



NEWS ARCHIVE:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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Rock the Mount 2011: marking 10th anniversary of Catholic youth rally

By Kiply Lukan Yaworski

MOUNT CARMEL – Fireworks filled the dark prairie sky Sept. 3 to conclude the 10th annual Rock the Mount Catholic youth rally, after a day of music, talks, and prayer.

Held later than usual this year to permit returning World Youth Day pilgrims to attend, the event at the historic shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel also included displays, children’s activities, reconciliation, adoration, and celebration of the Eucharist with Saskatoon Bishop Donald Bolen.

The words of Mary in the gospel of Luke – “Let it be done to me according to thy word” – formed the theme for the day.

Mary’s “yes” permitted God to draw near to us, to take on flesh and redeem the whole world, Bolen said, adding that God issues a similar invitation to every Christian. “God does come to each one of us and says: ‘I want to come in to your life. I want to touch the world through you. Will you follow me? Do you love me? Will you let me in?’”

Offering each day to God, or praying the words of the Lord’s prayer: “Thy will be done” also echo Mary’s response, noted the bishop.

“Every day in our life, we are invited to follow the Lord,” he said. “We’re asked this question in all of the ordinary events of our lives, wherever we are invited to exercise our freedom, to make decisions. Do we choose love or not? Do we choose to be attentive to the other, or are we self-centred? Do we give ourselves or not?”

The bishop noted that it is “quite possible that our lives can be so cluttered with other things, that we don’t really hear” God’s call. A lifetime of conversations with God meant the prophet Elijah was attuned to the Lord’s still small voice in the gentle breeze. A lifetime of conversations with God is also depicted in the recent film *Tree of Life*, he noted, as a mother and her eldest son wrestle with meaning, with loss and suffering.



Rock the Mount is held at the historic shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, west of Humboldt.

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“In the midst of suffering or struggle we are invited to ask God questions,” he said. “God does not mind being challenged with blunt and direct questions ... What God doesn’t want is to be ignored. What God doesn’t want is for us to spend our lives not asking real difficult questions, not really engaging in life, but just being involved in our own thing.”

Bolen invited those assembled to listen for God’s call in their lives.

“Hear God coming to you and saying: ‘Will you follow me with your whole life? Will you love me? Will you go where I send you? Will you taste the joy that I desire to give to you? Will you know my freedom – the freedom to live deeply and to give yourself fully?’” Then, like Mary we are invited to respond with our own version of “let it be done to me according to your word.”



Bishop Don Bolen presided at celebraton of the Eucharist.

“We have a God that loves us so much, that no matter what we’ve done, where we’ve been or where we’re going, God is going to be right there: so madly in love with you that that love is going to burn away any kind of fear. It is going to begin to shape you,” said Chiasson, who alternated his lively talks with singing.

Calling on Bible stories and witnessing to God’s action in his own life growing up – as well as in marriage and fatherhood, in struggle and loss – Chiasson focused on ways in which God’s Word sharpens, strengthens, and makes us uncomfortable.

“Some of you need to hear the message: don’t stop, don’t give up. God is with you,” he said, recalling the perseverance and love of the four who lowered their friend through the roof to place him at the feet of Jesus for healing.

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During three talks throughout the day, keynote speaker Michael Chiasson of All Access Ministries stressed the depth of God’s love for each person. “You are amazing: that’s what you and I need to know more than anything,” he said.

Michael Chiasson (left)



“I think God is calling us as a generation, to stand up, when no one else is standing,” Chiasson said. “God wants to rock you. He wants to move you, and sow in you something so great and so powerful, because that is how you are designed.”

He stressed that God can use little things to make an impact on the lives of others, urging his listeners to “magnify God” instead of their problems.

During his final talk, Chiasson called up the parents in the crowd, and invited the young people present to come forth to thank and bless them. “Sometimes we forget to tell you how much we appreciate you and how much we love you, and how thankful we are for your ‘yes,’ to allow us to be here.”

The Rock the Mount pilgrimage program also included Rev. Richard Meidl, OSB, presiding at a penitential service early in the day. A number of priests from the area were in attendance, providing the sacrament of reconciliation in gazebo-like tents scattered around the pilgrimage site.

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Christian singer Janelle and her band One80 performed throughout the day, as did Ken Yasinski of Face to Face Ministries, who also served as MC. Members of the Diocesan Youth Retreat Team led the rosary, and youth involved in Catholic Christian Outreach also spoke during the event.

The evening ended with Eucharistic adoration, followed by praise and worship, and fireworks.

Organized by a local committee led by John and Elaine Boskill, Rock the Mount is supported by donations, volunteers and organizations such as the Knights of Columbus and Catholic Women's League.

A search is now underway for new committee members for Rock the Mount. Anyone interested is invited to call (306) 665-5899.

For more about Rock the Mount or to hear talks see: www.rockthemount.com

