

Our Family News



Third Edition Issue 23

November 2021

St. William Catholic Church

Champion, Ohio

Happy Thanksgiving!

USHERING IN A NEW GENERATION

by Theresa Craiger

Have you ever asked yourself how you could become more involved in the church or what would it be like if you were part of a ministry team? Now imaging being 5, 6 or 7 years old and wanting to be a part of something more. For two young gentlemen the desire to become involved during Mass began before they could read.

If you are a regular attendee at 11:00 a.m. Mass you may have seen St. William's youngest Ushers, Collin Lee and Anthony Pacurar.

When the bell rings to end PSR classes Collin and Anthony quickly enter the sacristy, grabbing their shiny usher pins, and dash to the handles of the doors to the church. The boys oversee opening the doors to the sanctuary for everyone coming to Mass and do so with a smile and a soft "good morning!" When Mass has begun, and everyone has safely entered the sanctuary, the boys enter to find their family members and participate at Mass.

Being an Usher/Greeter is a very important job and comes with a great deal of responsibility. The job duties of an Usher/Greeter consist of communicating a friendly hello to the congregants, using manners when opening and closing doors, quietly entering and moving around the Sanctuary

Ushering In (Continued on page 14)



DO DOGS GO TO HEAVEN?

by Margie McCummins

Some people will respond with a yes, while others will say no. With my deep love for animals, I say YES! Here is a story of a furry friend with a beautiful heart, created by God for our pleasure, and in my opinion, I believe he has now returned to His Creator.

About fifteen years ago my husband and I noticed a medium-size yellow dog running through the woods behind our home. We put out food to lure him into our home, but he chose to adopt a nearby family in our small circle, who named him Darryl.

His new owners quickly learned that Darryl was a roamer. He would visit all the neighbors, spend time in their homes, and enjoy the loving and treats he was given, as we would enjoy his friendship.

When driving home, Darryl would spot us and run to welcome us in our driveway. Soon Darryl was adopted by the whole neighborhood and the neighborhood became his new home.

Darryl became the neighborhood patrolman. He would sit patiently until the UPS and FedEx employees dropped off their packages and drove away, the employees often talking to Darryl. Our mailman would also take a minute to visit with Darryl. During the night, we

DARRYL (Continued on page 10)



...FROM THE PASTOR

As I write this, it is a crisp bright Autumn Day just two weeks away from Thanksgiving! Hard to believe that this time of year is once again upon us. Surprisingly, many of the leaves are still on the trees and we even had to cut grass this past week – an unusual task for mid-November! These are unusual times as we continue to cope with the circumstances of the virus, the availability of goods and products remain a challenge, and the longing desire for a complete return to normality remains hopeful. Unusual times abound on so many different levels as we continue to wait!



Appropriately, *“Together We Wait”* is our Advent theme this year! Our season begins on Sunday, November 28 as *“together we wait”* for the coming of Christ celebrated on Christmas. The weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas are a time of promise and wonder that point us toward the coming of Jesus into our world to save and redeem us. The time leading up to the holidays can best be described as days of “hectic busyness!” Yet our challenge is to take a moment of quiet each day and reflect on how the wonders of His love are a part of our life, faith, and family. We have much to be grateful and to wait for! Great things are happening at our parish because of your enthusiasm, support, and generosity. As we get ready for this upcoming holiday season know of my prayers and best wishes for you and your family. May the coming weeks truly be a time of preparation, joy, and thankfulness as *“together we wait”* and remember all the blessings God has given to us, our family, and our parish!

This past Sunday we announced an exciting new project for our parish –the hope and plan for renovating and replacing our parking lot area. In 2014 we launched our *“Sharing the Light for Tomorrow,”* Capital Campaign to construct our new office wing, bell tower, and expand our kitchen facilities. Included was also the purchase of new chairs for the Church. Our efforts were quite successful. We have also been able to remodel our restrooms, social hall, and main hallway; install new carpeting in the church and flooring in the vestibule; new lighting throughout the building; new sound systems in the church and social hall; and maintain our facilities and grounds. The last piece is our parking lot! The proposed project includes a new boulevard entrance from Mahoning Avenue, the demolition of the current south entrance, new outside lighting, green space, and complete resurfacing of our existing space and north driveway. The Parish Council, Finance Committee, and

Pastor (Continued on page 8)



NEW PARISHIONERS

Shirley Andrews

Diane Leigh

Cliff Evans

BAPTISM

Brianna Leigh Basinger,
Daughter of Mark & Sarah Basinger
Sister of Van Basinger
September 18, 2021



A CELEBRATION OF THANKS... AND GIVING!

by Christine DePascale

Fall is my favorite time of the year. It is a time when my house takes on a new look every month starting with Halloween in October and ending with Christmas in December. The rest of the year my décor basically stays the same with very little change. Throughout these months there are many occasions where my family gathers from three different states to celebrate birthdays, holidays, and just enjoy being with each other. An integral part of these celebrations is gathering around the table to enjoy some fantastic food that has been prepared by all involved. We eat while reminiscing about our past and looking ahead to the future, making memories that last for years to come. These are the times that I am most thankful for and cherish above all others.

Unfortunately, that is not the case for all. Good times to cherish are few and far between. Many people in our own area are struggling to provide food for their families due to a myriad of circumstances.

They have no feasts to eat during the holidays and no place to gather to make memories.

This consistent lack of food is called food

insecurity. According to the non-profit Feeding America, food insecurity refers to “households that lack access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.” Before the pandemic hit, there were 31,240 food insecure people in Trumbull County alone. That number greatly increased as the pandemic has continued to change the face of poverty in our communities.

