

ST. MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL / BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH - FALL 2017

MORE

GOOD NEWS



All are
welcome
in this
place

PAGE 3

We all need to do our part to bring others back to faith

Recently, a Syracuse television report covered the closing of what used to be a large, vital and impressive Catholic parish on the south side of Syracuse — Our Lady of Lourdes.

That parish will merge with another and be called by a new name — Our Lady of Hope.

The reason for the closing is due to a decline in membership and changes in the makeup of religious faiths in that area of the city.

In addition to this is the absence and choice of Catholic people from 20 to 40 years old to not participate in the faith that was practiced by their families for decades, even centuries — although those non-practicing people still seek out the church for weddings, funerals, baptisms, confirmations, counseling and other special moments in their lives.

But when the participation and dutiful presence at weekend Mass is not there, and the support in terms of money, energy, time and

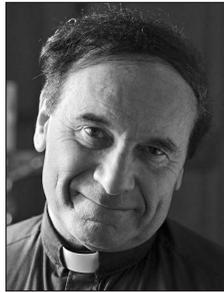
prayer are lost, what is inevitable is the closing of the parish.

Every Catholic parish household and pastor hope and sincerely pray that new people of all ages — whether families or single persons — will find their church and parish life and community helpful and attractive and spiritually vital enough to be drawn there, to join there, to become active in worship and the faith life that is found there.

We are fortunate and prayerfully grateful at Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament to experience on a fairly steady basis the influx and addition of new parishioners. Not many months go by when this does not happen. The merging of Blessed Sacrament with St. Mary of Mount Carmel certainly brought with it a good number of very devoted and gifted Catholic brothers and sisters in faith.

Our autumn homecoming invitations to be passed along to others encouraging a spiritual homecoming weekend for folks who have strayed away is one attempt to reach out. The church's fancy word for these attempts is evangelization — which means to encourage and invite the regular practice of the wonderful heritage of the Catholic faith that has been given to us.

Let's all do our part in any way that works toward the future.



FATHER JIM

CELEBRATING THE SAINTS

St. John XXIII

Feast day Oct. 11

Although few people had as great an impact on the 20th century as Pope John XXIII, he avoided the limelight as much as possible. Indeed, one writer has noted that his "ordinariness" seems one of his most remarkable qualities.

The firstborn son of a farming family in Sotto il Monte, near Bergamo in northern Italy, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli was always proud of his down-to-earth roots. In Bergamo's diocesan seminary, he joined the Secular Franciscan Order.

After his ordination in 1904, Roncalli returned to Rome for canon law studies. He soon worked as his bishop's secretary, church history teacher in the seminary and as publisher of the diocesan paper.

His service as a stretcher-bearer for the Italian army during World War I gave him a firsthand knowledge of war. In 1921, Roncalli



was made national director in Italy of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He also found time to teach patristics at a seminary in the Eternal City.

In 1925, he became a papal diplomat, serving first in Bulgaria, then in Turkey, and finally in France. During World War II, he became well acquainted with Orthodox Church leaders. With the help of Germany's ambassador to Turkey, Archbishop Roncalli helped save an estimated 24,000 Jewish people.

Named a cardinal and appointed patriarch of Venice in 1953, he finally was a residential bishop. A month short of entering his 78th year, Roncalli was elected pope, taking the name John after his father and the two patrons of Rome's cathedral, St. John Lateran.

His most famous encyclicals were *Mother and Teacher* (1961) and *Peace on Earth* (1963). Pope John XXIII enlarged the membership in the College of Cardinals and made it more international. At his address at the opening of the Second Vatican Council, he criticized the "prophets of doom" who "in these modern times see nothing but prevarication and ruin."

"Good Pope John" died on June 3, 1963. St. John Paul II beatified him in 2000, and Pope Francis canonized him in 2014.

Source: www.franciscanmedia.org

PARISH WEBSITE

Visit www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com for the latest parish news and announcements. There's even a mobile version for your smart phone. You can donate online and check out our social media sites and more.

