

The Weave

Easter/Pentecost 2018

Volume 22 Issue 2

A Newsletter of St. Mary Parish Family, Franklin MA

The Good News of Jesus Christ

by Fr. Brian Manning

We all love to hear good news, so I have lots of good news to share. Some of this news is expected, some maybe not. The good news that I am most happy about is that we have had an increase in attendance at our weekend Masses. It does my heart good to know that so many of our community gather each weekend in our beautiful church to attend Mass and be spiritually fed. With our present Mass schedule, attendance has shifted in amounts to various Masses. I do see an emerging pattern, but I do not know what it means yet. We are blessed with lecturers, eucharistic ministers, ushers, mass servers, leaders of song and a choir which all add to the hospitality and spiritual depth of our holy services. The welcoming which we offer is to everyone. So, spread the good news that the faith community at Saint Mary's continues to grow and that everyone is welcome!

Due to the generosity of many, many people we are able to pro-

ceed with our Parish Plan to improve our hospitality and welcoming. We will be adding the elevator and mobility accessible bathrooms on both major levels. We have gone beyond our goal of 1.2 million dollars to 1.3 million. Our entire project will cost about 1.6 and we will use some

Disciples in Mission



Archdiocese of Boston

of our savings to pay for the project. For those who ask if they can still be a contributor and belong to this project, the answer is yes! Please consider joining the many other parishioners who want our parish to be able to welcome everyone from the strong of body to those who need assistance. This project is for all of us and should be paid for by all of us according to our means. We are just about to start the bidding process. The Central Administration of the Archdiocese via its Engineering Department will assist us. Upon bidding completion, I will then select the construction company that I think is right for our parish. We hope that

(Continued on page 3)

The Beloved Disciple

by Joan McGuire

Today's church celebrates the Easter Season from the Resurrection until Pentecost. The gift of the Holy Spirit is one of the church's founding aspects of the Resurrection. But for the first apostles and disciples, this time was a major crisis. Many of them had expected that Jesus would instigate the overthrow of the Romans and restore Israel to its former glory. Others at least hoped that he would be recognized as the great unnamed prophet that was mentioned in Deuteronomy 18. Either way they would have become powerful associates. But Jesus didn't fulfill any of these expectations and all their hopes were lost. Even worse he was taken prisoner and condemned by the Jewish authorities and put to death by the Romans. They were both disgraced and in despair. Only in St John's gospel is a disciple mentioned who did not lose hope. He is not mentioned in the synoptic tradition because he had no great name or rank. In John 20:2 although not an apostle, he was identified as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and to the Johannine followers this was the criterion for greatness.

As he stood at the foot of the cross, the dying Jesus entrusted His mother into the care of this unnamed disciple. "Mother behold your son and to the

(Continued on page 6)

inside...

**There Is a Time for Every Season
Jesus Christ Is Victorious
St. Mary's Music Notes
What is Faith Formation All About?**

**page 4
page 5
page 6
page 8**

Changing and Growing to Support Our Changing and Growing Faith Community

by John M. Ristaino

Spring is an annual reminder that living things grow and change. Easter is well situated in the season of spring. Christ's death and resurrection are the ultimate example of change and growth. Out of the Paschal sacrifice, Christianity was born. Over the past two thousand years the Church has changed and grown in countless ways. Some of these changes have been universal in nature while others have been made on local levels. Our vibrant faith community, St. Mary Parish here in Franklin, is a great example of change and growth on a local level.

