

The Weave

March 2016

Volume 20 Issue 2

A Newsletter of St. Mary Parish Family, Franklin MA

Disciples in Mission

by Fr. Brian Manning

In each issue of the Weave for the past year, I have written an article about our wonderful Parish of Saint Mary and our involvement in the Pastoral Plan of Cardinal Sean for our Churches and Parishes in the Archdiocese. The Plan is called “Disciples in Mission” (disciplesinmission.com). This plan is a vision and a process for all of us as Catholics to live and worship and serve in a dynamic faith community and parish. Although this grand plan will take almost ten years for it to roll out to the entire Archdiocese, we have been involved for over two years at this point. We are participating because my great hope and desire is that our parish will continue to grow and be a substantial faith and support community to each one of us.

Oftentimes parishioners ask: Why? We are already a thriving and good faith community. Why all the bother? I tell folks that we certainly are a good faith community and parish, but we should always try to be a better disciple. As Matthew Kelly would put it quite simply: Should we try to become a better self, in fact, our best self? To be a dynamic Catholic, means to put in the effort to grow in faith.

At present, our Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Finance Council, and also our Professional and Pastoral Staff in addition to Fr. Jack and myself have attended special formation sessions that will help us as leaders and workers to help guide and direct our Parish to be better disciples in mission to Jesus Christ.



Archdiocese of Boston

We also have formed a special committee, called the Plan Writing Committee which is a cross section of the various “constituencies” of our Parish. This Committee will be helping to develop a written plan that will guide us for the coming five years. This plan requires that the

Committee attend many additional meetings to discover the elements that are necessary for a functioning parish and the elements that can help make Saint Mary a dynamic parish. I look forward to this Committee’s work with the oversight of the Pastoral and Finance Councils because this committee will assist all of us to know what we should be doing and are capable of doing as a faith community. In any parish, including our own, many people are more than

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Embrace the Light

by Joan McGuire

At the Easter Vigil Mass, I am always touched by the entrance of the new Paschal candle into the darkened church. As each of our candles are lighted from the flame of the Paschal Candle the church becomes brighter. As the procession reaches the main altar the church is ablaze with all our lit candles. The darkness is overcome.

Light is important in all of scripture. “In the beginning God said “let there be light.”” God saw how good the light was and separated it from the darkness. Two of my favorite miracles (Mark 8 and 10) have to do with Jesus taking two blind men from the darkness into the light.

In Bethsaida, friends brought the blind man to Jesus. Jesus with loving personal concern took his hand and led him away privately. With the first touch the man saw things as a blur. It was only at the second laying of hands that the man saw clearly. Jesus frequently calls us aside in prayer, but we don’t always have a clear spiritual vision right away. As we continue to reach out through prayer and the Eucharist, the power of the Holy Spirit will let us see clearly, in His time not necessarily ours.

The second miracle occurred outside of Jericho. A blind man named Bartimeus called out with faith to Jesus asking to be cured. Many people around him told him to be quiet but he cried out even louder.

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What Does Your Catholic Dash Contain?

by John M. Ristaino

Many of us have seen and read one of the popular pieces about the “dash” on cemetery grave markers and other places representing the years that a person lived here on earth. The gist of these offerings suggests that we need to make our “dash” count. I enjoy reading these reminders to make life matter.

Over the past few years, our Parish Pastoral Council, under the leadership of Father Brian and Father Jack, has been working with the Archdiocese of Boston in the “Disciples in Mission” program. Hopefully you have been reading Father Brian’s updates and explanations about this important initiative and have taken part in the survey. An important aspect of this initiative is to examine the demographic statistics of our community (both Parish and town). Some of the key areas examined include the number of registered Catholics, the number of residents of the town, the number of Catholics attending Mass, the number of children enrolled in Religious Education classes, the quantity of funeral Masses, Baptisms, Catholic weddings, and Parish volunteers.

During the past few weeks and months I have been pondering the Catholic dash, the dash which represents how we live our faith life between Baptism and death. Our Parish statistics indicate a high number of Baptisms. This is in line with the overall population growth of the area. It indicates the desire and need to connect new born children to our Faith tradition. Good tidings of great joy for sure! St. Mary Parish also celebrates a very large number of funeral Masses each year. This too is in line with the overall population trends of the area. It too belies the desire to connect with our Faith tradition (this time at the end of earthly life). So, we see a strong desire to connect with our Catholic tradi-

tion at both the start and end of life here on earth. What about the “dash?” What do the statistics tell us about our Catholic “dash,” the time we spend between Baptism and death?

