

# M.O.B. REVIVES SPIRITUALITY

BY CHRIS BELL

he knew could make it all happen. "Mr. Ridder was definitely the one who wanted to get this whole thing started," said teacher Bret Van Gorp. "He asked me if I would take up the youth ministry position and I accepted."

Van Gorp proceeded to find students to assist him in launching the group. "A couple of students had made it known that they wanted a youth group at Mount Michael because they were missing out on the one at their parish. So I made a small announcement about getting some of the guys together to get it started," Van Gorp said.

The group decided to bear the name "Men of Benedict," which is occasionally referred to as "The M.O.B." The Men of Benedict have come a long way since their initial meetings of just eight people. Nowadays their meetings are filled with over forty. And Engelkamp hopes that it doesn't stop there. "Our goal is to have a majority of the school at the meetings, and we would like it to stay just as strong after we graduate," Engelkamp said.

They seem well on their way to meeting this goal as the student body has responded tremendously since its creation.

"I think the youth group is a great idea," junior Chris Hoff, who is an active member of the youth group, said. "I am surprised that no one has started this before."

And while everyone seems to have

a different motive for joining the youth group, one thing is for sure; no one regrets it.

"My dad really wanted me to be a part of the youth group, and I am really happy that I did," said sophomore Eddie Ridder.

"I didn't feel I was strong in my faith and I felt this was a way for me to communicate with my peers and become closer with God," said sophomore Bobby Thomas.

The group meets every Tuesday after study hall. Although the meetings usually last until about 10 p.m. attendance is by no means mandatory.

"Anyone can come and go as they please," senior Steven Anderson said.

"There are no set groups, so if you have a lot of homework on Tuesday night, you can stay for only a few minutes if you want. The only thing we can ask is that everyone at least tries it."

After getting more meetings under their belt, the M.O.B. has come up with a variety of new ideas and activities. "They broke it down to four Tuesdays a

month. For example, the first Tuesday will be discussion topic night. The second Tuesday will be more of an experience of prayer and adoration. The third Tuesday will be an activity sponsored by the M.O.B. for the entire student body, like warball or games in the gym. On the fourth Tuesday we are hoping to have a candlelight mass," Van Gorp said.

Van Gorp has a very simple view on student participation in youth group: try it. "Just come and see. It's not going to hurt you. These are the same guys that you are around every day; the worst thing that is going to happen is that you realize that it is not for you right now. And that's alright," Van Gorp said.

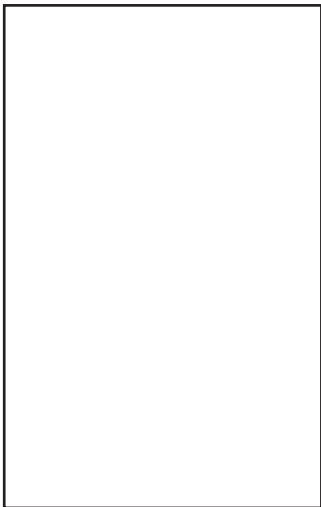


photo by James Benson

**Joe Bastian and Nate Van Haute use music to express their spirituality at the M.O.B. meetings.**

Sophomore Alex Engelkamp felt like he had lost a part of his life. For years he had participated in his local youth group through his church, but as a freshman at Mount Michael last year, he no longer had that privilege. "Being a boarding student, I couldn't leave to go to my youth group and they didn't have one at Mount Michael, so I felt kind of stuck," said Engelkamp.

So he did what no Mount Michael student has ever done before. He talked to principal Tom Ridder about starting a youth group at the school. And from there, Ridder talked to the person that

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