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Church falls victim to thievery

■ Stolen items include coins collected for a Spring Break trip to Mexico and a statue of the Virgin Mary

By Darren Freeman
 Oregon Daily Emerald

The Virgin Mary is missing, and police suspect foul play.

Congregation members of the St. Thomas Moore University Parish, on 19th Avenue and Emerald Street, were shocked Friday to find the ministry's two-foot tall white statue of the serene mother of Jesus Christ missing from its pedestal in the church's outdoor garden.

The statue "is a symbol of veneration to her presence in the church helping us be closer to her son, Jesus," associate pastor Juan Carlos Diaz Flores said. "This [theft] shows a lack of respect for our beliefs. It's an offense toward God and toward the church."

But the symbol of purity and motherly love wasn't the only item stolen from the church last weekend.

Between Friday and Sunday, two cars were broken into and several desk drawers were broken open and ransacked. Cash from a purse left in the church, a wallet and a jar of coins collected to fund a spring break trip to Mexico were also stolen.

"People have felt safe here and felt they could trust leaving their stuff here," peer minister and University junior Laura Saffer



The St. Thomas Moore University parish was shocked Friday to find a two-foot tall white statue of the Virgin Mary missing from its pedestal.

said. "Now all of a sudden it's not so."

Julie Smith, the Eugene Police Department officer on the case, said she suspects the thefts were done by a local resident, somebody who regularly passes through the nearby alley or one of several transients she's seen in the area.

Because of the relatively small size of the stolen statue, which Flores valued at about \$200, Smith said it probably won't be found.

"It's possible somebody saw it, liked it and took it. It could be in somebody else's garden," she said. Smith also said the statue

could have been pawned. Smith said police have no leads except for some fingerprints lifted from one of the cars broken into last weekend.

Prior to last weekend, Flores said a pair of cat food bowls were stolen from his front porch, which is adjacent to the ministry, and an outdoor thermometer was stolen but later returned.

"Somebody must be playing games," he said.

Flores said the ministry will begin locking its office doors more regularly and that if the statue is replaced, it will be secured to its pedestal.

Mom shares story of daughter's rape

■ Kristin Fuller Cooper's story of rape, depression and suicide have inspired her mother to speak out

By Simone Ripke
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Like many mothers, Andrea Fuller Cooper had always been concerned her 20-year-old daughter would die in a car wreck. Little did she know, Kristin would take her own life, after being raped by a friend.

About 800 students filled the EMU Ballroom Wednesday night to listen to Fuller Cooper share Kristin's story about date rape and depression.

The event was sponsored by Delta Delta Delta, Fuller Cooper's sorority, and Alpha Chi Omega, Kristin's sorority.

Fuller Cooper told the audience how Kristin had been home for winter break in 1995 after her first love had broken up with her. When Fuller Cooper and her husband Mike returned from a New Year's Eve party, they found Kristin's car parked in the driveway.

They entered the house and found that lights were on in every room and music was blasting through the house. Then they found Kristin lying right next to a speaker in the family room and noticed she was not breathing. Fuller Cooper said she saw a gun by Kristin's legs and realized her daughter had shot herself.

Two days after Kristin's death, the police called and said Kristin's diary had revealed she had been raped.

After talking to Kristin's friend in her hometown in Littleton, Col. and her sorority sisters at Baker University in Baldwin City, Kan. Fuller Cooper learned that while Kristin had kept the rape a secret from her family, she had confided in a few close friends.

"I was so hurt that she wouldn't



Andrea Fuller Cooper shares her daughter Kristin's story about date rape and depression with University students Wednesday night.

tell me, but I talked to so many rape victims, who just said 'no way would I tell my mom,'" Fuller Cooper said.

Kristin's friends told Fuller Cooper that Kristin had been raped after a friend's party in August of 1995. Kristin had wanted to stay for a movie, and her friend raped her. And although Fuller Cooper said she knows the name of the rapist, police can not take action against him without Kristin's testimony.

But Fuller Cooper would not give up. "When I found out there was nothing the police could do, I started thinking 'what can I do?'" she said.

Nine months later, Fuller Cooper started telling her daughter's story.

"I just feel that when something terrible happens in your life, you have two choices," she said.

"You can crawl up in a hole and stay in bed all day and cry, or you can get out there and try to make some changes."

Fuller Cooper has shared Kristin's story at 47 college campuses nationwide, educating students about rape and depression, which Kristin suffered after the rape.

She said 27 percent of victims raped by a stranger and 46 percent of date-rape victims never report the crimes.

Fuller Cooper said one of Kristin's friends later told her she had tried to take Kristin to a counselor. She had even set up an appointment and promised to go with Kristin. But Kristin never went.

"I feel that if Kristin had gone to that counselor, she would possibly be alive today," Fuller Cooper said.

But Fuller Cooper also said if a victim refuses seeking help, there is nothing one can do besides offer comfort and shelter, listen and be available to the victim at all times.

Ben Horton, a sophomore double-majoring in German and business said he gained some insight into how to help a rape victim and how rape can affect an entire family.

"It made me aware of the grief that rape brings upon not just the victim," he said.

Jesse Brown, Interfraternity Council Greeks Against Rape co-chair, was involved in organizing the event.

"I think our main concern was for people to see the effects that rape can have from a mother's perspective," he said.