

“A NICE WAY TO SHARE”: *Seniors Find Fellowship and Fun in Activities*

There’s something a little different in the works for our parish’s seniors who have been enjoying the fellowship and new friends made in the coloring group and Bible studies each month. So, watch for the news! But meanwhile...

Nancy Sparrow, volunteer, became involved in overseeing the activity groups when Joni Richter, Director of Pastoral Care, suggested an adult coloring group be formed.

The coloring group meets at 10 a.m. on the fourth Friday of each month in the parish center dining room.

“We do Scriptural verses and talk about them while they color,” Nancy says. “We use the works of Karla Dornacher, and we look at the Scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday, we read the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday, and we have prayer. A lot of the members discuss the readings and get to know each other. We have a lot of different personalities! They share about what’s going on with themselves, how to get around as a senior. There’s a lot of fun for everyone.”

The group often enjoys refreshments, and



Coloring has become a popular adult activity, and seniors in our parish enjoy a monthly gathering that involves not only coloring, but also fellowship.

Fr. Scott will stop in on occasion, and bring refreshments.

“It’s a nice way to share,” Nancy says. “He tries to do it even if he has a funeral that day.”

The Bible study group came out of a suggestion from one of the members of the coloring group. The Bible Study group meets at 10 a.m. on the second Friday of the month at the parish center.

“She wanted to do more,” Nancy says of the coloring group member. “Joni found a Christian Bible series, *Aging in the Grace of God*, that offers discussion topics,

continued on back cover

STEWARDSHIP:

The Four Pillars



You've heard about the three Ts of stewardship, but what about the Four Pillars?

The three Ts – time, talent and treasure – describe the personal gifts we offer to the Church. The Four Pillars of parish stewardship described by the renowned priest Msgr. Thomas McGread. They are the hallmark of a stewardship parish – hospitality, prayer, formation and service. Let's take a look at each of them to understand how we can improve in each area.

HOSPITALITY CHRISTIAN KINDNESS

"When I was a stranger, you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). The Gospel teaches that whenever we welcome the least of our brothers or sisters, we welcome Christ himself. That is why the first mark of a stewardship parish is hospitality. Being friendly is one of the first ways we can be Christ-like toward others.

Modern Catholic parishes are often so large and have so many Masses that many parishioners don't know one another. To create a sense of community, be sure to smile and greet others as you enter and exit the Church. Let's try harder than ever to be a welcoming community.

PRAYER HEART-TO-HEART WITH GOD

"Do not become so involved in the work of the Lord that you forget the Lord of the work," a seminary professor once taught. In other words, don't get so caught up with parish projects and outreach efforts that you forget to draw aside to spend time with God in prayer. Every great saint has taught that prayer is the most essential component in the life of the Christian. Through prayer, we nurture our most important relationship – the one that will last for all eternity.

A healthy prayer life should include communal prayer such as Mass, as well as personal prayer and family prayer. The two biggest obstacles to prayer are lack of time and lack of understanding of how to pray. We have to schedule time for prayer just as we would for an important appointment. And we have to learn how to pray from other people. Many saints have written spiritual books that describe different methods of prayer.

FORMATION CONTINUOUS CONVERSION

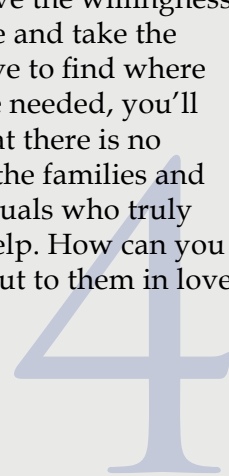
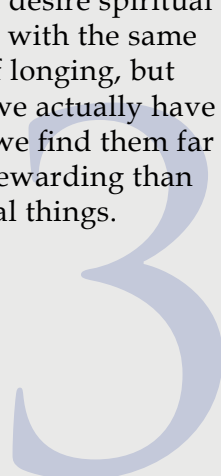
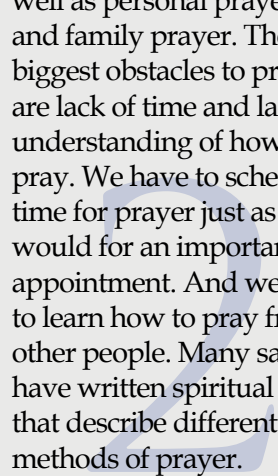
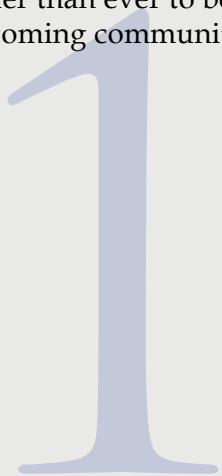
Pope John Paul II always emphasized ongoing conversion. From childhood through adulthood, our whole life must be a process of drawing closer to God. He never stops calling us forward to learn more and to examine ourselves more deeply.

