



ST. JOSEPH PARISH

NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

PARISH NEWSLETTER

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February 2021

From New York to Ohio, the **Mount Family** Has Kept Their Faith at the Center of Life Together

For St. Joseph parishioners Jeff and Kathleen Mount, the Catholic faith is not just a part of life on Sunday mornings — they strive to live intentional discipleship every day. By staying involved in various parish activities and ministries, they have grown closer to Christ and their faith community. Jeff and Kathleen are thankful for the many blessings that have come to them through their participation in a stewardship way of life at St. Joseph.

The Mounts first met while working together in Buffalo, New York, in 1986 and were married two years later. Drawing on the early example of an active faith life she had in her mother, Kathleen always knew that raising her children in the Church would be a priority. She and Jeff ensured that their five kids understood just how important the Catholic faith was to both of them. Beginning life as a family in Rochester, N.Y., Jeff served on the parish council of their church, St. Mary of the Lake, and Kathleen taught religious education and became a member of the parish staff.



St. Joseph parishioners Jeff and Kathleen Mount strive to live intentional discipleship every day.

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The Mount Family *continued from front cover*

When the Mounts moved to Amherst in 2005, one of the first things they did as a family was to find a new Catholic parish to call home, and church life has remained a top priority for the family ever since.

“We wanted our children to grow in their faith, and to share the same passion that Kathy and I have always had for our Lord,” Jeff says.

Once they discovered St. Joseph Catholic Church, it didn’t take long for the Mounts to feel right at home here!

“Moving to Amherst, we wanted to stay involved and be part of a new parish family,” Kathleen says. “We began with our boys in Sister Noel’s family program for religious formation, while our daughters sang with the youth choir. The parish was so welcoming that soon I was a catechist and Jeff an usher. The noon Mass was perfect for our family. The girls singing made the Mass all that more meaningful for us. Mass became the way our family Sundays began.”

As the Mount children grew older, Kathleen got involved with youth ministry and helped start the middle school youth camp. Currently, she serves as a Eucharistic Minister at Mass and for the homebound, which she finds greatly fulfilling. She also enjoys being a part of the Wonderful Woman group. Jeff has been an usher for the last decade and is also an active

participant in the Holy Family 4891 Knights of Columbus.

With many ministries restricted or on hold during the COVID-19 crisis, the Mounts are dearly missing the many wonderful ways our parish families are accustomed to coming together in worship and service. They pray for the continued unity of our faith community.

“The commitment and generosity of our parishioners are astounding to me,” Kathleen says. “I hope that people will soon feel safe to return to church and that the vibrant community of St. Joseph parish returns. Together, we are the Body of Christ!”

In the meantime, Jeff and Kathleen will continue to keep the faith and participate in the stewardship way of life that they have found so greatly rewarding over the years.

“I’ve always felt that servant leadership is at the heart of our faith,” Jeff says. “To me, there’s no better feeling than helping someone in need.”

“Stewardship is an honor and a blessing,” Kathleen says. “I have never thought of it as an obligation but a calling. We are called by our faith to serve. Each of us should look within ourselves to see how the Lord is calling us to share His love. We should always be in service to each other.”

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— Parishioner Kathleen Mount

Celebrating **50 Years** of Our

This past December, our St. Joseph faith family celebrated 50 years of worship in our building. We are happy to share some snapshots of our parish home from over the decades.



Parish Home at St. Joseph



A Love Letter TO THE EUCHARIST

By NATHAN FRANKART



Pease of Christ to you! The following letter is an adaptation of a journal entry that I wrote sometime in the fall of 2017 while at the University of Akron before I entered seminary. Many saints relate to our Eucharistic Lord much like an intimate lover, and here was my basic attempt at this style and charism of prayer.

“Lover of my soul, You have been waiting for me in this chapel, I know You have. I sensed Your presence from the moment I entered, that You had something to share with me. Let me rest in the embrace of Your abundant compassion and mercy, how I have longed to experience the comfort of Your embrace amidst the trial and turmoil of everyday life. The waves of the world may crash against me, but here in this chapel is where my respite and reward lie. Here I can enter peace, know peace, experience peace. Take me deeper, O Lord.

You have looked upon me with gentle eyes. You, raised in perpetual elevation, the moment of a miracle perfectly captured behind the appearance

of something ordinary, that only eyes of those who love You can search and find meaning. This spiritual, physical gift laid out before me, to adore and to consume. Lord, how can I repay such love that You have bestowed upon this wretched servant? Slow to act, one who fails to trust and is mired with doubts. I have failed to do Your will. I feel as though I am nothing when compared to Your perfection. Without Your love, I am cast into despair.

Yet, by Your grace and love, You raise me up brushing sin and failure away, and embrace me as Your beloved child. I know it is true that in Your eyes I am more valuable than the beauty of the stars. Lord, let me take the gifts which You bestow on me in this Eucharistic Adoration and allow me to love those who are in most desperate need. Let the love You show me to be reflected in my life, and may my life serve only to point towards beautiful sacrament. O Source and Summit of my faith, lover of my soul, hear my prayer. Stay in my heart till I behold that beatific vision which the angels and saints praise for all eternity.”

