



ST. JOSEPH PARISH

NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

PARISH NEWSLETTER

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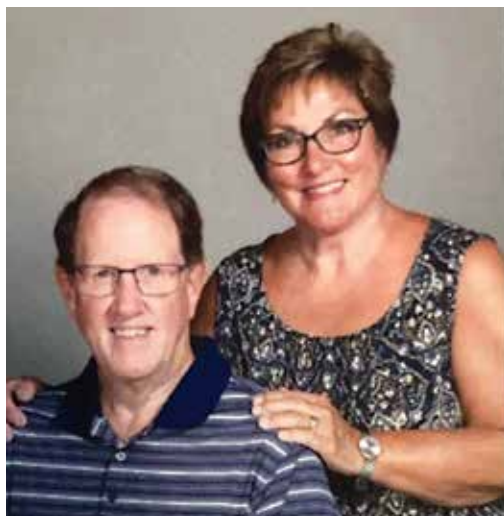
9 You Have Been Claimed!
By *NATHAN FRANKART*

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JUNE 2022

Meet Parishioner **Nicki Allsop**: *A Life of Sharing Time and Talents with God and Church*



Lifelong Nativity parishioner Nicki Allsop and her husband, Bob

A member of Nativity Parish her whole life, Nicki Allsop was baptized, received her First Communion, and was confirmed in the original sandstone church on West Main Street in South Amherst. In 1976, she married her husband, Bob, in the present church.

Nicki grew up in a large family and her siblings are also members of Nativity Parish. She has two children of her own,

Anthony and Emily. She was a nurse for 45 years, and while she loved her profession and found it very rewarding, she always knew that when she retired she would spend much of her time at the church. For Nicki, it was an easy transition from working full-time to offering more of her time to the church when she retired. She is a member of the Altar and Rosary Society, helps with Dinners on the Go, bakes, and helps with Christmas cookie sales.

“Dinners on the Go not only helps the church monetarily, but we also make it our mission to give to our local food cupboard and St. Elizabeth Shelter,” Nicki says.

Another important part of Nicki’s week is the hour that she spends in adoration with our Lord.

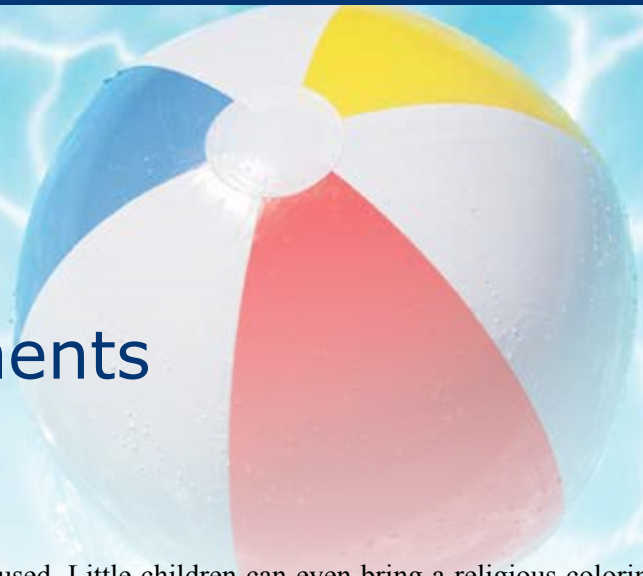
“When I pray during adoration is when I really feel the presence of God,” Nicki says. “It is such a wonderful way to spend an hour of meditation and prayer. It not only brings me closer to God but to my parents, Albert and Helen Gentile.”

Nicki describes her father as, “a quiet and unassuming man,” and her mother as,

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STEWARDSHIP

Keeping Our Stewardship Commitments in the Summertime



The kids are out of school and our fast-paced lives centered on school and youth sports activities have slowed down. Our own internal clocks are now on summer time. We're ready for a break from our hectic lives.

And while we take vacations and enjoy the leisurely pace of the season, we need to remember that summer is not the time to take a vacation from God. In fact, summer can serve as the perfect opportunity to grow in our relationship with God, especially since most of us have considerably more free time.

