

Teen Tells How Dead Theologians Society Brings Life to Carmel Parish

By DANILO L. D'APRILE

In 1997 a young man and a few other young people began a new youth ministry effort in their parish in Newark, Ohio, called the Dead Theologians Society (DTS). This new society has gone on to become a success within the Catholic Church here in the United States and throughout the world.

What is DTS? To sum it up in a few words, DTS was inspired by the lives of the saints and the movie "The Dead Poets Society." The Dead Theologians Society is an international teen and young adult organization whose mission is to pray for the release of the souls in purgatory and to educate young adults in the Catholic faith using the lives and writings of the saints.

Drawing from the writings and lives of the saints makes the young people see them as really human, complete with weaknesses and imperfections, just like they see in themselves. It gives them a chance to realize that they can walk the path to holiness, if they choose. It is not something reserved only for the fanatical and gifted — it is meant for everyone.

My involvement in DTS began in February 2003. I was a typical high school teen, not knowing what I wanted nor what the world wanted from me. A DTS chapter had begun at my parish, St. James the Apostle in Carmel, just a few months earlier.

I soon knew that my Catholic faith would play a major role in my daily activities and it would help shape the person that I am. I am now an active member of DTS, who publishes the group's monthly newsletter. I am involved in many of the community service, spiritual and social activities that we take part in. Most of all, I join with my fellow members and moderators to represent the St. James the



Apostle Parish Chapter of DTS everywhere we go. If not for the active and generous support of the four young moderators; the founder of the chapter, Deacon Gerard Cartwright; and the wonderful pastor of St. James the Apostle parish, Father Anthony D. Sorgie, DTS would just be a quiet whisper in Carmel. Our parish DTS chapter now has more than 50 hooded members who have attended at least five meetings.

For the second straight year, St. James' DTS planned and hosted a confirmation retreat for the eighth-grade confirmation candidates in the religious education program of our parish on March 5, with the generous help of Dr. George Bovino, director of religious education at St. James the Apostle. It was an all-day event modeled after the Youth 2000 NY retreats.

The day began when the candidates met their DTS group leaders. Soon afterward they were greeted in the St. James School gymnasium by Father Sorgie and Dr. Bovino. Throughout the day, three major talks were given by speakers. They were about family, given by Sgt. Paul Falia of the Suffolk County Police Department; forgiveness, by Deacon Cartwright, and faith, by Father Sorgie.

Deacon Cartwright's talk on forgiveness involved a small skit by some of the DTS teens that showed how normal teens can always turn to the Lord to seek help and forgiveness with their problems and flaws. It was an inspiring day for young teens such as the eighth-graders, a day filled with the Holy Spirit, working through the DTS teens and through the wonderful DTS Teen Music Ministry, which

emerged for the first time at this retreat.

The day ended with Mass, and exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. For many of the more than 200 people who attended, this was the first time they experienced the praise and worship of Jesus' body in the monstrance.

Hoping to inspire more teens of the world, DTS continues to serve the Lord and maintain the flame of faith through the youth of the Catholic Church. St. James the Apostle parish is blessed to have such dedicated teens, young adults and clergy.

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