If we look back on the history of St. Mary Parish we can see numerous changes in the parish, in its traditions, in its programs, in its buildings and in its members. During the Great Depression the Oakwald Estate (the former convent and current professional building next to the Charter School) was used as an orphanage run by Catholic nuns. For many years, the demographics of the parish and society allowed for the wonderful St. Mary School which provided Catholic elementary education to thousands of parishioners. During this period of time the parish was able to host an annual May procession in honor of the Blessed Mother and the namesake of our parish. The Catholic Women's Club held annual Christmas bazars for many years. The St. Mary CYO created a Hallow-

een Haunted House in current St. Rocco storage barn in past Octobers and they sold Christmas trees and wreaths in December for a number of years. Masses at St. Mary's once offered "folk music" at the 12 PM Mass. The Mass schedules at St. Mary's have changed over time in order to best address the needs of the parishioners of St. Mary Parish. That's why effective change and growth occur; done in order to best support the current and future needs of the St. Mary Parish community. Now we are on the threshold of another change for the St. Mary Parish community; the final St. Rocco Festival as we have known it for the past forty years and the future St. Rocco Celebration.

Get ready for the final and most FANTASTIC Feast of St. Rocco ever! On August 10, 11 and 12 the St. Mary Parish community will gather to enjoy a celebration of faith, food, family, friends and fun for the fortieth and final time. Make sure participating in this very special Feast of St. Rocco is on your calendars! What does this mean? This August will be your last chance to feast on manicotti, eggplant parm., Italian subs, pizza, sausage and onion subs, meatball subs, calzones, fried dough, clam cakes, Belgian waffles, Rocco burgers, all those Italian pastries and so many more of your favorite Italian foods! The rides will be running and the musical entertainment will play for one last time. Some parishioners who have moved away are returning to volunteer one final time and reconnecting with the faith community they loved when they lived here. The annual Healing Mass will be celebrated as it is every year on Saturday morning, August 11th. The opening Mass will take place at 10:30 AM on August 5th and the final closing Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 AM on August 12th. Father Frank Campo will be back to celebrate this very special Mass. This August will be our

chance to relive, remember and make new memories of this wonderful tradition. The spirit of this wonderful tradition will continue as it changes into a new St. Rocco celebration.

The foundation of our St. Rocco Festival has always been our Catholic faith. Our Catholic faith will continue to be the foundation and guide of the St. Rocco Celebration. It started with the discovery of the St. Rocco statue on the convent grounds. This statue will be moved across the street and will greet people entering St. Mary Church by the soon to be new elevator lobby entrance. In this new garden setting, the statue we have all come to know and relate to the festival will be the sign to all of the new St. Rocco Celebration. Starting in August 2019, the new St. Rocco Celebration will begin. The new August celebration of St. Rocco will include the annual Healing Mass held in the church followed by a hospitality luncheon for all those who attend. This will be a wonderful and appropriate way to continue the legacy of St. Rocco and the festival which took place for forty years in Franklin. This new format will support the St. Mary Parish current and future needs.

Nobody really likes change even when change is needed. It will be challenging to say goodbye to this truly wonderful forty year tradition. The aprons will be hung up, the pots and pans will be scrubbed and the booths will be taken down for the final time. Before that happens, this August we have one last chance to experience what has been. Next August is our chance to embrace and celebrate what will be. We are on the threshold of past and future. As we embrace both the past and the future, let's make sure we live in the present and appreciate the traditions, people, food and fun! See you at the Feast!



The Weave

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by Saint Mary Parish, Franklin MA



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...The Good News of Jesus Christ

(Continued from page 1)

the construction will begin outside by the end of April and inside after May 8th. The completion date will take a lot of prayers, but we hope it is substantially completed by October. We will transfer all funerals during the week to Saint Jude, Norfolk. They are most welcoming to us. When the inside of the upstairs church was painted few years ago, we also did this. We will have the church for weekend Masses. Downstairs the chapel will be open every day via the wooden side door towards the garage. The St. Vincent de Paul will have access to its food pantry and working space, but all other activities need to cease in these spaces. We all know when you do rehab or renovation in our homes that it is inconvenient and messy at times. So, all of us have to be cooperative to get the whole project done.

Our Parish Plan for (Adult) Faith Development and also Vocations is on track. This is good news because goals and objectives can lag behind expectations. We all know the pace and level of activity at Saint Mary's is far higher than in most parishes and we have to be careful not to lose sight of the important goals.

