed a 42-rank pipe organ.

Word got out about how good the acoustics now sounded, Father Lioi said, and a number of music groups such as Musica Spei and Air de Cour began to perform as well as practice in the church. Collegium Caecilianum also performs there.

"We encourage and support them," Father Lioi said. The church has sponsored free concerts assisted by grants issued through the church to the performers. Musica Spei, which performs Renaissance a cappella works, will perform a benefit concert at 8 p.m. June 4 at the church.

"We basically promote art and music here at St. Anne because they give us insights into God," he added.

The church also has been noted for its theater presentations since the time of Father George Schmitt, pastor from 1930 to 1950, who himself had been involved in theater as assistant pastor at St. Boniface. The two parishes combined their theatrical talents for some time.

Today a group known as the Footlight Players, who include a few St. Anne parishioners, perform twice a year in the old St. Anne's School.

St. Anne parishioners regularly reach out to parishioners who can't make it to the church. They visit several nursing homes, and take Communion to people in their homes at least once a month. Additionally, Mass and Communion services are provided in some nursing homes.

"We have a pretty good outreach to the aging who can't be part of us," Leistman said.

Younger parishioners are stepping up their service projects. The youth ministry prepares a spaghetti supper for Ronald McDonald House guests every year, for example, and has also served meals at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, both in Rochester.

"I think by continuing to do it and continuing to want to do it, we show other people it can be fun, and just because it is for church doesn't mean it's boring or whatever," said Megan McGarvey, an 11th-grader at Rochester's School of the Arts. She serves as a lector as well and is youth group representative to the church's Christian formation commission.

"I find personally church gives me a strong basis for life," she said, adding that her younger sister Melissa accompanies her in "almost everything" she does.

The parish employs eighth-graders in teaching 4-year-olds and sophomores in teaching kindergartners, according to Leistman.

"I think it's a good witness," she said. "It helps the younger kids see the older kids are still involved, and gives the older kids a point of involvement in parish life."

In addition, little children may serve as ushers. John and Kathleen Weinmann's children, John, 7, and Colleen, 5, usher at the 8 a.m. Sunday Mass and have been passing the basket for some time now.

"I took the collection up and the kids would be following me up," John said. So he asked Father Lioi if the children could be ushers.

"I thought it would bother him but he said, 'No, do it. People love seeing the kids.'"

SNAPSHOT

St. Anne Church
1600 Mt. Hope Ave.
Rochester, NY 14620-4598
Phone: 716/271-3260
Registered households: 800
Ministerial Staff:
Pastor: Father Frank E. Lioi
Pastoral associate:

Sister Roberta Rodenhouse,
RSM

Director of religious education:
Alice L. Leistman

Assisting priest:

Father Joseph M. Sasso

Assisting deacon:

Deacon Gregory R. Sampson

Korean ministry:

Father Dominic Jung, CPpS

Organist: Brink Bush

Choirmaster: Thomas G. Donohue

Cantor: Colleen Liggett

Parish office: Carol E. Smith

Hanging Baskets, House Plants, Concrete & Wooden Ornaments



Large Selection of
Spring and Summer Planting

SHRINES & STATUES

Many statues in stock including
The Blessed Mother, Christ,
Sacred Heart, St. Jude, St. Francis,
St. Joseph, St. Anthony
and Infant of Prague.

Statues of other saints may be
special ordered.

HILLTOP MARKET

1506 EMPIRE BLVD. • WEBSTER, NY 14580 (716) 671-1967

Severe to Profound Hearing Loss?

Rochester, NY— Recently, Nu Ear Electronics of San Diego released the most powerful, cleanest sounding behind the ear hearing aid yet developed. Cros-Differential Output Drive Amplification offers more useable gain and output before feedback whistle.

The A-675 TSP puts out more power than many "body" aids.

Telephone coil sensitivity is up to 130+dB, giving F.M. system users even better access to the world of sound. Bottom line is this.

Actual measured gain and output is up 3-5 dB from the best power aids previously available and useable gain can add as much as 10 dB or more to what you actually hear.

**CRANDALL HEARING INSTRUMENTS AT 1577 RIDGE RD. W
HAS A LIMITED NUMBER OF THESE UNITS AVAILABLE
FOR LIVE DEMONSTRATIONS.**

If you wear very high output behind the ear hearing aids, and would like to to see if your hearing can be improved, an appointment is just a phone call away at

865-4311 or 800-421-1012

Pinnacle Technology also available for moderate to serious hearing loss.
Bring your present hearing instruments in for sound comparison.