Thankfully, there are organizations that exist in our area to help combat food insecurities. One such place is the Second Harvest Food Bank. Headquartered on Salt Springs Road in Youngstown, its services reach out to communities in Columbiana, Mahoning, and Trumbull County. Making food accessible to all is the core belief of this Food Bank. How does a business this large manage to provide food for thousands of people in need throughout the tri-county area? They rely heavily on both food and monetary donations during the year. The organization itself is mainly a storehouse for the donated products. Trucks are loaded with food on a daily basis and delivered to hunger-relief organizations. Recipients of these deliveries include, but are not limited to, homeless shelters, after-school programs, soup kitchens and church pantries. In addition, Second Harvest Food Bank has partnered with at least 30 local school districts with pantry programs to ensure that students have access to healthy foods for home.

Giving (Continued on page 5)

PRAYING SCRIPTURE THE OLD TESTAMENT

by Tina McCue

I am an avid reader. I love holding a book in my hand and making the journey from my present reality back into the time



and place of the characters in the story. The characters and scenery become more real to me when I do this. This is also true for me when I read *The Holy Bible*, sometimes regarded as the “greatest love story ever told.” I invite you to journey with me as we immerse ourselves into reflecting on the readings of Holy Scripture for the First Sunday of Advent this year.

The First Reading is taken from the prophet Jeremiah. Close your eyes from a moment and try to envision his surroundings, a nation in turmoil and exile. Sound familiar? On this Sunday, we read Jeremiah 33:14-16. In these words, we do not hear Jeremiah crying out in despair but rather we hear sounds of HOPE! The words jump off the page – “*the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise!*” It is an appropriate setting for the season of Advent. Jeremiah recalls for us the promises of God! When we hear, “*in those days; in that time,*” we are reminded that God is present in every day and age. He was present to the people of Jeremiah’s time and He is present to us in our time. Further on, Jeremiah speaks the words “*safe*” and “*secure*” knowing that God will *raise up the one who is just and right*. These are words that make us wonder who God might be raising this Advent season. In these times of trouble and turmoil, could God be sending us help and guidance so that we can feel the same safety and security spoken by the prophet Jeremiah? Our Advent season urges us to seek comfort and peace; to be lifted from our cries of despair and anguish. Jeremiah announces for us the message of Advent that is celebrated in Christmas – God is here with us!

*Continued on page 5 with
The Psalm*

A SEASON FOR GIVING

by Sarah Boyle

As the leaves begin to fall and the end of autumn is near, the excitement for the Christmas season starts to stir within my household. While I'm shopping at Target and pass the toy aisle my two boys, Henry age 4 and Tommy age 3, begin to name off every toy they want, and the "Santa Claus" list gets longer and longer. The planning begins for all the Christmas activities including parties, baking cookies, and driving around to see the lights. The thrill of the season gives me so much joy as I watch my boys' eyes glisten with excitement for the magic of Christmas, but something was missing. I wondered; how do I make my children understand what Christmas is truly all about? How do I make them excited about that special baby in a manger and that He is the reason we give gifts? One day last year, I unexpectedly came across an ad for "The Giving Manger." As I clicked on the ad, it came to me that this is exactly what my children needed during the Christmas season. "The Giving Manger" changes the focus from receiving to giving. It comes with a book in addition to a small wooden manger and a bundle of straw. For every act of kindness or service, a piece of straw is placed in the manger. On Christmas morning, the true gift, the Infant Jesus is placed in the manger that is filled with the straw from all the good deeds.



Recently, my children have noticed that the Christmas season is nearing and have already begun to ask about "The Giving Manger". I was amazed that doing those small acts of kindness left such a lasting impression on them. We recently reminisced on all the giving activities we did during last Christmas season. Many acts of kindness were small including helping

me with laundry, sharing a toy, and assisting my husband with taking out the garbage. We also dropped off Poinsettia's at people's doors, left out snacks and water to thank our delivery workers, and picked out toys for children in need. They were able to give in small and big ways, and that's the beauty of giving. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love."

"The Giving Manger" has certainly become a family tradition and we are all looking forward to it this year. Even toddlers can feel the joy in their hearts after giving to others and we should encourage them to do so no matter what age. When my children are grown, I hope they will say that we made Christmas about Jesus. That helping those in need and putting a smile on someone's face is what Christmas is all about, and that true happiness comes from being close to God and giving to others. For this year, I have already discussed activities with my boys to help bring joy to those who may feel lonely during the Christmas season. We talked about sending Christmas cards to people in nursing homes, buying Christmas gifts for children who don't have a family, and making dinner for someone who is going through a difficult time.

I hope "The Giving Manger" becomes a family tradition in other households this coming year. It's amazing how something so small can bring happiness not only to others but to those who give. During this busy time, let us all remember the true meaning of Christmas and the Jesus is the greatest gift of all.



(Continued from page 3) Giving

With all that this organization does, it only makes sense that it takes a great deal of people to make it successful. This is where you and I come in. We can step up and volunteer at the Second Harvest Food Bank by giving freely of our time to help those in need county-wide. A visit to the website, <https://mahoningvalleysecondharvest.org/> is all it takes. From there you can click on the Make an Impact button where you can choose to donate money, donate food, start a food drive or simply volunteer. Whatever you choose to do will make a difference in the lives of those around you. In the words of Pope Francis, “You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. This is how prayer works.”

