

Our Parish Family Newsletter

Spring 2016



St. Joseph
Catholic Church
a stewardship parish



Ministry to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living

About 15 years ago Deacon Bob Lester and parishioner Matt Sokany came up with the charismatic desire to create a ministry dedicated to the elderly. Their intent was to reach out to those unable to attend Sunday Mass because of mobility and health restrictions. The solution was to create a ministry that would provide a Sunday service at nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

The idea caught on quickly and was accepted and approved by the Parish Staff. Gene Welsh introduced this ministry to the Falling Water Nursing Home and Crystal Water Assisted Care administrators who graciously welcomed the plan. Two years later Westwood Senior Apartment residents asked if St. Joseph would be kind enough to accept them.

Deacon Bob and Matt placed an article in the St. Joseph Bulletin identifying the ministry and asking for Eucharistic Ministers. It attracted the interest of several parishioners who were excited about the opportunity to preside over a ministry offering communal prayer services to the elderly. Where else would you find a ministry that brings the Word of God and Holy Communion to those unable to attend church – those who are eager to receive the Lord's love and mercy during

a critical period in their lives?

The ministry team was formed, the recruits were trained, and the St. Joseph Eucharistic Ministry to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Ministry was born.

The ministry conducts Sunday morning prayer services at each of the three facilities. The service lasts about a half an hour and includes Sunday's liturgical readings, a Gospel reflection and Communion.

(Continued on pg 2)

Table of Contents

Ministry to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living	pgs 1-2
SJS Youth Group	pg 2
Fr. Joe's Column	pg 3
RCIA Candidates and Catechumens	pgs 4-5
St. Joseph Church Preschool Program	pg 5
Tenebrae Service	pg 6
St. Joseph Gardeners	pgs 6-7
Schedule of Services	pg 7
Jubilee Year of Mercy	pg 8

Ministry to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living

Afterwards, we go to the rooms of registered Catholics who were unable to attend the scheduled service to offer Holy Communion and blessings.

Very few residents of the nursing home and assisted care facilities are St. Joseph parishioners, and yet are most grateful for the ministry service. It is so appreciated that often non-Catholics attend.

Members of the ministry range in age. There are male and female ministers and husband and wife

teams. We encourage high school and college students to join us. They would be an ideal addition to the ministry.

As coordinator of the ministry, I praise the ministry members for their relentless hard work and commitment. It takes talent, effort and reverence to do what they do.

However, they are rewarded when an elderly resident squeezes their hand, says thank you for being here, and says thank you for bringing Jesus to me in Word and Body.

They are rewarded when a resident

receives Holy Communion with reverence and dignity, and says thank you and God bless you.

It can be a very humbling ministry when you pause and realize you are bringing Jesus to the elderly in scripture and body, and it is received with solemnity.

Yes, it is a very passionate ministry, and we hope you would consider joining the team.

If you are interested, please call Gene Welsh at 440-238-1766 or email: genew@professionalmanagementinc.com



Members of our **By Teens, For Teens** youth group have been busy serving in our parish and Strongsville community. Many teens in grades 7-12 were helping out at the Soup and Chili Cook-Off event, the Lenten dinners and the Paprikash dinner. Our 8th grade members spent the morning of February 20th working with students in grade 2 during our Jesus Morning retreat. Also, as part of our mini lock-in, our teens in grades 7-12 enjoyed time with the residents of Falling Waters for some Saturday night games and fun. We also enjoyed a social night in January and our annual February lock-in event. Lessons on friendship, the sacrament of marriage and Lent were part of our BTFT winter calendar too.



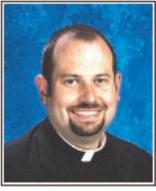
Spring brings hope and our SJS Youth Group are preparing for the Relay For Life event at Pat Catan Stadium on May 14th and 15th. Our teens have been busy fundraising for the team and we appreciate all of the support from our St. Joseph families. Our February "Forever in our Hearts" luminaria and prayer heart project was a beautiful way to keep cancer patients and their caregivers in our prayers. Please support our April cupcake sale on the weekend of April 16th and 17th. For more information on how to support our team, please visit our website at www.sjohio.org/youth.

ROCK36 (Reaching Other Catholic Kids in grades 3-6) will

help support the Relay For Life by attending "Magic Gives Back" on April 9th. Also, we will meet again on April 23rd in the Cave for more faith, food and fun. Ticket information can be found at www.sjohio.org/ROCK36.

