

Catholic Youth Today

CAPUCHIN YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES



SUMMER 2010

CYFM RECOGNIZES YOUTH AND ADULT LEADERS

Going to Capuchin Youth and Family Ministries for any occasion is always a celebration. Between the hugs, reunions, and community that is built, CYFM makes everyone feel amazing. Going to CYFM for a celebration, however, is a horse of another color. Well, not really. It still makes you feel equally amazing to be, "all dolled up," see the friends who've become a part of your family, dance the night away, and honor the adults who make CYFM possible. The excitement to hear of the seniors who win the scholarships is always another benefit of the Annual Awards and Senior Recognition Dinner Dance. Every senior was given a certificate for all of their participation in CYFM throughout their high school careers.

With a night full of awards, dancing, delicious food, and great company, one is reminded of the importance CYFM has in our, the teens, lives for the better. As one of the core values of this little slice of heaven states, "We believe in young people and in their ability to be authentic and responsible leaders in the Church and in society." The dinner dance is just one of the many events CYFM holds each year to honor teenagers who choose a positive lifestyle and develop their faith. The teenagers honored this year with scholarships were: **Heather McCormack, Alex Angstrom, Mairead Fogarty, Catherine Lupi,** and myself.

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Our 2010 Senior 'Class'

CATHOLIC YOUTH TODAY

is published by the Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries on behalf of the teenagers and adults who make up our ministry and our benefactors who support our ministry

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CAPUCHIN YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRIES

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The awards dinner celebrated the year's experiences and successes and remembered those very special adults who donate much of their time to helping teenagers grow and flourish in their relationship with Christ. The adults honored this year were just few of the many who help make CYFM the beautiful place it is. These dedicated adults honored that night are: **Dave and Kathy Bell, Rita Dlug, Jackie Gonzalez, and Matt Burke.** Congratulations!

Another part of the night was a slideshow playing of all the seniors who are graduating and have spent countless hours worshipping our Lord at CYFM. The evening was bittersweet, fun, and a great way to end another year at CYFM. Oh wait, did I say end? What I really meant, was that the year, for CYFM, is only just beginning. Happy summer!

~ Carolyn Thorn



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Empowering young people as leaders and then giving them key responsibilities is a hallmark of Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries. When our strategic planning group sought to articulate CYFM's core values, we stated clearly; "We believe in young people and in their ability to be authentic and responsible leaders in the church and society." We are proud to hold this value. We are wise to act on it.

Why? First, it is scriptural. We are Christians and follow St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy; "Let me one look down on you because of your youth, but be a continuing example of love, faith, and purity to all believers" Tm 4:12. Our experience is young people respond to God's call to leadership. They respond with enthusiasm and desire to grow in their faith and commitment to the community that so trusts them.



Elsewhere St. Paul teaches that the Holy Spirit bestows gifts in abundance on the Body of Christ (Rom 12 and 1 Cor 12). We witness the power of the youth of our community enriched with these gifts and supported to do extraordinary things during retreats, mission trips, and in their communities. Time and again, we hear the candidates of DDA tell us that their lives were changed by a peer's talk during the retreat.

We are also Capuchin. Allowing youth to exercise leadership within our community is a very Franciscan thing to do. We follow St Francis' counsel of minority. One manifestation of minority is that all deserve a place and a voice at the table. Isn't this also a manifestation of trust in the

Holy Spirit? Adults humbly acknowledge that we do not have all the answers. We trust that the Spirit has not only placed the gifts within the community, but that when we challenge young people to use these gifts responsibly, guided by the Holy Spirit, they can and will.

One of the core CYFM programs, our Day by Day Agape retreat, entrusts 14 of its 21 talks or mediations to teen

leaders. Further we entrust the facilitation of the small group discussions by the candidate to these 12 peer leaders. Regularly, we hear the young participants reflect on the depth and honesty of such sharing as moments of grace in which they experienced God healing or calling them to a closer relationship.

Finally, Catholic Youth Ministry has always defined itself as being to, for, with, and by young people. It is the ministry any member of the Church community does to or in the service of youth. It is the advocacy we do for or on behalf of youth. Youth ministry is what we do with or along side of young people. It is the ministry by young people towards their peers and others within the Church because they are gifted by the Holy Spirit with the gifts and voice to speak more effectively and powerfully as authentic and responsible leaders in the Church and in society.

