

a Young Adult

Parish volunteer gets from giving

By Rob Cullivan • Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Mike P. Kristan, 34, used to listen to motivational tapes to learn how to make more money as an electronic equipment salesman. On one such tape five years ago, he heard a discussion of the value of prayer.

"It was kind of short compared to rest of the tape," Kristan said. "But it was enough for God to speak to me."

Kristan was financially strapped at the time and continually worried about how he would support his wife and their two small children. But when he began to turn his worries over to the Lord, he found a new purpose in life, he said.

"I became a eucharistic minister," said the parishioner at St. Mary's Church in Canandaigua. "I needed to get more involved in church, to get closer to God."

Kristan spoke about his spiritual experiences with the *Catholic Courier* at Simplex Time Recorder, Inc., in Rochester, his current employer. A native of Penfield and a graduate of McQuaid Jesuit High School, Kristan is a service sales representative with the company.

After becoming a eucharistic minister, Kristan began expanding his faith activities, taking the Eucharist, for example, to nursing home residents. Kristan said he's now keen on encouraging other adults in their 20s and 30s to follow his example.

"This is going to be you in the not-too-distant future," he said of the elderly people he sees. "Who would you like to visit you in the nursing home?"

Kristan also became a volunteer in his parish's youth ministry program, and helps staff retreats and run youth group meetings and events. He said he tries to speak with teens as if he was their older, more experienced, brother, helping them to navigate the pitfalls of adolescence.

"Teens hate to be treated like children," he said. "You need to

treat the teen like an equal, a peer."

Kristan even includes some of his teens on his eucharistic visits to the elderly. Apparently, Kristan's approach has paid off, according to one such teen, Shauna Bailey, 16, one of the teen group's three co-chairpersons. Bailey, a junior at

Canandaigua Academy, said many of her friends in the group want to be like Mike when they grow up.

"He's not like a stiff adult that you might associate with a church meeting," Bailey said of Kristan. "He's just like a kid, so he can really relate to all the kids in the youth group. With his strong faith, he's like a great role model for all the kids."

Kristan emphasized that he also wished more young adults would be willing to share their talents with the church as he has.

"God says we are the church," Kristan commented. "It's our church ... We are called to become doers of our faith." Nonetheless, he said, young adults, in particular, are often reluctant to assume responsibility for the church's life. Yet, it can be as simple as asking a pastor or parish leader what kind of help is needed in a faith community, he explained.

"People are almost afraid to ask: 'Can we utilize this facility? Can I and a few of my friends get together and form this group?'"

He added that many young adults use lack of time or job demands as an excuse not to get involved with church. It's true, he said, that modern society makes undue demands on many young

working people. But even he wastes time, he said, watching TV or doing other things. If you want a vibrant faith life, you must deliberately set aside time for it, he noted. "In giving you get," he concluded. "You get a good feeling. You feel better about yourself. You feel better about the fact that you're doing what God is asking you to do."



St. Mary's Church, Canandaigua, parishioner Mike Kristan visits with Bob Judge, an Elm Manor Nursing Home, Canandaigua, resident, March 21. Kristan visits the home every three weeks as a eucharistic minister.

Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Young Adult Events

Unless otherwise indicated, for information on these events, call Odyssey, the diocesan-sponsored young adults network, at 716/328-3228, ext. 375.

• **Friday, April 2: Living Stations of the Cross** at Good Shepherd Church, 3318 E. Henrietta Road, Henrietta, 7:30-9:30 p.m. The parish's youth ministry members will present a modern-day interpretation of the Passion. Odyssey members will meet in the back of the church, and attend as a group.

• **Friday, April 9: Crossroads Coffeehouse and Open Mike Night** at 8 p.m. in the Dugan Center, St. Mary's Church, 15 St. Mary's Place, Rochester. Admission: \$2.



Free parking in the Bausch & Lomb, Inc., parking garage across from the church. Musicians can sign up for performance time slots. Bring

your own mug for free coffee and tea.

• **Saturday, April 10: Laser tag** in Party Room A of Laser Quest Rochester, Ridgemont Plaza, 2833 W. Ridge Road, 2-4 p.m. \$12 per person covers three 30-minute games. Space is limited, and reservations are needed. A joint event with Quest, the Diocese of Buffalo's young adult group.

• **Saturday, April 17: Crossroads: Game Night** at Blessed



Sacrament Church rectory, 259 Rutgers St., Rochester, at 7 p.m. Bring your favorite game.

Info: Chris at 716/271-7240.

• **Tuesday, April 20: Volunteers** needed for supper program at Blessed Sacrament Church, 534 Oxford St., Rochester, 6-8:30 p.m. Duties range from meal preparation to clean-up.

• **Tuesday, April 27: Discussion** on "Creation" at Blessed Sacrament Church, 534 Oxford St., Rochester, 7 p.m. Info: Chris at 716/271-7240.

"Comedy of Errors"

Aquila Theatre Company of London

Saturday, April 10
8:00 p.m.

Tickets \$25.00

One of Shakespeare's most vibrant and sparkling comedies will be staged by this critically acclaimed company in a unique rendition the *London Times* hailed as "hugely enjoyable and very, very funny."

Box Office: (716) 389-2170 • Groups: (716) 424-2979



Nazareth College
Arts Center

The Callahan Theater, 4245 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14618-3790



"The Odyssey"

Aquila Theatre Company of London

Friday, April 9
8:00 p.m.

Tickets \$25.00

This award-winning British theatre company brings to vivid life Homer's story of one man against the elements with original live music, stunning acting and innovative staging.

Box Office: (716) 389-2170
Groups: (716) 424-2979



Nazareth College
Arts Center

The Callahan Theater, 4245 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14618-3790

