

Teens try making resolutions stick

Mike Latona/Catholic Courier

To make New Year's resolutions, or not to make them? That is the question we tossed around recently with several members of the Diocesan Youth Committee.

Jamie Farley, for one, is a big proponent of New Year's resolutions. "It helps us to focus our goals. It is not necessary to start them on New Year's Day, but if that is what it takes for someone to get kick-started, then it is all gravy," said Jamie, 16, from Holy Cross Parish in Rochester.

Nicholas Hollon seconds that motion. "New Year's is as good a time as any to make personal improvements, so why not?" remarked Nicholas, 16, from St. Michael's in Newark.

Nicholas said his main goal in 2003 is to work on time management. "I have a bad habit of procrastinating," he acknowledged. "This year I am going to try to get things done as soon as possible. I know that in college the workload is only going to get bigger, so I'm going to stop procrastinating now before it catches up to me."

Jamie hopes to enter West Point someday — so to begin the year 2003, she's trying hard to get into better shape. She's also working on her interpersonal relationships, saying, "I have decided to be a better person and not to be the first to jump and criticize someone for something that might not really be their fault, or to be too judgmental on people until I get to know them better." Jamie



is also working harder to practice forgiveness, even when she has been hurt: "People make mistakes and they need to be forgiven. What help or leader am I to be to a person if I can't even forgive them for something?"

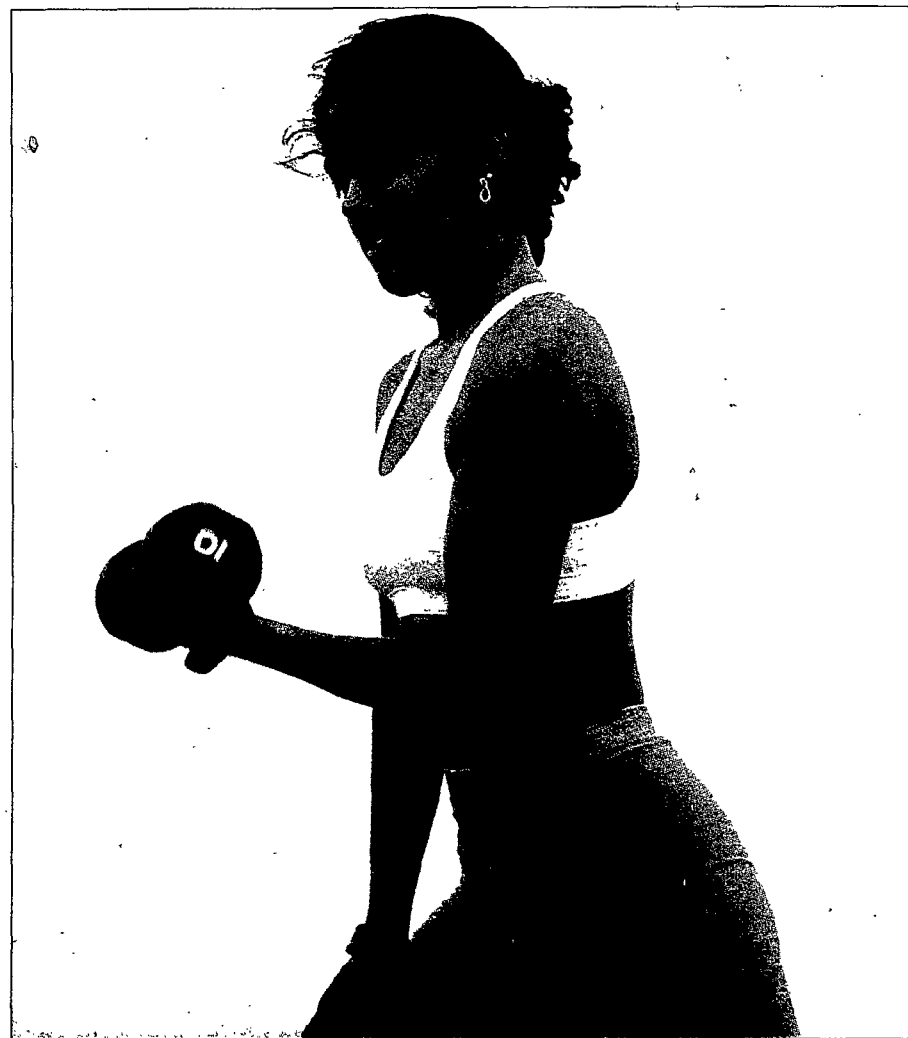
Meanwhile, Benjamin Hernandez is striving to improve his faith life as well as his studies: "I am graduating this year and I need God to help me get the grades to pass," said Benjamin, 17, from St. Francis Xavier/Holy Redeemer in Rochester. So far, so good, he reports: "I'm paying attention in school, and I'm happy that God made an impact on me to change my ways and live a good life."

However, New Year's resolutions don't always bring quick results, as Nicholas has discovered in his hopes to quit procrastinating. "It hasn't been very successful yet. All the things I planned to get done over the past few days, mostly schoolwork, I have put off," he admitted. "This year is starting out pretty much the same as the old one."

And Vanessa Preston has had only limited success in her resolution to not be late for school.

"Out of three days I have managed to be on time for one of those days," said Vanessa, 17, from Greece's Holy Name of Jesus.

For those struggling to get out of



the gate, Jamie suggested not overloading with resolutions. "If you keep it simple and something that you know that you are going to stick through, then it is great."

And it's no big crime if you didn't make any New Year's resolutions at all, according to two other NYC members, Sierra Rounsville and Matt Rooney. Both have embarked upon 2003 without resolutions to follow.

"If I make one I usually don't keep them," explained Sierra, 16, from St.

Mary's in Dansville. "In some cases I think that New Year's resolutions are good if you intend on working to keep them. But other than that, resolutions are just promises that get broken."

Matt, 16, from St. Louis in Pittsford, contends that "every day is a chance to change your life ... you can start something new, stop a bad habit or change your relationship with others. In my opinion, people should not need a significant date to change themselves."

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