

Holy Family Steel Orchestra and Youth Choir visits from Antigua

Right, Holy Family Steel Orchestra facilitator and arranger Bernard Duplessis, right, and Veron Henry, left, the orchestra's pan—or steel drum—builder, play traditional and congo drums during the band's concert on Sept. 1 at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. Cardinal Ritter students, shown in the background, participate in a line dance with the orchestra's choir members from Holy Family Cathedral Parish in St. John's, Antigua. The orchestra's motto is "serving Christ on pan through humility, commitment and love."

Photos by Mary Ann Wyand



Above, three Holy Family Steel Orchestra and Youth Choir members from St. John's, Antigua, lead Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School students in a line dance during the Sept. 1 concert at the Indianapolis West Deanery interparochial school. Cardinal Ritter students enthusiastically applauded at the conclusion of the concert, which featured a variety of music.

Michael Joseph, the campus director at Holy Angels Parish in Indianapolis, invited his brother-in-law, Bernard Duplessis, to bring the orchestra from Holy Family Cathedral Parish in St. John's, Antigua, to Indianapolis. St. John's is the capital and largest city in Antigua, a Caribbean country located in the West Indies.



Above, 21 members of the Holy Family Steel Orchestra and Youth Choir from St. John's, Antigua, pose for a photograph after their Sept. 1 concert at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. Bernard Duplessis, the orchestra's facilitator, said their music is a ministry. The group plays for Masses and a variety of events. "We came here to teach others about the [steel pan] instrument, for fellowship and, most important, to serve the community by sharing our love for God expressed through our music."

Right, Danielle Richardson, a 15-year-old pan player with the Holy Family Steel Orchestra and Youth Choir from St. John's, Antigua, plays a reggae song on a specially made steel drum during the Sept. 1 concert at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. The orchestra, comprised of a band and choir, also performed at Holy Angels, St. Rita and St. Lawrence parishes in Indianapolis as well as at St. Anselm Parish in Chicago during their recent two-week visit to the U.S. After the concert, Danielle said she has been playing the pan for seven years. "It means a lot to me that I can come and show other people what I do for my Church and also for my country," she said. "I feel very happy and excited."

