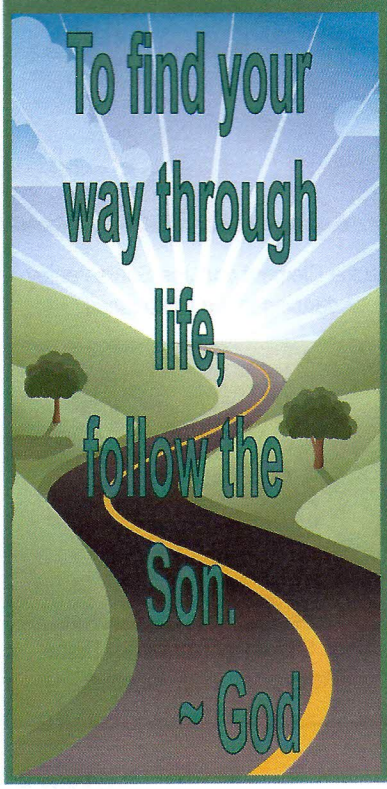
WATERTOWN CATECHETICAL BOARD

June 2016
Volume 10, Issue 3

Religious Education for People with Disabilities
Watertown, New York

Inside This Issue

Country Hoedown End of the Year Picnic	2
Spaghetti Dinner	3
Perfect Attendance	4
Board and Committee	4
Memories of 2015 –2016	5
2015–2016 Annual Appeal	6 - 7
Gifts In Memory of …	8
Tony Melendez Concert	9
Participants Comment on Melendez Concert	10



Finding God Following Jesus

By Sister Diane Marie Ulsamer, SSJ

"When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him." Matt. 8:23

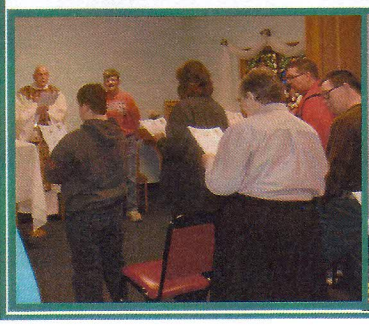
Why did the disciples get into the boat with Jesus ? Perhaps, listening to and observing Jesus stirred within in them a desire to stay connected with this man who oozed gentleness, compassion, and love. They knew that when Jesus spoke about the Father, something within them began to bubble up inside and they wanted to hear more.

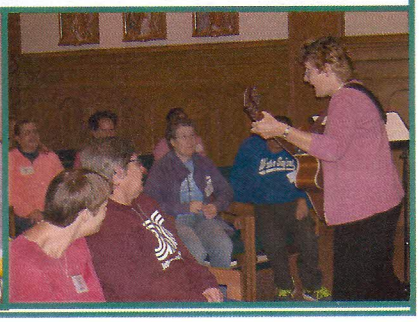
Stepping into the boat with Jesus presented new challenges for the disciples whose faith was weak. They began to listen to Jesus not just with their ears but, more importantly, with their hearts. In order to continue to follow they had to trust, believe, and depend on Jesus to heal their fears, doubts, and apprehensions. Who was this Jesus? What was it about him that drew the disciples into the boat and continued to challenge them to trust that he would help them to come to know the Father?

Our weekly sessions this year gave us an opportunity to draw closer to God by looking at the scriptures and discovering what is required of one who believes and follows the teachings of Jesus. Through a variety of prayer experiences, we, like the disciples, found our hearts bubbling up with a desire to come to know God the Father, not just with our minds but, more importantly, with our hearts. Each scripture reading, prayer, activity, and song enriched our faith and strengthened our belief in the loving and merciful Father that Jesus speaks about throughout the scriptures.

During the faith sharing at the end of the year prayer service it was made clear to me that the members of this faith community had grown in their understanding of what it means to be a companion of Jesus. Jesus reassured his disciples that they had come to know him, therefore, they knew the Father because Jesus and the Father are one. The words of Jesus have led us to a deeper understanding of God's infinite love for each of us.

So now we go forth during these summer months putting our faith into action. We are one with the Father and so we must live, loving and caring for one another. Following Jesus means entering into our day with faith, hope, love, and courage—loving others as we have seen Jesus love. Calling upon the Holy Spirit, we ask for the grace to be merciful and loving children of God. Like the disciples trusting in the Spirit, we look for opportunities to reach out to others, to preach the gospel with our lives imitating Jesus and daily encountering the love and mercy of our "Abba, Father."