FOR DAILY HAPPINESS, READ BOOKS!

by Cathy Poponak

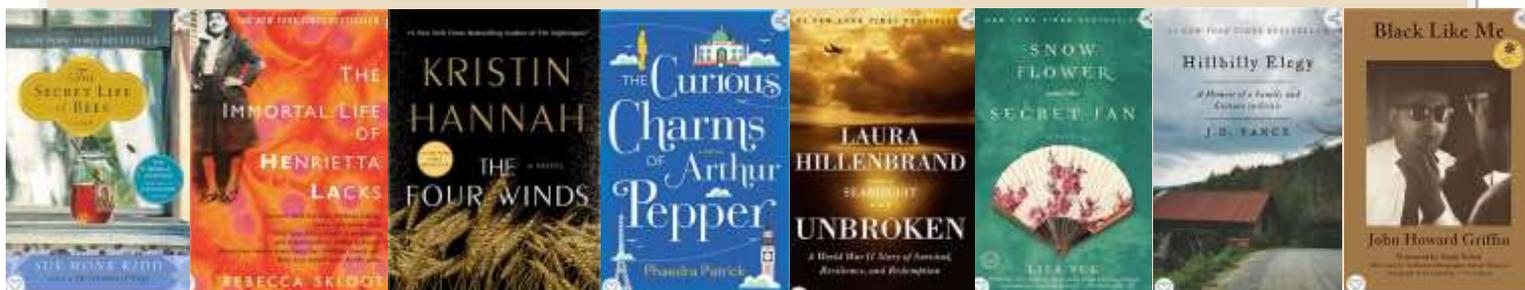
The English poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning said “No man can be called friendless who has God and the companionship of good books.” Forgive me for adding my own thoughts to her beautiful quote....no woman is friendless who belongs to a book club.

For well over ten years, I have met with a group of women each and every month to discuss a book over tasty food and good wine. Our various ages span 50 years, and our professions vary from dentist to stay at home mom. We call ourselves the Red “Read” Robins, and follow some simple guidelines. Each member is assigned a month to host book club. The hostess picks a book of her liking which every member reads in preparation for book club night. The hostess leads the discussion and provides refreshments at her home or at a restaurant.

As members we have had to be open to reading books that we may never have picked up on our own, as well as candidly discussing a plethora of topics ranging from WWII history, medicine, religion, politics, race relations, and beyond.

In ten years’ time, we have faced many changes in our own lives, including new babies, children leaving for college, sickness, death of loved ones, and the pandemic. Our love of reading has united us and provided us with an evening of escape found between the covers of a good book and the companionship of friends.

If you are a reader, think about getting a few friends together to start your own book club, or get involved in some of the many book discussion groups at your local library. To quote Dr. Seuss “The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”



PRAYING SCRIPTURE

THE PSALM

by Tina McCue

The story of God’s love for his people continues in the Book of Psalms. I have to admit as a cantor, the Book of Psalms is part of the scripture most familiar to me. I often find myself singing the words off the page. The psalm on the First Sunday of Advent tells of David crying out for guidance and protection from God. It is the same guidance and protection we find ourselves longing for in an ever-changing and confusing world. We listen to the psalm at Mass in Advent and respond with words that David yearns for -- “to you, O Lord, I lift my soul.”

In Psalm 25 we hear the words of our own prayer during this time of preparation and anticipation: “teach me, guide me, show me the path” so that we might know God better. As we face the challenges of our time, we need God to teach and guide us; to show us the path! Through our prayer in Advent we lift our soul and heart to the Lord so that we might be filled with the peace and joy that only a sacred covenant with God can provide.

*Continued on page 7 with
The New Testament*



ST. SOPHIA OF ROME

by Therese Tuttle

Sophia, whose name means wisdom, was a young widow living in Rome during the reign of Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD). She came from a rich and devout family and was the mother of three daughters she named after the virtues: Faith, Hope and Agape (love). Sophia and her daughters did not hide their faith in Christ, but openly confessed it before everyone. She taught her daughters about the grace of God and the importance of spiritual reading, prayer, and living the life of fasting and almsgiving. Together they studied the books of the Prophets and the Apostles. Because they did not hide their faith, word reached the emperor who sent his soldiers to bring them before him. They understood the reason for his summons and immediately started to pray asking that the Lord Jesus Christ give them the strength to not fear torture and death.

Hadrian was amazed at how steadfast in the faith Sophia's daughters were. He tried everything he could to get each of the young girls and their mother to deny Christ. Believing that the children were supporting one another enabling each



to hold their own against him, he separated them. One by one each were promised the riches of this world in exchange for their lives and each girl was brutally tortured in front of Sophia. Faith, who was twelve years old, was brought in first. She dismissed Hadrian's flatteries and deprecated his shameless deeds and vain plots against the Christians. The emperor had her stripped and mercilessly beaten. Hope, who was ten years old, was brought in next. Holding strong to the Christian faith, she too was beaten and thrown into a raging furnace, but the fire went out and she was not burnt. Agape (love),

the third sister, who was nine years old, shared the same steadfast faith as her sisters. She was hung on the gallows and chained so tightly that her limbs were broken. All three daughters were finally killed by the sword. In order to intensify Sophia's suffering, the emperor permitted her to take the bodies of her daughters. She placed their remains in coffins and loaded them on a wagon. She drove beyond the city limits and reverently buried them on a high hill and after praying next to their grave for three days, she too died and was buried next to her virtuous daughters. We celebrate her feast day on September 17.

