



Our Parish Family Newsletter

Winter 2015

St. Joseph
Catholic Church

a stewardship parish



“St. Joseph’s Men’s Group”

Dan Festa has been a member of St. Joseph's Men's Group for 15 years. He and his wife Debbie have five children, four boys and one girl. Dan says, “ it has been, and continues to be, a truly enriching and faith-filled experience. I feel I have grown both personally and spiritually and the Men's Group family has helped to enrich that experience.

Saint Joseph's Men's Group is an opportunity for us Christian men to bond and grow spiritually as men united in our faith. It is an opportunity for us to share with each other our faith, our challenges, our lives (the good, the bad and everything in between). We help each other on our journey as men of faith. Our journey is not an easy one, but it is a good one. My dad often says that **God has a plan and it's a good plan.** I pose two questions for you to ask yourself.

**What am I doing to help make God's plan, my plan?
What can the St. Joseph's Men’s Group do to help me in that journey?**

I encourage men of all ages, from the parish, to join me in this awesome and faithful family of men. We call it a group, but it is so much more than that. There are members of the parish that were once members of the group and

have stepped away for a time. We would welcome you back and encourage you to participate.

Every member enriches the experience. We challenge each other, we support each other, and we befriend each other.

We meet the 2nd Saturday of the month (every month). We begin with a Mass in the Chapel, followed by prayer and reflection in the Holy Family Center. We also take time in between for socializing with coffee and donuts.”

Join us and let the Holy Spirit deepen your faith. For more information you can call Tony Tesoriero at 440-572-2408 or email ttesoriero@wowway.com.

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**Deacon James
Kulway**
**Journey to
Ordination**

It has been quite a long journey! This road to the Priesthood of Jesus Christ began almost ten years ago, and still continues. I am truly grateful and happy to finally be at this point, where I can serve the Church as an ordained minister. I have been a Deacon now for five weeks and it has already been a great and joyful learning experience. I have noticed in this short amount of time that my vocation calls me to greater holiness and challenges me to give my best. I now feel a deeper sense of responsibility in my words and actions as one who represents the Church visibly.

For the first 19 years of my life, I never would have dreamt that I would enter the seminary to be a Catholic Priest. Why would someone want to do that? This

response to Priesthood, had I known in those first 19 years, I would even be later considering the call to ordained ministry. But God has His ways. In my early college years, I found myself in need. In my own way, I hit some low spots in life - even for a young man at the time. The only thing I could think to do in my suffering was start going to Mass again. I grew up with this faith but, to be honest, hardly knew a thing about it. It was time to begin searching a little bit deeper. I remember thinking - "If God is who we say He is, then why would I not get to know more about Him? But if He is not who we say He is then this is a big waste of time!"

After going to Mass more intentionally and trying to understand what was happening, I began for the first time, to truly learn about the faith. I began reading about the teachings of the Church, Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body, and reading up on the Saint's lives. This

fascinated me! Conversion takes a lifetime but the foundation of faith was beginning to be built here. On top of this, I went to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from time to time to really question Jesus about who He was. Around this time God's call for me to enter seminary was being born. Jesus would enter my heart through His presence in the Eucharist and I always was left desiring more - so much so that Priesthood became something to really consider.

After finally saying "yes" to God and entering the seminary, it took me four full years to receive my calling from God to the Priesthood in a deeper way. I would finally know with certainty that He was calling me to be a Priest and that this was something I desired with my whole heart. There was no turning back. Laying down my life through the Diaconate has been a gift. I have a real sense of mission and purpose. I ask for your prayers as I approach Priesthood, God-willing, in a few months!



Megan Adams
**Scholarship
Recipient**

As my sophomore year begins at Gannon University, in Erie Pennsylvania, in the 3+3 physical therapy program, new experiences continue to challenge me.

