

a Young

Priest's talk taps into life and love

ROCHESTER — Have you ever been advised to avoid bars in search of a committed, moral, lifelong relationship?

Well, even the staunchest defenders of such viewpoints would find it hard to quibble with the program that took place Feb. 7 at Johnny's Irish Pub, more commonly known as Johnny's Smoke Free. Approximately 50 young adults gathered in a private room — with music and loud chatter from other Johnny's Smoke Free patrons serving as a backdrop — to hear Father Lee Chase, pastor of Brighton's St. Thomas More Parish, deliver a seminar about love and relationships.

This is a typical setting for Theology on Tap, a monthly program cosponsored by the diocesan young-adult ministry program and the University of Rochester. Theology on Tap originated in the Archdiocese of Chicago and has spread to many other cities. It made its debut in Rochester last year, with Johnny's Smoke Free, 1382 Culver



Father Chase

Story by Mike Latona

Road, hosting each session. Despite its title and the option for participants to drink alcohol if they wish, Theology on Tap's key emphasis is not on partying, but on invigorating discussion for Catholic young adults. Holding such events in a popular nightclub helps gain a wider cross-section of the young-adult population, said Nora Bradbury-Haehl, diocesan coordinator of young-adult ministry.

"We want to go to where young adults are, not just where people are already involved in the church," Bradbury-Haehl said.

The two-hour program Feb. 7 consisted of Father Chase's talk followed by a question-and-answer session. Father Chase, 38, peppered audience members — who were mostly single — with advice on relationships.

He emphasized the importance of being flexible, saying, "When you get into the 'perfect' relationship it won't stay perfect, because you're not perfect." He also noted that "a relationship is always changing and growing, and so are you."

Father Chase warned that couples who live together first usually find the commitment of marriage too daunting, saying numerous marriages that come out of cohabitation end in two years or less. He implored participants to consider Catholic moral teaching on marriage, focusing on such points as intimacy and responsibility, and love as a choice rather than a feeling.

"We need to get beyond the physicalities," he said. "At a certain point, it's not 'I feel love for you,' it's 'I choose to love you — when you're sick, when you don't look as good as you do now.'"

The priest added that many ideals about love can apply to both romance and good friendship: "We all long to be connected. It's a natural instinct that we want to be connected to somebody else."

This marked Father Chase's second appearance at Theology on Tap. Previous discussions were also led by Bradbury-Haehl, as well as Rob Cullivan, staff writer for the *Catholic Courier*.

The Feb. 7 program was the largest yet for a Theology on Tap at Johnny's Smoke Free — which didn't surprise Michelle Long, 20, a student at the University of Rochester and parishioner at St. Joseph's in Penfield.

"This topic, it's always important," she said.

"It's something that everyone is interested in," agreed Mike Thibault, 24, from Rochester's Blessed Sacrament Parish. Thibault predicted that Father Chase's talk will help him in the future, saying, "The little tidbits, I'll pick up later in my life experience."

Meanwhile, Patrick Cain, 36, from Our Lady of Lourdes in Brighton, said he liked the way Father Chase combined "psychology with theology on the subject of relationships."

Thibault remarked that the Theology on Tap series as a whole has been a good fit for him, saying, "I'd been looking for awhile for something with people my own age that's interesting to me."

"Personally, I love it," Long added.

EDITORS' NOTE: For a schedule of future Theology on Tap events, contact Nora Bradbury-Haehl at 585/328-3210, ext. 218, or Bradbury-haehl@dor.org.

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"When you get into the 'perfect' relationship it won't stay perfect, because you're not perfect."

**Saturday, April 13, 2002
& Sunday April 14, 2002**

Fr. Benedict Groeschel

Schedule of Events

Saturday, April 13, 2002:	
5:00 PM	Doors open
7:00 PM	Talk
8:45 PM	Concert
Sunday, April 14, 2002	
8:00 AM	Doors open
9:00 AM	Mass
11:30 AM-6PM	Talks

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2. Early Bird Youth (under 19) - (must be received on or before 3/15/02) # _____ at \$10.00 each for \$ _____
3. Early Bird Group (10 or more) - (must be received on or before 3/15/02) # _____ at \$12.00 each for \$ _____
4. Regular Adult - After 3/15/ or at the door # _____ at \$20.00 each for \$ _____
5. Regular Youth (under 19) - After 3/15 or at the door # _____ at \$15.00 each for \$ _____
6. Regular Group (10 or more) - (must be received on or before 4/5/02) # _____ at \$17.00 each for \$ _____
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Events

● **Thursday, Feb. 28:** Odyssey Brainstorming Session, St. Thomas More Church, 2617 East Ave., Brighton, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Share your ideas for young adult (20s and 30s, married and single) events, service opportunities, programs, recruitment and publicity. Pizza and pop will be provided. Contact Nora Bradbury-Haehl, diocesan coordinator of young-adult ministry, at 585/328-3210, ext. 218, or Bradbury-haehl@dor.org.

● **Saturday, March 9:** American Heart Walk. March into spring supporting a good cause. The walk begins at 10 a.m. from the Blue Cross Arena in downtown Rochester. Contact Natalie at 585/663-0733.

● **Sunday, March 10:** Second Sunday Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church, 534 Oxford St., Rochester, 12:15 p.m. Young adults are welcome to sample meal and short program immediately after Mass. Contact jfazio@dor.org.

● **Friday, March 15:** Taize prayer. St. Joseph's Mercy Motherhouse, 1497 Blossom Road, Rochester, 8 p.m. Sing, chant and pray in the spirit of the monks of Taize. Refreshments to follow. Held every third Friday. Contact Sister Kathleen Wayne, 585/268-2740, ext. 109, or kwayne@roch.ymbo.com. Information on Taize prayer is available at www.taizeusa.org.

● **Thursday, March 21:** Theology on Tap, Johnny's Irish Pub (Johnny's Smoke Free), 1382 Culver Road, 8-10 p.m. Father Joe Marcoux, parochial vicar at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral, will speak on the subject of vocations. Contact Nora Bradbury-Haehl, diocesan coordinator of young-adult ministry, at 585/328-3210, ext. 218, or Bradbury-haehl@dor.org.

● **Thursday, March 21:** Odyssey dinner at Woody's II, 2758 W. Henrietta Road, Brighton, 7 p.m. Held every third Thursday. RSVP by March 20 to Jean at 585/482-9023.

● **Friday, April 5:** Evening of retreat, "The Spirituality of Parenting," Canandaigua Inn on the Lake, 6-10 p.m. with optional overnight stay. Dinner, prayer, presentations and discussion for young adults who have children 5 years old and younger. Contact Nora Bradbury-Haehl, diocesan coordinator of young-adult ministry, at 585/328-3210, ext. 218, or Bradbury-haehl@dor.org.

● **Saturday, April 13:** Odyssey game night at St. Thomas More Church, 2617 East Ave., Brighton, 7-11 p.m. Bring your favorite game and a snack to share. Contact Laura at 585/621-5672.

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