This faith year we launched a Men's Spirituality Program that meets monthly. This has been under the direction of Deacon Guy and a Steering Committee. Each month men meet on a Saturday morning for about one hour and watch and then share a CD of Bishop Barron on Catholicism. Among all the meetings about 60 men are actively involved.

At our Cemetery which is so beautifully maintained, a new ground section has been prepared for use. Many of us have family or friends who now rest in peace at Saint Mary's. We are also working on a site plan to develop mausoleum walls for interment of urns with cremains. Folks have asked us to develop this for the resting place for their beloved ones and we

are now doing so. These memorial walls will be of gray and black granite and each individual crypt in the wall will be able to hold two sets of cremains. This new area will allow folks to have a dignified and proper place to place the cremains and to honor their memory of their loved ones. To honor the memory of our beloved dead is a duty and also a privilege which requires proper care. It is wonderful the amount of praise people give for our Parish cemetery. Indeed, it is the best maintained parish cemetery I have ever seen. And this is due to others, especially Joe Spencer.

We all are aware that the Benjamin Franklin Public Charter School has announced that it is leaving our school building on June 30, 2019. Even though this announcement of leaving has occurred many other times, I think it seems reasonable that this time they may succeed. They have changed their service area now to include the many, many surrounding towns. Because they

(Continued on page 6)



View From the Pew

by Joan McGuire

Endless Gifts of Love

We are born to be conduits of God's messages. We can, if we agree, become messengers of Christ's presence in the mundane moments of each ordinary day. Whether we chose to or not, as we live each day, we always leave footprints. Christ, as a parting gift of love, promised to send the Paraclete to guide us. As long as I can remember I had devotion to the Paraclete. Possibly because I didn't think it was particularly complimentary to be identified as a bird or a ghost, but more probably because I knew I was in constant need of guidance. I recall my mother's constant reminder to me as I was going out the door. "People can't hear what you are saying because what you are doing is shouting at them."

Indians have a practice as winter is coming on. At the feast of the "Hungry Moon" they lay out a blanket and everyone in the tribe puts items that they can share on it. It might be food, clothing, utensils, blankets, toys or a cherished homemade item. Then the members of the tribe choose something that they need to get them through the coming winter. Like this "giving blanket" the Paraclete lays out the gifts we need to get through our daily lives. These gifts are skills that can be perfected by practice. (Watch a young child learning to catch a ball or tying the laces on shoes.) So as we consciously practice the gifts, they become habits that can more easily be used in working as God's instrument.

Pick one from the list below, define it and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit watch it bloom in you. Watch it bloom in your daily life.

Holy Spirit's Giving Blanket (gifts and fruits)

love	peace	joy
patience	kindness	goodness
faithfulness	gentleness	self-control
prudence	fortitude	wisdom
understanding		knowledge
counsel	strength	piety
fear of the Lord		