I share an apartment with three roommates which required learning how to communicate effectively. I have learned how to cook for myself, clean the apartment, and balance school work and extracurricular activities. This semester, along with

completing my liberal arts credits I am also taking one science based class, (physics) my least favorite subject of all the sciences. I am involved in the physical therapy club, the Kirk House bible study, Gannon University Greece T.R.A.V.E.L. program and community core, a service group on campus. I also have been doing service work with the Phi Beta Sigma, the honor society. Between classes and my extracurricular clubs, my schedule is extremely busy. Sundays I attend the 9:00pm Mass on campus, in the Mary Seat of Wisdom Chapel. This is the best way for me to start my week, while not interrupting my study schedule. I also attend a weekly bible study

faith sharing group, allowing me to continue to intergrade my faith with my daily life on campus.

I encourage students heading to college, to attend Mass and use it as a way to ground yourself in your faith and relax from the stress of class.

My Christmas break will entail spending ample amounts of time on the ski slopes, time with family and friends, and catching up on much needed sleep and a few of my favorite Netflix shows. I will also be doing some shadowing at an outpatient physical therapy center for my PT Seminar II.

2015 Annual Report

St. Joseph Parish

Dear Parish Family:

As our year draws to a close, I want to thank you for all you have done to enrich our parish. It's clear that we have allowed Christ to touch our lives and enrich the lives of others through our prayer, service, and our presence within our wider community. In this spirit of gratitude, I present our 2015 Annual Report.

While a major component of this report is financial, our report purposefully includes other facts and figures that speak to the life and activity of our parish from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. I have also included some recent statistics that help to situate us into the wider context of the other 184 Diocesan parishes. Looking back on the year, we completed significant physical improvements to our parish facilities.

While these involved significant monetary investment, they were completed because of prior accumulated savings and our ongoing support of the Diocesan *Rooted in Faith-Forward in Hope* Campaign. I'm thankful for this support and believe that future generations of parishioners will also be grateful for our efforts today!

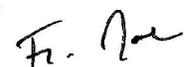
Parish Life Statistics	2015	2014
Adults welcomed into the Church	8	7
Infant Baptisms	68	68
Marriages	18	23
Funerals	69	88
8th Grade Confirmations	88	102
2nd Grade First Communions	61	75

As we have accomplished much "internally" during the past year, I'd like to draw your attention to one of the ways that we spread the Gospel "externally" beyond our buildings and into our neighborhood. As you will see, expenses from our community outreach, stewardship and evangelization, and our designated collections total \$93,270, which is 7.7% of our parish's offertory and designated collections. Coupling that figure with parishioner-supported Ministry of Assistance's 2014 monetary outreach of \$19,345 and parishioner gifts to the 2014 Catholic Charities Appeal totaling \$138,403, our parish community is responsible for \$251,018 being generated within the past 18 months. That's an amazingly generous figure! When you add the countless volunteer hours, efforts, and dedication of so many to these funds, you can see that we're a generous parish whose generosity continues to grow in so many ways, one of which, being monetarily.

Quick Facts for 2014-2015	St. Joseph	Diocesan Average
Average Total Weekend Attendance	1,503	925
Number of Weekend Masses	4	3.8
Church Seating Capacity	800	663
Registered Households	2,526	1,439
Registered Individuals	6,516	3,704

As you view our report, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact Jim Kulway, Finance Council Chairperson at 440.238.6163, Joe Shuman, our Business Manager at 440.238.5555, or me. You may also wish to visit www.sjohio.org/finance for details on our Finance Council or to view past Annual Reports.

I am hopeful of your continued prayerful, active, and financial support as these contribute to the efforts and vitality of our parish. I continue my pledge to always strive to be the best steward of our shared resources. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide our work, that way, together, with St. Joseph as our guide, we might continue to accomplish great things!



