

Teens learning their faith through DTS

BEVERLY — In its third year at St. Bernard Church, the Dead Theologian Society (DTS) continues to gain favor among parish teenagers, and its popularity is spreading to nearby parishes — St. Ambrose in Little Hocking and St. Mary in Marietta — Yvonne Huck, catechetical leader at St. Bernard's, said.

The first chapter of the nationwide DTS in the Steubenville Diocese was formed at St. Bernard's with the support of Msgr. Robert J. Kawa, pastor.

The society focuses on the lives and teachings of saints, Huck explained.

A saint is studied at each DTS session, where time also is set aside for socializing.

At a meeting, after the initial study session, Huck said that youth are encouraged to ask questions about their Catholic faith.

"The questions are good; they get things straightened out," she said.

"The youth are learning so much about their faith."

Some teens have told Huck that as a result of the DTS, they are able to answer questions posed by friends about the Catholic Church.

A priest always attends the DTS meetings, held monthly at St. Bernard's. Other chapters meet monthly or biweekly.

Prayer and praise end each DTS session, Huck said.

The idea behind the DTS, Huck explained, is that "we are dead to this world, but alive in Christ."

For teens, today, Huck added, there is a lot of peer pressure, and the saints offer examples of our faith.

Huck said the DTS, designed for youth, is "very teen relevant." High school freshmen to seniors attend meetings and some come back to sessions when they return home from college, she pointed out.

through the summer, a first campout was held with youth from St. Bernard, St. Ambrose and St. Mary attending.

The overnighter in Waterford centered on the study of St. Benedict, Huck said.

Melinda Husk and Sue Bogden assisted Huck in the planning of the campout, expected to become an annual event.

Thirty-two youth attended.

Msgr. Kawa was at the campout along with Father Mark A. Moore, parochial vicar at St. Mary Church.

At St. Bernard's, the DTS started with four or five youth attending, Huck said. Now, 25-30 come to each meeting.

"It is truly a positive program. You can see the kids growing in their faith, which they are looking at more seriously."

As a result of the study of the saints, Huck said that when it is time for the teens to pick a confirmation name, they really think about the saint to select.

Teens from St. Bernard, at right, join with youth from St. Ambrose and St. Mary, top right and center, at a Dead Theologian Society campout. (Photos provided)

