

SERVANT OF THE WEEK— JIM YARNELL



Jim Yarnell is our last featured servant of this summer. He came to OLV just four years ago, with a widely varied background: Chief P.O. at Portage County Juvenile Court; Drug and Alcohol Counselor; Summit County Drug Board; track and football coach at area high schools and John Carroll U; Italian restaurant owner, and currently Co-Owner of Concept 4 Insurance Agency. Plus, he's been the bandleader and drummer of "The Deacons", local R & B band—and his group appeared on the NBC Tonight Show! Jim tells an interesting story of joining our parish with wife Rita and daughters Leah and Nicole. "When I stopped by the Church Office to register my family and inquire about the PSR program for our daughters, our very 'persuasive' Director of Religious Education (Diane Hardick) not only informed me about the program, but also asked me to consider helping out with 8th grade PSR. When she said she had been praying for

someone like me, my response was that I needed all the prayer I could get! Thinking to myself that I really was not the right person for this, I told her that I'd have to check with my wife first, expecting my wife to agree that I really was not cut out for teaching PSR--particularly 8th graders. I couldn't have been more wrong, as her immediate response was that it was exactly what I had been praying for—a way to give back." Jim, a cancer survivor, says, "I feel God has given me many gifts. It's the right thing to do to give back. It makes me feel good making a difference in someone's life." Some might wonder how Jim can find any extra time to volunteer, but he has. He brought his cooking skills to our K of C to wear a chef's hat at Spaghetti Dinners and Pancake Breakfasts. He gave a powerful witness talk at our 2006 GROW mission. This spring, he gave a presentation in our Faith and Living Series on "How to Communicate with Teens". But Jim says that working with our 8th grade youth means the most to him about being at OLV. He did accept the invitation to help in PSR by taking on the role of Coordinator of the 8th grade teaching team. He led the students out of the classroom to "give back" too. For the past three years, Jim has directed the 8th Graders in presenting the "Shadow Stations of the Cross" for our PSR students and the parish at our Good Friday Meditation Services. This winter he assisted the class in organizing a Dance Marathon to benefit parish families in need. The kids had a ball, were gratified to raise more money than they expected, and have a vivid memory of the joy of serving others in Christ's name.