St. Joseph Parish
Statement of Church Revenue and Expenses

	Actual Year Ended June 30,		Budget
	2015	2014	2016
Parish Receipts:			
Offertory Collections	\$ 1,184,291	\$ 1,185,638	\$ 1,177,700
Donations & Bequests	15,008	200,000	\$ -
Net Fund Raising Income (1)	155,458	159,641	143,100
Income From Parish Programs	149,050	117,023	128,580
Investment & Endowment Income	10,010	30,272	5,560
Miscellaneous Receipts (2)	93,298	112,062	69,325
Designated Collections	29,083	25,222	18,840
Extraordinary Receipts (3)	-	65,123	-
Total Parish Receipts	1,636,198	1,894,981	1,543,105
Parish Disbursements:			
Salaries, Benefits & Taxes	638,418	618,933	627,231
Rectory & Household	15,924	13,266	9,500
Parish Office & Administration	70,912	76,980	74,573
Altar, Sanctuary & Liturgical (4)	71,731	60,418	52,800
Community Outreach (5)	38,130	33,091	39,112
Religious Education (6)	36,067	40,573	38,640
Stewardship & Evangelization	26,057	24,016	32,295
Utilities (1)	53,053	54,863	53,370
Insurance & Property Taxes	18,947	18,515	19,550
Maintenance, Repairs & Plant Operating (1)	57,983	62,529	56,322
Diocesan Assessment	143,292	129,396	136,266
School Support (7)	278,597	283,634	300,864
Designated Collections	29,133	25,221	18,840
Capital Expenditures (1)	190,818	125,127	209,836
Extraordinary Expenses (8)		70,907	
Total Parish Disbursements	1,669,062	1,637,469	1,669,199
TOTAL PARISH SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(32,864)	257,512	(126,094)
Less - Mortgage Principal Payments	83,043	96,513	85,616
TOTAL PARISH CASH FLOW (USAGE) (9)	\$ (115,907)	\$ 160,999	\$ (211,710)

- (1) 75% of income received through Maintenance & Repair Fund, helps to offset expenses in these categories.
- (2) Includes \$57,624 in 2015, \$69,453 in 2014 and \$33,000 in the 2016 budget from *Rooted In Faith* donations
- (3) Insurance claim proceeds
- (4) Includes all expenses associated with Mass, our Parish Mission, and our various Parish Programs & Functions.
- (5) Includes Social Concerns ministries, such as West Side Catholic Center Meals, Mission of Hope, and Bereavement.
- (6) Includes programming and resources for PSR, Youth Ministry and all educational ministries (no salaries are included)
- (7) Includes our parish subsidy to our interparochial school and any parish-awarded tuition assistance
- (8) Insurance claim expenses
- (9) Our negative cash flow includes: in 2015, \$190,818 towards the garage addition and partial payment on parking lot, while 2016's budget includes \$209,836 for the remainder of both the parking lot and garage addition. Funds for these projects were raised in prior years.

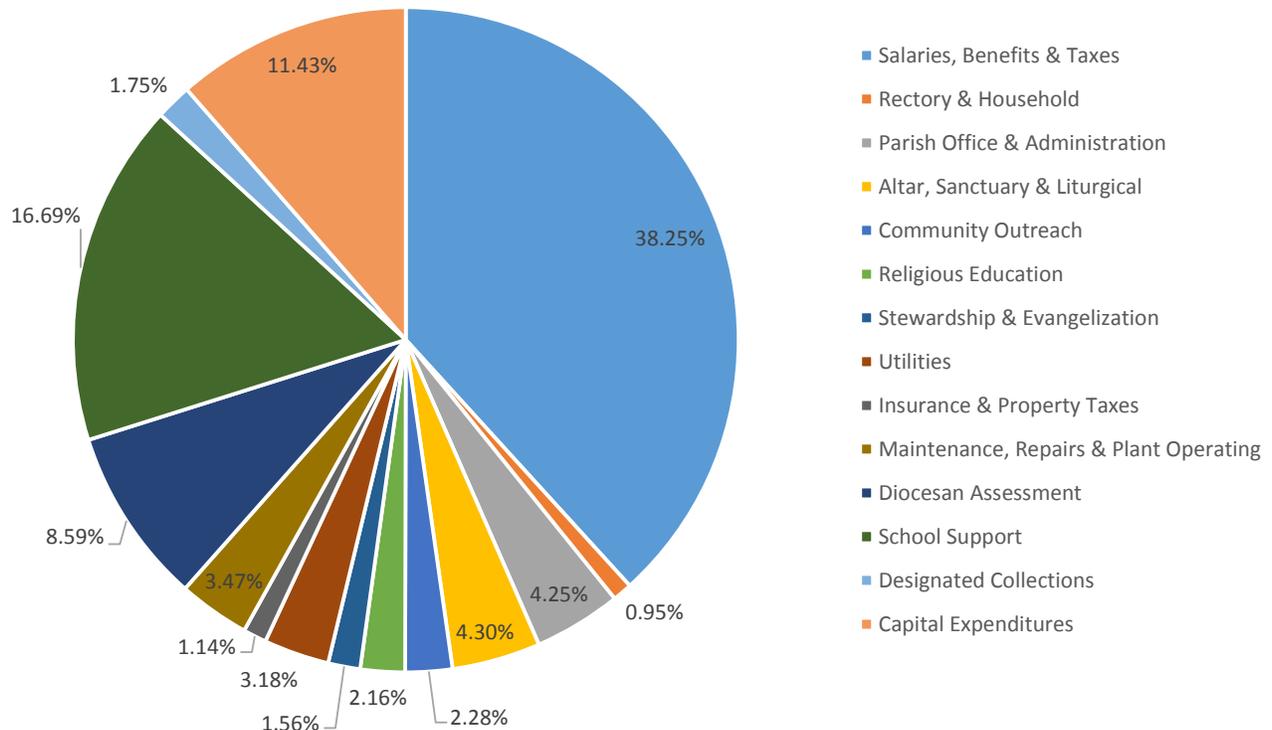
St. Joseph Parish Statement of Church Assets and Liabilities

