

PHOTOS BY ANDREA DIXON
TEXT BY MIKE LATONA

On the **WOW**



(From left) Jenny Orbaker, 16, of St. Mary's of the Lake, Ontario; Amanda Acomb, 15, of St. Joseph's, Wayland; and Sierra Rounsville, 15, of St. Mary's, Dansville, back away as Matt Yannle, 15, of St. Joseph's, Wayland, tries to splash them at Ontario Beach Park July 25.

Workshops get wet and wild



(From left) Amanda, Jenny and Sierra try to get back at Matt by throwing him into the water.



(From left) Kristl Dempski, 15, and Christy Rath, 14, laugh with Rae Walker, 15, during dinner. The girls are from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Hamlin.

Thirty-one teens from 11 diocesan parishes made a day at the beach out of their leadership workshops July 25. Following the first part of the two-day Future Now training program at Rochester's Holy Cross Church, the group attended the Holy Cross 5:20 p.m. Mass and then marched down Lake Avenue to Ontario Beach Park. There, they enjoyed the beautiful summer evening by dining at nearby eateries, frolicking in the sand and water, and taking in an outdoor concert. Then it was back to Holy Cross, where they slept overnight before resuming their workshops July 26.

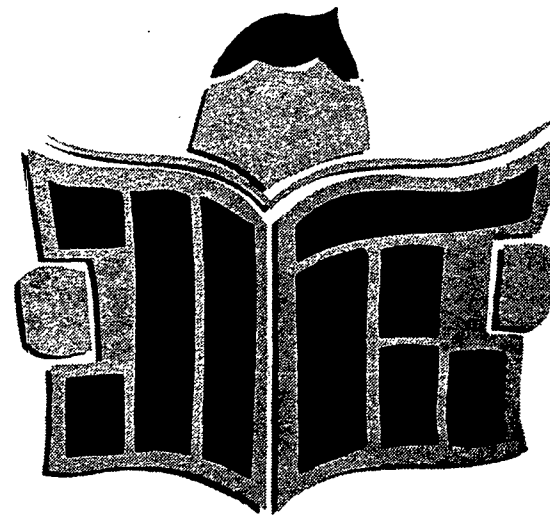
"If you have a local thing the kids would enjoy, if you can take advantage of that — beach, snow, anything — I think that's a good thing to do. Some kids don't have that advantage, experiencing the local culture," said Donna Jacobi, youth minister at Holy Cross. She also noted that the group held a morning prayer service July 26 at the historic Charlotte Lighthouse, located behind Holy Cross Church on the Genesee River.

These activities helped round out the Future Now program, a diocesan initiative that helps teens develop leadership skills in their parish, school and community. Workshops focus on such areas as styles of leadership, leading small groups, team-building and decision-making, how to deal with conflict, communicating effectively, dealing with stress, and how to get help for someone who needs it.

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