

MOVE on the MOVE

SPOTLIGHTING



(Counterclockwise from above) St. Mary's of the Lake parishioners Laura Cummings and Jennifer Jeffers organize household items at Community Resources/Catholic Family Center on Clifford Street, Rochester April 19. Youth minister John Doughty works with Laura and Robert Makuch, 14, of St. Mary's of the Assumption in Scottsville, outside of Community Resources. Mary Gacloch of St. Patrick's in Macedon separates shoes at Matthew's Closet April 20.



Story by Mike Latona

Photos by Andrea Dixon

we did it wrong at first," she said, laughing.

One of Kara's crew members, Jeff Brayer, said his favorite experience was at Rogers

House, a ministry for men who are former prisoners attempting to re-enter society.

"I kind of thought they were going to be mean, but a guy walked right up and said 'Hey, how ya doing,'" recalled Jeff, 15. He and Kara are parishioners at St. Mary of the Lake in Ontario.

"They were so kind," added Mary Gacloch, 16, from St. Patrick's in Macedon.

Meanwhile, Jen Jeffers, 18, from St. Mary of the Lake, was impressed by how she would walk down streets near the work sites and "complete strangers would say 'Hi, how are you doing, have a good day.'"

Jeff said that meeting with Rogers House residents helped him get a better handle on the challenges that inner-city residents may face.

"You know why they're unhappy, you know why there's problems," Jeff said. For instance, he said, people who struggled to finish high school may now have trouble finding work.

However, Jeff also said he was impressed by the residents' resiliency. "They got in trouble, now they're out in the real world trying to get back up to par," he remarked.

Not only did the teens toil during the day, they also had many opportunities for prayer and faith-sharing at the beginning and end of each day. The SALT crew slept overnight on April 16 and 17

in the former convent at Holy Apostles Church.

At first, the teens said, they had to adjust to some images they were not used to seeing, such as children walking at night on the city streets. Then there was the morning they discovered a dead dog, stuffed in a bag, in a lot behind the convent building. The scarred animal was a pit bull that apparently had been trained as a fighter dog.

But overall, they said, they were glad to have gotten involved in SALT.

"I didn't know what it would be like, but I was kind of curious, actually," Kara remarked.

"I didn't really know what I was getting into. But I'm just having a lot of fun," said St. Mary of the Lake's Laura Cummings, 15, as she worked in a garden at Liberty Manor, a residence for women struggling with substance abuse.

The SALT program is coordinated by Nora Bradbury-Haehl, diocesan specialist for youth and young-adult ministry; and John Doughty, youth minister at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brighton. The next scheduled SALT retreats are May 18-20 in the Southern Tier, where the focus will be on rural social service; and July 8-14, when SALT will return to Rochester and visit some of the same social-service agencies as retreatants did in April.

What will the workers from Retreat No. 1 tell people about the inner city when they return home?

"That it's a great experience," Kara said.

And, Jen added, "Not to judge it until you've been here."

**COMING NEXT WEEK:
Fun summer employment**

inner-city service, social awareness

For many people, newspaper and television reports are the closest they ever come to witnessing the struggles of the inner city.

On the other hand, nine teens spent part of their Easter break getting a first-hand account. All the teens were from suburban and rural parts of the Rochester Diocese.

These teens, along with several adult leaders, performed volunteer duty for several social-outreach agencies in Rochester. Their efforts marked the debut of the Service Action Learning Team (SALT). The work retreat, held April 18-20, was the first of three scheduled SALT programs over the next few months.

The hard-working youths rotated in small groups among the outreaches, performing such chores as painting, gardening, window washing, building shelves and preparing meals. During the late morning of April 20, Kara McCallum, 17, reported that her crew had already sorted "hundreds and hundreds" of clothing items at Matthew's Closet. This ministry of Corpus Christi Parish sells donated clothes to the poor.

The previous day, Kara admitted, she had gotten off to a slower start at Rogers House, where one of her duties was to hang curtains. "We put the curtains back up a few times, because