

## DIOCESAN NEWS

## Hispanic Catholics herald mission's approach

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

When Colombian pop star Shakira recorded her crossover hit "Whenever, Wherever," it's doubtful she envisioned it becoming a tool for evangelization.

Yet the Latin-flavored Top 40 song served the Gospel well on the evening of Aug. 21 as the recorded voice of MTV's latest sensation rang out across the parking lot of Holy Apostles Church on Lyell Avenue in Rochester.

As Shakira's danceable number played, a group of Hispanic teens joined members of the Brooklyn-based Community Servants of Christ Alive, a lay Catholic evangelical group, on stage to dance. But the teens and young adults weren't doing it for fun; they were portraying the temptations that lured the Prodigal Son of Jesus' famed parable to his downfall.

In Spanish, the amateur actors took turns identifying themselves as the man portraying the Prodigal Son as "I am alcohol," "I am prostitution" and other temptations. Pedro O. Nunez, 17, a member of Mount Carmel Parish, played the role of alcohol, which tempted the Prodigal Son, played by Enrique Lugo, a member of the Community Servants.

"We were playing drunk, but it felt kind of weird," Pedro said after his performance. "Everyone was laughing at me."

Pedro took a chance on stage to serve the 13th annual *La Mision* (The Mission), an annual Hispanic Catholic event in the Diocese of Rochester. Presented each year at a different parish or group of parishes serving a large Hispanic population, this year's event took place at Holy Apostles Aug. 19-Aug. 23, and at St. Michael's Parish in Newark Aug. 24-25.

*La Mision* drew more than 200 people on Aug. 21 to hear spoken presentations, sing songs, share prayers and watch the enactment of "The Prodigal Son." The teens involved in putting on the performance said they enjoyed their moment of fame on stage, and learned something to boot.

"Don't take your parents for granted," said Vanessa Morales, 15, who played the role of drugs. Her sister, Eva Lisa, 13, played the role of sadness. The two girls attend Holy Redeemer/St. Francis Xavier Parish in Rochester.

Their friend, Glory Ortiz, 14, played the



Karin von Voigtlander/Staff photographer  
Dilia Lugo of Queens waves a tissue while holding Grace Angeles during *La Mision* (The Mission), an annual Hispanic Catholic event in the Diocese of Rochester. This year's mission was held at Rochester's Holy Apostles Church.



Evalisa Morales of St. Francis Xavier Church in Rochester performs a role in "The Prodigal Son"

role of abandonment, and said she had enjoyed the mission, most especially the presentations directed at teenagers like herself.

"They talked about mistakes and how I can fix them," she said.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark attended the evening's activities Aug. 21 and spoke briefly to the crowd.

"I think this community has a special power with God because every year you have perfect weather for this celebration,"

Bishop Clark remarked.

In fact, while the weather held for most of the week, it rained the first night of the mission, said Gabriela Jaramillo, director of the diocesan Office of the Spanish Apostolate. However, the rain turned out to be a plus, she said, since that night's activities were relocated inside the parish's church, compelling everyone to get to know each other. The Aug. 19 attendees then went out into their neighborhoods and spoke highly of *La Mision*, she said, helping to increase each subsequent night's attendance.

Jaramillo added that *La Mision* this year was unique because it was the first diocesan Hispanic mission led entirely by lay people rather than priests. A committee of 15 diocesan lay Catholics put the mission together, and arranged for a performance by the Community Servants, who stressed lively group participation, she added.

"It's new and different, and people are eating it up," Jaramillo said, adding that

grandchildren; and nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in the abbey church on Aug. 8, followed by burial in the abbey cemetery.

— Lou Litzenberger

### Sr. M. Boehly, 79

Sister Mary Justene Boehly of the School Sisters of Notre Dame died on Aug. 10, 2002, at the provincial motherhouse in Wilton, Conn. She was 79.

A native of St. Michael Parish in Rochester, she received her bachelor's degree from Nazareth College and a master's degree in theology from St. Bonaventure University. She taught high school for more than 35 years, including at Rochester's St. Joseph Business High School (1956-68) and Bishop Kearney High School (1968-89).

Predeceased by her sister, Justine, she is survived by her sisters, Rita (Richard) Wunch and Dorothy Boehly, both of Rochester; and her brothers, William of Hamlin and Gerard of Rochester.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in the motherhouse chapel on Aug. 10 with burial in St. Mary Cemetery, Bethel, Conn. Memorials may be sent to SSND Development Fund, Wilton, CT 06897.

— Lou Litzenberger

participants had been asked to hand in written evaluations of the mission each night, and had generally given great reviews.