**Mark Your Parish
Calendar**

- Mar 14** Stations of the Cross, 12 noon
- Mar 14** Mass at Forge Hill, 2pm
- Mar 14** Confessions, 7-8pm
- Mar 18** K of C Coffee & Donuts, after 9&10:30 Masses
- Mar 18** Baptisms
- Mar 21** Stations of the Cross, 12 noon
- Mar 21** Mass & Confession at Magnolia Heights
- Mar 21** Confessions, 7-8pm
- Mar 24** K of C Gift Card Drive
- Mar 25** K of C Gift Card Drive
- Mar 27** Mass at nursing home
- Mar 28** Stations of the Cross, 12 noon
- Mar 28** Confessions, 7-8pm
- Mar 29** **Holy Thursday**
Morning Prayer, 7am
Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7:30pm
- Mar 30** **Good Friday**
Morning Prayer, 7am
Cross Walk, 12 noon
Stations of the Cross, 3pm
Good Friday Service, 7:30pm
- Mar 31** **Holy Saturday**
Morning Prayer, 7am
Confessions, 3-4pm
Easter Vigil, 7:30pm
- April 1** **Easter Sunday**
Masses:
7:30, 9:00 (2), 10:30 (2), 12:00
NO 5pm Mass
- April 4** Mass at Atria, 2pm
- April 5** Bereavement Support Group begins; Pre-registration required
- April 7** Mass at Central Park Terrace, 10:30am
- April 8** Baptisms, 1:30
- April 8** Baptismal Catechesis, 1:30
- April 11** Mass at Forge Hill
- April 14** Men's Faith Formation, 8:45am
- April 15** Baptisms
- April 18** Mass at Magnolia Heights
- April 19** CWC Meeting, 7pm
- April 22** Baptisms
- April 24** Mass at Nursing Home, 2pm
- April 28** **First Communion**, 10am
- April 29** Baptisms
- May 2** Mass at Atria
- May 5** **First Communion**, 10am, 1pm
- May 6** Baptisms, 1:30
- May 9** Mass at Forge Hill, 2pm
- May 10** **Ascension Thursday**
Vigil Mass: Wed. at 4pm
Thursday: 7am & 7:30pm
- May 12** Men's Faith Formation, 8:45am
- May 13** Baptisms, 1:30
- May 20** Baptisms, 1:30
- May 22** Mass at nursing home
- May 28** **Memorial Day**
Mass at Cemetery, 9am
- June 3** Baccalaureate Mass, 10:30am
- June 6** Mass at Atria
- June 9** Men's Faith Formation, 8:45am
- June 10** Baptisms, 1:30

Jesus Christ is Victorious

by Father Jack Sullivan

On the introductory “set-up piece” to Catholic TV’s daily broadcast of the Mass, you see the elevation of the Eucharistic host. Notice the design impressed upon the host. This design imitates the practice of the Eastern Rite Churches in decorating the altar bread for the Eucharist. This Greek-language monogram proclaims “Jesus Christ conquers” or “Jesus Christ is victorious.” This artistic declaration recalls the Easter Proclamation’s praise for the victory of Jesus: “... This is the night when Christ broke the prison-bars of death and rose victorious (victor ascendent) from the underworld.” The Easter hymn *Alleluia let the holy anthem rise* contains an echo of the Easter Proclamation in these words in verse two: he has risen up in triumph from the darkness of the grave. Reflection upon these words of the tradition prepares us to listen anew to the opening prayer of Easter Sunday. In this prayer the Church addresses God the Father: ...through your beloved Son [you] have conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity.

The funeral ritual includes one prayer that acknowledges that God is alone

- June 13** Mass at Forge Hill
- June 17** Baptisms, 1:30
- June 24** Baptisms, 1:30
- June 26** Mass at nursing home
- July 3** Mass at Atria
- July 11** Mass at Forge Hill
- July 15** Baptisms, 1:30
- July 22** Baptisms, 1:30
- July 24** Mass at nursing home

Save the Date

40th and final

Feast of Saint Rocco

August 5-12, 2018

able to give life after death. As heirs to the Christian biblical tradition we believe that God the almighty Father has already decisively displayed this power to give life after death by raising Jesus his only-begotten Son from the dead on the third day, Easter day. We rejoice that Jesus has promised to share his risen life with us – “Because I live you also will live” (John 14:19).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 638, proclaims: “The Resurrection of Jesus is the crowning truth of our faith in Christ, a faith believed and lived as the central truth by the first Christian community...and preached as an essential part of the Paschal Mystery along with the cross: ‘Christ is risen from the dead! Dying, he conquered death; to the dead, he has given life’ (Byzantine Liturgy, Troparion of Easter).”

Theologians have placed the Resurrection of Jesus at the center of Christian faith and practice. This resurrectional focus for our prayer and meditation seems in need of being frequently refreshed and sharpened. With the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, we believe that we all have a place in the new creation. For us, every Sunday is Easter, the Lord’s Day when we celebrate together the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. When we gather as the Christian people at worship, we declare that the Lord Jesus is risen.