	Balance As Of June 30,	
	2015	2014
ASSETS		
Checking, Savings And Investments		
Checking Account Balances	\$ 11,406	\$ 485
Savings and Investment Account Balances	636,356	598,557
Parish Improvement Account (10)	388,126	290,998
Total Checking, Savings and Investments	1,035,888	890,040
Accounts Receivable	549	2,519
Total Assets	\$ 1,036,437	\$ 892,559
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	\$ 104,817	\$ 37,143
Income Received In Advance (11)	192,111	-
Loans, Notes and Mortgages Payable	270,391	353,434
Total Liabilities	567,319	390,577
FUND BALANCE		
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	501,982	244,470
Net Surplus (Deficit) for the Year	(32,864)	257,512
Fund Balance, End of Year	469,118	501,982
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	\$ 1,036,437	\$ 892,559

(10) 2015 balance is after a \$85,152 withdrawal for a partial payment on the parking lot.

(11) School portion of parking lot project

**Parish Disbursements
For The Year Ended June 30, 2015**





How did Saint Nicholas become Santa Claus?

The man behind the traditions of Father Christmas and Santa Claus is really a Roman Catholic saint. Saint Nicholas was the fourth century Bishop of Myra (present day Turkey). Nicholas was an incredibly wealthy man because his parents had both died when he was only a child and left him a huge sum of money. Nicholas was widely known for his generosity and developed a reputation for helping the poor and those less fortunate. The most famous story about Saint Nicholas tells of how the custom of hanging up stockings to get presents first began in our modern day Christmas tradition.

There was a poor man whose wife had died and had three daughters. All three daughters wanted desperately to get married but no men would marry them because the father did not have enough money for a dowry (a dowry is a sum of money paid to the bridegroom by the bride's parents

on the wedding day). One night, Nicholas secretly dropped a bag of gold down the chimney and into the house. Legend tells us that bag of gold fell into one of the daughter's stockings that had been hung by the fire to dry. Bishop Nicholas repeated this again the following night dropping gold down the chimney for the second daughter. Finally, determined to discover the person who had given him the money, the father secretly hid by the fire every evening until he caught Nicholas dropping off a bag of gold. Nicholas begged the father to not tell anyone what he had done, because he did not want to bring attention to himself. But soon the news got out and when anyone received a secret gift, it was thought that maybe it was from Nicholas. Bishop Nicholas was exiled from Myra and later put in prison during the Christian persecutions under Roman Emperor Diocletian. No one really knows when he died, but it was on the 6th of December in either 345 or 352 AD. The generosity of Bishop Nicholas slowly crept into popular culture and after Nicholas was made a saint of the Church it became a custom that every year on December 6th, the Feast of Saint Nicholas, small children would put their stockings out to be filled up with candy and toys

overnight. Different countries slowly added their own traditions and legends to the life of Nicholas that over time transformed him into "Father Christmas" and the modern day "Santa Claus."