We are wise to act on this core value. It is one of the things that makes Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries the powerful evangelizing community it is!

~ Tom Brinkmann

EMPOWERED DISCIPLESHIP

During a span of a few short years, Francis saw his community grow from the original 12 members in Assisi to over 5,000 brothers in several countries. People were attracted to this new, radical embrace of the Gospel Life and inspiring holiness with which the brothers lived. This rapid expansion was also due to the fact that Francis received all new brothers with open arms welcoming into the community anyone who wanted to join.

For Francis, what mattered most was the desire for discipleship. There wasn't a lengthy application process, an in-depth background check, or an extensive training process. Rather, Francis quickly accepted new members and gave them his blessing. Francis trusted in the sincerity of those who wanted to live according to his *Rule and Life* and, even more, he trusted the Holy Spirit. Francis' radical acceptance of others empowered those who joined in living his dream. As we all know,



vocations do not come from ourselves. They come from God. (God chose us, we did not choose him, John 15:16.)

It is God's Spirit within us that impels us to prayer and service.

One of our core values at CYFM reads: *We believe in young people and in their ability to be authentic and responsible leaders in the church and society. We express this in many ways. One of them is on our outreach programs COP & CAM. Together we receive the Holy Spirit and become Church. Like St. Francis, we trust in the sincere hearts of those who come to serve others. We empower those*

who seek leadership roles within our community. We are all enriched as God works through each of us to become the Body of Christ visible in today's world.

~ Br. Lake

ASK THE PADRE

"What does it mean to be a Guardian in the Franciscan/Capuchin Community?"

The term Guardian was a term St. Francis preferred when referring to the local "Superior" of a community. It meant that the friar who was asked to be the leader of the community was not "above" or "better than" the other friars or even necessarily "more capable". He was in fact the servant of the community. He was someone who was called to be "authentic." Someone who not only told others what to do or even how to live in the spirit of St. Francis, but who was an example of what he asked of others himself. When I was a novice we had an assistant novice master who was a perfect example of this. He never asked us to do anything he wouldn't do himself. Whether we were asked to sickle weeds in a field on a hot day or clean a bathroom he was there working with us. St. Francis would have been pleased. Young people today would refer to it as not only "talking the talk" but also "walking the walk". In other words being real or genuine.

St Francis in his Rule for Hermits stipulates that in this little hermit community two of the brothers should be 'the mother' while the other two live as 'sons'. The 'mothers' should keep the life of Martha, i.e. serving, cooking, cleaning etc, while the 'sons' should follow the life of Mary, sitting at the feet of the Lord in contemplation and prayer. Throughout the Middle Ages the model of Mary and Martha had been used to distinguish the vocation of the religious who had with-

drawn from the world and who was therefore free to be wholly attentive to the Lord, from that of the 'secular' Christian involved in the affairs and concerns of the world; the vocation of the 'Marys' being considered higher than that of 'Marthas'. Francis, however, makes no such hierarchical distinction. The 'sons' who are focusing primarily on contemplative prayer are to be dependent upon their 'mothers' begging alms and periodically the roles would be reversed so that those who had withdrawn for a time of intense prayer took their turn in serving while the others were left free to go deeper into contemplation.

For Francis an ideal fraternity is when the brothers are dependent upon each other and owe each other mutual love and obedience. In our Capuchin Community a friar is asked to be Guardian for three years with the possibility of being reassigned for another three years at the end of his term. After that generally the Guardian is asked to "step down" from his position for at least a year while another takes his place. This I believe is good for the well being of the friar and the community. "So Guardians, be nice to your community. Someone you lead now may someday be your Guardian". ☺

In service to God and community,

~ Friar Fred



This past February I had the opportunity to be part of something that was a true gift and privilege. The best part is that it is something everyone may be a part of, and experience too! I had a conversion that I didn't think was possible and the Girls of DDA 215 and I would love to share it with you.

Three of our five children have been involved with the CYFM programs- all three attending DDA and the further leadership and other retreats available to the teens. That in itself should have been a clue to me as to how powerful and wonderful these retreats are, but I am a slow learner. I should also tell you that my husband, David and I have attended Cursillio weekends ourselves, so that also should have been a clue to what I was "getting myself into."