Healing Mass

There will be a Healing Mass with the Anointing of the Sick on Saturday, April 7, 2018 at 10:30 AM. This special Mass will take place at the Community Hall at Central Park Terrace (off of Wachusett Street.)

Refreshments will be served following the Mass. This Mass is sponsored by St Mary’s Health Ministry and the Legion of Mary.

For information, please call Nan Rafter at 508-528-0020.



There Is A Time For Every Season

by Nan Rafter, Parish Nurse

In the book of Ecclesiastes, we are told there is a time for everything and I truly believe this.

It is with a lot of prayer and some emotion that I have decided to retire from my position of Pastoral Associate/Parish Nurse. Retirement brings me much excitement of the anticipation of spending more time with family and friends and travel especially in the winter months to warmer climates, however there is sadness in my heart because I have had so much joy ministering here at this special place.

I cannot believe that I have been in ministry here for over twenty years! How did that happen? I began exploring Parish Nursing in 1995 and with the support of Fr. Tom Walsh was asked to come on staff in a permanent position as Coordinator of Health and Homebound Ministry. In the years that followed, I was supported by Fr. David Callahan. I was led by God to complete my Master's degree in Theology and Pastoral Ministry at Providence College. I enjoyed being part of the deaconate class, getting to know many deacon candidates in the Providence Diocese. I went on to complete four units of Clinical Pastoral Education

which led to my becoming certified as a Catholic Chaplain. As the Pastoral Associate role increased, I became certified and then was asked to be on the certification committee, certifying new PAs. All of this education has helped me in the ministry work here at St Mary's and in my life. My Dad would always remind me that education is never lost.

While I was here at St. Mary's I was blessed to minister to those who were sick and homebound, many who were grieving and in need of care and support. You grieved with me when my mother died six weeks after being diagnosed with terminal cancer and you prayed for me as I went through cancer surgery. My surgeon was surprised to see how calm I was and I told him it was because my parish family was praying for me and him! It has been an honor to facilitate the bereavement support group as God generously blessed me with the gift to help heal those who are grieving.

One area of this ministry that pleasantly surprised me was becoming a supervisor to the second year seminarians from Pope Saint John XXIII Seminary in Weston for their Pastoral Ministry experience. For six years I have introduced seminarians to our

wonderful parishioners who are homebound or in facilities and they have welcomed these men and taught them the importance of a listening presence when ministering to those in need.

You welcomed me into your homes and your hearts and I will take all that I learned from you with me as I journey on to my next chapter. Fr. Brian has given me caring, pastoral support and guidance so that I could help those in need; Fr. Jack has helped me to guide the seminarians in their pastoral year of formation so that they can become compassionate, caring priests. Deacon Guy continues to share his ministerial gifts with others and I feel he and his wife Sheila are a special team and a caring addition to our parish family.

As I begin a new journey I am beginning to see glimpses of what God has planned for me. I have been hosting a Senior Cable show for a year and find it challenging and exciting. It is a different way for me to educate seniors and help them to be aware of programs and resources as well as staying updated with local and state events along with going back in time.

I will be completing a two year Spiritual Director program in May and look forward to providing Spiritual Direction for those who seek to know God in a personal way. I have begun to dabble in painting, (no pun intended) and I am hoping to uncover a little mini Monet. I plan to take some extended time in my hammock this summer along with preparing all of the quahogs Jim will harvest. The great stuffed quahog contest continues!

So as I leave this ministry I take with me all that you have taught me and will continue to use my experiences wherever God takes me. St Mary's will continue to be my parish family and I look forward to exploring new ways to volunteer and share my gifts and nurture my spirit. I have begun praying for your new Pastoral Associate and those on the selection committee. I will keep the parish, clergy, pastoral and professional staff in my prayers as I ask you to pray for me and my family.

