

Play helps teach foreign language

Jennifer Burke/Catholic Courier

Memorizing the lines to an hour-long play might seem like quite a task for fifth-grade students — but memorizing those same lines in French?

That appears to be no problem for fifth-graders at St. Patrick's School in Owego.

Linda Cvik, St. Patrick's principal, is also the French teacher for every student in the elementary school. When Cvik began teaching French at St. Patrick's in 1988, she decided to have her fifth-graders put on a play entirely in French.

"I just thought it would be a fun thing to do. It's kind of grown since then, and I wanted to continue it when I came into the principal position three years ago," Cvik said. "What I've done is taken a fairy tale or common story that everyone knows and written a script and dialogue. All the students have a part and they all learn their lines in French."

In the past, Cvik's classes have

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performed such plays as "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" and "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." This past school year, she picked "Cinderella."

"That particular story fit the personality of that class, and I hadn't done it before," Cvik said. "We started in September, talking about the play and picking plots and characters. From that point on, we worked on it for 45 minutes one day a week," Cvik said.

The 14 students in the class spent the year learning the French vocabulary and grammar necessary to perform the play.

"As they were learning the lines they learned the vocabulary and were able to converse with each other and know what they were saying to each other. It was a really good foreign-language activity," Cvik said.

The play also gave both the stu-



Rebecca Gosselin/Catholic Courier

Kindergarten grads

Christopher P. Hyland (left), Grace E. Weyand, Joshua W. Bush, Clara Gulli and Jeremy N. Daniels carry a gift of flowers to Sister Dolores Ann Stein June 12 during their kindergarten-graduation ceremony at St. Ann's School in Hornell.

dents and their parents an opportunity to be creative. The elegant coach that took Cinderella to the ball was made from a two-seater red wagon, and parents helped find period costumes. According to Cvik, parents brought in wigs, sport jackets and costume materials purchased at the local Salvation Army store. One parent even ordered a Cinderella dress from a store in Las Vegas.

The fifth-grade class performed its play to a full house at the end of June.

"We invited the entire school to watch the play, as well as all the parents. I had prepared the younger

grades for what they were going to hear and some of the vocabulary. It's a really nice enrichment activity," Cvik said.

Cvik plans on putting on another play with this school year's fifth-grade class and said that exposing children to a foreign language in kindergarten has been "a real success." The play made learning especially fun for the students.

"They loved it. They were so excited to do it. I think it gave them a freedom of language where they weren't afraid of it. It will be an advantage when they go into the middle school and have to pick a foreign language," Cvik said.

Mercy plans jubilee weekend

Several activities will mark Our Lady of Mercy High School's 75th-anniversary celebration Sept. 27-28.

On Sept. 27, Bishop Matthew H. Clark will celebrate a 4 p.m. jubilee liturgy in the high-school auditorium. The public is invited as well. The bishop will bless Mercy's new building immediately following Mass, and a dinner dance in the new Catherine McAuley Gallery is

set to begin at 6:30 p.m. Cost for the dinner dance is \$75 per person.

On Sept. 28, a family picnic will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. on school grounds. A donation of \$20 per family is requested. In addition, tours of the high school will be offered throughout the weekend.

To purchase tickets for the dinner dance and/or picnic, call 585/288-2610.

— Mike Latona

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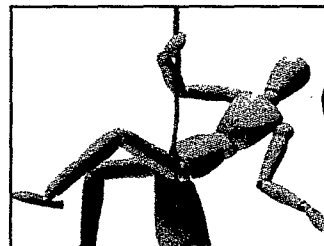
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