

MASCOUTAH

Print | E-mail | Comment (No comments posted.) | ☆☆☆Rate | Share | Text Size

CYO speaker touches emotions

By Theresa Schmidt

Published: Tuesday, November 23, 2010 8:12 AM CST

mascherald@heraldpubs.com

There wasn't a dry eye in the church when the Holy Childhood Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) hosted renowned speaker Justin Fatica and local band "Oddwalk Ministries" on Wednesday, Nov. 17.

Packed to the brim with high school students, Holy Childhood Church was abuzz with energy when Oddwalk Ministries took the stage as the opening act at Wednesday's festivities. From the oddly ridiculous "O Saint Joseph, I implore thy aid; I'm trying to sell my home and I've had no luck I'm afraid" to the deeply spiritual "Come to me and breathe new life in me," Oddwalk offered the perfect combination of faith and silliness to prepare the crowd for a moving night of spiritual growth.

Combining the talents of Shannon Cerneka of Belleville and Orin Johnson of St. Louis, Oddwalk has performed for a number of local and national events, including past World Youth Days in Belleville, Confirmation retreats and National Catholic Youth Conferences. Lucas Mueller, a participant at the event, said, "I've heard them [Oddwalk] at two recent World Youth Days and I have all their CDs. They have good music and they always get the crowd moving."

Following Oddwalk's performance was speaker Justin Fatica and his powerful message of hope and love. Using the real life stories of past and present audience members, Fatica encouraged those present to accept themselves and their weaknesses just as they are. Emily Renth, daughter of long-time CYO leader Kathy Renth, said, "Thank you, Justin Fatica, for making me realize I am not alone! For making me realize that it doesn't matter what other people think. What really matters is what my Father thinks."

Bringing Fatica to Holy Childhood was the result of a tremendous effort between many dedicated parish members. CYO members Jordan Anderson and Jessica Wingate originally approached CYO leader Ron Hulliung with the idea after they saw Fatica speak at Catholic Family Land. When Hulliung saw how excited the two were about the idea, he requested help from the parish and was overwhelmed by the positive response.

"I just think God works in some great ways. It's just amazing that when things happen or there are needs, this parish does just a beautiful job coming and helping us out; every time it astonishes me. I just love being here," Hulliung explained.

The effort was clearly worth it. Teenagers flooded Facebook with inspiring messages and energy. Jordan Rasch called it "the best night of his life" and enthusiastically declared, "I love everyone and you are AWESOME!" Kari Kolda stated, "My life is forever changed. I am amazing. What others think and say of me does not matter. What I think of myself doesn't matter. Only God's thought of me matters, and He thinks I am amazing."

If the evening had touched or struck a cord with just one person it would have been a success, but its obvious power and reach is an even greater testament to the love and passion passed on by Holy Childhood and its youth group through events like these. Young or old, the community will all watch Holy Childhood with anticipation for more such faith-filled, amazing events in the future.

For more information about the Holy Childhood Catholic Youth Organization, contact Ron Hulliung at (618) 566-7109 or Kathy Renth at (618) 588-4018. Learn more about Oddwalk Ministries at www.oddwalkministries.com or Justin Fatica at www.justinfatica.net.



Holy Childhood Church was packed as the teens turned out in droves to hear Oddwalk's and Justin Fatica's messages.



Share this Article