- Roscoe Gautschi*
- Maureen Thuman*
- Francis C. Theis*
- Marylyn Burnfield*
- Terry Troyan*
- Barb Brdek*
- William Sauer*
- Millie Bova*
- Donald Lesh*
- Gerald Ott*
- Joseph Badanjek*
- Joann Majersky*
- Franklin Amoline*
- Ronald Mooney*
- Julia Albani*
- Douglas Gradishar*
- Angela Tombar*
- Bernadette Fox*
- Mary Beth Gelet*
- Eleanor Poland*
- Lawrence Griffen*
- Ronald Wisniewski*

and all the deceased members of Saint William Parish.



In Memoriam

All Souls Day - 2021

We remember all of our parishioners who passed away and were buried from our parish in the last year. We pray for their families who continue to grieve their loss.

May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, Rest in Peace

PSR

by Carol Timko

Our PSR theme this year is **POWER UP→ RECONNECT WITH THE WORD.**

PSR started the 2021-2022 school year Sunday, September 12 with the Annual Parent Meeting. During this meeting, the families were introduced to the Ohio Catholic Federal Credit Union Parish Ministry Grant that that was



then receive the Teen Bible.

In other news, our second grade class began First Reconciliation preparation classes. First Reconciliation will take place Saturday, January 22. Please keep these families in your prayers.



STORIES & SCRIPTURES

The Stories and Scriptures classes are popular children's stories with a moral paired with Sacred Scripture to teach our preschool children God's Word through easy-to-understand stories and fun activities. Parents and families with preschool children who are three years of age by September 1 are welcome to join us on the second Sunday of the month at 9:30am. If you would like additional information, please contact Carol Timko.

The 2021-2022 Stories and Scriptures preschool class began on October 10 with the story *What Do You Do With A Tail Like This?* by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page. The families listened to the story, made a craft tied to the story, enjoyed a snack, and received a special Children's Bible that will be used during the Stories and Scriptures sessions



PSR Students receive a bible for class use

awarded to our parish. With this grant, Bibles were purchased for all PSR children to use in class. During the meeting, Father Balash blessed the Bibles, and distributed to the children. These Bibles will stay at church and will move each year with the children through each grade level. We purchased Children's Bible's for K-6 students and Teen Bible's for 7-12 students. When a child completes grade 6, that Bible will go home with the student and they will



Stories & Scriptures

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

THE NEW TESTAMENT

by Tina McCue

"Brothers and sisters..." when these words are proclaimed we know that are about to hear from the first writer of the New Testament – Saint Paul. On the First Sunday of Advent we hear from Paul's letter to the Thessalonians. Not surprisingly the people of Thessalonica were probably skeptical of Paul and his message. There is a sense in reading from the Letter to the Thessalonians that the people were not embracing the gospel message of Jesus Christ. Similar to the message of the prophet Jeremiah, we can relate to the advice of Paul in today's world and in our little town of northeast Ohio amidst the pandemic. We are weary of the anger and fear that has bubbled into our lives and like Paul, we pray that *"the Lord will make us increase and abound in love for one another and for all."* We are reminded that we must conduct ourselves in a way pleasing to God and follow the teachings and words given to us by Jesus Christ – to love God and our neighbor. All that we need to attain happiness and peace, wholeness and holiness, is found in the words of Saint Paul on the opening Sunday of Advent – that our care and concern for each other may increase and overflow to others causing them to do the same. In doing so, may we come to be known as true believers and Christians as Saint Paul eloquently writes – *they will know us by our love, by our love!*

Continued on page 9 with The Gospel

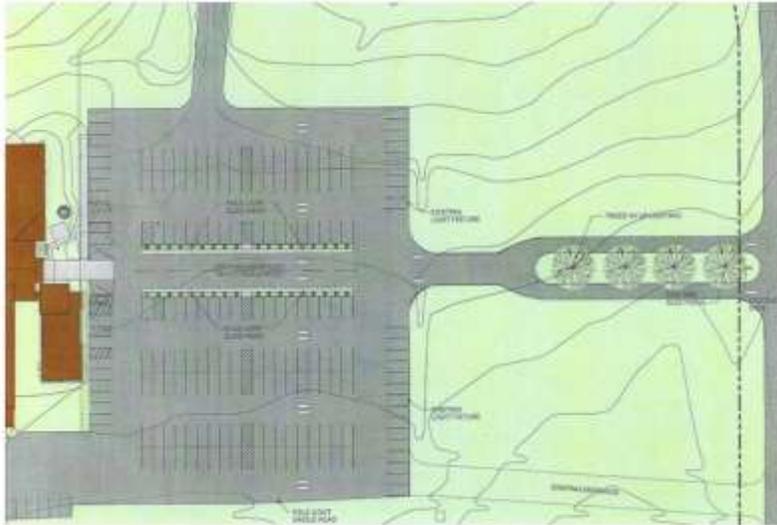


(Continued from page 2) Pastor

Parking Lot Renovation Committee has approved \$100,000.00 from Fish Dinner profits towards this project with the hope that you will also respond by donating \$1,000.00 or more over the next 5 months to help fund this project. We hope to complete this project next summer.

This continues to be an exciting and historic time in our parish. From humble beginnings our parish has grown into a vibrant community of faith. I ask that you consider contributing to the legacy of all those who have gone before us and to the future of those following after us by considering a pledge of \$1,000.00 or more to help us attain our goal and to make our parish a show piece in the Champion area. Thank you for your consideration and for all that you do to make Saint William Parish the best it can be. God bless you and your family and an early *Merry Christmas* to you!