Very often our society values material things more than interior virtues. But as personal experience shows, when we finally acquire the car or house or "toy" that we wanted so badly, it doesn't really satisfy. On the other hand, we don't tend to desire spiritual virtues with the same kind of longing, but when we actually have them, we find them far more rewarding than material things.

SERVICE LOVE IN ACTION

"Amen I say to you, whatever you did to the least of my brothers, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40). This Scripture was one of St. Teresa of Calcutta's favorites. Each time she picked up a poor and hungry child, she knew she was ministering to Christ. While we may not view ourselves as saints, we too are called to such heroic service right within our own community. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "To be a saint is not the privilege of a few, but the duty of everyone."

We have many service opportunities right here within our own parish. If you have the willingness to serve and take the initiative to find where you are needed, you'll find that there is no end to the families and individuals who truly need help. How can you reach out to them in love?



A Letter From Our Pastor

2018
New Year Resolutions



RESOLVE TO GIVE BACK

to God in 2018

Another new year – 2018! There was a time in my life when this date (and others) seemed so far in the future. It is amazing how those dates start to pile up and stream by, isn't it? I have reached a point where measuring one's life by the years and dates is not as significant as many other things.

I recall reading somewhere, "The world around us asks, 'What does a person own?' But God asks, 'How does a person use what he or she has been given?'" This month of January is one filled with reminders of holiness – the official end of the Christmas season; the Epiphany of our Lord; the Baptism of the Lord; and the return to Ordinary Time, which, as we know, is not "ordinary" at all.

At Epiphany we hear, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matthew 2:11), a reference to the Magi and their visit to the Christ Child. The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their gifts for Him is one we should all try to follow. Each of us is called to open our gifts before Jesus and offer Him what He needs. I heard a suggestion once that if you have a problem with this thought, you should perhaps keep one of the Magi from your Christmas Nativity set and place it on your desk as a reminder.

During the Baptism of the Lord, God makes it clear when He proclaims from the Heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). God has given us the greatest gift He could give. He gave His only Son. When we think about the enormity of that gift of Jesus sent to save us, in addition to all the other blessings which God has entrusted to us, it is very humbling. God has given us so much. What do we give in return?

Making resolutions is common at this time of year. We will also hear this month about how Jesus called the first apostles. The Lord calls us as well to follow Him. Let us resolve to try to do that better – all of us. That does not mean we have to leave our work and our families behind, but we do need to put our service to Jesus. That should be our top resolution.



In *The Theology of the Hammer*, Habitat for Humanity co-founder Millard Fuller wrote, "The only truly safe investment one can make in life is what is given away." First and foremost, God wants us. That should be our real resolution – to give ourselves to the Lord. May we all do a better job of that in 2018. God bless you all.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Scott J. Wimsett
Pastor



Tables set and ready for a meeting of Walking With Purpose

WALKING WITH PURPOSE:

Women Strengthen Their Relationships with Christ and One Another

Several years ago, parishioner Meredith Gardner was looking for “something more.” By all appearances, her life was very full – as a wife and mother to two daughters, she remained active in the parish school and in church life and had met many fellow parents and parishioners. Still, Meredith found herself in search of a ministry that might take her faith life and her relationships to a deeper level. A simple Google search introduced her to a women’s Catholic Bible study called Walking With Purpose. Just over three years later, Walking With Purpose is a thriving ministry here at Our Lady of Lourdes, with over 50 parish women participating in this life-changing program.

The Walking With Purpose Bible study program is uniquely geared toward Catholic women.

“Walking With Purpose was founded in Maryland by Lisa Brenninkmeyer, a Catholic mom

who didn’t feel like she was being spiritually fed on a personal level by the Catholic Church,” Meredith explains. “So, she started writing Bible studies on different themes. It’s a fresh and relevant way for women to see how powerful the Word of God is in their everyday lives as wives and mothers and friends. The studies really make the Scripture come alive to us as women.”

At Our Lady of Lourdes, Beth Freeman and Meredith coordinate Walking With Purpose, and the group members meet weekly from the beginning of September through Holy Week, covering one of the program’s 26-week Bible studies each year. This year, women can choose from a group that meets on Monday evenings and one that meets on Friday mornings.