Statistics tell us that our Catholic “dash” starts off pretty robustly. Our Parish enjoys a large number of children being enrolled in Religious Education classes. This is particularly true in the Sacramental Preparation Programs for First Penance, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Such statistics are strong indicators that the seeds of Faith are being planted in the hearts and minds of our children. The Catholic “dash” appears to start off and to continue very well. Statistics also indicate that the Catholic “dash” begins to fade for many as time passes and Sacramental Preparations have been completed.

How is your Catholic “dash?” Are you practicing and developing your Catholic “dash?” Would you like to develop it a little bit more? Here are some observations for reflection about developing your Catholic “dash” which in turn enhances the Catholic “dash” of our Parish and the entire Catholic faith.

Attending Mass each week is a great way to develop your Catholic “dash.” The numbers indicate we have an ever increasing number of people “in the pews” at St. Mary Church in Franklin each week. Weekly participation at Mass is a most important way to celebrate and develop your Catholic faith. Do you attend Mass each week? If not, how frequently do you attend? Might you consider attending more regularly and working up to attending weekly? Your “dash” will count more if you do. Attending Mass regularly and receiving Holy Communion is a wonderful way to build and enhance your Catholic “dash.”

Are you a member of the Parish who participates actively at Mass? We are always seeking new Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Altar Servers, Choir Members and Ushers. Participating in such a way really strengthens your Catholic “dash.” It also introduces you to other members of our Parish family who you may not know. The weekly bulletin and the parish web-site (stmarysfranklin.org) provide you links to these and so many more volunteer opportunities. Volunteering in such a way not only enhances your Catholic “dash” but it also builds community and puts you in contact with members of our Parish who

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Project PJ

by Karen Ackles

I am always amazed at the wonderful charities that our Religious Education students get involved in. This year I had the opportunity to speak with one of our eighth grade students, Ryan DePaolo. Ryan was contacted back in the fall to see if she would be interested in taking over “Project PJ” as a



community service project. Ryan was so excited, as her family had been donating to this charity since she was four years old. Ryan told me, “We have done this ever since we moved into our neighborhood. We have always participated in this project and it has helped to teach us about community service and being a good person. I was happy to continue this great charity.” Project PJ was founded to bring awareness to children in need who are placed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Foster Care Program. These children range in age from newborn to eighteen years old. “Foster children are very unfortunate to be placed in the situation that they are in. They leave their homes with only the clothes on their backs, nothing else. Pajamas are a source of comfort, which can ease the transition for a child to their new families,” said Ryan.

Ryan contacted everyone she knew to encourage them to donate a new pair of pajamas to this charity. She even set up dona-

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...Disciples in Mission

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willing to say "Father, do you know what you should do. I think you..." All of us tend to have that American managerial cultural need to always tell someone else what they should do to improve, but never offer to lead, help or participate in what should happen. Other times, people's "you should" really reflects their pet issues and not necessarily the issues that are for the good of the community. As we well know that often in families people have suggestions for everyone else, but themselves! This plan will help us to have a common vision of who we are, what our priorities are and how you can participate in making our parish a great community of faith.



...Project PJ

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tion bins by her back door and was willing to go around and pick them up from people's home (with the help of family). Many of our Religious Education teachers donated as well. The goal for this year was 200 pair of pajamas. Through the support of so many people, Ryan was able to collect 380 pairs of pajamas! Ryan has even greater expectations for next year. "I would love to try to increase my collection next year! This is such a good cause and I feel that people really do love to help less fortunate children, especially at the holidays," said Ryan.

Once all the pajamas were collected, sorted, and packed up, Ryan and her family were off to deliver them to Whitinsville. Ryan stated that, "it was a great experience to get to deliver the PJs. I really enjoyed getting to deliver them personally. The people there were so kind and welcoming towards us and were so happy to receive such a donation. They were so grateful and amiable; anyone in their care would be in good hands. This was a once in a lifetime experience that I would not trade for anything!"

Anyone interested in contributing to this wonderful charity can always drop off new pajamas to the Religious Education Office and we will make sure they reach Ryan DePaolo.