Both our BTFT and our ROCK36 groups are open to new members at any time. Many different activities and lessons are available monthly along with our summer Steubenville conference on July 15-17. Please take time to follow us on Facebook at St. Joseph Youth Group, Twitter @SJSYouth and Instagram @sjs_youth, or email Linda at lzvoncheck@sjohio.org.





*From the Desk
of
Fr. Joe Mamich*

Dear Parish Family:

Happy March! We're in the midst of what has been a relatively nice winter. Given our past few winters, I think this is a welcome reward. Although, I have to admit that I do like snow! As we're in the midst of Lent, I hope that you have been able to do something already or perhaps are thinking of doing something that will allow you to grow in your faith. Every year, I try to do something different and as I write this, I'm pretty excited that my "opportunity" this year has already proven fruitful not only in my prayer, but also in my daily living. I hope that Lent has been and will continue to be a blessed time for you!

This newsletter features a cover article about our ongoing Eucharistic-centered ministry to the Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities within our parish boundaries. Through the collaboration of parishioners and staff, what began years ago continues strong today. As our Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion travel and minister to Falling Water, Westwood, Crystal Waters, or Kemper House they became not only the face of our parish to the residents, but the very hands and presence of Christ as they administer the Blessed Sacrament to the residents. What a blessing it is for our parish to be able to minister in this way!

Similarly to these parishioners, we also have parishioners who bring

Holy Communion to our homebound parishioners who are unable to attend Mass. We are currently exploring how we can continue to best execute this ministry and would welcome anyone interested in becoming a Eucharistic Minister to the Homebound, a Nursing Home, or an Assisted Living facility, to contact Deacon Bob. While Communion is ordinarily brought to our homebound parishioners on Sunday, what's most important is that they have the opportunity to receive sometime during the week, so it does not necessarily have to be done on Sunday. I'm grateful for those who have devoted themselves to these special ministries and invite you to consider whether or not the Lord may be calling you to one or both of these unique opportunities for bringing our Eucharistic Lord to one another!

Looking forward to events this year, we have something exciting on the horizon with the anticipated Ordination to the Priesthood of our parishioner, James Kulway, on Saturday, May 21! His ordination marks ten years since the last Strongsville Ordination to the Priesthood (yours truly in 2006) and twenty-four years (1992), since one of our own (Fr. Russ Lowe) was ordained as a priest. I can't help but wonder who may be next? This is a great celebration for our entire parish! Our community of prayer, faith, and support has helped to provide Deacon James with the "parish foundation" of his vocation and have built upon the work and example that his parents, Jim and Sherry, have given him. Deacon James and Deacon Pat, along with their classmates are

slated to comprise this year's ordination class of five. I hope that you'll take some time over the course of the next couple months to say a prayer for them and their classmates. We look forward to celebrating with both Deacon James and Deacon Pat later this year, but in the meantime, we continue to assure them of our prayers and our support!

Lastly, as we journey through this Lent and soon approach the days of the Easter Triduum, I ask you to remember our parish in your prayers. Please consult this newsletter on pg. 7 for the liturgical schedules for the upcoming celebration of Holy Week. As Catholics, we believe that Christ's Last Supper, Passion, Death, and ultimate Resurrection are the central events of our Catholic-Christian faith, it makes sense that we should try to experience these to the fullest of their possibilities, especially in the gathering with our fellow believers. Hope to see you there!

We are a parish that is blessed with many gifts and talents – together as we offer what we have been given – we are transformed and together, we become better disciples of our great Lord! With continued prayer and our efforts, we'll continue to make a difference in our community.

With you, on the Lenten journey,

Congratulations to our RCIA Catechumens and Candidates!

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) has been busy preparing our catechumens and candidates for full initiation into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil on Saturday March 26, 2016. They have spent many months learning about Jesus' life, the sacraments and what Lent is all about. All of them come from different walks of life and different faith backgrounds, but together they form an amazing part of our St. Joseph Parish Family. This year we are blessed to have nine adults with the desire to enter into the Catholic Church during the Easter Season. Corey Stebbins, Nick Capelety, and Will McFaye are preparing to receive all three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. Kristin Webb, Dawn Yarmusch, Daniel Nagy, Larry Gearhart, John Guiher, and Tom Habenicht, are already baptized Christians and will make a Profession of Faith, Confirmation and receive First Holy Communion. These individuals do not make this journey alone! Each week, the candidates come together for prayer and study with the support of the clergy, their sponsors and the RCIA team.

We asked the Catechumens and Candidates the following two questions:

1. Who or what has inspired you the most in your spiritual journey into the Catholic faith?
2. What is the most exciting or interesting thing you have learned through the RCIA process that you



didn't know or understand before? Here are just a few of their responses!

