

Reflections of A Happening

by Fr. René Somodevilla

On Labor day weekend a group of teenagers and young adults gathered at St. Philip's Episcopal Church to become involved in a Happening weekend. Actually, the term is to "make" their happening. The Happening renewal movement began in the late 70's as an answer to three young men who wanted to have a similar experience to their parents' Cursillo experience. Once the content was prepared, off the movement went. The Happening experience exists in many countries such as Wales, Great Britain, and Malawi.

The premise is simple. Gather a group of committed teenagers in High School that is willing to introduce others to the love of Christ, and do it in a span of forty eight hours. As I prepared to serve in Happening 48 in the Diocese of West Tennessee, I realized that I had been involved in this renewal movement for thirty years. Thirty years of witnessing lives changing in front of my eyes by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Would this one be the same for those involved? How would this experience be for me? Would it impact my life once more? Could I contribute to this change for His glory?

Again, I witnessed the power of God's presence in the lives of these young people. The friendships formed, the singing that took place, the laughter, the serious talks delivered by the young staff, the guidance of the spiritual directors in worship and counsel, the healing service, and the skits gave proof that God was truly present the same way He has been present for all these years. It was a time of acceptance of who these young people are, and a time of invitation to become closer to Jesus Christ. I believe that both of these things "happened" at Happening # 48 in the Diocese of West Tennessee.

I thank God that He allowed me to again witness His power among His people.