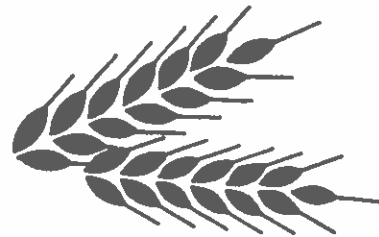


# In Focus



SPECIAL EDITION

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*As teen CREW members prepare for next summer's Mission trip, looking back helps put all their service and fundraising efforts into perspective. And looking back helps parishioners to establish priorities in lending greatly needed and greatly appreciated support to those efforts.*

*The following account of last summer's Mission trip was provided by Cindy Shaw, who stepped in to serve as coordinator once more.*

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This year the strong history of CREW missions promoting the sharing and developing of our faith continued with the sixth annual Mission trip.

The theme, "We are the Body of Christ," was chosen by the teens, and they developed a Bible study centered on it. Little did they know that their journey would be recalled by three watchwords: *patience, perseverance, and fun.*

Twenty-three teens and twelve adults traveled to Memphis, Tenn., where they worked with MIFA, the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association, to fulfill their mission of service, and, as many of the youths discovered, to find a new understanding not only of others, but of themselves. During the Mission send-off Mass, Fr. Joe Hogan asked three teens, "What do you hope to gain from this trip?" Their answers

## St. Patrick's CREW On Mission, 2005

*Lord Give me Your Holy Spirit that I may be open to what Your Word is for me and that I may be changed by it.*

were "patience," "perseverance," and "fun."

Little did the group know that all of these would be tested from the start. Departing on Jul. 24—one of the hottest days of the year, topping out at

first.

For the following six hours they drove in the blazing sun, and the temperature in the bus reached over 90 degrees! Some of the dads got together to buy some hand-held fans so that there would at least be some air movement. During this time the teens maintained as good attitudes as could be expected for the situation and took it all in stride. When they finally arrived at the dorm at 10:30 p.m. they were hot, smelly, and tired. After lugging in all of the bags and equipment, we were then told (of all things!) the air conditioning in the

dorm was broken! This called for a great deal of *patience* from the group.

The next day the teens and parents were divided into five work groups, each of which had its own mission for the week. Four of these groups worked on home repairs for disadvantaged eld-



The 2005 CREW participants ready to leave on the 2004 mission

erly homeowners. They were given the tasks of replacing floors, ceilings, and wallboards, with painting to be done inside and out.

One group delivered Meals-on-Wheels to elderly clients. They took meals to people in the mornings, helping to deliver the 3,000 meals MIFA prepares in their headquarters

103 degrees—they boarded their bus and waved good-bye. Very quickly the group realized how hot the bus was. By the time they reached Charleston, they were already hot and sweating, and not long after, one of the teens got sick. In an effort to improve the situation, they even made a return trip to Tuscola to switch buses. But as it turned out, this was for naught; the second bus was just as hot as the

erly homeowners. They were given the tasks of replacing floors, ceilings, and wallboards, with painting to be done inside and out.

One group delivered Meals-on-Wheels to elderly clients. They took meals to people in the mornings, helping to deliver the 3,000 meals MIFA prepares in their headquarters

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every day, and did yard work in the hot, humid afternoons.

By the end of the week, each group had accomplished the goals they'd set out at the beginning of the week. This demonstrated *perseverance*!

Finally, the Mission group also had fun. They toured the Civil Rights Museum, swam in the University of Memphis pool, went sightseeing in downtown Memphis, went to Six Flags, and even just "hung out." One could certainly say they had *fun*!

The Mission group included teens from five different high schools. They ate together, worked together, studied the Bible together, and went sightseeing together. The struggles they faced early on, the work they accomplished, and the fun they had were all essential for the bonding of the group. By forming this bond, the teens became One Body in Christ, and one with the St. Patrick's community. That is what this trip was about—using hearts and hands to help those in need, for we are all one body in Christ and are called to serve one another.

## Working together in Christ

While in Memphis, the CREW group worked in five teams. Here are a couple of their stories.

### *Maciek Swiech: Helping Mr. Oliver*

Four of us, led by Jim Mayor and Dave Eifert, were given the task of helping Mr. Oliver with repairs to his home. Mr. Oliver's kitchen floor and a large part of the ceiling had extensive water and termite damage. While people with experience took care of putting in a new

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*Fr. Hogan joined in the send-off*



*We baked in the bus, but managed to stay in good spirits*



*Having fun in downtown Memphis*



*Working in the heat was just another challenge!*



*Laying a new floor was hard work, but we had fun doing it!*

this, so that you could not even tell where the floor was.