Celebrating the Miracle of St. Blaise *Feast Day, Feb. 3*

This month, we reflect on the life of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, who is one of the “Fourteen Holy Helpers” — a group of Catholic saints whose intercession is believed to be effective against diseases. Traditionally, we celebrate the feast day of St. Blaise on Feb. 3. So, as we continue to navigate the ongoing challenges brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic, we may look toward St. Blaise’s example and pray for his intercession during these difficult times.

Though we do not know much about the life of St. Blaise, tradition tells us that he was born to wealthy, saintly Catholic parents. Born in Armenia, he devoted his life to medicine and helping the sick. He was a physician, until he was begged by the people to become their bishop. He was appointed by the Church as bishop of the Diocese of Sebaste.

Around the year 313, when the Roman Emperor Licinius was persecuting the Church, Blaise lived as a hermit in the woods among animals that he befriended. One day, a group of hunters found Blaise and seized him. Upon their trip to the governor, they encountered a woman whose pig was being attacked by a wolf. Blaise commanded the wolf to leave the pig alone and, upon his command, the pig was freed unharmed. Blaise was then taken to prison, where he miraculously healed a boy who was choking to death on a fishbone. While Blaise remained in prison, the woman whose pig he had freed brought him two candles to serve as his light so that he could read the Scripture.

It was from the miracle of saving the choking boy that the custom of praying to St. Blaise to cure all ailments of the throat was born. And, so, after still refusing to recant



his Christian beliefs, he was suspended from a tree and his flesh was torn with iron combs or rakes.

Blaise was then thrown into a lake to drown. To the surprise of his persecutors, he surfaced and walked upon the water, and he invited his persecutors to join him. They should do this, he said, to show the power of their gods. The pagans took him up on his invitation, and ultimately they were drowned. Blaise was then told by an angel to return to dry land to receive martyrdom. He was beheaded on the shore and immediately went to heaven.

Because of his prison experience and his great reputation as a healer, St. Blaise’s intercession is invoked for the healing of diseases affecting the throat. The candles that the clergy place upon our throats while blessing them symbolize the candles that enlightened St. Blaise’s cell as he studied Sacred Scripture — connecting his spiritual life to the physical healing. Let us remember to invoke the intercession of this great healer upon any ailments that might be affecting us, either physical or spiritual — especially those pertaining to the throat.

In non-pandemic times, blessing of the throats is done by the priest holding two blessed candles near the throat in the form of a cross. If, for pastoral reasons, each individual person cannot be blessed, a priest or deacon may give the blessing to all by extending his hands, without crossed candles, over the people while saying the prayer of blessing: “Through the Intercession of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

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This newsletter brought to you by the Catholic Communities of:

& ST. JOSEPH PARISH & NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

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200 Saint Joseph Drive, Amherst, OH 44001

Address Service Requested

Fr. Tim O'Connor Serving Both Parishes

Mass:

Monday, 9:00 a.m. - *St. Joseph*
Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. - *Nativity of the BVM*
Thursday, 7:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*
Friday, 9:00 a.m. - *St. Joseph*
Saturday, 4:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*
5:30 p.m. - *Nativity of the BVM*
Sunday, 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*

Confession at St. Joseph:

Thursday - Individual Reconciliation 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Saturday - Individual Reconciliation 11:00 a.m. - noon

Eucharistic Adoration (Chapel) at Nativity of the BVM:

Monday-Friday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The Year of St. Joseph *continued from page 3*

been conceived through the Holy Spirit, Pope Francis counsels: "Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history. Unless we are reconciled with our own history, we will be unable to take a single step forward, for we will always remain hostage to our expectations and the disappointments that follow" (No. 4).

What, then, are some ways to take advantage of the **Year of St. Joseph** during this season of Lent? Here are two simple suggestions to get started. Begin by making the invisible visible. St. Joseph may have been "in the shadows," as Pope Francis says, but we can help bring him to the fore by giving him a prominent presence in our homes this year. Consider obtaining a statue, an

icon or another image of this holy man to grace your domestic church. A prominent reminder of St. Joseph will serve as an aid during prayerful reflection, as well as a visible reminder to seek his intercession. Use it to grow in relationship with him.

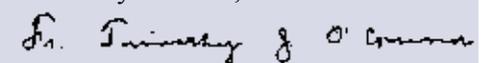
I also recommend praying the powerful Litany of St. Joseph regularly, if not every day. While it is one of only six litanies approved by the Church for public recitation, the litany is also excellent for private recitation. With its short, descriptive petitions, it can help focus prayer and is highly family-friendly. In this time of pandemic, it reminds us to seek Joseph's intercession under the titles of "hope of the sick" and "patron of the dying." As the family is threatened, it reminds us to call on Joseph as "pillar of families" and "glory of home life." And as the Church struggles under the

weight of great sin, it reminds us to turn to him as "protector of Holy Church."

Extra ideas: Read about St. Joseph (maybe the book *Consecration to St. Joseph*, by Fr. Donald H. Calloway, MIC). Ask St. Joseph's intercession upon the fathers in your life. Give him a special place in your prayers during Lent, and especially during March, the month traditionally set aside by the Church for his veneration. Celebrate in a particular way the feasts of St. Joseph (March 19) and of St. Joseph the Worker (May 1).

May St. Joseph, patron of the universal Church, accompany us this Lent, this year and always.

Gratefully in Christ,



Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor,
Pastor