

# MOV on the



The smiles remained in Terry Kohl's memory long after she helped bring Thanksgiving dinner to a family in need.

"Their whole faces lit up and they said, 'Wow, all this stuff is for us!'" recalled Terry, 16, a parishioner at Church of the Assumption in Fairport. "I wish I had a camera; it made me so happy. I like to help, and I love the reactions."

Terry said that she, and up to 30 relatives, annually adopt a family for Thanksgiving through Dimitri House, an outreach of Corpus Christi Church in Rochester.

"We all collect money — from work, friends, everywhere," Terry said.

Terry also visits the families, who reside in Rochester's inner city, at least once prior to delivering the meals at Thanksgiving time. "We like to get to know them,



she explained.

In addition to a turkey dinner, Terry noted, she and her relatives also deliver such items as 50-pound sacks of potatoes.

"They're things that'll last them awhile. Thanksgiving is only one day, one meal," she explained.

Terry, who has taken part in these projects for the past five years, said her family is hard at work preparing a delivery to another family later this month. She is just one of many diocesan teens who are taking on Thanksgiving-related service projects through their family, parish or school.

In Apalachin, the junior-high youth group from St. Margaret Mary Church is in the midst of its second annual coat drive. The 1997 drive netted hundreds of used coats in good condition, which were then taken to the Open Door Mission in Owego.

Peter Morrison, 13, said that when he helped deliver the coats last year, he got to tour the Open Door Mission and visit with its residents.

"We talked to them; they were pretty nice. They were people who didn't really have a family, or they got fired from work and couldn't pay for their home or car. (The mission) takes care of them until they can get back on their feet," said Peter, who added that he plans to return to the mission later this month.

Coats can be donated by dropping them off at St. Margaret Mary Church as well as the Apalachin Public Library, where Peter's mother, Gail, is director.

Sue White, a St. Margaret Mary youth minister, noted that the coat drive has grown this year to include St. Patrick's Church in Owego as well as three Methodist churches in the Apalachin area.

Extensive service efforts are also being made at Elmira Notre Dame High School, where a large percentage of the student body is taking part in Thanksgiving fundraising, according to Trish



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Story by Mike Latona  
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LaFortune, the school's campus minister.

For instance, Nora Hurley, a senior and National Honor Society vice-president, coordinated a Halloween masquerade ball at Notre Dame that collected \$725.

"We had a lot of fun bobbing for apples," reported Nora, 17, a parishioner at Church of St. Mary Our Mother in Horseheads.

Lindsey Freeman, sophomore class president, oversaw a fundraiser where students could win prizes if they plucked a lucky lollipop from a display in the school cafeteria. The prizes, she said, included tickets to school sporting events and free meals from the cafeteria.

Lindsey reported that all 800 lollipops, at 25 cents each, were sold in less than a week's time.

"We never expected we'd sell out so fast. It was amazing," said Lindsey, 15, from Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Elmira.

Katie Hillyard, a junior who is co-chairing the Thanksgiving mission drive, explained that funds raised will benefit poor children in India.

"It sends a message: Show your thanks by giving to others," said Katie, 16, from St. Ann's Church in Bentley Creek, Pa.

Volunteers receive messages, as well, by taking part in these projects. Terry, who resides in the village of Fairport, said she got a much greater awareness of poverty by visiting the inner city.

"We don't have a whole lot of exposure to that where we live. But when I went to see these people, there would be five or six kids, and grandparents, in this one little apartment," Terry remarked.

Amber Candela, from Church of the Assumption, said that her eyes were similarly opened when she took part in a Thanksgiving service project three years ago with Minerva DeLand School in Fairport. That effort, also, involved preparing a Thanksgiving dinner and delivering it to a family in the inner city.

"I was never really aware of what went on outside of Fairport. I totally took Thanksgiving dinner for granted," said Amber, 17.

Amber added that her experience has motivated her to get involved with other service activities. For instance, she adopts people through "Christmas giving trees" at Perinton Square Mall and her mother's church, Mountain Rise United Church of Christ in Fairport.

Amber said that even if you have an awareness of poverty through the media, it's not the same as seeing it up close with your own eyes.

"I don't think it's possible to understand unless you go there. You're actually interacting with these people and you see how thankful they are," Amber said.

And Peter, when asked what he learned by visiting the Open Door Mission, paused and said, "Just that life's tough."

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