

# a Young Adult



Mike Mergen/Photo intern

Kevin Trout sings and plays guitar for the 50 people who gathered for Crossroads' Open Mike Night at Blessed Sacrament Church, Rochester, March 18.

## The show goes on in church hall

ROCHESTER — Maria Grego, a junior at the University of Rochester who attends Sacred Heart Cathedral, tries to snap her fingers to create a rhythm on the microphone, but the sound doesn't carry well. So she asks the 50-strong audience to help her out as she reads her poem "About My Brother John: Doesn't He Look Good?" The audience commences snapping its collective fingers in time.

"He strides in macho / Everybody watcho," she recites to the crowd. "Rhythmic action fiend / With a diamond-ring sheen / John always got style / Nice verbal wit and smile."

No, it's not a beatnik night at a cafe in Greenwich Village circa 1961. It's an open-microphone night in the basement hall of Blessed Sacrament Church, 259 Rutgers St., off Monroe Avenue.

Crossroads, the parish's young adult ministry, began organizing the sporadically scheduled open mike evenings in conjunction with St. Mary's Church downtown last year, and this was the third such event, according to Chris Hood, pastoral associate at Blessed Sacrament. The first two open mikes took place at St. Mary's,

### Story by Rob Cullivan

and the third was taking place at his parish March 18.

"It's open to everybody," Hood said, noting that the parish plastered the Monroe Avenue neighborhood surrounding Blessed Sacrament with flyers promoting the event. "We're trying to draw the neighborhood. We have 10 acts signed up."

One performer this month won over the audience by singing a humorous song about a farmer lying in a hospital bed worried about his hogs not being fed.

"We don't control what our people want to sing," Hood said. "It's fun for people to share their talents."

The March 18 event had a dual purpose as well, he said, noting the presence of volunteers and clients of the Compeer Program. Compeer matches volunteers with people who have mental illness or emotional problems for the purposes of a supportive friendship. Informational fliers were available on a table staffed by Suzanne Pierson at the

entrance to the hall.

"We really look for volunteers in church communities because we find they're great volunteers," said Pierson, Compeer's Faith In Action coordinator and a parishioner at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Greece. She said the organization needs volunteers on both an ongoing basis and for one-time events, and encouraged people interested to call Compeer at 716/546-8280.

On the walls of the church hall were several pieces of artwork brought in by young adults that evening. Terese Manfredi, who attends St. Mary's and is in her first year as an art teacher at Wayne Central High School in Ontario, brought both photographic work and paintings to the open mike night at Blessed Sacrament.

"I've been wanting to start displaying it in public more," she said, adding that she also planned to show her work at an all-day art fair St. Mary's will host Sunday, April 30.

During intermission, various musicians milled around, some singing harmony in

## Events

● **Saturday, April 1:** Cayuga Lake winery tour starts at 10 a.m. Bring money for lunch and wine. Meet at Wegman's Food Market, 1750 East Ave., Rochester.

● **Thursday, April 6:** Volunteers needed to assemble soup mix containers for Rochester Women's Bean Project, a program for needy women, affiliated with Catholic Family Center. Bean soup supper at 6:30 p.m. in Blessed Sacrament Church Hall, 259 Rutgers St., Rochester, followed by assembly work.

● **Saturday, April 8:** 9:30 a.m. to noon at place to be determined. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, a psychological profiling tool, will be used to help participants find their psychological types. Cost: \$11; space limited to 15 persons.

● **Thursday, April 13:** Ten to 15 volunteers needed for supper program at Blessed Sacrament Church, 259 Rutgers St., Rochester, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

● **Tuesday, April 18:** Crossroads, young adult program of Blessed Sacrament Church, 259 Rutgers St., Rochester, will host Stations of the Cross and a prayer service. Call Chris Hood at 716/271-7240.

● **Thursday, April 27:** Dinner at the Elmwood Inn Restaurant, 1256 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester, 7 p.m. RSVP by April 26.

● **Saturday, April 29:** Hike at Cummings Nature Center, Bristol Hills. Start with coffee and doughnuts at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 3349 Monroe Ave., Pittsford, 8:30 a.m. Cost: \$5 to enter center.

● **Sunday, April 30:** 9:30 a.m. Mass at St. Margaret Mary Church, 401 Rogers Parkway, Irondequoit. Meet in church lobby beforehand. Brunch after Mass.

small groups as they prepared to take the stage, others holding guitars in their laps as they drank the ubiquitous mugs of coffee. Gerard Weber, who plays at Sunday Masses for St. John Fisher College students, looked content as he sat after singing songs written by Duncan Sheik and Glenn Campbell. He talked about why he likes to perform in such a setting as opposed to some nightclub.

"People listen, and there's no smoking," he said. "It's a more intimate atmosphere where you can connect more with an audience."

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