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Photo by Scott Dreslinski
 Megan Houlihan, 13, Nicole Tymchuk, 17, take a photo with Archbishop Allen Vigneron after he confirmed them during a Mass at St. Peter Church in Mount Clemens on March 2.

Mass all the more special for local students

By Sarah Cormier
 C & G Staff Writer

MOUNT CLEMENS — It was just a short time ago that Nick Kogowski, an eighth-grader at St. Mary School in Mount Clemens, was chosen to be one of 10 students to meet the newly appointed archbishop of Detroit, Allen Vigneron.

Kogowski, along with the other students, were introduced to Vigneron and shook his hand.

Vigneron, was a bishop in Oakland, Calif., for five years before being appointed by Pope Benedict XVI in January 2009 to the position of archbishop of Detroit, where he is now responsible for overseeing 1.4 million Catholics in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Lapeer and St. Clair counties. The appointment was unique because Vigneron is from Mount Clemens.

“I thought he was a nice person,” said Kogowski of his meeting with the new archbishop.

So when Kogowski heard that Vigneron would be conducting his confirmation ceremony at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Mount Clemens on March 2, he was pleased.

“I thought it was pretty impressive because it’s not every day that the archbishop gets to come to your church,” he said.

Father Michael Cooney, priest at St. Peter’s, said that the confirmation ceremony went “very, very well.” That night, 93 students — from both St. Mary School and the St. Peter religious education program — received the sacrament of confirmation.

“This is the first time in our almost 19 years here that an archbishop has come out to celebrate the sacrament,” said Cooney.

Cooney, who was a former classmate of Vigneron’s when they were at Detroit’s

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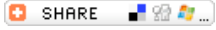
Sacred Heart Seminary High School and College, said it was great to have his colleague back locally.

“It was kind of like a homecoming type of thing,” he said. “We haven’t had a chance to celebrate a Mass together since before he went to Oakland.”

Jacquelyn Haskins, an eighth-grader at Wyandot Middle School and member of the St. Peter religious education program, was, like Kogowski, happy to have Vigneron conduct her confirmation.

“I thought it was very nice to have him there,” she said. “It made it all the more special.”

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