No Parish can do everything; we must at a certain point decide what we can do. Five years ago, the Parish Pastoral Council gave me a list of priorities for our parish as a community of faith. I have paid attention to this and tried to lead and guide the parish in light of these points. It is now time again to review and reset our priorities and programs and ask that you and everyone continue or become an active member in service to our God, to each other and those who we meet along the way.

Good things are happening. It all takes time, but it takes God's time and we just have to cooperate with his grace.

Lenten and Easter Liturgical Celebrations

Daily Mass
Mon. - Fri. 7am, 5:15pm
Saturday 8am

Confession
Wednesdays in Lent
6:30-8pm

Stations of the Cross
Fridays after the 5:15pm Mass

Holy Thursday
March 24
Morning Prayer at 7am
Mass at 7:30pm

Good Friday
March 25
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 26
Morning Prayer at 7am
Easter Vigil at 7:30pm

Easter Sunday
March 27
Masses:
7:30am, 9am (2),
10:30am (2), 12 noon

View From the Pew

by Joan McGuire

To Plumb the Depths of Easter

For most of the great feasts of our church I have physical memories that I can connect with the celebration of the feast.

The birth of Christ at Christmas evokes the memories of the joyful changes that new babies bring into my family and to my friends. As with other parishioners, I have had the sorrow of missing loved ones who have gone home to God; especially those whom I didn't have the opportunity to say goodbye. So the sorrows of Good Friday are real to me as I read the Passion gospels or meditate on the sorrows of Jesus' mother and His friends.

I have no such physical connection to the Resurrection. A priest friend of mine suggested that I focus on the symbols of the Easter season to understand the depths of this, the greatest of feasts. The light of the Pascal candle reminds me of God's divine providence and His protective love over us in times of darkness. The Easter water reminds me of the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan and the fact that my baptism makes me a beloved child of God forever.

Since I am a "cradle catholic" I don't remember my actual baptism but at the Vigil Mass I have an opportunity to renew the event as I watch the catechumens come forward to accept the privilege of becoming God's children through Baptism. Then as neophytes, new plants in God's garden, they receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and share the Eucharist with their brothers and sisters in Christ. The symbols of the Vigil Mass are the signs of the richness of our liturgical life through the Resurrection, ALLELUIA!





Mark Your Parish Calendar

... Embrace the Light

- March 6** Baptisms, 1:30
- March 9** Confession, 6:30-8pm
- Mar. 11** Stations of the Cross after 5:15 Mass
- Mar. 13** Baptisms
- Mar. 13** Baptismal Catechesis, 1:30
- Mar. 16** Confession, 6:30-8pm
- Mar. 18** Stations of the Cross after 5:15 Mass
- Mar. 20** Baptisms
- Mar. 22** Mass at nursing home
- Mar. 23** Confessions, 6:30-8pm
- Mar. 24** **Holy Thursday**
Morning Prayer at 7am
Mass at 7:30pm
- Mar. 25** **Good Friday**
Mass at 7am
Cross Walk at noon
Stations of the Cross at 3pm
Good Friday Service -7:30pm
- Mar. 26** **Holy Saturday**
Morning Prayer at 7am
Easter Vigil at 7:30pm
- Mar. 27** **Easter Sunday**
Masses: 7:30am, 9am, 10:30am, 12 noon
- Apr. 3** Baptisms
- Apr. 6** Mass at The Estate
- Apr. 9** Respect Life Baby Shower
- Apr. 10** Respect Life Baby Shower
- Apr. 10** Baptisms
- Apr. 10** Baptismal Catechesis, 1:30pm
- Apr. 13** Mass at Forge Hill
- Apr. 17** Baptisms
- Apr. 21** CWC Meeting
- Apr. 28** Bereavement Support group begins
- Apr. 30** **First Communion**
10am & 12pm
- May 1** Baptisms
- May 4** Mass at The Estate
- May 4** **Vigil of the Ascension**
Mass at 4pm
- May 5** **The Ascension of the Lord**
Mass: 7am and 7:30pm
- May 7** **First Communion**
10am and 12pm
- May 8** Baptisms
- May 11** Mass at Forge Hill
- May 15** Baptisms
- May 15** Baptismal Catechesis, 1:30
- May 22** Prolatio Concert
- May 24** Mass at nursing home
- May 29** Baccalaureate Mass-10:30am
- May 30** **Memorial Day**
Mass at the cemetery at 9am
- June 1** Mass at The Estate
- June 8** Mass at Forge Hill
- June 12** Baptisms
- June 12** Baptismal Catechesis, 1:30pm
- June 19** Baptisms
- June 26** Baptisms
- June 28** Mass at nursing home
- July 6** Mass at The Estate