This particular weekend was special because our youngest child, Julia was on team for the first time and wanted me to be an adult observer. To be candid here, I, as all of you, live a very busy life and the idea of giving up four days, FOUR DAYS, was more than I felt willing to do. Boy, oh boy, I had a lot to learn! So dragging my feet, with a little whining and bellyaching, I went on the retreat.

I had the honor of being at a table with women of all ages and enjoyed meeting and getting to know the women, I did know, more intimately. We made posters, and had chats, the blessings were bountiful. There were so many activities to participate in and lots of laughter. For me, the best part was the witnessing of the teenage girls. The faith, the courage and the honesty that these young women shared with us, was nothing short of amazing. Each girl had a

different story with one common, recurring theme: A deep faith in our Lord and a willingness to humble herself and grow from whatever the experience was that she shared with us. I am still in awe of these girls. If these young women are an example of the women of the future we aren't in as bad a shape as the media would have us

believe. The young women who participated in the retreat as leaders, as well as participants, are intelligent, intuitive, moral and faith-filled.

Another wondrous thing was watching how at the beginning of the weekend, on Thursday night, we were almost strangers, and then leaving the retreat on Sunday as mother, sister and friend with each girl

or woman. Leaving on Sunday was also difficult because I knew we had to face the real world and leave the security of unconditional love and friendship given us on DDA 215 by the other women, the participating religious and all the people who helped to make the weekend so memorable. Yet, I didn't feel alone because I knew I had a community who I can turn to with any troubles that may come my way. (A side note here is that I was so enthusiastic when I went home that I encouraged my husband and my son to participate as adult observers, and they did!)

I hope to participate in many more weekends, and to do so as a team member to continue the wonderful tradition that has become a big part of our family history.

Yours in Christ,

~ Carolyn Mundy



DDA #216

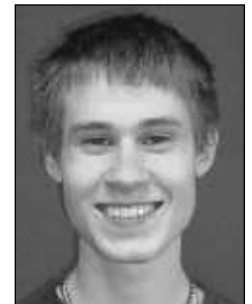
There is no single best way to describe a CYFM retreat. It's difficult to even pick a favorite part of the retreat. Much of what I experienced at CYFM, I have not experienced anywhere else. My DDA was hands down one of the best weekends of my life. I arrived at CYFM not knowing what to expect, it was my first experience here. The moment I arrived I was greeted by a flood of strangers that would soon become some of my closest friends.

I was convinced to go on a DDA by some of my friends in the peer ministry team I belong to. I was skeptical if these retreats they speak of could really be as awesome as they say. I decided that I would give it a shot and see for myself. I filled out the application, sent it in, and I was on my way to an experience that I will never forget. One of the reasons I decided to go is that everyone I know that has been on a retreat at CYFM only says good things about their experience.



It is truly amazing what 72 hours can do. I will never forget the people I have spent that time with. We have shared meals together, prayed together, and even played awesome matches of dodge ball. I have learned a lot about myself through their stories, and their experiences. As the weekend crept to a close I found myself not wanting to leave. I just let myself know that there will always be another opportunity to be at CYFM, and as a very good friend that I met at my DDA said, "In order to come-back, you must first leave." So I take that to heart and I will defiantly be back and I recommend a retreat to everyone.

~ Andrzej Skonieczny



DDA #217

Whenever people ask me, "What is DDA?" I do not think I can ever completely explain it to someone unless they experience it for themselves. DDA is a weekend unlike any other. Although I can not fully say it changed my life, it did, however, change my perspective on several things. Growing up in a Catholic school environment from kindergarten to a senior in high school and being raised with wonderful, Catholic parents, I felt I knew a great amount about my faith and what it was like to be a Christian. However, DDA made me realize that my faith was never my "own" faith. It was the faith my parents had instilled in me from day one. It was forced and never actually meant something to me personally. I went to church on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation because it was just what we did as a family and mainly because of the reason we all hear so very often from our parents: "Because I said so." After DDA, however, my outlook on all this changed.

As a teenager, obstacles in my life made it difficult to keep a strong faith. However, DDA helped me to learn more about my faith and how to grow closer to God. DDA taught me how to love my faith in Jesus. The faith in which I had been taught my entire life was strengthened by the love shown in each girl



on the retreat. The girls I met on that weekend are now my family and best friends. Through my DDA, I learned who I truly am and the blessings I have been given. My life is now faith-centered as it always should be with God all around me. DDA made me see Him through other people and I think that was the coolest part of the whole learning process. He really is in everyone and speaking through them to you.