Dawn Yarmusch says the person who inspired her most is definitely her sponsor, Mike Abruzzo. "He has held my hand, been so supportive, as well as a stellar example, and is one of my best friends. I really look up to him and turn to him for guidance." Dawn goes on to say that the most exciting thing she has learned through the process is how beautiful the Catholic faith is both physically in the church and spiritually. I understand better "the consecration of the Eucharist... what it means and how the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ."

Corey Stebbins says the people who inspired him the most in his faith journey are his fiancé, Liz and her mother, Neomia, and her grandmother, Mary Ann Branic. "Liz has been very supportive and helpful with the RCIA process and learning more about the different aspects of the faith. Both Neomia and Mary Ann would tell me different stories about the Catholic faith that helped spike my interest and curiosity to learn more." Corey

goes on to say that the most interesting part of the faith he has learned thus far is the "consistency of celebrating Mass across all of the Catholic faith and the many continued traditions of Mass that have lasted since the 1st century. The fact that the Catholic faith has stayed so true to the original beliefs and traditions throughout the centuries further strengthens my desire to learn and experience the faith."

Kristin Webb says that her husband, Kevin, has been the greatest inspiration in her decision to become Catholic. "I have been attending Mass with him for the last nine years and during that time my faith has become much deeper. I also realized that in just two years our daughter will be making her First Holy Communion and that makes me want to join the Catholic faith even more." Kristin goes on to say that the meaning behind Holy Communion is the most exciting topic for her. "I have felt like I have been missing out on such a powerful part of the Mass. It is so much deeper than just eating a piece of bread and drinking some wine, it is Jesus truly being part of me and I look forward to participating by receiving Holy Communion soon!"

Tom Habenicht says that his fiancé, Stephanie, inspired him the most. "In our first year of our relationship we went to church every Sunday and she taught me more and more about the faith." Tom experienced a powerful

(Continued on pg 5)

Congratulations to our RCIA Catechumens and Candidates!

moment of the Holy Spirit when on retreat at Franciscan University in Steubenville. "At the retreat I fully felt the Holy Spirit come over me and realized that this is where I needed to be." Tom goes on to say, "I've really enjoyed learning about the Trinity and seeing how the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all relate and I've been very moved to learn about the love of God."

John Guiher says that Father Bob Sanson, John's wife, Karen, and his daughter, Kylie, have all inspired his journey into the Catholic faith. "Fr. Sanson provided me with his wisdom and support while he was pastor at St. Joe's. Attending Mass with my wife and my daughter, who is making her first Holy Communion this year, also inspired me. I want to be able to participate in the sharing of the Eucharist with her as well as with my daughter, Jenna." John goes on to say, "I have a much greater appreciation for the priests, the Mass, the Holy Eucharist."

St. Joseph Church Preschool Program

During the seasons of Advent and Lent, our youngest members of the parish experienced our St. Joseph Preschool program during the 10:00 Mass. Our preschool teacher, Mrs. Dolly Schabel, along with her high school assistants, prepared lessons, songs and crafts for our 3 and 4 year old friends. On one particular Sunday morning during Advent, the children were praying for special intentions around their prayer table and then prepared for

Nick Capelety says his fiancé Mary is his main inspiration along with attending Catholic high school and college. "At this point in my life I finally feel like it was time to put both feet forward permanently and go from merely being familiar to a disciple of the Catholic faith. Nick goes on to say that the most exciting thing he has learned is how Catholicism is the only religion with a permanent centralized teaching authority in the Pope and bishops who help determine how the faith is interpreted and understood, from the bible, to morality, to living as a Christian today. "I have enjoyed learning about the details behind each part of the Mass and specifically learning about how we actually receive the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ." This has helped Nick focus his attention and prayer during the Mass itself.

Perhaps the most important quality that each of our catechumens and candidates has in common is that they listened to the promptings of the Holy Spirit calling them to a deeper commitment of faith.

music with Mr. Joe. During another class they talked about doing good deeds for others including parents and grandparents. Coloring and crafts were always a big part of our preschool activities. Our program for Lent started with our first class on February 14th with lots of hearts as we talked about God's love for all of us. Sunday mornings were full of excitement as our preschoolers headed downstairs from the Chapel for their 10:00 class. Small hands and big hearts prepared for Jesus during Lent

However, becoming committed disciples of Jesus Christ, does not happen just through a class formation program, or even sacramental initiation.