PHOTO GALLERIES



BULLETIN

A Community on a Journey of Faith April 2, 2017

**St. Mary of Mt. Carmel
Blessed Sacrament Parish**

648 Jay St., Utica, NY 13501 • www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com





Weekday Masses
Saturday: 4:30 PM
Sunday: 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM
Reconciliation: Saturday 3:45 PM

Weekday Masses
Nov. 7: 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
Friday: 8:30 AM - Mass of Communion Service.
Rosary for the 13th and Divine Mercy Chaplet - Thursday after Mass.
Holy Days Consult Bulletin.

PARISH STAFF
Pastor: Rev. Jim Cielie
Parish Director: Fr. Michael Tanti (Residence: 404
Co-ordinator of Faith Formation: Anne Carroll Esquire 7-10
In Charge: 801-437-0349
Music Director: Peter Blazek
Business Administration: Jani Smith LaHive
Parish Office: 744-7444
Parish Website: www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com

CONTACT:
Office: 744-7444
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Cell: 724-3900
email: parish@stmarys.com
fr.jimcielie@aol.com

OFFICE HOURS
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM Monday-Thursday
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Friday
4:45 - 5:15 PM Saturday
All bulletin items are to be submitted in writing by 12:00 noon Friday ten days before publication.

BAPTISM
Confirmation: Please call the parish office to arrange a baptism. The parents are encouraged to attend the planning class before the birth of their child.
RECESSION
A child, or children, 7 or older who has never been baptized or confirmed or received the Sacrament are invited to call the Parish Office for information about this process.
PARISHAGE
Couples must make arrangements six months in advance.
NEW PARISHIONERS
Welcome to our parish family. We invite you to become an active participant of our parish community. Please see us to register by calling the parish office.
Also baptisms are available for having requested.

... AND MORE

- Father Jim's "Wise and Otherwise"
- History of the parish
- Lector, minister, altar server schedules
- Mass schedules
- Parish news
- Ministries
- Event calendar
- Weekly reflection on Sunday's readings
- "More Good News" magazine
- Links to our social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.



More finding a home in our vibrant parish

Worship, social programs, outreach keep community thriving

By FRAN PERRITANO

The Roman Catholic Church has faced obstacles over the last several decades with fewer people identifying as Catholic and parishes merging or closing.

According to the Wall Street Journal, roughly 81.6 million Americans — or about 25 percent of the overall population — identify as Roman Catholic. Catholics comprise the largest religious group in 35 states. Yet, according to the Journal, the church is changing thanks to demographic trends and shifting attitudes toward religion.

Some 25 million adults, or a third of all active members, no longer identify with the church, according to the 2015 Journal report. Most of those who leave abandon affiliated religion altogether.

Locally, many parishes have closed and/or merged with others.

Mount Carmel is very familiar with that development when in 2006, Blessed Sacrament Church merged with Mount Carmel to create our current dynamic — St. Mary of Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament Parish.

Mount Carmel always has been a thriving and lively parish, and welcoming many from Blessed Sacrament enhanced the community.

In fact, our parish defies what's happening elsewhere — we're growing.

As of August, there were 991 registered



After retiring, Scott and Loraine Bolen returned to Central New York and found a home at Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament.

parishioners/families/households in the parish. Since 2013, our numbers have grown by 169 families/households.

The Rev. Jim Cesta said changing demographics has caused a shift where people have moved out of older cities and into outlying areas, building new churches while older parishes are “weakening” and newer parishes “are doing very well.”

“The parishes that are doing well with attracting new people are parishes that not only offer devotions, liturgy and worship that is well done, but also have many social programs and outreach to the communities in which

there with,” he said. “Many people, especially young people today, are looking for not only to fulfill their duty to go to Mass, but are looking for a place that reaches out, makes the community better or offers social opportunities just for people to enjoy one another’s fellowship. So, if a parish hits all the buttons ... that parish will gain new people. If a parish offers basically only the sacraments, they are weakening.”