So I encourage you, if you haven't already, to make your DDA encounter. Like I said, it really is an experience I have trouble explaining fully. It is four days full of happiness and laughter, tears and sadness, dancing and singing, making life-long friends, and new experiences. Just be ready to have A LOT of fun. Going on DDA 210 and being on Team for DDA 217 were easily the best decisions I ever made and I found a family immersed in faith and love and best friends that I know I will keep forever.

~ Shannon Quaid



CAP CORPS VOLUNTEER PERSPECTIVE

As we begin to prepare for the end of this year and all that it entails I find myself thinking about how thankful I am for all that I have experienced here at CYFM. Instead of looking at all of the things that I will be saying goodbye to on July 22nd, such as the amazing people who make up the CYFM community, I instead find myself focusing on all of the “firsts” that I have experienced here. To begin with, I have never lived in an intentional faith community before. I have learned so much from our community of Cap Corps Volunteers this year. My fellow CCVs have taught me patience, understanding, love, and faith in ways that I have never been taught or shown before. I have climbed many mountains for the first time, both literally and figuratively.

In climbing these mountains and seeing the beauty of the Hudson Valley I have seen God more fully present in the beauty of the world around me. I have also been provided with the quiet to honestly be still and know that God is here. Additionally, I have been able to see the impact of what we do on retreats in a more holistic way in the lives of the families we minister to, particularly when the Cap Corps’ and I have been able to have dinner with them in their homes. Through our experiences with these “host” families I have more fully understood how important what we do at CYFM is in the lives of these families. CYFM has helped to shape who they are and how they relate to one another. It has been a privilege to be a part of the lives of these families this year and to them I owe a big “Thank you,” even though I know it is not enough.



A few of my other first time experiences this year include: dessert thrown in my face, riding my bike 12 miles, seeing more than a foot of snow, going to the Jersey Shore, meeting cadets at West Point and sharing in their United Catholic Fellowship group, being on a retreat more than 100 times. This year is also the first time I have truly been myself and have been open and honest with everyone I meet. I am so happy to say that this year is the first time I have seen truly amazing teenagers and adults who live their faith and know the love of God in such a deep way. This year is the first time I have been moved to tears at being able to watch some of the teenagers here experience their conversion, and have been able to watch these same teens become leaders and help others in their conversion.

I have said this more than once this year and I hope that it is not the last time I will say it, but I have the best job in the world and I love it. I get to say this to myself every day. My decision to be here this year has helped me to see the love of others and the love of God in a new and different way and I am forever changed and grateful for it. I only hope that some day I will be able to be a part of a place like CYFM again, a place where I share the love of God and love of neighbor, and I live that love in my everyday life.

~ Cara Annese



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GoodSearch

REFLECTIONS ON
Women of the Waters, Bloom Where You Are Planted

-February 2010 Retreat

As the gentle snows of February in central NY enveloped us, our excitement began to grow regarding getting to spend some special time with family and close friends on our first women's retreat. What we didn't realize, however, was that by participating in the *Women of the Waters*, how much we would enjoy meeting all of the other women whose faith we shared.

Immediately after joining our assigned tables, we were asked to share with each other our life experiences based on the color and amount of the M & M's we each chose. And, very soon into our discussions, as God laid his loving hands on us all, anxiety and hesitation dissipated; peace filled us. By sharing various stories about each of our life's trials, our souls were nourished. At that moment, as other women of same faith took the time to listen and care, we were made abundantly aware that we were exactly where we were supposed to be. Through this, we each were able to bloom. The outside world departed, God's love filled the room, and our souls were filled with tranquility.

Feeling such a strong sense of community and discipleship so early on in our fellowship weekend, reminded us of how Jesus knew, just he sat at the table with His friends, that the breaking of the bread that we also shared that cold winter weekend, i.e. sharing our "candy stories," would bring us so closely together with the women in our newly found faith community.

We also learned quickly through our discussions and self-reflections that everyone has plans on how her life should be, and at times, we all feel stuck. Yet during our retreat, it became clearer that we were and still are exactly where we are supposed to be, and God wants us to bloom there. Through God's grace, our calling is to nourish each other. By this, we are glorifying Him. We must never forget that God walks with us each day; we never walk alone.