Baptism, Confirmation and receiving Holy Communion, merely opens the candidate's soul to receive the grace of God to continue living a personal relationship with Jesus Christ after the Easter Vigil is finished. The friendship, prayers, personal witness, and support of every committed Catholic at St. Joseph Parish is needed to keep the flame of faith alive in our candidates' hearts and souls long after the RCIA classes have ended. Please continue to keep each of our candidates and catechumens in your prayers. When you see them at Mass, congratulate them for responding to God's call, to become a Catholic disciple of Jesus Christ.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming Catholic, please call the parish office and speak with Father Anthony Suso at 440-238-5555 ext. 105. The journey of faith begins with you!

and Advent. With help from their teacher and assistants, our 3 and 4 year old friends became part of our praying community at St. Joseph Church.

Thank you so much, Dolly Schabel for running our St. Joseph Preschool program for so many years! As Dolly prepares to use her gifts in other areas at St. Joseph Church, we pray that our Preschool Program continues to be enriched by the leadership of our dedicated volunteers.

“Tenebrae” Service

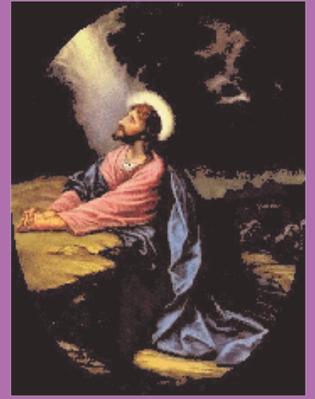


This year on Palm Sunday, our choir will host our second annual “Tenebrae” service.

The word “**Tenebrae**” is Latin for “**shadows**”, originally designed for Good Friday. It is similar to lessons and carols that we see in Advent, which alternates between readings and Christmas carols. At Tenebrae, however, the songs, chants, hymns and readings focus on **Christ’s Passion**. The purpose of the service is to recreate the betrayal, abandonment and agony of the events and it is left unfinished, because the story is not over until Easter Day! Tenebrae can have many variations, but the main feature of any Tenebrae service is that it gradually moves from full light to darkness. As each reading or song is proclaimed,

candles are extinguished until only the last candle remains at the end, which is the “**Christ candle**” and symbolizes that Jesus is the light of the world, even when the world is in total darkness. We even coordinate the timing with the sunset so that even natural light and darkness becomes part of the symbol. The service ends with a loud bang symbolizing the closing of Christ’s tomb. The people leave in silence to ponder the impact of Christ’s death and await the coming Resurrection.

This service is haunting, solemn and beautiful, but also sad. If your expectation is that Christian worship should always be joyful, you will not understand Tenebrae. Think of it this way: If you see only the happy ending of a movie, you rob yourself of the full joy of the story. It won’t even make sense. But if you see the beginning and the middle part, with all the suspense and grief, you understand what the characters overcame, and the happy ending is all the more joyful.



Attend the entire movie this year, and experience **all** of the agony and redemption of Holy Week, from **Palm Sunday Tenebrae** to Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Otherwise, you rob yourself of the **full joy of Easter**.

One added bonus is that, since this is not a Mass, our choir sings from behind the altar with no accompaniment, where the acoustics are out-of-this-world. Last year members of the assembly were amazed at the difference in the choir sound because of the acoustics.

Come to Tenebrae this year at 7:30pm on March 20th and it may become one of your favorite services of the year.

St. Joseph Gardeners

In the Pastor’s column, Father Joe made a request for volunteers to help with a spring cleanup for the entrances and courtyard of our parish, and several parishioners responded.

We held a meeting and made plans for a spring planting. People chose

an area of the church that they would plant, weed, and water. This became their plot that they maintained throughout the summer.

In the fall, Father Joe again announced a need for volunteers to help with a fall cleanup to prepare the grounds for winter. There was a need for leaf cleanup, hedge and shrub trimming, tree trimming, etc. Again, we successfully received

volunteers who came to help, had fun and as a result decided to join us.

The following spring, the Blessed Mother statue moved to the front of the church. This gave us another area to maintain. At our next spring meeting we began another group who plant, water and maintain this beautiful area of our church.

(Continued on pg 7)

St. Joseph Gardeners

At our spring meetings, we plan what flowers to use around the church in our members plots. One thing that is awesome is that we repurpose all of the plants we purchase for Easter.

After the Easter season is over, we use all of the plants we purchased to plant in the plots around the church. If you look around this spring you will see all of the Easter lilies come back to life in our beds from last year. Around the Statue of Mary, you will find the hydrangeas that were used in church for Easter. You will also find azaleas and hydrangeas in the church courtyard.