Leigh D’Agostino is one of the former Blessed Sacrament parishioners who transplanted herself in the newly merged parish. She was married at Blessed Sacrament and worshiped there for 20 years.

She and her husband decided to give Mount Carmel a try to support former pastor the Rev. John Rose in helping him complete the merger.

She doesn’t regret it.

“When you join a parish and attend weekly Mass you realize it is not a building but a community of people,” she said. “As you involve yourself in activities, the stranger becomes your friend and friendship lasts a lifetime.

“Our parish is alive,” she added. “You can feel the energy as people start arriving before Mass. We care about one another. Look around at Mass — more and more people are here every week.”

Scott and Loraine Bolen of Barneveld traveled a long way to get to Mount Carmel /

Please see NEW PARISHIONERS, Page 7

A CONVERSATION WITH ... LEIGH D'AGOSTINO

Leigh rewrites definition of the word 'retirement'

Leigh D'Agostino has worked for nearly her whole life, including now in retirement. She was retail manager at the former Doyle-Knower and was tour manager at the F.X. Matt Brewing Co. She volunteers at the Boilermaker Road Race and spearheaded the Buono Fortuna raffle for this year's festival. Most would say she needs a break. Not her.

After more than 40 years in the workforce, you're now retired. How is your new life treating you?

I love retirement. My family was very surprised that I like the new relaxed schedule. My job took up six days a week for many years and they thought I would have a hard time adjusting. I like not having to watch the clock all day.

What was it like being tour manager at the F.X. Matt brewery?

People often think because you work in a brewery you drink beer all day! Seriously, it was a very rewarding job as I managed Saranac Thursdays into a very popular annual summer event for the city. I am most proud of working with the brewery tour guides and helping them develop their individual speaking skills. Everyone needs to know how to communicate.

You also worked at Doyle Knower for 22 years prior to the brewery. What did you like best about that job and what didn't you like?

Doyle-Knower was my first job out of college. I started working there as a retail business intern from MVCC and became a buyer and merchandise manager until the store closed. I did not like cleaning out fitting rooms, but it was part of the job.

You might be retired, but that doesn't mean you're not busy. You volunteer for the Boilermaker each year. What do you do, how long have you done it and why do you do it?

I started being involved with the Boilermaker as part of my job 21 years ago. The tour center is responsible for all the morning refreshments (5 a.m.) for media, elite runners, back-stage crews on race day. We also pour beer at the volunteer party, sample soda at the expo and make sure that all the beer is at each location for all Boilermaker activities during the week.

In addition, we host refreshments for the Committee Run one week prior to the race. The tour guides used to call me "The General,"



Leigh D'Agostino with her husband, Gregory, and daughter Alison.

LEIGH D'AGOSTINO

Age: 65.

Resides: New Hartford.

Family: Husband Gregory, daughter Alison.

Occupation: Retired. Worked at the F.X. Matt Brewing Co. as tour manager for 21 years and Doyle-Knower Co. as retail manager for 22 years.

Things I like to do: Watch the New York Giants and Syracuse University basketball.

Favorite TV show: "Masterpiece Theatre" on PBS.

Favorite movie: "My Fair Lady."

Favorite musical artist or genre: Broadway shows and I love the soundtrack from "Hamilton."

Favorite quote: "Look at the glass as half full, not half empty."

as I have a talent for being organized and handling logistics. Last year, I volunteered to manage the Boilermaker clothing for the expo at MVCC. This involves buying, ticketing, floor plans, cash register and inventory management. Why do I do it? I am a native of this area

and I want people to come back. If they have a great weekend in Utica for this race, perhaps they may think of moving here.

You also volunteered with United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica as a campaign speaker at company presentations and also have been involved with the Girl Scouts for 20 years as a leader and adult trainer. Why do you volunteer so much?