PARISH COMMUNICATION

This parish is very large and active. It is important for us to be able to give you accurate information and for you to be able to contact us as needed. If you wish to contact anyone at the rectory we can be reached by phone, 508-528-0020; Fax, 508-528-1641; or email. Here are email addresses for the clergy, Religious Education and rectory staff:

Father Brian Manning: bmannings@stmarysfranklin.org

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Deacon Guy St. Sauveur: deaconguy@stmarysfranklin.org

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Paula Coughlin: parishpublishing@stmarysfranklin.org

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Nan Rafter: nrafter@stmarysfranklin.org

Terry Kerr, Music Director: terry.kerr@att.net 508-541-3286

If your parish group or organization would like to place a notice in the bulletin, we must receive it **in writing (email is preferred)** by 5pm Sunday afternoon for the following weekend. Information can also be submitted for inclusion on the parish website at any time. Bulletin or website information can be emailed to parishpublishing@stmarysfranklin.org

If your organization is planning to use any parish facilities, such as the church, church hall, lower church meeting rooms or the school, for your meetings, events, etc. it is **necessary** that you call and reserve the time and place that you want. This is the **only** way that you can be assured of having your activity at the desired location.

CHECK OUT OUR PARISH WEBSITE: www.stmarysfranklin.org. There is a wealth of information available there.



**St. Mary's
Music Notes!!**

by Terry Kerr

Adult Choir: St. Mary's Adult Choir led us in song for our Fourth Annual "Festival of Lessons and Carols Service" on Sunday, December 10, 2017. The Adult Choir continues to flourish and expand their repertoire for each new liturgical season. Our Adult Choir is still growing and enhances the liturgical celebrations of our parish!

The Adult Choir has already begun preparing for the Triduum and Easter Season and is always happy to welcome new faces and voices. They rehearse on Thursday Evenings in the Upper Church Choir Loft from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Our St. Mary Adult Choir will participate in the "Voices of Faith" Concert sponsored by the Franklin Interfaith Council. The Concert will be held on Sunday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!!!

**Holy Week and Easter
Liturgical Celebrations**

**Holy Thursday
March 29**

Morning Prayer at 7am
Mass at 7:30pm

**Good Friday
March 30**

Morning Prayer at 7am
Cross Walk on the Common, noon
Stations of the Cross at 3pm
Good Friday Service at 7:30pm

**Holy Saturday
March 31**

Morning Prayer at 7am
Confession: 3-4pm
Easter Vigil at 7:30pm

**Easter Sunday
April 1**

Masses:
7:30am, 9am (2),
10:30am (2), 12 noon

...the Beloved Disciple

(Continued from page 1)
disciple "behold your mother" (John 20:3-8) and so he takes her to his home. In the chronicles of the community at Ephesus he is greatly revered.

In the last chapters of John, the beloved disciple is mentioned several times. He goes to the tomb with Peter and on seeing the burial clothes folded carefully he believes it is proof of the resurrection rather than a body robbery. Later when the apostles go fishing on the sea of Galilee and get no fish the stranger on the shore tells them to cast their nets on the other side to catch the fish. It is the beloved disciple who recognizes that the man on the shore is Jesus. He tells Peter, who jumps out of the boat to go to Jesus.

Although he is only briefly mentioned in one gospel, I find him a great model for the majority of the members of the church. Like many members of our universal church, he was not a person of authority or apparently individually important in the church.

He is only known for:

- his undaunted love for Jesus
- his care of Jesus' loved ones - His mother and his other followers
- his pointing out Jesus to others who might not recognize Him (as he did for Peter at the sea of Galilee)

For those simple things he earned the title "**the disciple whom Jesus loved**". The job description is reasonably easy to imitate. The title is awesome!

Bereavement Support Group

A seven-week Bereavement Support Group will begin on Thursday, **April 5** from 7-9pm. This group is for anyone who has experienced a recent loss. To register, or for additional information, please call Nan Rafter at 508-528-0020.