Father Paul Tomasso, pastor of Holy Apostles, agreed that *La Mision* was a success this year.

"People welcome this chance for spirituality together," he said. "It's a great renewal, not only for the faith, but for the community."

Norma Cruz, who attends St. Michael's Church in Rochester, came to the Aug. 21 mission with her husband, Pascual, to "learn more about God's love."

She said she enjoyed the previous evening's emphasis on reconciling parents with their children. She also had learned about the importance of Mary to Catholics. A member of a Bible study group at her parish, Cruz said *La Mision* was a chance to renew her faith.

"I learn how big God is, how much he loves me and how good he is with everybody," she said.

Deacon Salvador Otero, who serves Holy Apostles, said that holding *La Mision* mostly outdoors brought home an important message to the event's participants.

"It's time in Rochester for people to understand that the church is not the temple we go in on Sunday, it's all of us," he said.

He also noted that many people in the neighborhood surrounding Holy Apostles were intrigued by the mission, and left their windows open to hear the music and the messages, or stood on the outskirts of the parking lot watching the events. Holding the event outdoors also made it more inviting to people who might not attend Mass for a variety of reasons.

"Maybe someday you'll see them in church," he said.

### New principal at Holy Cross

Catherine Howell Kress, former principal at Nazareth Hall Elementary School in Rochester, has been appointed principal of Charlotte's Holy Cross School, the Diocese of Rochester announced Aug. 22.

"I'm glad to become a part of the Holy Cross family and to enjoy the family spirit here," Kress said. "I just love kids and parents and teachers. I really like the job of school administrator, and I see Catholic school education as a ministry."

Kress, who has been an educator for nearly 40 years, returns to Holy Cross for the second time — she was an elementary teacher there from 1982-86. She has also taught at schools in England and Philadelphia, as well as in the Rush-Henrietta and City of Rochester school districts. She was appointed principal of Henrietta's Guardian Angels School in 1986, then served as Nazareth Hall Elementary School's assistant principal for two years prior to being appointed principal there in 1994. She served in that position until 2000.

Kress received a bachelor's degree in elementary education at Keuka College, and a certificate of advance studies and a master's degree in school administration from the State University of New York at Brockport.

"We're very pleased to have Catherine in place to serve the parents, students and staff at Holy Cross," said Sister Elizabeth Meegan, O.P., superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Rochester. "The wealth of knowledge and experience that she brings to her position will only enhance what we already know to be an excellent program at Holy Cross."

— Jennifer Burthe

### Obituaries

## Fr. Stanton; Abbey of the Genesee priest

Father Joseph Stanton, 79, a Cistercian priest of the Abbey of the Genesee in Piffard, N.Y., died on Aug. 8, 2002, at the Sisters of St. Joseph Infirmary in Rochester.

Father Stanton, born Fred B. Stanton, received his degree in engineering from Johns Hopkins University and served in the Merchant Marine during World War II. He and his wife, Helen, had three children. Seeking a new direction to his life following their divorce, he entered the monastery in 1973. He was ordained by Bishop Matthew H. Clark on March 2,

1984, in a ceremony attended by his children and grandchildren.

Father Stanton served in Nigeria following his ordination, returning to the abbey in 1994 after contracting malaria. He was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in 1997.

He is survived by his daughters, Susannah (Adam) Szczepanski of Raleigh, N.C., and Helen (James) Chapple of Palmyra, Va.; a son, Robert (Lillian) Stanton of Valrico, Fla.; sisters, Emily Pierce of Maryland and Mary Thoms of North Carolina; five

## Fr. Bracikowski, OFM Conv., 87

Conventual Franciscan Father Felix Bracikowski, who had served at Rochester and Auburn parishes, died at Buffalo General Hospital Aug. 1, 2002. He was 87.

Father Bracikowski entered the Order of Friars Minor Conventual in 1932 and was ordained to the priesthood at the tomb of St. Francis in Assisi, Italy, on Dec. 17, 1938, having completed theological studies in Assisi.

He served St. Hyacinth Parish, Auburn, as assistant pastor (1963-1966) and as pastor and guardian of the local Franciscan friary (rectory) from 1966 to 1976. He was pastor and guardian at the former St.

Theresa Parish in Rochester from 1979 to 1985.

Father Bracikowski was predeceased by three brothers and a sister. He is survived by two sisters, Helen Parnitzke and Lucy Kinecki, both of West Seneca, N.Y.; and his brother, Menceslaus, of Cuba, N.Y.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Francis Church, Athol Springs, N.Y., on Aug. 5, with burial in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga. Memorial donations may be made to the Franciscan Education Fund, Provincial House, 12300 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042.

— Lou Litzenberger