Volume 10, Issue 3

Country Hoedown

it's picnik time!

After nine months of weekly sessions of prayer and study, it was time for us to celebrate the blessings of our faith and friendship with one another. Participants and parents gathered together with the catechists to have a fun-filled evening.

The "Hoedown" began with a picnic dinner prepared by members of the Special Religious Education Committee. The meal ended with dessert provided by JoAnne Patrick the best cupcake maker we know.

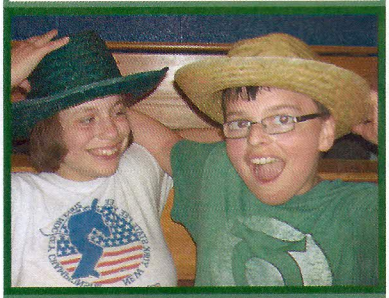
Before dinner we took time to show our appreciation to the volunteer catechists who journeyed with us this year. We are grateful for the many ways they helped us to share our faith. With their help we continue to grow closer to God.

Certificates were then presented to those students who had perfect attendance or missed only one of our weekly sessions. (See p. 4)

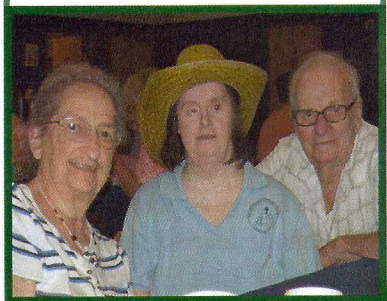
Finally, with our hoedown hats and blue jeans we kicked up our heals to the music provide by *The Country Stompers.* We learned to square dance, line dance and did some foot stomping to the country fiddle tunes. You can see from these pictures that it was an evening filled with celebration.

We want to thank Mr. Charles LaRose and *The Country Stompers* for sharing their time and talent with us. We had a wonderful time dancing!

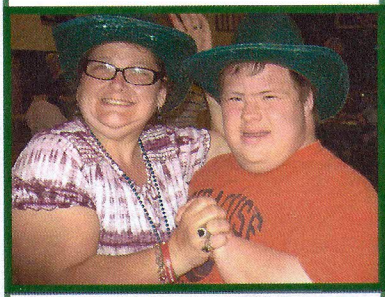
Jeff Deline dances with catechist Laura Johnson.



Our two youngest members Samantha Todhunter and Chip Yott

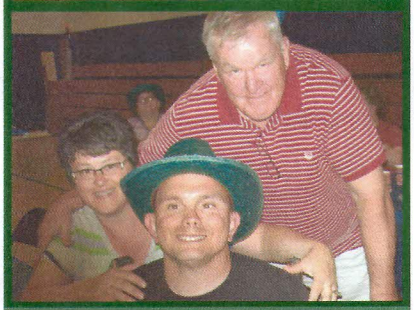


Therese Burdick and her mom and dad enjoyed the evening.

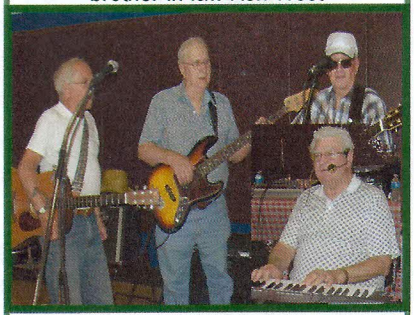


Nalanie Simpson and Duane Olley discover that they make good dancing partners.

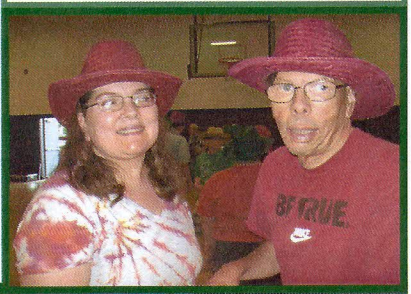
Dana Lee Tubbert, Scott Shelmidine, and Rosemary Burlingame square dance with Sr. Cathleen Moore, SSJ.