Through experiencing life with such amazing women on our *Women of the Waters* retreat, we were renewed and energized right where God planted us—essentially each becoming a better version of ourselves. And what we realized is that it was God's choice for us to attend; we simply listened and followed through with His decision. Because of this, our time at the retreat, like Lydia's time with the disciples of Jesus, was life-changing.

As we continue to reflect on our gardens, we are even more aware that we need more of the living waters of



Jesus to keep those gardens in bloom. Meeting with such wonderful women did this.

We give you thanks, Lord, for the gift of meeting such beautiful women and seeing that we all must nourish each other as children of God. Blessed are those who led our retreat. They have opened our minds, hearts and souls by allowing us to bloom where we are planted.

May we continue to grow as your children by flowing with the life-giving waters of Jesus.

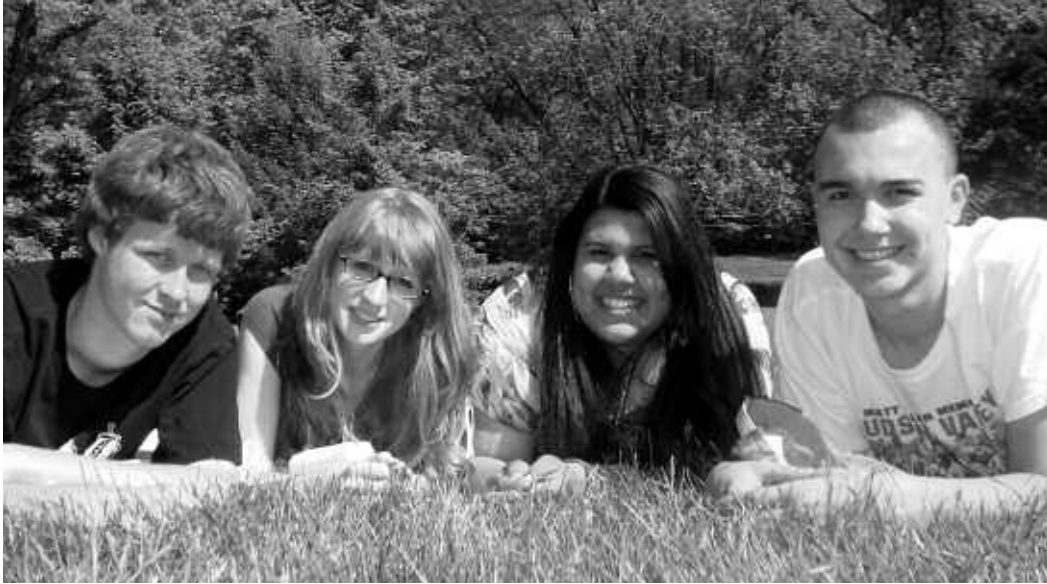
Looking Forward to Next Year,



~ Cricket Scullin and Angel Godleski

DDA Leadership

I remember my first experience at CYFM like it was yesterday. It was two years ago, at my sister's DDA closing mass. I remember seeing so many excited girls as they sang their DDA songs together as if they had been best friends for all their lives. It was though they had this bond that was inseparable through Christ.



Two years later, it was my turn to experience this. I can't even say how happy I was to be going on my own DDA. It was finally my chance to be part of this family that I longed to be in. Pulling up to CYFM, I felt joyful, nervous, but mostly so glad I was there. Walking through those front doors, I was immediately bombarded with hugs, smiles, and high fives. Throughout my DDA, I was not only overwhelmed with love given to me by my new sisters, but overwhelmed with the love of Christ. It was amazing to see, and hear not only myself, but my peers talk so openly about their faith. There was a sense of security there, that no one would judge you on your thoughts, or on your own personal faith. I never wanted to leave. Unfortunately, it was the last day on DDA 217. After the countless hugs, and tears, it was time to go. We knew it was not a 'good-bye', but a 'see you soon'.

Not even two days after DAA did my new sisters and I start talking about leadership. The countdown was soon over, and I was finally back home at CYFM. I was ecstatic to see my best friends whom I met at CYFM, but even more ecstatic to meet new people who had also experienced almost the same thing as me. After

finding my room, and putting my bags on my bed, I ran downstairs to once again, be bombarded with endless hugs and smiles. I was ready for another Christ filled, upbeat weekend.

