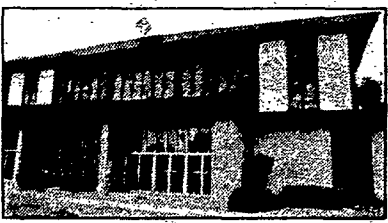


PARISH PROFILE

Energetic parish offers complete menu of ministries



Parish Profile
St. Charles Borromeo,
Greece

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

GREECE — At 2,500 families, St. Charles Borromeo is among the larger parishes in the Rochester Diocese.

However, Father Edward L. Palumbos emphasized, being big doesn't mean having to forsake the personal touch.

"I think you have to create an environment of trust — little things, like returning a phone call as soon as possible. You also share your personal experience," Father Palumbos remarked.

"People know they're going to be listened to here," said parishioner Patricia Scouten.

Father Palumbos said that there are many qualified people at St. Charles Borromeo to do the listening. The priest, who has served as pastor since 1992, said he views his role as a delegator, rather than an iron-fisted leader.

"Leadership does not have to be just the ordained, or the women religious," Father Palumbos stated.

The team approach, Pat Fender-Robinson asserted, has allowed St. Charles parishioners to maximize their gifts and talents.

"We feel the call to be a leader in our parish community. We're all asked to do what we can, in a variety of ways," Fender-Robinson, an active church member, said. "There's no contribution that isn't valued."

The end result? An abundance of ministries.

"If you can't find anything to do here, you're not opening your eyes," Dave Burton, another parishioner, commented.

To wit: Fender-Robinson serves as a lector and greeter at St. Charles, and is also a member of the liturgy reflection and small Christian community programs. Meanwhile, Burton is a eucharistic minister and is involved in parish pastoral council, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and baptismal preparation.

Sister Sue Hoffman, SSJ, pastoral associate, said that opportunities extend to St. Charles parishioners of all ages. For example, youths are encouraged to take part in such liturgical roles as lectors, eucharistic ministers, greeters and liturgical



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Liturgical dancers Meredith Plankenhorn, 16, right, and Marci Malone, 17, approach the altar during Mass at St. Charles Borromeo, Greece, May 31.



Liturgical dancers, Maggie Morgan, 12, left, and Jillian DiPonzio, 12, carry gifts to the altar May 31.

dancers.

And this past Holy Thursday, the foot-washing ceremony included parishioners ranging from "children to senior citizen," Sister Hoffman said.

"There's something here for everyone, regardless of your age," remarked Scouten, who also serves as administrator of the Borromeo Prayer Center, which is located at St. Charles. The prayer center is the largest parish-based retreat facility in the diocese.

Sister Miriam Nugent, RSM, pastoral

associate, added that St. Charles is always on the lookout for new approaches to ministry. She noted that the summer religious education program, which is concentrated into a two-week block, has been received enthusiastically since its inception in 1996.

"Kids were not responding

to coming weekly," Sister Nugent said.

This spirit of innovation is a long-standing trademark at St. Charles. In the early 1970s, Father Palumbos said, St. Charles became one of the first diocesan parishes to employ female preachers.

Fender-Robinson explained that this call to lay involvement grew out of the Second Vatican Council.

"We're not changing the faith," she said. "The actual practice we (adults) learned as children hasn't changed. We want to help people bridge the pre- and

SNAPSHOT

St. Charles Borromeo Church

3003 Dewey Ave.

Rochester, N.Y. 14616

Phone: 716/663-3230

Registered households: 2,490

Ministerial staff:

Pastor:

Father Edward L. Palumbos

Parochial vicar:

Father Francis E. Blighton

Priest intern:

Father Douglas D. DellaPietra

In residence:

Father Elmer W. Heindl

Pastoral associate:

Sister Miriam Nugent, RSM

Pastoral associate:

Sister Sue Hoffman, SSJ

Parish deacon:

Deacon Leo Aman

Parish secretary:

Donna Bellanca

Parish business manager:

Sharon Quattrociocchi

Youth minister:

Gail Vail

Christian formation administrator:

Margaret Gray

Christian formation secretary:

Janet Brawn

Music ministers: Sheila Bianchi,

Jim and Carol DeYaeger, Marcia

Sheremeta, Ralph Zecchino

Borromeo Prayer Center adminis-

trator: Patricia Scouten

Parish pastoral council chair:

Tom Gurak

St. Charles School principal:

Mary Barrese-Frame

post-Vatican II (church)."

According to parishioner Betty Cilano, the flurry of activity that pulsates through St. Charles is accompanied by a deep sense of caring. Five years ago, she recalled, she was overwhelmed by support from parishioners while her husband was recovering from surgery.

"People who I didn't even know were showing up at my house with meals. I never had to cook," Cilano said. "If there's a need (at the parish), then look out — because there's a stampede of help coming."

Don't expect St. Charles to back off any time soon, either, from its ongoing push to grow its parish community. Father Palumbos said that St. Charles will target evangelization as a top priority when it begins its Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium process this summer.

"We have 12,000 people in the 14616 zip code (where St. Charles is located) and statistically, 40 percent of them would be Catholic. So that's up to 5,000 people we can reach," Father Palumbos said.

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