**...The Good News of
Jesus Christ**

(Continued from page 3)
principally served the children of Franklin and many of whom are our parishioners, I believed that we had a special obligation to keep extending leases, when perhaps, for the sake of the Parish's common good, I should not have. I know this has been in dispute with some parishioners. With the public change of priority of students almost 2 years ago, I consider our obligation at an end when this lease extension ends. We now have the graced task of discerning how to envision the best use of our Patrimony and Goods located at 201 Main Street for the long term Mission of Saint Mary's. This will take some time. Quick answers are not sufficient. We must ask about our future and how this property best serves the Mission of our Parish. This is now the time and opportunity to do what is the very best for the long term benefit of Saint Mary's. I do not know what it is, but I believe with prayer, thought, reflection and discussion and also professional advice from others, we will find the best possible answer for all of us.

A Committee is busy planning some wonderful concluding events for the Feast of St. Rocco (Final Church & Processional Mass on Sunday, August 12 at 10:30 AM and Special Mass and Reception with Fr. Guarino on Saturday, October 6, from 4 PM to 8 PM) and long term annual Healing Mass in honor of St. Rocco.

Spring brings great new beginnings and one event that I especially love, First Communion. If you are fortunate enough to be at one of our First Communion, you will be touched in your heart by the grace and beauty of it all. O Happy Day when each one of us received the Lord in Communion for the first time!

Indeed we have lots of good news about "the Good News of Jesus Christ"!

It's All About Giving

by Karen Ackles

The most important things that we try to instill in our Religious Education students is to help others and to give to those who are in need. With that being said, we have had many opportunities for our students to do that this year.

Last August, over forty of our Confirmation students donated filled backpacks to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. These backpacks were then given to local students who might not have the ability to purchase the supplies they need for a successful school year.

During this same time, other Confirmation students participated in a project with "The Women's Lunch Place." The Lunch Place is a day shelter for homeless women in the Boston area. Our students donated over eight-five new or "gently used" pocketbooks. Each pocketbook contained a hat, gloves, socks and some personal care items. Our students used their own money for these projects and were amazingly generous.

During the Christmas season, all of our students in Grades 1-8 were very generous to our military. Tons of personal care items, snacks, books, puzzles, socks, etc. were donated.

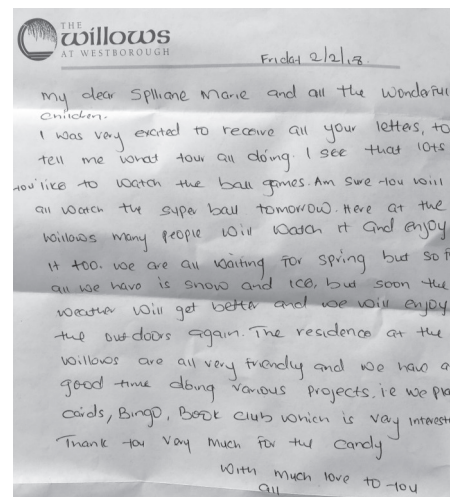
These items were put into boxes and delivered to our troops worldwide.



We were able to send boxes to some soldiers who are friends and family to some of our Religious Education students. Along with the items, some of the cutest handmade cards from our kids were sent. We received many thank you notes from the soldiers - the following is an example of how much these donations mean to the military:

Hello my name is Chris Betances and I'm with the 82nd Airborne Division currently deployed to Afghanistan. On behalf of Delta Company 2-501 PIR I want to thank you so much for the packages that we received today. Your support means a lot to us and there are no words to describe how grateful we are. From every Paratrooper in this company we want to wish you all a Happy Holiday and a Happy New Year!

Shortly after Christmas the following letter was received from an elderly woman who was the recipient of lovely cards/letters and candy gifts from one of our seventh grade Religious Education classes. These children enjoyed the opportunity to reach out to some "seniors" and to brighten their day.



Now that the year is almost over, the children are donating travel size personal care items which will be put together to make "Blessing Bags." These will then be donated to a local homeless shelter to help make their lives a bit easier. As you can see we have been very busy this year trying to teach our students to put others first.

