

# a Young

## Lent means to give up, give back something

By Rob Cullivan • Staff writer

It was only two days into Lent, and Jennifer L. Curatolo was already giving in to temptation.

"What I'm giving up is chocolate," said Curatolo, 20, a parishioner at St. John the Evangelist Church, Spencerport. "Unfortunately, I'm already breaking (my fast)."

Curatolo then noted she works in a bakery, a veritable culinary den of iniquity. She said she spends her days surrounded by cakes, cakes luridly arrayed in various formations of chocolate. It was here, she said — the morning of Feb. 18 — that she broke her vow by eating some chocolate flakes.

"The hardest thing working in a bakery," she said, "(Chocolate) is the hardest thing to give up."

Curatolo was one of a handful of young adult Catholics who spoke to the *Catholic Courier* about what they were doing for Lent. Mike L. Pacelli, a parishioner at St. Francis of Assisi Church, is also giving up one of his favorite things — coffee. It's a big deal for the Cayuga Community Center biology teacher.

"Coffee gives me a little zip in the morning," he said of coffee. "In exchange for the 'zip' he's losing, he hopes his sacrifice will make him a stronger person not only physically, mentally and spiritually, but well," he said of Lenten sacrifice.

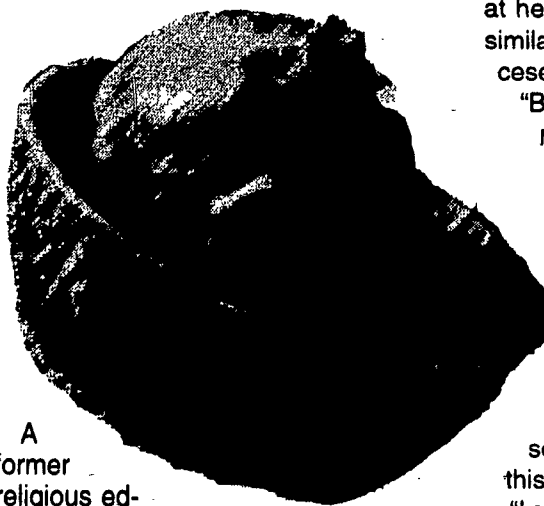
That's the hope of Becky Ryan, 26, who attends Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Elmira. Ss. Peter and Paul is one of the churches that make up Eastside Catholic Parish, a cluster also including St. Cecilia and St. John the Baptist parishes.

Ryan said she's giving greasy foods and sugar-heavy foods a rest during Lent. A desire for better health drove her to her decision, she said.

"I was feeling drawn out and worn down," she said. "I feel like I'm dragging all the time. With more energy, I'll feel like getting more involved in church functions than I have."

Ryan noted her weekly Mass attendance had slacked off in recent years, but that she has recently recommitted to attending Mass regularly.

"I felt there was something missing," she said of skipping Mass.



A former religious education teacher at Ss. Peter and Paul, Ryan said she wants to get involved with catechizing youth again.

"I learned a lot from the kids and, in turn, they learned a lot from me, which was really cool," she recalled of her former days working with young people.

To these young adults, Lent not only means fasting, it also means focusing — on prayer, on Scripture and on others. For example, Curatolo planned to coordinate a retreat for junior high youth

at her parish for Feb. 26-27, and a similar retreat on behalf of the diocese in April.

"By doing that, I feel stronger in my faith," she said. "It's like an uplifting way of going through Lent, a positive way of imitating how God gives up his life for us."