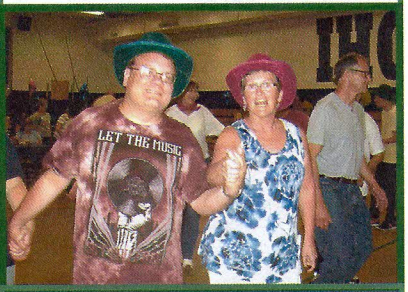
Jay DeVito with his sister Maria and brother-in-law Ken West



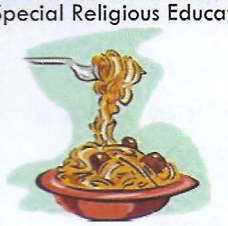
The Country Stompers provided us with foot stomping music.



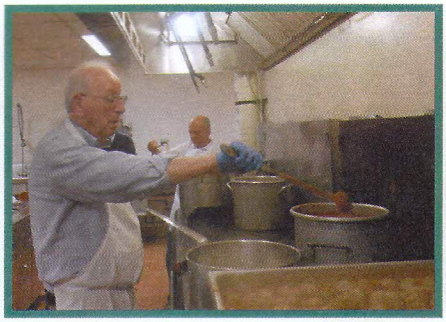
Jackie Clement and Joe Soarse enjoy dancing to the fiddle tunes.



Chris O'Leary and catechist Diane Ross promenade together.



Annual Spaghetti Dinner



This year's dinner was held at the IHCI gym on Monday, April 4th. We decided to change the time and location this year since the fall was very busy with the Auction, Thanksgiving Dinner and Christmas.

A delicious menu of spaghetti and meatballs, tossed salad, Italian bread, cupcakes and a beverage was prepared by the Knights of Columbus Council #259. Mike Deline served as chairperson and John Morgia as head cook. Other Knights involved in the preparation and serving were Vinnie Paragon, Richard Doell, Bill Stage, Jim Fraser, Fr. Joseph Christie MSC, Dick Burnett, Anthony Sligar, Sam Tufo, and Jeff Deline. Two-hundred and thirty-one meals were served. We are happy to report that once again this was a successful fundraiser.

Putting on any event such as this requires the generosity of many volunteers. More than forty people contributed their time and talent. Many of the program participants helped to serve the dinner and bus the tables. Members of the Special Religious Education Committee, parents, and catechists assisted with the serving and the Knights just kept the hot and delicious food coming.

Although there was a change in the timing and location of the dinner, the results of the evening event were very favorable. The gym was a-buzz with conversations, smiles, and an energetic spirit. The Knights of Columbus did a fantastic job with the cooking and the program participants took pride in taking part and of being of service to the members of the local community.

We want to thank all who supported us especially those of you who took time to come and enjoy interacting with us. It was a delightful evening for everyone involved! We hope to repeat this event with a bigger crowd next year.

Perfect Attendance

2015 2016

Christopher O'Leary

Rebecca McConnell

Eddie Sayyeau

Honorable Mention

The following participants missed only one class.

Rosemary Burlingame

Kathleen Gilbert

Eliza Meeks

Francis Scovel

Jeffrey Deline

Kevin Hill

Nancy Murphy

Kathy Lane

Watertown Catechetical Board Members

Msgr. Robert Aucoin
Rev. Steven Murray
Rev. Jonas Tandayu MSC
Sister Diane Marie SSJ
Alice Busler-Committee Chairperson
Elizabeth Bamann-St. Patrick's
Sr. Angelica Rebello, SCC - Holy Family
Helen Guardino-Trimm St. Anthony's
Sister Bernadette Marie Collins - President - OLSH
Sandie Butler-St. Patrick's
Katie Demarse-Holy Family
Randy Belina-St. Anthony's
Patrick Henry– Vice President - OLSH
Sr. Noël Chabanel SSJ - Secretary

Watertown Catechetical Committee Members

Officers

Alice Busler—Chairperson
Sarah Schantz– Vice Chairperson
Sr. Noël Chabanel SSJ–Secretary

Members

Sr. Diane Marie Ulsamer SSJ
Janice Phelps-Interfaith Rep.
Kim West-Interfaith Rep.
Patrick Bates-Holy Family
Nancy Keefe-Holy Family
Patricia Spaziani-St. Anthony's
Stephanie Moore—St. Anthony's
Virginia Burdick— St Anthony's
Alice Busler-OLSH
Julie Gould-OLSH
Catherine Deline-St. Patrick's
Sarah Schantz-St. Patrick's

Program Representatives

Francis Scovel

Therese Burdick

2015-2016 Memories

Fulfilling the Mission of Jesus

Jesus' ministry on earth was all inclusive. We read in the scriptures how Jesus cured the sick, healed the blind, the crippled, and raised the dead to life.