LENTEN WORD SEARCH

C P R Y B G A E L M F X Y F N
 R G Q W A L H E S F Q A E O O
 O N S V M D H W A T D J M R I
 S I U S R U S T H I N N V T X
 S T Q X G E H R R P Q I M Y I
 E S U J E Z P F U W T I X D F
 Y A D S E N D E W H S A J A I
 U F N K T O C Q N P T F D Y C
 T N E L O Y J P N T R Y O S U
 D U P G D A L W U I A A L T R
 P A L M S U N D A Y A N Y O C
 L J E C I F I R C A S T C E H
 Y U C Q S P H D F W V X S E R
 Y N I J A K V R U Z L V N B L
 J Q V U Z T R I D U U M E L A

ABSTAIN
 ALMS
 ASH WEDNESDAY
 CROSS
 CRUCIFIXION
 FASTING
 FORTY DAYS
 GOOD FRIDAY
 HOLY THURSDAY
 LENT
 PALM SUNDAY
 PRAYER
 REPENTANCE
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What is Faith Formation All About?

By Deacon Guy St. Sauvuer

Catholic Faith Formation Education is designed to help Catholics deepen their relationship with God and recommit themselves to the responsibility of sharing their faith with others.

The Church's catechetical mission aims to help the faithful of all ages to grow in both human and Christian maturity, enriching the whole of life with the Gospel.

We try to touch all faith dimensions of an adult life: communicating the faith, skills needed for the faith growth, the experience of family life, relationships, community service and concern for the common good. Our adult faith formation ministry engages the particular needs and interests of the adults in our faith community.

Three major goals guide and direct our efforts in adult faith formation as directed by the *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)*:

1. Invite and enable ongoing conversion to Jesus in Holiness of Life
2. Promote and support active membership in the Christian Community
3. To call and prepare adults to act as disciples in the mission to the world.

How can we do this?

Sunday liturgy

Sunday liturgy is the center of our Church's life. It is the place where the

largest number of people is catechized regularly - through communal prayer, homilies, music, hospitality, the environment, web site, and even the bulletin!

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

RCIA is focused on those who are joining the Church & provide a deepening education opportunity to address our faith at an adult level.

Parent sacrament sessions

These sessions provide parents a knowledge and understanding of the faith to help raise and connect with their children through the sacrament process.

Marriage preparation

Marriage preparation assists couples that are preparing for marriage and being connected to the life of the parish. It provides a good opportunity to address/discuss their faith in a deeper relationship. The Archdiocese uses a program called *Transformed in Love*.

Catechist training

This training continually emphasizes the importance of ongoing formation and providing opportunities for catechists to take courses, attending conferences, provide resources, & develop team meetings.

Advent & Lent

These liturgical seasons provide several designated weeks to provide a short-term, highly motivated time for faith formation through session, holy hour, Stations, adoration...

Retreats

Retreats, whether day or weekend, can truly set an adult's heart burning. Parish-based retreats have the added value of forming a community ready to go deeper. Several retreat centers are located close by such as La Sallette in Attleboro, Betania II in Medway and Our Lady of Fatima in Holliston.

Parish Ministries

Parish ministries and organizations are involved in witnessing and evangelizing our faith. Take time at training sessions to do things like reminding ushers that their greetings at the door may be the welcome needed to turn a seeker into a member. We all have gifts to bring to the community of faith table. St Mary's has many ministry opportunities listed on the web site.

Weekly/Monthly study or faith groups

The variety of Bible study and formation programs available today is tremendous. In addition, the *U.S. Catholic Catechism* and other resources provide easy-to-use resources for group study on multiple faith topics. Again, St Mary's has Bible Study, Rosary group, Men's formation...

Please check the St Mary's bulletin and web site for more detailed information about any of these topics. <http://www.stmarysfranklin.org/>

Sources: USCCB & Loyola Press

inside...

- page 1 The Good News of Jesus Christ
- page 2 Changing and Growing to Support our Changing and Growing Faith Community
- page 3 View from the Pew
- Page 4 Parish Calendar
- Page 7 It's All About Giving