Fr. Balash



**SAINT WILLIAM PARISH
PARKING LOT RENOVATION
MINI-CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
DECEMBER 2021 - APRIL 2022**

*Consider a gift of \$1,000.00 or more
(A \$1,000.00 gift = \$200/month = \$50.00/week = \$7.00/day)*

**POWER UP!
RECONNECT**



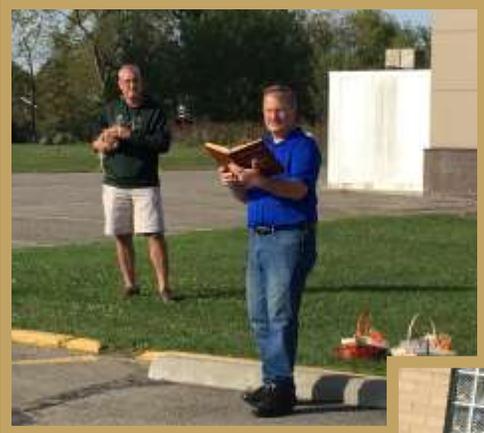
2021 Women's Guild Chance Auction

BLESSING OF PETS

by Therese Tuttle

In the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, the blessing of the pets took place October 2, 2021. Deacon Bob

Mintus led us in prayer and blessed each of our pets. There were 38 legs (which you might notice is not divisible by 4) in attendance. Several weekends ago, Fr. Balash mentioned at Mass that some of us may have two legged pets and they are very welcome to attend the blessing. One may think that Father was joking that



perhaps a two-legged pet could be in human form. In attendance were one cat, eight dogs and one very special bird - Ms. Little Red Hen. Little Red Hen is the beloved pet of Chuck and Cathy Poponak, and she received the blessing and holy water like a true upstanding chicken would: with grace and dignity. Pets are true companions, loyal and loving, and the bond between person and pet is like no other relationship. Every creature, whether a treasured pet or an animal in



the wild, is important, and the love we give and receive from non-human companions is a wonderful gift from God.



PRAYING SCRIPTURE

THE GOSPEL

by Tina McCue

The gospel reading on the first Sunday of Advent succinctly sums up the message of Advent as we recall in this season the patient waiting of people for the promised Messiah and how we too wait for Him to come and gather us into his Kingdom. We hear from Luke of how *“there will be signs in the sun, moon and stars in anticipation of what is coming upon the world.”* How often are we faced with anxieties and frustrations of life and our world. The past twenty months have given us all cause to be stressed, tired, and drained on so many levels. How glad we might be that the Lord did not come to us on these days we have been at our worst! However, Jesus reminds us to *“be vigilant at all times; to pray for the strength to escape the tribulations that seem to be imminent”* so that we might enter into this season of joy and hope with strong hearts and willing spirits. *Together we wait* in this day and time for the coming of the Lord. May he find us ready and prepared to meet him at this coming so that we might be taken up into his glory and honor forever.

*Continued on page 11 with
The Invitation*



***“All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful:
The Lord God made them all.”***



(Continued from page 1) Darryl

would often see Darryl laying in various yards keeping vigil.

Darryl would accompany us on walks or on bike rides. One day he was walking with an elderly neighbor woman when she fell and could not get up. Darryl stayed beside her until help came. She said it was a comfort to have his companionship as she lay there in distress.

Our hearts were broken when Darryl became ill and we had to say goodbye to our precious friend. His owner, his favorite neighbor, and I held him as he took his last breath. Our circle was a bit lonelier without our friend.

We had a memorial for Darryl, with forty-plus people attending from our small neighborhood. There was a cake decorated in Cleveland Browns' colors, for Darryl was a Browns fan – that is posted on his Facebook page - and a package of hot dogs, his favorite treat. Our neighborhood minister led a prayer service, stories were shared, and many tears were shed. Darryl – our neighborhood guardian – our dear friend – still loved and missed – until we meet again.

"You think dogs will not be in heaven? I tell you they will be there long before any of us".

Robert Louis Stevenson



THE LEGEND OF THE POINSETTIA

Maria and Pablo lived in a tiny village in Mexico. Because Christmastime at their house did not include many gifts, Maria and Pablo looked forward to the Christmas festivities at the village church with great joy and anticipation.

To honor the birth of Christ, the church displayed a beautiful manger that drew crowds of admirers. Villagers walked miles to admire the manger, bringing lovely, expensive gifts for the Baby Jesus. As Maria and Pablo watched the villagers place their gifts in the soft hay around the manger, they felt sad. They had no money to buy gifts for their family and no money to buy a gift for the Baby Jesus.

One Christmas Eve, Maria and Pablo walked to the church for that evening's services, wishing desperately that they had a gift to bring. Just then, a soft glowing light shone through the darkness, and the shadowy outline of an angel appeared above them.

Maria and Pablo were afraid, but the angel comforted them, instructing

them to pick some of the short green weeds that were growing by the road. They should bring the plants to the church, the angel explained, and place them near the manger as their gift to the Baby Jesus. Then just as quickly as she had appeared, the angel was gone, leaving Maria and Pablo on the road looking up into the



Wild Poinsettia plants in Mexico

dark sky. Confused but excited, the children filled their arms with large bunches of the green weeds and hurried to the church.

When the children entered the church, many of the villagers turned to stare. As Maria and Pablo began

placing the weeds around the manger, some of the villagers laughed at them. "Why are those children putting weeds by the manger?" they asked each other. Maria and Pablo began to feel embarrassed and ashamed of their gift to the Baby Jesus, but they stood bravely near the manger, placing the plants on the soft hay, as the angel had instructed.