- July 10** Baptisms
- July 10** Baptismal Catechesis, 1:30pm
- July 13** Mass at Forge Hill
- July 17** Baptisms



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Jesus as usual responded to this kind of faith.

In our lives Jesus may not be as obvious, but he is always there waiting for us to speak to him personally about our needs and desires. Sometimes, as in the stories of Mark, we are encouraged by our friends and sometimes we are discouraged by them.

However the gift of the Easter light, is to see how coming to Jesus is like being led from the dark of blindness to the light of sight. Maybe not all at once but eventually we will see our lives in a new way. First we will see the unconditional love God has for us and then we will see Jesus in others. The culmination of this gift is to love others as God loves us.

I AM
THE RESURRECTION
AND THE
LIFE

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
- SACRIFICE
- TRIDUUM



Caring for the Sick....Palliative Care May Be An Option

by Nan Rafter, Parish Nurse

This past fall several members of our Health Ministry attended a workshop offered by the Archdiocese of Boston on Palliative Care. MC Sullivan, a nurse, bioethicist and attorney is the Director for the Initiative for Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning for the Archdiocese of Boston. MC and Dr. Peter J. Cataldo, Ph.D, Chief Healthcare Ethicist for the Archdioceses presented at this comprehensive and informative workshop. This initiative was established in February 2015 with three main foci; *Education, Advocacy and Ethics*. One of the goals for the Archdiocese is to educate people so they can make informed decisions that will allow them to live their lives until the end with dignity, compassionate care and comfort.

Pope Francis, during this *Year of Mercy*, encourages us to perform Corporal Works of Mercy, such as Caring for the Sick. I was taught to care for the sick by my mother, who along with her nurse friend helped our neighbors in need. As I reflect back on the care she provided for my aunt, it was much like the Palliative Care philosophy of today. When my aunt was diagnosed with cancer, my mother arranged for the district nurse to visit and bathe her (Physical); She listened to the relatives and friends as they came to realize how sick my aunt was (Emotional); She arranged for meals to be brought to my aunt and her family (Psycho-social); and she called the priest to come and visit her (Spiritual). My mother coordi-

nated my aunt's palliative care before this holistic, compassionate care was known.

Palliative care is not the same as Hospice. Palliative care can be delivered at any point in a serious illness even at the point of diagnosis whereas, Hospice care is specifically about end-of-life.

MC Sullivan defined Palliative care as being "patient-centered and family-supported comprehensive care that addresses all aspects of human pain and suffering." The word palliative means comforting, soothing, calming, relieving. Palliative Care is a compassionate, multi-disciplinary program, which is patient-driven and family centered, providing specialized care for people living with serious illness. It focuses on the five aspects of a patient's care: physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual providing relief from symptoms and the stress of the illness...whatever the diagnosis.

Palliative care unlike Hospice care can be delivered simultaneously with treatments aimed at cure or can be delivered by itself when curing is no longer an option. Palliative care does not prevent other treatments from being provided including those which are life-prolonging or are potentially curative. It is initiated with conversations between the person, the family and the physician as a result of advance care planning. Palliative care can be provided anywhere, including the hospital, nursing home, long term care facili-

ty or at home. It can be started at the time of diagnosis of a serious illness for a person of any age.

Palliative care is appropriate for patients who are diagnosed with a serious or chronic illness at any age, regardless of the expected outcome of their illness. What we learned at the workshop and surprised me was that those who are candidates for palliative care could be a 7 year old child with type I (Juvenile) Diabetes, a 9 year old with Muscular Dystrophy, a 23 year old with Hodgkin's Lymphoma, a 36 year old with Pernicious Anemia, a 53 year old with Alzheimer's disease. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and their families.