On my leadership weekend, I learned so much that I will carry on through out my life. I learned how to be a Christian leader and lead with the values that Jesus did. The team members from my DDA

were so inspiring and influential. I could see Christ working through them as leaders. Their talks touched everyone in the room, and I truly look up to them. My leadership weekend helped me to become like the team leaders and to help people in not only our Christian community, but everywhere else I go as well. CYFM has helped me see God more clearly in myself and others. I cherish each time I spend there, and I'm always looking forward to my next experience to share with my new family.

~ Madeline Dondero



Be In "Constant Contact" with Us

If you would like to receive E-mail announcements and reminders about upcoming events here at the center, go to our website (www.cyfm.org); click on 'E-mail Sign-up' at the top right of our homepage; fill out the form and click "Submit".

That's all you have to do to be in constant contact with CYFM!!!!!!

FAMILY FESTIVA

This year on May 16th, six youth groups from around the Hudson Valley came together to participate in CYFM's annual Family Festiva and God's TYM Olympics. The day

series of challenges set up by the Cap Corps Volunteers requiring the virtues of speed, strength, agility, coordination, raw intelligence and creativity in order to claim the

coveted Golden Tau. After running around balancing eggs on spoons, counting beds, and other various challenges, the teams would each prepare a skit depicting a Bible verse for a final round.

After each skit was presented, and the marks were tallied, the Golden Tau was presented to the team of those who did not have a youth group present.



was kicked off with Mass. This was followed by the Senior tree planting, the planting of a tree by all the graduating seniors to commemorate their time and joys at CYFM.

Once the tree was planted, each youth group opened up a booth where various crafts were made, or games played, ranging from face-painting to bracelet-making to hurling whipped cream pies at the Cap Corps Volunteers. The day provided the great opportunity to see some old and new faces around CYFM.

The day continued with the God's TYM Olympics where each youth groups competed against one another. Some groups had matching outfits, while anyone who did not have a youth group present banded together and were ready to compete. These teams went head to head in a



They will proudly hold it and try to defend it in next year's God's TYM Olympics.

~ Ian Hart





THANK YOU DONORS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

CYFM is blessed by the many individuals and families who generously supported our recent fundraising endeavors.

General Donations (\$1026.00)

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Mr & Mrs Thomas Lowe
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Mr & Mrs William Muth
Mr Thomas Ruiz
Mr & Mrs Frederick Scullin
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Post Outreach Appeal (\$100.00)

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Please remember us in your will:

“Capuchin Youth & Family Ministries,” a ministry of the Capuchin Franciscans of the Province of St. Mary of the Capuchin Order, a not-for-profit religious institution having its principal office at St. Conrad Friary, 30 Gedney Park Drive, White Plains, New York 10605.

For more information, please call our development office at (212) 564 0759 ext 252.

A special note for families who work for IBM:

You can now find CYFM on the official list for the IBM Employee Charitable Campaign. If you give to that campaign, please consider designating your contribution for CYFM and help support our ministry with young people and their families.



CYFM UPCOMING EVENTS

PLEASE NOTE that these dates and activities are subject to change.

JULY

Jul. 22Cap Corps Volunteer's Send-off

AUGUST

Aug 22Cap Corps Volunteer's Arrive

Aug. 27-29G.I.F.T (Growing In Faith Together)

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 3-5Renew & Refresh

Sept. 5Cap Corps Volunteer's Commissioning

OCTOBER

Oct. 14-17Girl's DDA Weekend

Oct. 30-317th & 8th Grade Overnight
(Bring it on: The Lowdown on Prayer)

ALWAYS DOUBLE CHECK before you plan!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORDINATION

6/19/10- **Brian O'Neil** of St. Anastasia's parish in Harriman was ordained as a deacon at St. Patrick's Cathedral

DEATHS

4/20/10 – **Salvatrice Amendola**, grandmother of **Gina Fullam** (DDA 184, 194), **Joe Fullam** (DDA 176, 185, 201, 206) and **Laura Fullam** (DDA 202)

BIRTHS

5/8/10 – a daughter, **Cecelia Grace**, born to **Jason Sclafani** (LA 03/04), (DDA LI 13, DDA 185, 187, 190, 199 and 204) and **Kerry Durkin Sclafani** (LA 03/04),(DDA 184, 188 and 207)

5/18/10 – a daughter, **Ruth Cecilia**, born to **Edward B. Rogers, IV** (LA 04/05), DDA 190 and 192 and **Elizabeth Rogers**