Advent and Christmas remain an important time for Catholic Christians as we anticipate receiving our greatest gift, the incarnate Son of God born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus himself is the gift from God the Father who generously pours himself out for us on the cross that we might be saved from sin and death. Jesus is the gift each of us receives in the Holy Eucharist at Mass bringing peace in this love and promised happiness in the life to come. Saint Nicholas' most precious gift was not the gold he left in young girls stockings but the person of Jesus Christ he embodied and shared with the world. During this Advent and Christmas Season, when you are filling stockings and exchanging gifts, do not forget to share your most precious gift, your friendship with Jesus Christ, with your family, friends and even complete strangers. May you and your families have a blessed Advent and Christmas Season!

**Peace in Christ,
Father Anthony Suso**



By Teens, For Teens

Our teens in grades 7-12 have been involved in some great By Teens, For Teens youth events since September. Thank you to our high school juniors and seniors who are part of the core team and mentor our teens in grades 7-10. Through activities, small group discussion and prayer, we have explored

topics relating to our choices in life, our quest for happiness and our call to serve others. Our teens also participated in the Trunk or Treat and provided many hands during the Polka Mass and dinner. Yes, our teens do know how to polka!

Also during November, we were blessed to hear from our special guest, Scott W. Fedor, founder of "Getting Back Up", who inspired

all of us to achieve the best life possible.

Our winter By Teens, For Teens events include a night for our juniors and seniors to hear about college from our recent graduates and other college students during our "College Café" event.

We also are inviting married couples to join us as we learn more about the sacrament of marriage.

Continued on bottom of page 7



The Power of Ten-Squared

It is said that Jesus sent his apostles out in one accord. On Saturday, October 10th, He sent out the “Power of Ten-Squared” workers, not only in an Accord, but Toyotas, Fords, VWs and Kias. By vans, trucks, SUVs and cars, the workers left St. Joseph, going out to the community of Strongsville to help those in need. The “Power of Ten-Squared” was a day of service to help celebrate the year-long, 50th Anniversary of the dedication of St. Joseph Church. While the parish of St. Joseph had been around for 18 years prior, the church was dedicated in May of 1965.

On a cool but sunny Saturday morning, over 60 members of the community of St. Joseph, both young and old, gathered in the church for 8:00am Mass. After being energized by the power of the Holy Spirit during Mass, our bodies were then nourished with a light breakfast provided by Dawna Meng and her St. Joseph Workers. With both our souls and bodies filled, we then headed to our respective job sites.

The majority of the workers headed out to the homes of parishioners that could no longer maintain their yards. Leaves were raked, trees trimmed. Others headed over to Kemper House to keep company and play board games with those who were homebound. Yet others helped around the church itself. These

jobs included the thorough cleaning of the Holy Family Center kitchen, the moving of the Ministry of Assistance from a storage locker back to the church and the wrapping of boxes for our “Breakfast with Santa”.

While we fell short of our goal of 100 people, the energy and effort of the more than 60 workers, more than made up for it. All-in-all, our St. Joseph day of service was well received and left the door to our “**Hearts Wide Open**” to making this an annual event!

A special “**Thank You**” goes out to **Kathy McConaughy, Dan Kilbane, Fr. Joe and Dawna Meng** for their efforts in the coordination of this event and to those who took a day out of their lives to help.



Don't be surprised if you see a group of teens “Caroling for Cancer” as we raise money for our St. Joseph Relay for Life Team. We will participate in the May event at Pat Catan Stadium. As always, winter provides a great time for our By Teens, For Teens group to enjoy activities in the snow and plenty of hot chocolate!