Goals may include: Spiritual care needs; Psycho-social concerns; Pain and other symptom management; Options on where care will be delivered; Hospitalizations and readmissions; Resuscitation; Ongoing curative treatments i.e. chemotherapy, dialysis, or surgery, medically administered nutrition and hydration; Emotional "roller-coaster" issues such as decisions on continuing curative treatment. *Palliative Care planning is informed by Church teaching and by previous advance care planning discussions.*

As a Parish Nurse ministering to the whole person, I am aware of the interconnectedness of the person. I visited a man who had constant pain until he was able to work through his problems with his son. I visited a woman who experienced emotional pain from an unresolved spiritual issue from the past. What I have learned, especially in recent years, is that it is important for our family and physicians to know our specific goals for care. An advanced directive, such as a health care proxy or living will helps to make sure your requests are made known and carried through. As of January 2016, Medicare will now reimburse physicians to have an advanced care planning discussion with their patients and families.

Palliative Care is a hopeful way to care for those who are sick and their families. It is my hope that people will talk to their health care professionals about Palliative and Hospice care so they may receive compassionate care and live out their lives with dignity and peace.

For more info go to www.caringinfo.org
For information on Health Care and Advanced Directives Catholic Health Association www.chausa.org

"You also must be prepared for at an hour you do not expect, the son of man will come". Luke 12:40

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: bmanning@stmarysfranklin.org

Father Jack Sullivan: jsullivan@stmarysfranklin.org

Karen Ackles: reled.director@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: A new tradition for the Parish and the Adult Choir has begun at St. Mary's! St. Mary's Adult Choir led us in song for our Second Annual "Festival of Lessons and Carols" on Sunday, December 13, 2015!

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

Why not take a STAB at it? STAB, of course, means...

- S oprano
- T enor
- A lto
- B ass

Children's Choir: The Children did a wonderful job singing at the Horace Mann School for the 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Liturgy! The Children are now preparing music for the 9:00 a.m. Easter Sunday Mass in the Upper Church.

The St. Mary Children's Choir has become a more "seasonal" choir to optimize full participation from as many youth in our parish as possible. The Children's Choir now sings at the Horace Mann School 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Liturgy and the 9:00 a.m. Easter Sunday Morning Liturgy in the Upper Church. The children attend three (3) rehearsals before the Christmas Eve Liturgy and three (3) rehearsals before the Easter Sunday Liturgy.

Children's Choir Rehearsals are held on Thursday afternoons from 5:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. in the Upper Church.

If you are interested in having your child participate in the St. Mary Children's Choir Program this fall, please check out the bulletin or contact Terry Kerr, Music Director for more information. The more - the merrier!!



Peter Brunelli Receives the Archdiocese of Boston Cheverus Award for a Life of Faithful Service

by John M. Ristaino

In November Peter Brunelli, a lifelong member of St. Mary Parish, received the Cheverus Award from Cardinal Sean on behalf of the Archdiocese of Boston during a ceremony held at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross. It was with great pride and deep gratitude for his service that St. Mary Parish nominated Peter for this recognition.

Peter and his wife Dolores became registered members of St. Mary Parish in Franklin, MA back in 1962. Their active participation in, and support of the parish community has been dynamic and diverse over the more than five decades of their membership. Peter and Dolores raised two daughters (Patricia and Christine) in our Catholic faith. Peter's service to St. Mary Parish is characterized by his humility, humor and holiness.

He has served St. Mary Parish in many different ministries over the years. He has shared his musical talent by singing in the choir and currently serves as an usher at Mass. His most significant contributions

have been to the community outreach that St. Mary Parish in Franklin, MA has been able to achieve and enjoy as the results of his efforts.

As a distinguished member of the Franklin business community, Peter donated countless resources to the Friends of Franklin organization which supports those residents of Franklin who lack

financial resources. The Friends of Franklin distributes food and gifts to these people at Christmas and Easter. Peter donated the use of storage and assembly space in addition to financial and produce donations and his keen business acumen to this group's efforts. The Friends of Franklin predates the St. Vincent de Paul Society organization at St.

Mary Parish in Franklin. It can be observed that the efforts and success of the Friends of Franklin identified the need and established a path for other St. Mary Parishioners to follow in establishing the St. Vincent DePaul Society Chapter here.