In addition to Scripture study, the Walking With Purpose program places an emphasis on fellowship



The Walking With Purpose leadership team (from left) Polly Lovasz, Barb Bresnahan, Meredith Gardner, Kathy Norris, Kathy Paper, Rosemary Deans, Sharon Frick, Julie McGregor, Missy Milby, Brooke Bond, and Beth Freeman



In addition to Scripture study, the Walking With Purpose program places an emphasis on fellowship and hospitality.

continued on page 5

WALKING WITH PURPOSE

continued from page 4

and hospitality. As the group's hospitality coordinator, Rosemary Deans arrives an hour early to meetings in order to arrange the linens, candles, coffee and food to create a warm and inviting atmosphere. Fellowship is further encouraged by the small-group sharing that takes place at each gathering, leading the women to form close friendships as the year progresses.

For Meredith, forming strong friendships and witnessing how the Lord transforms her own life and the lives of others through Walking With Purpose has been a true joy.

"When it clicked for me — personally knowing Jesus for myself and what that means for my life — that fueled my desire to offer this program," she says. "I want other women to experience the transformation that I have experienced. And that very first season we did the program, I got to see up close and personal how learning to pray more and depend on her relationship with Jesus really transformed one of the women from the inside out. Even if that happens for only one woman, it's worth it."

Since bringing Walking With Purpose to our parish, Meredith has felt incredibly blessed by the opportunity to share her everyday challenges with other women in the church.

"The program really addresses so many issues for women wanting a practical application for living a faith-filled life," she says. "It really comes down to this — if I'm struggling as a mom or in my marriage, what does God say about this? It really helps women to learn what God says about our issues in 2018. It's not ancient — it's still alive for us today."

This school year, Meredith has had the opportunity to bring the benefits of the Walking With Purpose program to even more individuals with a new study designed especially for girls in middle school. While this study, *Blaze*, has not yet been published, Meredith was able to receive a copy directly from the program's founder after learning about it at a national Walking With Purpose leadership conference.

Meredith, whose two daughters are 11 and 12, now offers this 26-week study to interested girls in the Our Lady of Lourdes School sixth and seventh-grade classes.

"I knew I needed a strong faith to fuel my daughter's faith, but now I can do a study with her and her friends," Meredith enthuses. "It's about all the things girls deal with and God's truth about it all. It's great, and the girls love it!"

From middle school to middle age — and beyond — we are all in need of a strong faith to help us navigate through life. Ultimately, the goal of Walking With Purpose is to help individuals grow ever closer to the Lord.

"It's really important to develop that personal relationship with Jesus," Meredith affirms. "Walking With Purpose helps to guide us and shepherd us in that."



A video promoting Walking With Purpose.

Walking With Purpose groups meet in the adult room at Our Lady of Lourdes on Monday evenings and Friday mornings, with childcare provided. Are you interested in learning more? Please contact Meredith Gardner at 502-500-9507 or mrgardner323@yahoo.com.

A SIGNIFICANT MOMENT IN OUR PRAYER

The Presentation of the Gifts

Occasionally, you might hear someone jokingly refer to “halftime” during Mass – the interval following the Prayers of the Faithful, as the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins. It can be easy, even tempting, to zone out as you sit, waiting for the collection basket to make its way to your pew.

But if you pay attention, you’ll have the opportunity to enter into something deeper – a significant moment in our prayer.

It’s mentioned by St. Justin Martyr, one of the earliest Christian writers, when describing the Mass in the second century, “Bread is brought up and wine and water...”

This practice, of people bringing up the gifts, has been part of our Catholic tradition from the very beginning. Although we might think of this action as being merely practical, in reality, it serves a much deeper spiritual purpose.

Each Sunday Mass, someone is chosen, whether an usher, or another member of the parish, to bring forward “the gifts” – bread, wine, and in many cases, the collection of money that has been gathered moments before, from the generosity of the congregation. These gifts not only symbolize, but also in reality, are the work of human hands. The bread and wine are fruit of God’s creation, which, through the effort of human hands, are made into the gifts that we present to the Lord.

Certainly, the collection that is presented to the priest also serves to represent the work and sacrifices of the previous week. Sharing our monetary “treasures” is one of the ways that we embrace stewardship. It’s an opportunity to generously give back to the Lord, from the fruit of our work.

In his book *What Happens At Mass*, Fr. Jeremy Driscoll, OSB explains, “...We should not think of the collection of money at this point as some sort of banal, dirty but necessary affair. Money is our work. Money is hours of our lives. And now we give it away, we sacrifice it, for the work of the Church.”