In the two years since the initiation of the St. Joseph Gardeners, our membership has grown. Initially

we had just a handful of volunteers. This has grown quite nicely. We have a wide range of members. We have seniors who enjoy gardening. We have the Girl Scouts who maintain a plot near the Rectory. We have a few members that are families with small children who come together to help and maintain their plots. We have an eighth grader from the school that has joined us. We also have many youth from the SJS Youth Group to help with seasonal clean up.

As is evident, all of the areas surrounding our church are being serviced by the St. Joseph Gardeners. We meet twice a year to do our planning and evaluate how the previous season went. We enjoy each other's company, have fun, and fulfill a ministry most needed for our parish. We hope

more parishioners who share our passion join us!

As the beautiful flowers around our parish, let the St. Joseph Gardeners grow!

If you are interested please email Rob and Annamarie Dolan at robanna71@gmail.com



+ SCHEDULE OF SERVICES +

SUNDAY, March 20, 2016 - PALM SUNDAY

Masses: Saturday: 4:30pm
Sunday: 8:00am, 10:00am, 12:00 noon

+ E A S T E R T R I D U M +

THURSDAY, March 24, 2016 - HOLY THURSDAY

Morning Prayer: 8:30am
Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7:00pm
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament follows until 10:00pm
Night Prayer: 10:00pm

FRIDAY, March 25, 2016 - GOOD FRIDAY

Morning Prayer: 8:30am
Stations of the Cross: 12:10pm
Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion: 3:00 and 7:00pm
The Church will be open for silent prayer all day

SATURDAY, March 26, 2016 - HOLY SATURDAY

Morning Prayer with Ephphetha Rite: 8:30am
Blessing of Easter Foods: 1:00pm
Easter Vigil: 9:00pm (no 4:30pm Mass)
A reception to welcome the newly initiated members of the Church will follow.

SUNDAY, March 27, 2016- EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday Masses: 8:00am, 10:00am, 12:00 noon
(Seating in Church and Holy Family Center)

+ R E C O N C I L I A T I O N +

WEDNESDAY, February 24, 2016

Diocesan Wide Confessions: 5:00-8:00pm

WEDNESDAY, March 9, 2016

Lenten Penance Service at
St. John Neumann Church at 7:00pm

Saturdays: 3:00-4:00pm

(except Saturday, March 26, 2016)

Two priests each weekend.

Saturday, March 19, 2016

10:00am—11:00am (and) 3:00pm—3:45pm

“Jubilee Year of Mercy”

“Merciful like the Father”



In the words of Pope Francis

“Lent is a time of conversion and a time to deepen one’s faith, demonstrating and sharing it through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

Faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit.

Feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, welcoming strangers, offering instruction, giving comfort - **on such things will we be judged.**

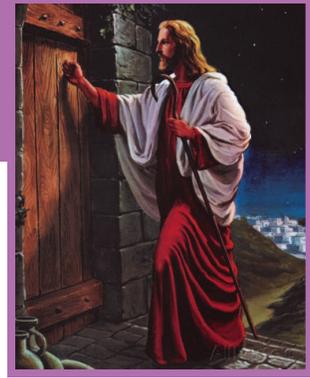
The root of all sin is thinking that one is God, something often expressed in a total preoccupation for accumulating money and power. And just as individuals can be tempted to think they have no need of God, social and political systems can run the same risk, ignoring both God and the real needs of human beings.

Love alone is the answer to that yearning for infinite happiness. It is the only response to the longings that we think we can satisfy with the idols of knowledge, power and riches.

The danger always remains that by a constant refusal to open the doors of their hearts to Christ who knocks on them in the poor. The proud, rich and powerful will end up condemning themselves and plunging into the eternal abyss of solitude which is hell.

But, through acts of mercy and charity, by touching the flesh of the crucified Jesus in the suffering, sinners can receive the gift of realizing that they too are poor and in need.

In the **corporal works of mercy** - admonishment and prayer - we touch the flesh of Christ in our brothers and sisters who need to be fed, clothed, sheltered, visited. In the **spiritual works of mercy** - counsel, instruction, forgiveness,



touch more directly our own sinfulness.

In the Christian life, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy must never be separated.

The works of mercy are a very simple, concrete, direct, alive, daily, easy, accessible-to-all way of living the Jubilee of Mercy. The works of mercy describe what we as Christians can actually do every day, and that is why I find them so fascinating.”

In this Jubilee Year, let us allow God to surprise us. He never tires of casting open the doors of his heart and of repeating that he loves us and wants to share his love with us. The Church feels the urgent need to proclaim God’s mercy. Her life is authentic and credible only when she becomes a convincing herald of mercy... **Pope Francis.**

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.