Jesus desired that his mission of all inclusive love be offered to all people.

The Watertown Catechetical Board, under the sponsorship of the four Catholic Parishes in Watertown, recognizes the importance of this commission by Jesus to bring His love to all people, including people with disabilities in our faith communities.

Since 1972, the Catholic parishes of Watertown have sponsored this program to provide for the spiritual life of people with mental and physical disabilities in the Watertown Area.

The program provides services for 136 participants who enrolled for the 2015-2016 sessions.

SNACK TIME

EASTER HUNT

FALL AUCTION

FALL RETREAT

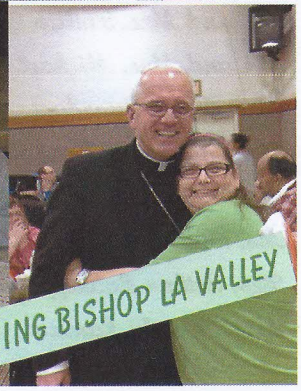
Smile if you're having fun.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

SPAGHETTI DINNER

CELEBRATING FRIENDS

WORKING TOGETHER


WELCOMING BISHOP LA VALLEY

Diamond Benefactor
$1000

Gold Benefactors
$250—$999

Anonymous Donors: 1
Most Rev. Gerald M. Barbarito
Jacqueline Clement
Mr. Joseph Coniglio
Mr. Michael Coniglio
First Presbyterian Outreach Committee
Jefferson Rehabilitation Center
Ms. Katherine Robertson
St. Anthony's Altar Rosary

Silver Benefactors
$100 - $249

Anonymous Donors: 1
Mrgr. Robert Aucoin
Mr. Edmund Becker
Mr. and Mrs. Randolph Belina
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Butler Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Walter P. Cummings
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Delosh
Mrs. Rosemary Deusser-Jensen
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Elliott
Mrs. Rose Frattali
Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Gaffney
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Graham
Mrs. Helen Guardino
Mrs. Margaret Harberson
Mr. and Mrs. William Heldt
Mr. and Mrs. William Jesmore
Rev. Arthur LaBaff
Mrs. Beverly Lamica

Silver Benefactors (Continued)
$100 - $249

Most Rev. Terry LaValley
Mr. and Mrs. Ted Mascott
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Michaelson
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Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse
Dcn. and Mrs. Richard Warner
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Mr. and Mrs. Allen Williams
Ms. Nancy Williams

Bronze Benefactors
$25 - $99

Anonymous Donors: 1
Mrs. Marilyn Adams & Martha
Mr. and Mrs. David Bach
Mr. and Mrs. William Barden
Mr. Patrick Bates
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bruno
Ms. Sylvia Buduson
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Burdick
D.L. Calarco Funeral Home Inc.
Mr. Nate Carbone
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Mr. and Mrs. Keith Caughlin
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Charlebois
Mr. Thomas Cheney
Mrs. Cathy Chirico
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Coe

Bronze Benefactors (Continued)

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Commeret
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Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Coughlin
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Mr. and Mrs. Michael Deline
Ms. Mary Dermady
Mr. Jay DiVito
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dyer
Ms. Patricia Fanning
Ms. Frances Fazio
Sister Mary Louise Fiedler, SSJ
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Ms. Sally Grzesiak
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Mr. and Mrs. James Heidt
Mr. and Mrs. William Hermann
Ms. Nina Hershey
Dcn. and Mrs. Norman Hunneyman
Mr. and Mrs. David Johnson
Miss Myrajean Koster
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Lashway

The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.