I don't think of it as a choice. I think of volunteering as what people should do for one another. Plus, I don't watch television very much.

When you're not "working" as a volunteer, what else do you enjoy in your retirement?

I enjoy my flower garden and cooking. I am making all the recipes I never had time to try.

Any words of wisdom for those of us considering retirement?

Get into a new routine. Try something different. Take an afternoon and visit Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute or the zoo — places you never had time to visit when you were working. Time is now on your side.

You were married at Blessed Sacrament

Please see LEIGH, Page 7

Practice, practice, practice

At a young age, Zachary has found key to success is hard work

Zachary Slade is 13 years old but his talent is well beyond those years. The parish knows him as a virtuoso on the piano, participating in competitions across the Atlantic. But he's a teenager, too, enjoying swimming, hiking, video games, watching YouTube videos, and he's also a black belt in the martial arts. Needless to say, he's striking the right chords in his young life.

It's apparent you love music. You're an accomplished pianist and even play tuba in your school's concert and jazz bands. From where do you get your love of music?

I'm not really sure. I watched some TV shows when I was little that involved music, but the love of it was just kind of natural for me. I started getting piano lessons at age 4, and it quickly became a big part of my life. My mom also used to play violin, piano, flute and guitar, and she currently plays the harp. Maybe she has something to do with it.

Everyone in the parish is amazed by your talent when you play the piano in church. You oftentimes don't even use sheet music. How did you get so talented and how can you play so well from memory?

There were three steps that I took to be able to play the piano well (and by memory) Step 1: Practice. Step 2: Practice. Step 3: Practice. I was inclined to music when I was little; however, nine-plus years of practice were what really got me to where I am today. As far as memorization is concerned, everybody who enters competitions and does concerts has to play the music by memory, so I have been practicing this skill for a very long time.

When did you realize you had such musical talent?

I'm not really sure, I have just been practicing, performing and competing, and there's always people who have had way more experience and have the time to practice five-plus hours a day. They usually have the upper hand in competitions and they have more talent because of the practicing. That's mainly how it comes about.

You've traveled to Poland several times for competitions and instruction, the latest being participating in the 24th International Master Course for Pianists in Wroclaw in August. What are those competitions like and what do you learn from traveling there?

I competed in the competition in Poland back when I was 8. I don't remember a lot from that trip, but I know it was an amazing experience. The master course was recent, however. I learned so much from the professors I had the lessons with, and I got a whole new perspective on the professional piano world. Many of the participants go to piano conservatories, and they get to practice about eight hours a day. It



LEFT: Zachary Slade at the 24th International Master Course for Pianists in Wroclaw, Poland. RIGHT: Zachary at age 2 beginning his musical life.

ZACHARY SLADE

Age: 13.

Education: In eighth grade at Perry Junior High School.

Family: I live with my mom and my dog Kendo in Frankfort; my father lives in New Hartford.

Things I like to do: Swimming, hiking, chilling in the snow (weather dependent) video games (mainly mobile games such as "Summoners War") and watching YouTube videos.

Favorite TV show: "Designated Survivor."

Favorite movie: "Central Intelligence," "Star Wars" series.

Favorite book: "The Young Elites" series.

Favorite musical artist or genre: Drake; pop and some rap.

Favorite quote: "Do ... or do not. There is no try." — Yoda

was a whole different lifestyle, and now I realize the lifestyle of some of the people I may face in future competitions.

You always seem very calm while playing. Do you ever get nervous?

Absolutely! I can't help it sometimes, especially when I am performing in a big concert or a competition. A lot of times, months of practice and hard work is on the line in the competitions, and I just can't help getting a tad bit nervous.

What does music do for you?

