



## Youth Rally Draws Hundreds to Saint Viator

October 4, 2011



Mike Patin's animated storytelling kept students and parents engaged and gave them a new way of thinking about their faith.

The area's first Catholic youth rally sounded more like a mass football drill than a faith outreach, with young people screaming and slapping their knees in unison.

"No practice," shouted Mike Patin, the nationally acclaimed youth speaker, to his young audience as they tried to keep up with his drills. It was as if to say they need not fear a youth rally steeped in doctrine, but they would see their faith in a fresh, new way.

"We hope everyone leaves here tonight -- parents and students like --- recommitted to being people of faith," said the Rev. Robert M. Egan, C.S.V., president.

Teens came from Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Mount Prospect, Palatine, Rolling Meadows, Elk Grove Village, Des Plaines and Niles. Nearly 400 in all attended the

event held Tuesday at Saint Viator High School in Arlington Heights.

Saint Viator's Praise Project band, led by senior percussionist D.J. Horstmann of Hoffman Estates, opened the rally with contemporary music.

Patin is a trained facilitator for Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and a winner of the National Catholic Youth Ministry Award, having addressed young audiences across the country and around the world.

Yet, it was his experience as an athlete and a college basketball coach that set the tone for his upbeat, rapid-fire delivery aimed around a message that worked to "affirm, challenge and encourage."

"He spoke our language," said junior Tim Ackerlund of Schaumburg.

Senior Lauren Falotico of Arlington Heights agreed, adding that Patin made his point with humorous stories that kept everyone laughing and engaged, even after they left the auditorium.

"He encouraged us to fit God into our lives." Falotico added. "No matter how stressed out we get, God's always there for us."

Members of Saint Viator's Campus Ministry department were thrilled with the first-time event, particularly with the number of their students who came back to hear Patin, after experiencing him first hand during an all-school assembly.

"Fr. Egan has always said that our students are our best ambassadors, and I couldn't agree more," said Tim Masterton, campus minister. "Having more than 50 Saint Viator students here to welcome our guests and lead us in song and prayer speaks volumes about their faith and convictions."