

# Catholic radio hits Frederick County airwaves

After nearly four years of prayer, fundraising and labor, Catholic radio has hit the airwaves in Frederick County.

Holy Spirit Communications made its first broadcast on Oct. 13 on FM 89.9 WMTB, the 100-watt radio station of Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg.

"This is just a wonderful means of evangelization," said Robert Maloney, a parishioner of St. Peter the Apostle in Libertytown who serves as president of Holy Spirit Communications. "Pope John Paul II called all Catholics to use all means of communication to spread the Good News and that's what we're trying to do."

The programming currently consists entirely of shows offered by the EWTN Global Radio Network, including call-in programs, Masses and devotional shows. The programming is provided free of charge and runs from 2-10 a.m., Mr. Maloney said.

"It's the morning drive time when people are most likely to be in their cars going to work," said Mr. Maloney, noting that he hopes eventually to offer locally-produced programming that takes advantage of the "brain power" of Mount St. Mary's professors, local pastors and others.

Holy Spirit Communications, a non-profit Maryland corporation, is currently raising money to purchase a radio station to provide more extensive programming and coverage, Mr. Maloney said. The station at Mount St. Mary's reaches northern Frederick County, Gettysburg, Penn. and east to Westminster, according to Mr. Maloney.

In the Frederick area, an AM station of moderate power would cost approximately \$500,000 while an FM station of moderate power would cost \$2-3 million, Mr. Maloney said.

"When you move to the DC and Baltimore areas, those prices escalate exponentially," he said. "It's expensive, but I think we can raise the money. We're

convinced it's the Lord's work and we know God can move mountains."

Mr. Maloney was inspired to promote Catholic radio after being frustrated at not being able to find Catholic programming traveling in his car as a furniture salesman. While there are four Christian radio stations in the area, they do not address important topics like the sacraments, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Mass, he said.

"I knew nothing about radio," said Mr. Maloney, noting that he received approval from Cardinal William H. Keeler to pursue the project in 2004. "I heard that EWTN offered free programming, so I called them up and that was the start."

Mr. Maloney's group raised \$5,000 to pay for a 170-pound satellite dish and broadcast equipment.

There are currently about 1,600 Christian radio stations and only 140 Catholic radio stations, according to Mr. Mahoney.