The classical music I play opens doors for

me to learn about other cultures in other countries, and I learn about what life was like back in the era when that music was composed. A lot of the classical music written a few hundred years ago reflects on the culture of that era. Playing music also helps with my focus, especially when I am playing by memory. One thing I want to add — I don't like to turn up the radio to Bach and Beethoven (at all). Like most people my age, I listen to all the new releases on the pop channels, and I also like some rap songs as well.

Your favorite subject is school is math. Many students might say that's their worst subject. Why do love it so much?

I like math because it is simple and straightforward, and the answers you put out are either right or wrong. I've always liked working with numbers, and I like the fact that it has a practical application in most parts of life. I want to learn something that I can use many times in my life later on.

You love hiking the High Peaks in the Adirondacks, and have climbed 15 out of the 46 tallest mountains in the area, including Mt. Marcy, whose summit is the tallest elevation in the state. Why do you like it and what do you think about while hiking?

I love hiking the High Peaks because they give me a big challenge whenever I do them, and completing the hikes give me a feeling of achievement I just can't get anywhere else. Every year, the mountains get harder and longer, but I still love to do them because I have that one goal in mind: completing all 46

Please see ZACHARY, Page 7

Relics more than flesh, bone

During the summer, a relic of St. Anne was presented to the congregation after Mass.

I was moved by the devotion demonstrated by the congregants as they touched and/or kissed the small monstrance that contained a fragment of bone. I later found out that that particular sacred piece once was a possession of Monsignor Willenburg and was a gift to our parish. That started me thinking, a possibly dangerous thing, but in this case just an examination of faith.

As a traveler throughout Italy, I often have seen the remains of various saints and blessed individuals venerated in such monstrances, reliquaries and elaborate monuments. Some of the smaller ones I recall included petrified fingers, teeth, St. Clair's hair, St. Francis' sandals, fragments of wood and nails believed to from the cross of Jesus, thorns from Christ's crown and pieces of the manger of Bethlehem.

We, at home, have even received via mail, small pieces of fabric from the Padre Pio Foundation.



A.J. VALENTINI

Larger monumental relics I have seen include the home of the Virgin Mary within the Basilica of Loreto and the "Porziuncola," an entire small church St. Francis restored, again in another basilica, Santa Maria degli Angeli in Assisi. The

mentioned fragment of the holy manger is in an elaborate crypt below the main altar of Rome's Santa Maria degli Angeli. In the town of Otranto, the cathedral holds a chapel with the display of the bones of more than 800 martyrs of the Ottoman slaughter of 1480.

Entire churches have been constructed to house relics. In May, my wife and I were privileged to enter the Basilica of San Nicola (St. Nicholas) in the city of Bari just as an Orthodox celebration was taking place. There was a procession of clergy in elaborately embroidered vestments and the choir erupted in a beautiful hymn that reverberated from the massive stone walls.

We later learned that Pope Francis recently gave permission for the saint's relics to travel to Russia for a visit, as Nicholas is one of the Russian Orthodox Church's most venerated saints. Many local residents were not happy to see their saint leave their presence. The remains had rested in Bari since 1087, when Baresi sailors seized them from Myra, Turkey, which was then in the hands of non-Christians.

The crypt of the Cathedral of Amalfi holds one of the most beautiful tombs in the country, that of the apostle Andrew. His remains were brought from Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade.

The Basilica of San Marco in Venice (11th century) is a monument and tomb of St. Mark the Evangelist. The story goes that in 828, Venetian



Photo by A.J. VALENTINI

The Basilica of San Marco in Venice is a monument and tomb of St. Mark the Evangelist. In 828, Venetian sailors smuggled the remains out of Alexandria, Egypt, in crates labeled "pork" so that the Muslim guards would not inspect them. The Coptic Orthodox Church believes that the saint's head still remains in a church in Alexandria.

sailors smuggled the remains out of Alexandria, Egypt, in crates labeled "pork" so that the Muslim guards would not inspect them. The Coptic Orthodox Church believes that the saint's head still remains in a church in Alexandria.