Sharing his expertise and experience in business matters is the hallmark of Peter's service to St. Mary Parish in Franklin. For many years he and Dolores served as the producers of the St. Mary Parish variety shows, cabarets and musicals. These were wonderful productions which built community in many wonderful and faith-filled ways. Peter's business skills were the reason these productions were able to be mounted for as many years as they were.

This skill of change management is

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Peter Brunelli receiving his Cheverus Award from Cardinal Sean O'Malley.



Bereavement Support Group to begin

A seven week Bereavement Support Group will begin on Thursday, April 28, 2016 at 7pm in St Mary's lower church. This faith based group is offered to anyone who has experienced a recent loss. For additional information or to register, please call Nan Rafter at 508-528-0020. Space is limited.



...Peter Brunelli Receives Cheverus Award

(Continued from page 6)

something that Peter shares with the annual Feast of St. Rocco. In his role as co-chairperson for this event Peter has brought his humor and humility to each and every festival's organizing, planning and running. Peter has been in this leadership role for well over 35 years. The Feast of St. Rocco has changed in many ways over this period of time.

Peter has worked with five Pastors, dozens of priests, and a good number of co-chairs during his tenure. Peter is the glue that keeps the Feast of St. Rocco running. Managing this very large event is a year round task which Peter does extremely well. This annual event is one which has benefitted St. Mary Parish greatly in financial terms. Even more significant is the impact it has on the Greater Franklin Community. The Feast of St. Rocco is a wonderful opportunity to annually gather as a community and to share our Catholic faith. It is a very fun event with food, rides and amusements. It is more importantly an annual outreach to the ill of

the parish to gather and to celebrate at Mass. There are three unique and wonderful Liturgical Celebrations which are part of the Feast of St. Rocco; the Opening Mass, the Healing Mass and the Closing Mass. Each of these Celebrations provide St. Mary Parish the opportunity to welcome and evangelize. Peter appreciates that the holiness of the St. Rocco Festival is its core. The festival's food, rides and amusements are what is enjoyed as the result of gathering to share and to celebrate our Catholic faith.

In any leadership role, it is easy to develop a sense of self-importance or even arrogance. Peter defies this. He approaches every role he takes on at St. Mary Parish with a unique sense of humility. Peter never brags about his titles or the contributions he makes to the St. Mary Parish family. Peter takes pride in and values the contributions he makes to our Faith. When asked this summer about his proudest moment of being involved with the St. Rocco Festival, Peter responded that being able to carry the statue of St. Rocco in procession is what he takes greatest pride in be-

cause of what the statue represents from a religious perspective.

You always find Peter with a smile on his face, an idea or two in his head on to how to keep the Feast of St. Rocco vital to the St. Mary Parish Family, and a prayer in his heart for his family, friends and Faith.

When asked what receiving this award meant to him, Peter responded; "Makes me feel kind of humble. I was taught by my father to always try to help others. Friends of Franklin and St. Rocco give me that chance. It's bringing everybody working together that is special. It's the way that everyone comes together for good causes and have fun doing it that makes it special. We look forward to helping people." The Cheverus Award is a reminder to Peter of the lives touched by his "bringing people together." Not only those who were helped but the people who came together to offer that assistance as well. May God continue to bless Peter and Dolores with His gift of love.

...What Does Your Catholic "Dash" Contain?

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you might not otherwise know.

Society is continually changing. Today, weddings are major social events. Our Catholic tradition tells us that they can be a religious event, one of the Sacraments. Are you a person who is engaged to be married? Are you planning to be married in the Church? If not, why not? This is our faith. This is part of your Catholic "dash." Yes, our Parish statistics support the change in society. The number of weddings in our beautiful church building remain rather low (when you consider the number of children who grew up in the faith and are getting married). This data reflects societal values. A spectacular venue seems to be valued more than the Catholic tradition. We can change this. We are the Church. It's our "dash." I like to think that a wedding in the church followed by a reception at a spectacular venue is a nice way to develop your "dash."

Actively engaging in the Sacrament of Reconciliation is yet another way to enhance your Catholic "dash." If you have not received this Sacrament lately, why not consid-

er doing so during this Lenten and/or Easter season? If you may have forgotten how, fear not, Fathers Brian and Jack can lead you in the conversation. Receiving forgiveness of your sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a great way to unburden your heart and mind and yes, to polish your Catholic "dash."

