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MANTUA

Technological venture

Church acquires web site

By Diane Smith
Record-Courier staff writer

MANTUA — When the parish council at St. Joseph Church first discussed a web site, it initially surprised the Rev. Thomas McCarthy, pastor of the church.

"Then I looked around and realized I was the oldest one there," he said.

The church has ventured into the brave new world of the Internet with its web site <http://stjosephmantua.com>. The church is one of the few churches in the Youngstown diocese to have its own web site.

McCarthy said the church's parish council holds an annual planning retreat, where the idea was first raised two years ago as a way to better communicate with the parish.

McCarthy then set about acquainting himself with the cyber world, finding someone to set up the web site and appointing Kathi Trares, a part-time secretary in the church who was already in charge of the church's weekly newsletter, as web master.

The church put a notice in the bulletin asking for someone to design the web site. Mary Anne Cole, a church member and freelance graphic designer, responded. Once Cole had de-



Chris Smanto/Record-Courier

St. Joseph Church in Mantua has acquired its own web site: <http://stjosephmantua.com>. It is one of the few churches in the Youngstown diocese to do so. Web master Kathi Trares and the Rev. Thomas McCarthy, pastor, recently demonstrated the new site.

signed the site, it was handed over to Trares to update and to monitor traffic.

The site has pages devoted to church history, the school, organizations sponsored by the church or which meet at the church, and parish news. It also contains links to various Catholic web sites, including the Diocese of Youngstown and web sites at St. Joan of Arc church in Streetsboro and St. Joseph Church in Randolph. It

gets about 2,500 hits a month.

Trares said the web site came in handy last summer when the church was swamped with technical questions on the tractor pulls, questions staff members were not always able to answer.

"It was real nice," she said. "We just put the rules on the web site, and it was right there."

Eventually, there are plans to expand the site, perhaps with mailboxes for teachers at the

school, she said.

McCarthy said the popularity of the web site surprised him, but he has learned that the site is a source of information for many people.

"More and more, I've come to realize the younger generation is very dependent on web sites for information," he said.

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