≈ Alfred North Whitehead

Bronze Benefactors (Continued)

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Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Roman
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Mrs. Eva Scovel & Francis
Mrs. Erma Simmons
Sisters of the Cross

We Appreciate Your Support

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Mrs. James Walsh
Mr. and Mrs. John Webert
Mr. and Mrs. Gary West
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Copper Benefactors

$5.00 - $24.00

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Ms. Beverly Shepard
Mrs. Anne Shurtleff
Ms. Patty Spicer
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Todhunter
Mrs. Dorothy Vespa
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Wiley

Gifts Given In Memory

Kevin M. Shepard
Rosario & Juliet Mandeville
Robert F. Dermady
Parents of Joseph & Claire Coughlin
Rita M. Carbone
John A. Fraser
Lyle Miller
Madden Hayden Ladd
Clyde & Leona Shampine
Deceased Sisters of St. Joseph
Salvatore & Dolores Coniglio
James Walsh
Christina O'Connor
Mr. & Mrs. Orville Hart
Carmen DiLeonardo
M. Jane O'Brien
Gregory J. Wiley
Bryan Leddy
Russell Squier
Jim Hartzell
William R. Jesmore III
Deceased Family Members
Clifford Carr, Jr.
Julie Alteri
Gaffney, Booras, Sharp Families
Joseph B. Guardino
William A. Trimm Jr.
Helena Belina
Mary Anne Fijalek
Sallie & Eugene DeVito
Vincent Frattali
Doris Casey Short
Sally D. Becker
Edward J. Finnerty
Mark Richardson
Deceased members of the Dyer Family
Shirley Irwine

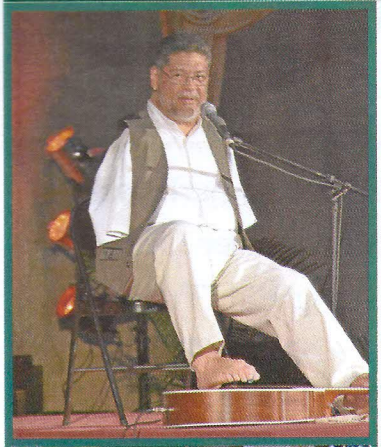
Rest in Peace

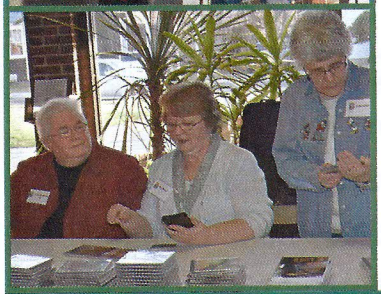
James B. Schraenkler
Brefka Family
Carlton H. Lamica Sr.
Carlton Lamica Jr.
Mary Byrne
Daniel A. Buduson
John M. Vespa
Pasqualina Lettiere
Gorri & Malara Families
Virginia & Robert Weldon
Kim Plummer
Messina & Leone Families
Dennis J. & Alice Cheney
David Cheney
Virginia Brown
Sandra Miller & Family
Nancy Butler
Claude & Barbara Mayne
Walter P. & Mary Margaret Cummings
Mary Spicer
Raymond Grzesiak

In Honor of:

Sr. Maurice Black SSJ
Special Religious Education Program Volunteers
Stephanie Williams
Sisters of St. Joseph who have worked in the program
Therese Burdick
Mike McDermott
Special Religious Education Program
Sr. Diane Marie Ulsamer SSJ
Trevor Andrews
Jared Ridgeway
All program participants

Tony Melendez Concert





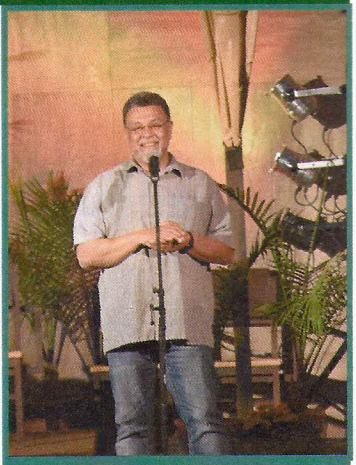
The Watertown Catechetical Board sponsored the Tony Melendez Concert on April 16, 2016 at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church. For many years Tony's story and musical artistry have inspired thousands of people around the world. We were pleased that with the assistance of the four Catholic parishes and donations from a few organizations, we were able to finance this very inspiring concert.

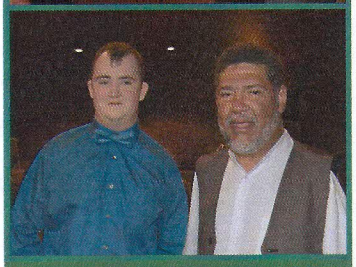
Tony is a person with a disability who uses his gifts to share his faith and love for the Lord with others through his music. Being born with no arms did not stop him from learning how to play the guitar. At age 16 he taught himself to play with his feet. With his talent he began to praise God with his voice and in 1987 he played for Pope John Paul II. The Holy Father then encouraged Tony to continue to share his gift with the world.