Suddenly, the dull green leaves on the tops of the plants began to turn a beautiful shade of red, surrounding the Baby with beautiful blooms. The laughing villagers became silent as they watched the green plants transform into the lovely star-shaped crimson flowers we call poinsettias. As they watched the weeds bloom before their eyes, Maria and Pablo knew they had no reason to be ashamed anymore. They had given the Baby Jesus the only gift they could--and it was the most beautiful gift of all.

Today, poinsettias are a traditional symbol of Christmas, thanks to young Maria and Pablo and their special gifts to the Baby Jesus.

-- By Stephanie Herbek

PSR: FROM THE TEACHER'S DESK

by Melanie Zappia

On Sunday, October 24, 2021, the PSR students, families, and teachers joined together to celebrate our first Family Faith Celebration of this school year. We began the morning sharing breakfast and spending some time visiting with each other and our families. After breakfast, each student and their family were presented with a Bible. Father Balash then circled the room as the children proudly held their Bibles up for a blessing. All were so appreciative to receive this gift - special thanks to Mrs. Tina McCue and everyone that helped her with this Bible initiative. It is quite an accomplishment to have received this grant for our parish families.

After the Bible blessing, the families were separated into four groups for our activity. This year

our teachers created 4 different Escape Rooms! Each room was age appropriate and related to a story from the Old Testament. The themes for each of the rooms were: Creation, Ancient Israel, David, and Noah's Ark. This was a creative activity that incorporated a lesson with fun! It was very joyful to see the families working together with our students to 'Escape' from their room. Following the escape, we joined together in the Social Hall and each group shared something they learned from the activity.

We concluded the session by attending Mass together. We had a wonderful time with the kick off for the 2021-2022 school year! On behalf of the PSR teachers, I would like to thank our PSR students and parents for attending and participating in the festivities. Thank you also to our PSR team for their dedication to our parish children. God Bless!



PRAYING SCRIPTURE

THE INVITATION

by Tina McCue

As we have walked through the Scripture selections for the First Sunday of Advent we find that the message of long ago remains relevant and appropriate for us today. As a parish family we have dedicated this year to POWER UP → RECONNECT with the WORD! You are invited to reconnect with the Scripture through friends and others by sharing your story of how the Gospel of Jesus Christ touches your lives in THIS day and THIS time.

Small Faith Sharing Groups are being formed now. Won't you consider joining one and give yourself the gift of reflection and grace as we reflect on faith, Scripture, and life. Plans are to meet twice a month on the second and fourth Monday from 9:30 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. or 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Choose a time that works best for you. You can gather friends and acquaintances to be part of this journey. Now is the time and today is the opportunity. In the iconic words of Nike... *Just do it!* Taking that first step and opening yourself up to the power of the WORD will power you up and provide the opportunity to "reconnect" so that whatever might come your way will be met with the courage and strength of Jeremiah, the Psalmist, Paul and our Lord Jesus Christ!



WOMEN'S GUILD UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ Christmas Kolachi Bake is happening December 1. These yummy treats will be available for purchase that afternoon between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- ◆ Parish Family Dinner will be held December 5 after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. There are rumors that Santa may make an appearance. All parishioners are welcome.
- ◆ Christmas Craft Show is scheduled for December 11 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. A nice event to do a little bit of Christmas shopping.
- ◆ Women's Guild meeting on January 5 is a fun Game Night!

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A KNIGHT? (Part 2)

Submitted by Brian McCue

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal organization. A fraternal organization is a social club or membership organization formed around a common bond, ideology, or personal background (dictionary.com). In this case, the Knights of Columbus is formed around four areas or programs. These areas are Faith, Family, Community, and Life.

What we do in these four areas are as follows:

FAITH PROGRAMS:

provide opportunities to increase Catholic faith. We support vocations. Our program assists seminarians and postulants. As the strong right arm of the church, the Knights of Columbus are committed to providing moral, financial, and spiritual support to future priests and religious at all stages of their formation. There is a spiritual program that creates opportunities for prayer and reflection together as a fraternity.

Our council families celebrate mass together at least twice a year and we call it a Corporate Communion. We use the word corporate which means "formed into a unified body of individuals." We help strengthen families as the domestic church by providing exceptional religious education materials to all Catholics. Our council provides financial support to the Youngstown Diocese Media center.

FAMILY PROGRAMS:

acknowledge and foster the family. Families are the fabric of our community. We invite each family of the parish to consecrate themselves to the Holy Family. The Family Fully Alive initiative encourages families to place God and the faith at the center of their lives every day. Some councils hold a family prayer night. The "Family of the Month" program recognizes a family that models

Christian values and visibly lives them every day. Keep Christ in Christmas promotes the true spirit of Christmas in our homes, schools, parishes, and communities. Yard signs, poster contest and buttons are some ways councils use to promote Keep Christ in Christmas.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS:

are probably the most noticeable programs for many. Our Coats for Kids



program provides the gift of warmth to children during cold winter months. Youth is an important part of our community, so the councils provide athletic outlets for youth in basketball, soccer, and hockey. We have a Helping

Hands program to help those less fortunate in our community. We also have the opportunity to participate in the global wheelchair program to change the lives of people with disabilities worldwide. An essay contest encourages youth to become citizens grounded in their faith through creative writing. And lastly, the Leave No Neighbor Behind project, which was created during the pandemic, defined our duty to lead our families, protect our parishes, and serve our communities.