And, of course, we can't forget the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome, the most elaborate and grandiose of the dedicated structures containing the remains of several holy personages. The tomb of St. Peter, much enhanced over the centuries, is directly below the high altar of the basilica.

So, like any modern day person, trained to be skeptical of anything that doesn't have scientific proof, I began to wonder how the church determines which relics are real.

Not all relics are the same.

A first-class relic is one associated with Christ's earthly life or with the body of a saint. Therefore those fingers in a reliquary or St. Catherine's head in Siena are concrete first-class relics. Many of the relics we have of Christ's life were collected in the 4th century by St. Helen, the mother of the emperor Constantine. She traveled the Holy Land and had carte blanche to dig up whatever she could find.

One story tells how she had a Roman temple on Mount Calvary excavated and found remains of three crosses. Not knowing if one was the true cross, she had each touch a woman who was dying. The first two had no effect, but when the third touched the woman she had a miraculous recovery. That sealed its authenticity as far as the church was concerned. It makes sense then that some of these relics are in the church of Santa Croce in Rome, which once was on Helen's private estate.

The Shroud of Turin never has been authen-

ticated by the church. Even after extensive modern technological analysis it remains a curiosity mentioned in TV documentaries.

A second-class relic is something that the saint used. So when you go to Assisi and visit the room behind the Basilica you will see St. Francis' robe, sandals etc. When a saint is exhumed any remnants of clothing, rosaries or crosses found with him/her become relics of this order.

The tiny pieces of cloth that we receive in the mail are at best third-class relics. They might have touched a first- or second-class relic. The church forbids the sale of relics, so your subsequent donation to the gifting organization is not a sale. Earlier in history relic sales were a common practice and became one of the bones of contention of the Protestant Reformation. You can't buy your way into heaven.

The church dictates that relics must be in sealed containers to be publicly venerated. That is why our St. Anne relic is in a monstrance and why the 3rd century blood of San Gennaro of Naples is kept in sealed ampules. That relic is first class, having been credited with many miracles besides the fact that the crystalized blood turns liquid most Septembers during his feast. It did not liquefy in 1939, and World War II broke out. It did not liquefy last September and Italy has been plagued by heat, brush fires and inability to cope with the rising tide of refugees arriving on her shores.

It might be coincidence, but as Monsignor Vincenzo De Gregorio, the abbot of the chapel of San Gennaro, said, "We must not think about disasters and calamities. We are men of faith and we must continue to pray."

I guess real faith is in your heart and not in objects after all.

LEIGH

Continued from Page 4

Church and became a Catholic one week before the wedding. Why was it important to you to convert?

My husband and I wanted to worship together every week and raise our family. I also liked that at the Catholic Mass, you receive the Eucharist every week. I need the extra encouragement.

What were your feelings when you learned Blessed Sacrament would close and what was it like for the parish?

We had attended Mass at Blessed Sacrament for 20 years and it was like a death in the family. We had lost a dear friend. The closing was coming as we saw the numbers decreasing every week at Mass, especially after the school closed.

You and your husband ended up at Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament. You could have gone anywhere. Why here?

We wanted to support Father Rose as he completed the two-parish merger. He had a very difficult job and he certainly could not please everyone. We decided to try Mount Carmel.

You have made quite an impact in our parish. You have been a parish trustee and parish council member, a lector

and have helped at the parish festival as a food server and finance committee member and this year assisted with the Buono Fortuna raffle. What has our parish come to mean to you?

When you join a parish, and attend weekly Mass you realize it is not a building but a community of people. As you involve yourself in activities, the stranger becomes your friend and friendship lasts a lifetime.

You say what you like the most is being a catechist for fifth-graders in the Faith Formation Program. Why is that so important for you?

Being a catechist is always a learning process for me. I enjoy listening to the children's opinions as they start to form their own values about our faith.

What do you hope the youngsters get out of it?

I hope the children understand that God will always love them. I hope that by attending Faith Formation classes they have a better understanding of our faith and how we all need one another.