In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul instructs Christians to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God” (Romans 12:1).

The physical act of carrying the gifts forward to the priest is meant to serve as a tangible reminder of the fact that we are all called to stewardship. We are all called to present to God our lives – our work, our talents, the struggles and victories of the past week – as an offering and gift to God.

Those who bring forward the gifts each week have the privilege and responsibility of remembering what their action represents – that we are called to give generously of our time, talent and treasure to God, who gives us His very self, at Mass. And for those sitting in the pews, tempted to “check out” for a few minutes, seeing the gifts being brought forward should serve as a powerful reminder to offer our lives back to God, through serving and honoring Him.

So next week, don’t just sit back and wait for the “halftime show.” Come to Mass a few minutes early and approach an usher to ask if you and/or your family may bring up the gifts that week. Don’t be surprised if you start to notice a change in your heart and a desire to be even more generous with God in the coming week!





A SPIRIT-FILLED AND FUN WEEK FOR OUR STUDENTS AND PARISH COMMUNITY

Catholic Schools Week at Our Lady of Lourdes School

Since 1974, Catholic schools across the country have been blessed to share in a wonderful yearly celebration of education, faith, fellowship and fun – Catholic Schools Week, sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association. This year’s celebration takes place from Jan. 28 through Feb. 3.

“Working with our school Student Council and the Archdiocese of Louisville, we here at Our Lady of Lourdes School are completing the plans for a spirit-filled and fun week for our students and parish community,” says Jennifer Barz, the Principal at Our Lady of Lourdes School. “This year’s theme is ‘Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.’”

Catholic schools in the United States currently enroll almost 2,000,000 students – some 1,300,000 at the elementary level and another 600,000 at the secondary level. Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Louisville provide 20,000 students with a unique environment that allows students to grow in their faith while performing at high academic levels in a community of dedicated educators, parents and advocates.

“This week is a week of celebration for us in many ways,” Mrs. Barz says. “Our 2018 week is not completely scheduled, but we expect to do some of the same things as we have in the past. We will participate in the all-archdiocesan Mass. We were privileged to host that Mass at Our Lady of

Lourdes last year. This year, representatives of our Student Council will attend. Attendance is limited as it includes students and teachers from all over the archdiocese. Of course, the archbishop is the principal celebrant.

“There are so many things we plan,” she continues. “We will have an Open House for parents and others who are interested. Much of what we do will have this year’s theme as the focus. Our students write letters to the people of the parish thanking them for their support. We will showcase what we do here at the school. During the week, we try to celebrate the school, our students, our faculty and staff, the students’ parents, and really the entire parish. In the past, and probably again this year, we have had dress up and dress down days, given the students opportunities to show their allegiance to colleges and professional teams, hold our annual science fair, and done other things which are just plain fun. We are proud of our school and our Catholic identity, and this is a time to emphasize that.”

This year’s theme – Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed. – encompasses the core products and values that can be found in Catholic schools throughout the country. Not only do Catholic schools teach students to become disciples and future leaders, but it is also these shared values that truly make Catholic schools succeed in their mission.

If you would like more information, please contact the school office at 502-895-5122.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

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SENIORS FIND FELLOWSHIP AND FUN IN ACTIVITIES *continued from front cover*

such as letting go of certain things and the changes in one's life, coping with no longer being able to do things."

The Bible study sessions allow the members to share even more with each other.

"We use the Biblical texts to go about the discussions," Nancy says. "It's really interesting how they share about things that have happened in their lives, and how they face challenges. It's pretty amazing – some talk about using Uber and Lyft and exercise classes. It's helpful as they talk about times that are hard, dealing with loss. There are a lot of smiles and fun and laughter, but the coloring group is more light-

hearted and the Bible study is a little more serious."

No matter which group the seniors attend, they are enjoying the benefits of fellowship. They are enjoying the opportunity to get to form friendships beyond just seeing each other at Mass.

"Some people get a lot out of getting to know each other on a different basis," Nancy says. "They learn about each others' families."

Other activities the parish seniors have enjoyed included a "Christmas in July" event held last summer, as well as several daytime bus trips.

"We want people to join us!" Nancy says.

Anyone interested in upcoming senior activities may contact Joni at 502-896-0241, ext. 18.

LITURGY SCHEDULE:

Weekends: Saturday, 4:30 p.m.; Sunday, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 a.m.

Weekdays: Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 12:00 p.m.; 8:15 a.m. most Thursdays during the school year

Holy Days: Please verify in the bulletin.