LIFE PROGRAMS:

empower Knights to stand shoulder-to-shoulder in service to the community and to vigorously defend life and the dignity of each human being at every stage of life. We pray the rosary to our Mother Mary for her inter-

cession for all people to respect life. We support the annual March for Life which shows life, at any age, can be lived to its fullest, with joy and satisfaction. The Special Olympics program celebrates the intrinsic worth and dignity of every single human being. We support the Ultrasound initiative locally through support of the Bella Women's Center which empowers women to see their unborn child with ultrasound technology. We provide much-needed spiritual and material support for mothers, fathers, and their children before and after birth. Lastly, we have the opportunity to share the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe and promote respect for life through her intercession.

To find out more about what the Knights of Columbus around the world are accomplishing, visit the website, www.kofc.org. The Knights are a busy bunch of guys when we put our treasure and talent to use. Knights around the globe enjoy the opportunity to help where and when we can. But, we can only do as much as the men of our council can provide and there is always room for one more. If you are looking for an opportunity to be a better husband, father, son, neighbor, and role model adding charity and community service into your life, consider becoming a Knight of Columbus. We can use a good man like you! Vivat Jesus!



MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY

by Carol Timko

Make a Difference Day was held on Saturday, October 23 nationwide and here at St. William. PSR began taking part in this event several years ago by raking leaves for parishioners. The weather and the leaves did not always cooperate with us, so several years ago, we changed and chose to stay at the church and deep cleaning the kitchen and all the tables and chairs in the building.

This year we chose a delicious project to make our Make a Difference Day into a fundraiser. Our PSR youth and their families worked on the St. William Assembly Line making Pumpkin Pies. Some of the families had never made a pumpkin pie, or any pie, before this day. The jobs were divided up in different activities (Crust, filling, baking, cooling, and boxing.) Some families made the pie crusts while others made the pumpkin filling. Other families measured out the ingredients and opened cans of the pie filling so all that needed to do was to put the ingredients together and whisk it up. There was someone measuring out the correct amounts of crust ingredients, so the other family just had to mix it up, roll it out, cut off the edges and put

it in the pie pan. After a few hours if they wanted, the families changed jobs.

We had a family filling the crusts with the exact amount of filling, putting them in the oven to bake, and then taking them out of the oven when cooked. After the pies cooled, they needed to be put in something, so pie boxes were made...lots of pie boxes! I figured out how to put the boxes together then showed a few families. I lost count of how many boxes were put together, but I will tell you it was over 150, or at least it felt like it! My hands were very sore the next day.

A luncheon of pizza, chips, and apple cider was shared, and dessert was yummy cupcakes. Our families were very hard workers and in four hours, we made 108 very tasty pumpkin pies! The pies were sold after all the Masses that weekend.

It was such a great day watching and listening to families talk about the different activities their children are in, how things are going at school, different ways the families will celebrate Thanksgiving, and just sharing and getting to know each other better. Stay tuned for next year's Make a Difference Day event. Will we be baking again or doing another activity? You will just have to wait till October 2022 to find out what we may have up our sleeves to Make a Difference!



MUSIC MINISTRY

by Pat Maciejewski

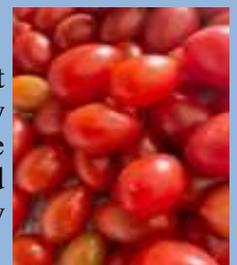
St. William celebrates Advent Lessons and Carols, Tuesday, November 30 at 7:00 p.m. Mark your calendars now and know you are welcome to come sing, pray, and reflect as "together we wait" during this Advent Season. The celebration is about one hour and gets us on our way to welcome anew the Christ Child into our hearts.



Saint William Youth Music

Ministry – students in as music ministers. Also, a BIG grades 2 and up are welcome back to cantor Sam Weeks! encouraged to help On a personal note, I would like celebrate Christmas Eve to offer special thanks to cantors, 5:00 p.m. Mass in choir singers, and musicians of St. William with 2 rehearsals on and all guest musicians for providing Saturday, December 4 and music for weekend Masses and 18 from 10:00 – 11:30 funerals while I was away dealing a.m. in the church. Info with my TKR (Total Knee Replacement!) was included in the fall PSR folder, and a registration form given to Bless you all!

Last, but not all PSR parents. All are welcome to least: I am very join in this solemn and fun event! grateful for late Music Ministry would like to garden salad welcome: Charles Jaskiewicz, tomatoes from my Christine DePascale, Diane Leigh, garden! and Claudia Valimont for joining us



(Continued from page 1) Ushering In

when Mass has started, and staying focused during Mass to know when it is time to take part in the Offertory Collection and Communion. Once Mass has ended the job continues by tidying up the church and replacing all the missals correctly in the chairs.

These boys take their ministry seriously and when the moment arrives for them to take their place in the center aisle, they often look at each other and seem to have a little hand signal as if to say, "hey, it is time to go." They respectfully bow at the altar before passing the collection baskets.

Collin and Anthony's parents hope that this first ministry of literally opening doors will open the doors for their son to have even more willingness to serve our church. So, take a lesson from Collin and Anthony, if you are thinking about being part of a church ministry but feel you lack the talent or bravery, just think about how these young people are making a difference in their lives and the lives of others at St. William. Any little gesture that helps others will bring you closer to your faith and to God.

One last secret I would like to share about these boys, they do get rewarded by helping themselves to a piece of candy from a candy dish they discovered in the "old people's room" also known as the "Adult Meeting Room." Oh, through the eyes of children!