What do hope this new stage of your life holds for you?

I hope that our good health continues. I would like to do some traveling across the country.

ZACHARY

Continued from Page 5

High Peaks. Whenever I climb them, I try to think about anything but the mountains. The journeys are very physically and mentally demanding, and I try to talk and think about fun things and random stuff back at home. That is what mainly powers me through the 12- to 13-hour hikes.

You're a black belt in American Eagle Style, a traditional martial arts style. Why did you get into the martial arts and what do you get out of it?

I've been studying the martial arts since I was 6 because my mom got me into it. It involves discipline, exercise and lots of focus, and a lot of what I learn in the style goes hand in hand with my piano studies.

You've been a parishioner of Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament since you were young and you're an altar server. What are your thoughts about the parish?

I can't imagine a parish better than this one. The people are very nice and welcoming, and the church itself is beautiful. Father Cesta is very funny, and he is one of the nicest people I've met. I have been serving for almost five years, and it is an enjoyable and rewarding experience, especially

during Holy Week.

What does your faith mean to you?

Faith helps me deal with problems and choices I face in school and life. It helps me make smart decisions, and sometimes, when I am up against a corner in life, I know that God is there for me.

Life has its ups and downs. How do you cope with disappointments?

I don't really spend a ton of time thinking about them, and after a little while I move on.

If you could tell your friends one thing about your faith, what would it be?

I am a Catholic and I am dedicated to my parish family. I love altar serving every other week and I am starting to get involved with the choir by playing the piano when there is no pianist there.

What do you hope the future holds for Zachary Slade?

I'm not really sure yet. I hope music will be a part of my life later on, but the competitive piano world is very cutthroat, so I'll decide in a few years whether or not to go down that path eventually. Because I like math and science, I might decide to choose a career in one of those fields, but I will always hang on to the music aspect.

NEW PARISHIONERS

Continued from Page 3

Blessed Sacrament.

They attended St. Peter's Catholic Church in Big Pine Key, Florida, for years, which they termed "a wonderful parish."

While many people retire to Florida, Scott and Loraine decided to return home.

"We both retired from federal government service and returned back home to our family and friends in upstate Central New York," Scott said. "We had been away for 16 years having spent a long tour of duty in Washington, D.C., before finally arriving at our last duty station at the Naval Air Station in Key West, Florida. After that, it was time to come home. We moved close by to our daughter and son so that we could enjoy them and our grandchildren."

And that led them to Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament.

"We attended a few other parishes in the area but finally decided on Mount Carmel," Scott said. "Our friend Dr. Mike Wicks suggested Mount Carmel during one of our visits with him



Kathy Smith and Evie Kavanaugh are sisters who became disenchanted with their previous parish and found a welcoming place in our parish.

when we returned home. He gave us a tour one afternoon and urged us to attend Mass — that was three years ago! We immediately fell in love with our new parish family. We were greeted with the warmest, most friendly welcome. Everyone made us feel at home, embracing us right away with broad smiles and open hearts."

Kathy Smith and Evie Kavanaugh are sisters

who live in Utica who became disenchanted with their previous parish.

"It was very nice there, but many changes took place and my sister and I became disappointed and wanted a change," Kathy said.

She said her cousin and husband attended our parish.

"She asked us to attend a Mass," Kathy said. "We did, then went again. The rest is history."

Evie said she has found the parish warm and welcoming.

"Father Cesta put me at peace," she said. "I just felt like I had been going to the church for a long time. I loved the music and choir."

Kathy's advice to others looking for a new spiritual home: "Come join Mount Carmel. It's like coming home to His house."

Scott and Loraine said they have found "so many caring, friendly and supportive people."

Like Kathy and Evie, they have a bit of advice for others:

"We tell everyone we know, 'Come to St. Mary of Mount Carmel. ... This will become your home.'"



Scenes from summer of fun

