

ORTHODOX

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Miles of fun

They may be from small towns, but the folks at St. Theresa, Stanley, and St. Mary, Rushville, think big. That was evident from the parish youth group's involvement in Run for the Young, held May 11 at St. Lawrence Church in Greece. With 15 participants, St. Theresa/St. Mary brought one of the largest contingents of any parish, despite having one of the longest distances to travel. The churches are located in central and eastern Ontario County — more than an hour from St. Lawrence.

With a sunny morning and a flat terrain, conditions were ideal for running, said Charlotte Daum, 15.

"It was pretty nice. The (practice) loop at our school has a huge hill at the end, so when I saw this, I said 'I can do this,'" Charlotte said. Even though temperatures were below normal for May, Charlotte added that she worked up a sweat pretty quickly: "The people with water at the halfway point, they helped out quite a bit."

Run for the Young drew more than 300 runners for its 5K (3.1 mile) event and an additional 50 people — including Bishop Matthew H. Clark — for a one-mile "fun run." Eleven teens and four adults in all helped put St. Theresa/St. Mary in line for a prestigious honor — the "Most Holy Right Shoe." The shoe, a bronzed sneaker that once belonged to Bishop Clark, goes to the group with largest participation based on parish size.

Although the shoe's recipient was not known by press time, Michael Theisen, diocesan director of youth ministry, said the odds were looking good for St. Theresa/St. Mary. "I wouldn't bet against them," he said with a laugh.

One of St. Theresa/St. Mary's runners, 13-year-old Lauren Way, used the word "obsession" to describe how adamant her parish has become about retaining the shoe. Charlotte added that her small-town setting is ideal for developing runners, saying, "You can run on the road — very few cars."

What may have been more challenging than the actual Run for the Young, Charlotte said, was getting up early to make the long drive in for the 9:30 a.m. race.

"We had to leave from Stanley at 7:30," she said.

"And we had the opening of our school play (at Marcus Whitman High School) last night," added Megan Craig-Kuhn, 14.

Yet they were rewarded for their sacrifices: Megan earned a medal for taking third place in the age 14-and-under girls' division; Lauren went home with a water bottle she got as a door prize; and Charlotte came away with one of the red carnations being handed out, saying it was for her mom. "I forgot to get my mother a Mother's Day present," she explained.

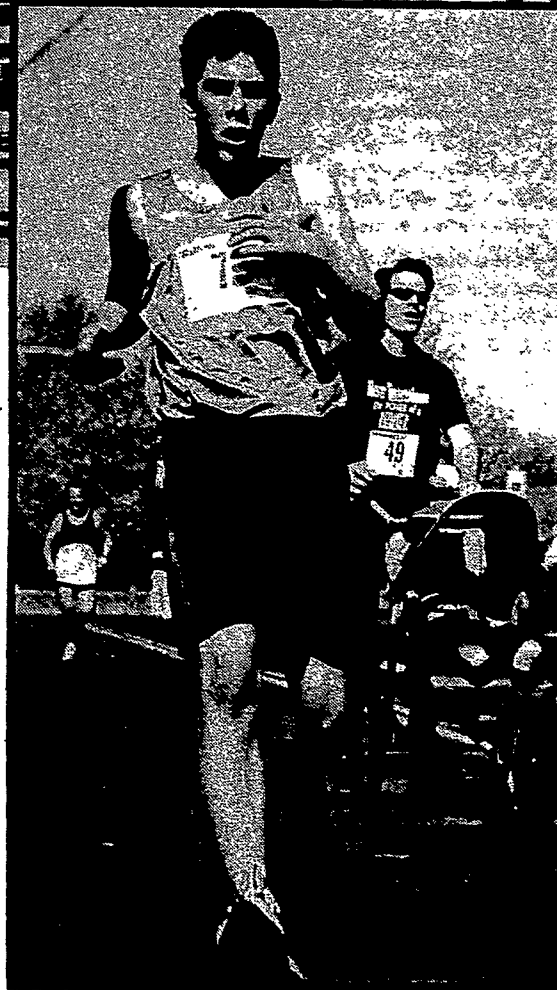
Martha DeBoover, youth minister, remarked that St. Theresa/St. Mary always finds extra energy for diocesan events.

"Our parishes, we never have to twist

arms. They are so supportive," said DeBoover, who ran in the 5K race as well.

DeBoover added that Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Community, a cluster to which St. Theresa and St. Mary belong, has registered nearly 50 young people to attend World Youth Day in Toronto in late July. This enthusiasm is vital, DeBoover said, because the churches are small and have gone through numerous changes in priest leadership in recent years. Other cluster members are St. Michael, Penn Yan; St. Andrew, Dundee; St. Januarius, Naples; and St. Patrick, Prattsburg.

As a whole, Run for the Young enjoyed another successful year. Theisen said nearly \$10,000 was raised so that young people can attend such events as diocesan retreats and conventions, along with national meetings, during



Dave Theisen, 14, finishes the Run for the Young 5K race at St. Lawrence Church in Greece May 11.



Volunteer Yversha Roman, 17, hands out gift bags before the race.

the year.

Funds were raised primarily through registration fees and pledges collected by runners. Another award, the "Most Holy Left Shoe," goes to the parish that raises the most money. (The winner was not known at press time.)

Age-group divisions ranged from 14-and-under to 70-and-over. "We gave away quite a few medals," Theisen said. In addition, cash prizes were awarded for the top overall finishers. A course record was set that day by Derrick Jones of West Henrietta, who turned in a time of 15 minutes, 39 seconds. The top women's finisher was Heidi Swarts of Geneseo, whose time was 17:45.

Run for the Young has become a regular for both Catholics and non-Catholics on the road race circuit, Theisen observed.

"The race has earned a good name within the running community," he said.



Michael Theisen, diocesan director of youth ministry, hands a megaphone to Bishop Matthew H. Clark to start the race.