WOMEN'S GUILD & TRUMBULL NEW THEATRE

In September the Women's Guild sponsored the play "Clue" at the Trumbull New Theater in Niles. The play was based on the 1985 movie and the Hasbro game! Not only was it a dark and stormy night in



the play but the setting outside the theater was also dark and stormy! Severe thunderstorms were issued for our area but over 80 curious people attend the show wondering "whodunnit." Each of the guests had aliases, the butler offered

a variety of weapons, and the host was DEAD at the beginning of the play! The audience joined Ms. Scarlet, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Mr. Green, Mrs. Peacock, and Colonel Mustard as they raced to find the murderer before the body count stacked up. The madcap comedy kept everyone guessing until the final twist, where Mr. Green, probably the most interesting and colorful character, ended up being on the right side of the law and arrested all the other characters. Once again it was a wonderful night out full of delicious food and drinks for church members, family, and friends.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ST. WILLIAM PARISHIONERS

Lauren Haynie
Champion HS Homecoming Queen
&
Jack O'Shaughnessy
Champion HS Homecoming King

UP CLOSE with COLLIN LEE

by Theresa Craiger

Keeping young children attentive during mass is a challenge for any parent. Collin's creative parents decided to choose a few events during Mass to keep him focused. The first event was the collection of offertory envelopes. Collin would collect all the offertory envelopes from the family members sitting



around him and place them in the basket. Then he started to gather envelopes from all the people sitting in his row. Over time, as he placed the envelopes into the collection basket, he realized the Usher was collecting all the envelopes and thought that was cool, so he decided he wanted to collect all the "people's money." His mother told him he had to talk to Father about it and that is exactly what Collin did. The following Sunday he marched into the sacristy with a serious look on his face and asked Father if he could collect the money from the people. Father smiled and thought this is the first time in 34 years of being a priest that someone this young had asked to be an usher. Father told him he could be an usher if he came to mass every Sunday. Collin smiled and said, "I will be here every Sunday!"

After a few weeks of ushering Collin walked back into the sacristy and asked Father when he got paid for passing the baskets. Father Balash chuckled before informing him, "you don't get paid." What a perfect opportunity for Collin to learn about serving the church and others as a minister at St. William. Collin takes his participation in Mass very seriously and feels his ushering job is so important that during the pandemic suspension he was worried about who was collecting the people's offertory envelopes since he wasn't there. Another time he was upset that he wore home an usher pin and lost it. His mother ordered six more to replace the one Collin lost but also made him apologize to Father for taking it home.

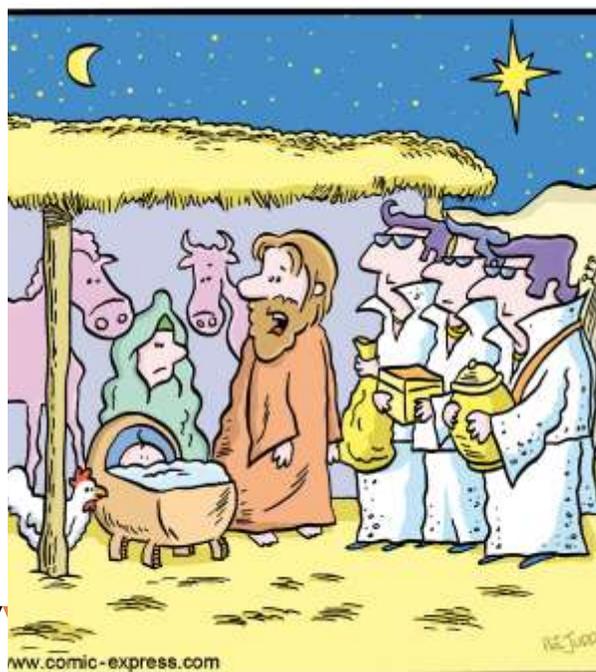
UP CLOSE with ANTHONY PACURAR

by Theresa Craiger



Anthony was in first grade when he became interested in ushering. He would watch Collin every week performing the duties of an usher. Anthony has always been shy, and it surprised his parents when, on his own, he approached Father and asked if he could also be an usher. Having the confidence to approach Father was a huge moment for Anthony and he

was very excited when Father told him he could be an usher once he made his First Communion... and then, the pandemic suspension happened, and everything was put on hold. Once church re-opened for worship, Father approached Anthony and said that he would work with him sometime over the summer to train him to be an usher. Anthony LOVES being an usher. He has gotten braver about greeting people on their way into Mass, but he thinks passing the basket is kind of stressful. His all-time favorite part is helping to dismiss people for reception of Communion. He thinks that is a very important job and has even become upset with his mother because they had to attend 8:30 Mass because his mother had PSR teacher meetings at 11:00!!



"They say they are three kings."

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Weekend

Friday, December 24 ~ Christmas Eve: 5:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 25 ~ Christmas Day: 10:00 a.m. ONLY

**Note: There is no Saturday 5:00 p.m. Mass*

Sunday, December 26 ~ Feast of the Holy Family: 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

New Year Weekend

Friday, December 31 ~ New Year's Eve: No Mass

Saturday, January 1 ~ New Year's Day: 10:00 a.m. ONLY

**Note: There is no obligation to attend New Year's Day Mass*

**Note: There is no Saturday 5:00 p.m. Mass*

Sunday, January 2 ~ The Epiphany of the Lord: 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.



THEY'RE BACK!!

ST. WILLIAM "Fabulous" FISH DINNERS

FEBRUARY 25
THROUGH
APRIL 8, 2022
FRIDAYS 4-7PM



<http://www.stwilliamchampion.org>

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