Along with our teens in grades 7-12, our new ROCK36 (Reaching Other Catholic Kids in

grades 3-6) group spent time together learning about Pope Francis and making new friends during our fall event. ROCK36 participants were also busy at the Trunk or Treat collecting candy from our teens, and will join together again in the winter to participate in faith, fun and a pizza party. We invite all students in grades 3-6 to join us!

Finally, thank you to Brooklynne Elliot, a junior at Strongsville High School who is our teen representative on our parish Youth

and Young Adult Commission. As a member of the commission, Brooklynne attends meetings and provides important input for the other members of the commission. She also represents the By Teens, For Teens program at other parish events. Great work Brooklynne!

Please take time to follow us on Facebook at St. Joseph Strongsville Youth Group, Twitter @SJSYouth and Instagram@sjs_youth or email Linda at lvoncheck@sjohio.org. We always welcome new members!



**I'm Spending
Christmas with
Jesus Christ this
Year**

I see the countless Christmas trees,
around the world below.
With tiny lights, like heaven's
stars, reflecting on the snow.

The sight is so spectacular, please
wipe away that tear.
For I'm spending Christmas, with
Jesus Christ this year.

For I have no words to tell you, the
joy their voices bring.
For it is beyond description, to
hear the angels sing.

I can't tell you of the splendor, or
the peace here in this place.
Can you just imagine Christmas,
with our Savior, face to face?

I hear the many Christmas songs,
that people hold so dear. But the
sounds of music can't compare,
with the Christmas choir up here.

I will ask Him to light your spirit,
as I tell Him of your love.
So then, pray one for another, as I
lift your eyes above.

Please let your hearts be joyful,
and let your spirit sing.
For I'm spending Christmas in
Heaven, and I'm walking with the
King.

~© Wanda Bencke ~



Donald Adams
Susan Andrasik
Thomas Achtziger
Margaret Barna
Joseph Babic
George Bogdon Sr.
Charles Boros
Yolanda M. Camerieri
Joan Caputo
Lisa Carney
John Chorich
Bernadette Conroy
Lisa Crawford
Lois Creter
Maria Vigliucci Crozier
Sam Diblasi
Connie DiCiolla
Paula Dillon
Amelia Dolan
Leonarda Duane
Henry Feudo
Allen Fletcher
Howard Fletcher
Joe Foggio
Stella Frantz
Harriot Funk
Edmund Garczynski
Eugene Giblin
Marianne Gole

Helen Grazulis
Tony Gullatta
William Haight
Thomas Harrington
Betty Herrman
James J. Hollo
Florence Iafelice
Dennis Jankowski
Donald E. Jankura
Jerry Jankura
Catherine Johnson
Walter Joyce
Nadine Kammer
Robert Karaba
Geraldine Kenny
Kathleen Kingsbury
Joseph Kortan
Albert Kozar
Robert C. Krivos
George Kunsman
Charles Kurka
Andrea Lambert
Omerine Lowery
Helen Mack
Baby Flynn Madachik
Rose Mariano
Don Marquetant
Nancy McDonald
Earlene McMahon

Frances McNeeley
Joyce Carroll Moenich
Dorothy Mullally
Baby Myrick
Joseph Nagy
Robert O'Brien
Veronica R. Patek
Francis Rached
Alice Rademaker
Dolores Reis
Gerald Rezac
Florence Russ
Helen Sankey
Julia T. Scarella
Jean Schultz
John Sekerak
Gregory Simon
Douglas Stefanik
Greta Thompson
Charles Tiede
Helen Van Dam
Paul Varga
Josephine Vranesic
Harold Weida
Patricia Williams
Larry Wyszynski
Michael Yanke
Carol Ziernicki

* The names listed above were read at our "Mass of Remembrance" on November 2, 2015

OUR PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Parishioners of the Catholic community of St. Joseph Church, are a people of God, blessed by a diversity of gifts to carry on the work of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves to be a Eucharistic people gathering to worship and praise God. We commit ourselves to be an apostolic people enabling each person to grow spiritually, so that each can invite others to know the Good News of Jesus Christ. We commit ourselves further to use our time, talent, and treasure in serving each other with a caring spirit, reaching out to the needs of our families, our Parish and our community.