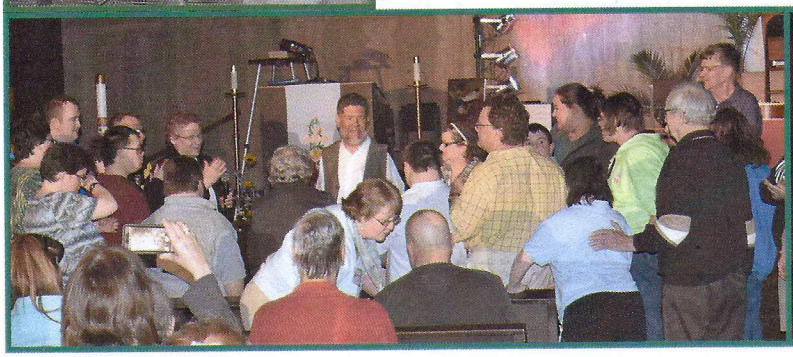
Approximately three hundred and fifty people filled Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church. Tony managed to get everyone singing and praising the Lord. Many of the participants of the Special Religious Education program helped with the evening event by collecting tickets at the door and serving as ushers.

The goal of the evening was to have Tony inspire our people with disabilities as well as all present to see themselves as people loved by God. When we believe that nothing is impossible with God, then we are capable of doing great things for others. Tony's presentation focused on believing that, with God's help, one can focus not on his or her own disabilities, but rather on the abilities God bestowed upon them.

We all left the church that night filled with a feeling of peace, love, and hope. The Spirit of God was alive and very evident in the faces of many who were in attendance. Since that night, many positive comments have been heard of how Tony's presentation touched hearts and helped others to see life in a very different light. Thank you, Tony, for bringing your message to Watertown. We will pay it forward to those we encounter each day.

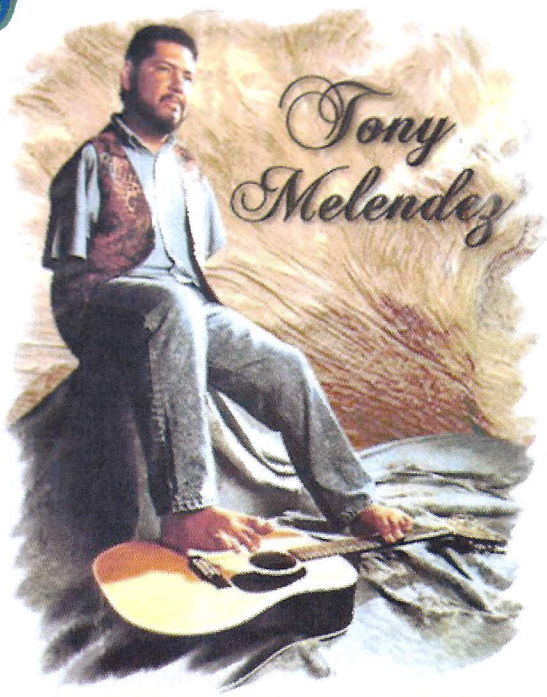






Participants Comment On Tony Melendez Concert

Psalm 100:1 Make a Joyful noise unto the Lord



I liked the way the guy played the guitar with his feet. I liked being an usher. It was fun!
~ Jeffrey Deline

The best part was when Sister Diane sang with Tony.
~Nathan Bach

Tony was talented and heart warming. I liked him a lot.
~ Dana Lee Tubbert

Tony did a good job! My best part was Sister singing Amazing Grace.
~ Therese Burdick

Tony was excellent! He is a remarkable man with a great talent.
~Kathy Lane

I enjoyed the concert. It was fun to watch. Tony is talented. He was nice and awesome. Thanks for bringing him to Watertown.
~ Becky McConnell

The concert was great! I liked Tony a lot . He was very entertaining and funny.
~Christopher O'Leary

I liked Tony's singing especially when he sang with Sister. I liked the way he joked with us.
~Francis Scovel

Tony was unique and inspiring. I am so happy Sister Diane brought him here. He made me want to do better now.
~ Molly Costa

Good music! I liked the concert. I liked Tony because he did not feel bad about his disability.
~ Anderson Stenard

Sing praise

He sings good!
~ Rosemary Burlingame

with all your heart