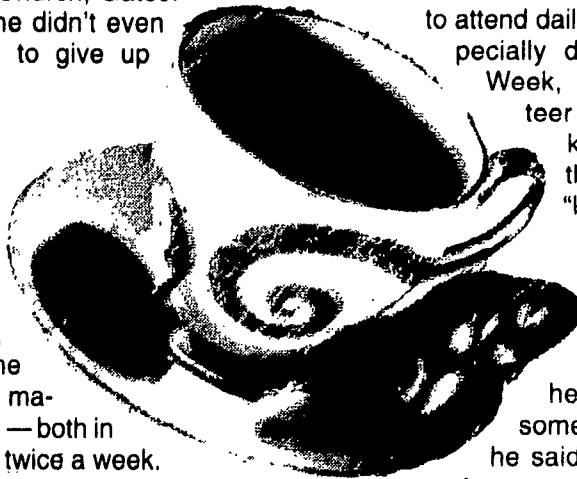
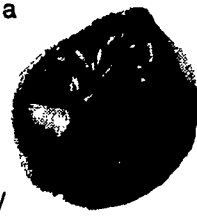
Her attitude was shared by Louis Reale, 36, a parishioner at St. Theodore's Church, Gates.

Reale said he didn't even bother trying to give up something this Lent.

"I sort of have a hard time giving things up because I'm so inconsistent," he said.

Instead of giving something up, Reale said he planned to visit his maternal grandparents — both in their 90s — at least twice a week.

"They seemed to be pretty much a gift in my life that I haven't really been reflecting on or appreciating," he said.



Mark A. Trovato, a 30-year-old parishioner at Christ the King Church, Irondequoit, also planned on doing something positive for Lent. Trovato noted that he and his fiancée, Lori Dolan, are co-hosting a discussion series on the movie "Jesus of Nazareth" at Good Shepherd School in Henrietta during Lent (see events calendar).

Trovato added that he hopes to attend daily Mass, especially during Holy Week, and volunteer at a soup kitchen in the diocese. "I'm trying to focus on what I can do in my own life, and in helping out someone else," he said of Lent. "I focus on giving back rather than giving up."

### Young Adult Events

Unless otherwise indicated, for information on these upcoming events, call the hotline for Odyssey, the diocesan-sponsored young adults network, at 716/328-3228 or 1-800-388-7177, ext. 375.

● **Monday, March 1:** Odyssey is hosting a discussion series on the film "Jesus of Nazareth" from 7 to 9 p.m. in Room 109 of Good Shepherd School, 3288 E. Henrietta Road, Henrietta. Subsequent discussions will take place on the Sundays of March 7, 14, 21 and 28 from 2 to 4 p.m. in the school library.

● **Saturday, March 6:** Cross-country ski outing at Mendon Ponds Park, Mendon. A group will meet in the coffee shop at Barnes & Noble Booksellers in Pittsford Plaza, 3349 Monroe Ave., between 9 and 9:30 a.m.

● **Tuesday, March 9:** Between 10 and 15 young adults are needed to help out at the supper program at Blessed Sacrament Church, 534 Oxford St., Rochester, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

● **Wednesday, March 10:** St. Bernard's Institute's "On The Road" series presents "Searching For God" in the auditorium of Corpus Christi School at Blessed Sacrament, 546 Oxford St., Rochester, at 7:15 p.m.

● **Saturday, March 13:** Skating in the Ice Arena at Rochester Institute of Technology, 51 Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, 2:30-4:30 p.m. Admission: \$5, includes skate rental. Dinner at 5 p.m. in the Old Country Buffet in nearby Southtown Plaza.

● **Tuesday, March 16:** Blessed Sacrament Church, Rochester, hosts its monthly "Spiritual Tuesday" discussion at 7 p.m. Topic: Lenten reflection.

● **Thursday, March 25:** Dinner at the Distillery Restaurant, 1142 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester, at 7 p.m.

● The Diocese of Syracuse will present a workshop titled "Our Church: Becoming Responsive to Young Adults" on Wednesday, April 14, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Club Hotel by Doubletree, 6701 Buckley Road, North Syracuse. The workshop features Father Ron Bagley, CJM, and Joan Weber of the Center for Ministry Development, and is for anyone who works with — or who is interested in working with — young adults. Admission fees vary from \$20 to \$25.

For information, call the religious education office in Syracuse at 315/470-1431 or the Department of Evangelization & Catechesis in Rochester at 716/328-3210.

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All are invited to celebrate with St. Michael's Community its 125 years of Christian presence and service to the people of the North Clinton area of Rochester.

More information: (716) 325-4040