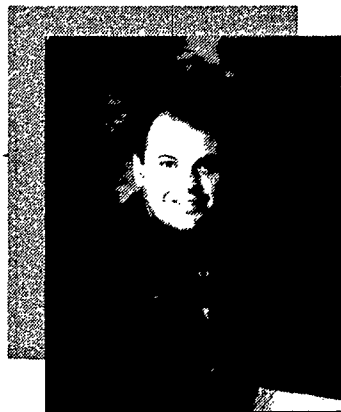


# a Young Adult

## Performer's characters present life challenges



By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

Preaching the Gospel takes character, according to Doug Brummel, a lay Catholic comedian, musician and catechist from Littleton, Colo.

Three characters, as a matter of fact.

One of Brummel's catechetical techniques is to perform as a young boy, a 40-year-old man, and an elderly grandfather who share their feelings on life, faith and decision making with audiences.

Brummel, 35, is a former youth minister who travels the country presenting multi-generational workshops at church conferences, as well as at parish missions.

Brummel encourages his audience members to "talk" with his characters. He said that makes it more enjoyable for spectators to learn about their values than if they were listening to a formal lecture on faith.

"What the audience does is lower their defenses because it's make-believe, it's not reality," Brummel said during a phone interview from his Littleton home. "It's not someone teaching at them, but they can get something out of it. It's kind of a magical time. What I've found is if the audience goes along for the ride ... the Holy Spirit works very powerfully."

Brummel will share his characters with youth and young adult participants at "Winds of Change - Youth Convention '99," slated for Aug. 6-8 at the State University of New York College at Geneseo. Saturday, Aug. 7 is Young Adult Day at the convention, and will feature workshops and other presentations targeting Catholics ages 18 to 22.

The convention is sponsored by the Diocese of Rochester's Department of Evangelization and Catechesis. The convention will also feature Bishop Matthew H. Clark and the Christian folk rock



Doug Brummel plays a host of characters in his performances.

group Scarecrow & Tinmen. For information, call Michael Theisen at 716/328-3210, or 1-800-388-7177.

Brummel said each of his characters weaves comments about values and faith into sometimes humorous, sometimes poignant biographical accounts. For example, his 40-year-old character "Rob" is reconciling with God and the church after realizing he spent his young adult years indulging in certain excesses.

"He's not real specific," Brummel says of Rob. "He doesn't say it's sex. He doesn't say it's drugs. But you know it."

When young adults hear Rob, Brummel said, they start thinking about what they plan to do in their 20s and 30s.

"I think it challenges them to jump ahead a few decades and say, 'When I look at my past, is this a decision I want to be a part of it?'"

Meanwhile, his grandfather character, "Joe," talks about his recently deceased daughter and his wife, also deceased, to whom he had been married for decades. Joe makes his audience members realize the importance of family, marriage and commitment, Brummel said, adding that

Joe has another important message.

"Hopefully, (Joe) encourages the audience, in a subtle way, to remember our seniors," he said.

In recent months, Brummel's work has taken on a new urgency because he knew at least one student wounded in the April 20 Columbine High School massacre - a girl he had taught in confirmation class. Brummel said that he participated in a community service at his parish, Light of the World Church, for the victims' families.

The massacre has left Littleton citizens stunned and numb, he said. Speculating on what motivated the boys to kill their fellow students and themselves, he was reluctant to pinpoint any one reason. However, the massacre has strengthened his resolve to teach teenagers and young adults the importance of making sound moral choices, something his three characters hint at through their monologues.

"If you say 'yes' to evil a little bit, it can soon take over your life," he said. "What we do, what we think, what we watch, what we say, what we learn - it all matters."

### Young Adult Events

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

**Friday, July 23 to Sunday, July 25:** Retreat for women at High Acres, Geneva. The Sisters of Mercy invite women to share a retreat with them and reflect on how to serve those suffering from poverty, sickness and ignorance. For information, contact Sister Kathleen Wayne, RSM, at 716/288-2710, ext. 109.

**Tuesday, July 27:** Movie "Brother Sun, Sister Moon" on St. Francis of Assisi. Discussion to follow. Popcorn and drinks provided. 7 p.m. at St. Cecilia's Church, 2732 Culver Road, Irondequoit.

**Saturday, Aug. 14:** Nature hike at site yet to be determined.

**Sunday, Aug. 15:** Kayaking or canoeing outing on Irondequoit Bay.

**Friday, Aug. 20:** Rochester Red Wings baseball game at Frontier Field, Rochester. 7:15 p.m. Call the hotline and leave your name and phone number.

**Thursday, Aug. 26:** Dinner at the Elmwood Inn Restaurant, 1256 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester. 7 p.m. RSVP by Aug. 25.

**Saturday, Aug. 28:** Horseback riding at Letchworth State Park. \$20 per person. Reservations must be made by calling the hotline.

**Tuesday, Aug. 31:** Movie "Romero," true story of Salvadoran archbishop who was slain for speaking out for the poor. Discussion to follow. Popcorn and drinks provided. 7 p.m. at St. Cecilia's Church, 2732 Culver Road, Irondequoit.

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