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# Catholic Courier

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## delegated **lay** **PRESIDERS**



Barbara Ivers had trained to serve as a lay presider for a major service in an emergency situation. But her first opportunity to do so came long before she ever anticipated.

The religious education coordinator of Holy Cross Parish, Dryden, was getting ready Dec. 8 for the 9 a.m. Mass for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. At 8:40 a.m. she received a call from her pastor, Father John Hayes.

"He had set up for Mass and something came over him and he knew he could not do the Mass," she said. He asked her to preside.

Ivers had only just completed diocesan training as a lay presider a few weeks earlier. She had just received *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, a book put out by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops that details the rituals lay presiders are to use.

"I said, 'Well, I won't have to use this for a while,'" she recalled thinking.

After Father Hayes' call, she grabbed the book and headed to the church. Once there, she explained to the people who had gathered for the Holy Day of Obligation Mass what had happened. They patiently waited an extra 10 minutes as she got ready, marking the pages in the book she would need to use, perusing the readings for the day and forming a sermon.

"I prayed a lot for the Holy Spirit to be with me," Ivers said.

After the...  
came...

STORY BY LEE STRONG • PHOTO BY GREG BENENATI