Do you visit our Parish website?

www.stmarysfranklin.org is a great resource for you! It contains information about Mass times, volunteer opportunities, Parish events and lots, lots more! It has links to other resources which can help you grow in your Catholic faith.

We are in the Year of Mercy! Have you heard about it? The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy is a Roman Catholic period of prayer which started on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8), 2015 and will continue until the Feast of Christ the King (November 20), 2016. The Year of Jubilee is seen by the Church as a period for remission of sins and universal pardon focusing particularly on God's forgiveness and mercy. Pope Francis called for this wonderful initiative. You can learn more about the Year of Mercy

on the Parish website. It is a great opportunity for you to develop and polish your Catholic "dash."

Giving to those less fortunate than ourselves is a tremendous way to demonstrate God's mercy. Here at St. Mary Parish in Franklin we enjoy a very dynamic and engaging St. Vincent de Paul Society. They reach out constantly to those in our community who are in need. They are always accepting financial support as well as food donations. You can find yellow envelopes at the doors of church for your financial gifts (just place the yellow envelope in the collection basket or drop it by the Rectory). There are boxes at that the doors of the church to accept your non-perishable food items. Helping to show God's mercy is a beautiful way to polish your Catholic "dash."

As we journey through Lent and into Easter, let's pause and think about our Catholic "dash." Are we growing in our Catholic faith as we journey through life? How can we do it better? How can we make our Catholic "dash" the most fruitful it can be? The doors of the Church and the arms of Christ are open for you to explore the answers.

Encountering Jesus Christ

by Father Jack Sullivan

Early in this new year, the Disciple Maker Survey inquired about our Catholic journey and included among the possible choices for our self-description the following statement: "I have personally encountered Jesus Christ and am growing as a disciple." I suspect that our New England reserve about claiming too much and our reluctance to brag moved many of us away from choosing this selection.

Pope Francis began this new year by encouraging us all: "let us allow the Blessed Virgin Mary to lead us to the rediscovery of the beauty of an encounter with her Son Jesus." On February 2, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord Jesus, we find this invitation prior to the procession: "So let us also, gathered together by the Holy Spirit, proceed to the house of God to encounter Christ. There we shall find him and recognize him in the breaking of the bread, until he comes again, revealed in glory." The Roman Missal identifies the time and place of our encounter with Jesus Christ by securely anchoring this encounter in the Eucharist, the sacrament of his

immense love. In the Catholic East, the Greek title for the Presentation is the Feast of Meeting (hypapante). Saint Matthew's gospel reminds us that the Risen Jesus takes the initiative in meeting the women on Easter morning. "And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them..." (Matth 28:9 using the Greek verb hypantao = to meet).

Do we understand ourselves as capable of an encounter with the Risen Lord Jesus Christ? Would we describe an encounter with Jesus as an experience possible for us today and in the weeks ahead?

Our Catholic heritage cherishes and respects human flesh, our physical bodies, in measuring our relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord. Do we find ourselves close to Jesus? Upon deeper reflection, is Jesus near-by? Our Catholic tradition delights in complexity and balance. The risen Jesus now lives at the right hand of his almighty Father – above and beyond our physical grasp. Yet the Risen Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, provides for our bodily reception of him as food in the Eucharist, the sacrament of his astounding love. The Risen Jesus also allows us to discover and serve him near-by in our

neighbors-in-need. "...whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matth 25:40). In our attitudes and actions, we strive to avoid any drifting away from the reception of the Holy Eucharist or from the exercise of practical charity for our neighbors-in-need. The Risen Jesus is wondrously both beyond and within our physical grasp in the Eucharist and in the loving service of our neighbors-in-need.

Late in the Season of Lent, the Roman Missal provides this prayer: "O God, who in this season give your Church the grace to imitate the Blessed Virgin Mary in contemplating the Passion of Christ, grant, we pray, through her intercession, that we may cling more firmly each day to your Only Begotten Son and come at last to the fullness of his grace" (Lent 5, Friday). As we continue to move closer to Jesus each day, another instructive prayer in the Roman Missal exhibits rhetorical balance in its emphasis on words and deeds: "...having received your Son, born of the tender Virgin, under sacramental signs, we may profess him in words and hold fast to him in deeds" (Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 3).

The Weave

St. Mary Parish Family
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