Once we got back to the ceiling, it turned out that there was an incredible amount of damage to the corner of the ceiling, and so we set about to restore it as well as we could. We put in a new header and supports and affixed the joist more firmly to the wall, making it more stable. We were then able to put in the drywall to complete the ceiling and painted the drywall with texture paint so that it looked very similar to the rest of the ceiling. We also put in a new sub-floor and laid new tiles, and we reorganized, repainted, and put in a new floor in a closet that needed some major repairs as well.



*The Olivers liked their new kitchen.*

floor, we were given the task of cleaning Mr. Oliver's back room. It turned out that Mr. Oliver's son had a mental condition, which caused him to collect seemingly random items, including newspapers, mail, clothing, cell phones, and other items that he thought of as his precious belongings. He had filled an entire room with

Once we were done, the ultimate reward was the look on Mr. Oliver's face. Mr. Oliver was not the kind of person who had many facial expressions, but when he saw his new kitchen, his sympathetic face cracked a smile and his eyes lit up. He told us that he had never seen anything more beautiful in his life. But what was really amazing was the change between Mr. Oliver and his son.

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*Evening worship called for pretty active participation!*



Throughout the whole week they had constantly been fighting and yelling at each other, but when they saw the work we were doing, it did something to them, and they were able to reconcile their differences. Seeing them happy and nice to each other made all the toil worth it. I strongly recommend that anyone who is thinking of coming on [next] year's mission go. It is an experience that you cannot possibly get from anything else.



*Working on the ceiling.*



*We got to use some really cool tools!*

*Amy Black: Helping a grandmother*

I am a sophomore at Judah Christian School, and this was my first mission trip. I liked going because I got to meet a lot of other high school students from the church, and I liked to be able to help other people. The most memorable part of the trip was when the owner of the house, wanted pictures of us so she could remember us. She had her grandson take a picture of us, and then another, and then she told him to take yet one more just to make sure we were all in it.

This trip made me think about how good I had it. A tree fell through the roof of her house, and she paid a guy in advance to fix her roof. He worked on it for 2 days and then left town without finishing it. She couldn't afford to pay someone else to work on it. Her job was to be a senior friend to another elderly woman from MIFA. Since MIFA already knew her, they sent us over to repair her ceiling. We had to tear down the ceiling in that room, put up new drywall, put in new trim on the floor and ceiling, and then paint the ceiling and walls.

Overall it was a good experience, and I am planning on going again next summer!

*Allison Jarrett*

This was my fourth Mission trip with St. Patrick's CREW. The one thing that sticks out really well in my mind about the trip this year was the human interaction, especially

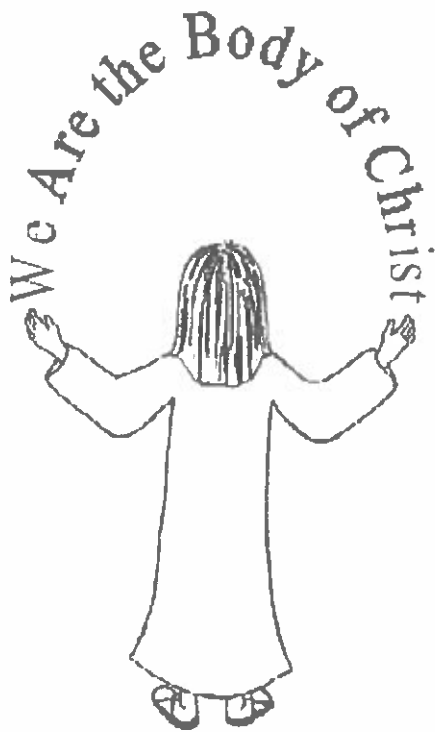


*The tree is gone and the ceiling looks great!*



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amongst the CREW teens. I was a Bible study leader this year, and all of the teens that were in my group were first-timers, which could have made the discussion very awkward and tense. But they were surprisingly insightful; every single person in my group made an effort to open up and bond with everyone else right from the beginning. For the first night or so, I just thought I had a very chatty Bible study group, but later on in the week, as we started doing large-group activities and sing-alongs, I realized that



*"The Bible studies were most meaningful for me because they gave me time to reflect on my religion and action."*

*"I liked singing together during Bible study because we felt like a community."*

*"I liked Bible study because the discussions were very insightful."*



*Bible study sessions were very creative.*



The best part of the Mission overall?

*"It has helped me see past some of the stereotypes I realized I held towards poor people."*

*"I learned not to judge others."*

*"I am more accepting of people who are different from me."*

*"The interactions with the people on the trip and doing something for a good cause."*

*"Finishing our work on the job site because I felt accomplished and like I had done some good."*