So, instead of neglecting our faith due to busy days and late nights, try these simple steps to embrace God during the quieter summer months and during your vacation.

Get More Active in a Parish Ministry

The summer is actually a perfect time to get more involved in a parish ministry. Because we no longer have to get the kids to and from school, or get them to sporting events or other activities that normally occur during the school year, our schedules are a bit less cluttered. Summer is indeed a perfect time to fill some downtime with service to God through ministry and giving of your talents. Take a look through the parish ministries to find something that suits your particular interest or talent.

Give Thanks for the Sun

Praise God for the sun, time off from school and easygoing days by visiting the adoration chapel to say a quick prayer. Bring a journal or rosary along to help stay

focused. Little children can even bring a religious coloring book to give thanks to God on their terms. Or, before heading to the pool, why not attend daily Mass with the kids? It's a perfect way to start the day and set the tone that — vacation or not — God is still an important part of your family life.

Don't Take a Vacation from Mass

Often while on a vacation away from our parish family, we are not familiar with where to attend Mass. Don't let that be an obstacle for you. Check out masstimes.org in order to find out where and when to go to Mass. In addition, if you are lodging at a hotel, the concierge will assist you with directions to the nearest Catholic Church.

Summertime Stewardship of Treasure

The prime reason for keeping up our pledge all summer is that God doesn't go on vacation. He continues to sustain us throughout the summer months. He persists in pouring out blessings on us, even during the hottest weather. He keeps on meeting us in His sacramental presence when we go to Mass wherever we travel. As God remains faithful to us during the summer, we are called to be faithful in our commitments to Him and our parish family, even during our vacation time.

So, enjoy the warmer temperatures and the relaxed atmosphere. Just don't forget Who provides the sun and the sand! And most importantly, remember to take God with you wherever you go on vacation!

A Letter from Our Pastor



Embrace the Holy Spirit

Dear Members of St. Joseph and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parishes,



You have all heard homilies about Pentecost, which comes on June 5th this year. Pentecost was the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles while they were gathered for prayer in Jerusalem.

Coming ten days after Jesus' Ascension into heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit turned the apostles from a collection of fearful followers looking for some direction into a band of courageous witnesses ready to declare their faith in Christ to the whole world.

You have heard that Pentecost is the birthday of the Church because that was the day when newly filled with the Holy Spirit, St. Peter preached the first Christian sermon, inviting his hearers to turn to Jesus as their Savior and their Lord. Those who accepted the invitation were baptized and "some three thousand were added that day" to the Church (Acts 2:41). That day marked the beginning of the Church's public mission, which continues to the present.

But the Holy Spirit's actions in the Church were not limited to the apostles in an ancient time. He remains active down to the present, guiding the pope and the bishops as they go about their work of teaching, sanctifying and governing in the Church. The Holy Spirit acts in the sacraments to make them effective means of grace. We see the Holy Spirit's work in the witness of the saints through whom He continues the work of salvation.

The Spirit, moreover, acts not only in the Church as a corporate body but also in the lives of individual Christians. We become temples of the Holy Spirit at our baptism. Then at Confirmation, which is our own personal Pentecost, we receive the seal of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit unites us more closely to Christ, increases the spiritual gifts we have been given, and strengthens us to spread and defend the faith.

Ultimately, Pentecost is more than simply a feast celebrating something that happened a long time ago. Of course, the coming of the Spirit we read about in Acts 2 took place just once. But the Holy Spirit remains active today,

guiding the Church as a whole but also working in the life of each individual Christian to make us holy.

Maybe you don't feel as if the Holy Spirit is working in your life. Well, God the Father gave us free will, so we can choose whether or not we will obey Him. And God the Holy Spirit, being united in the one Godhead with the Father and the Son, honors that freedom. He will never force us to turn away from sin or compel us to obey God's commandments. The Spirit offers us grace. He will beckon us toward heaven, and occasionally we may feel Him nudging us along, but we always have the freedom to choose God or to reject Him.

I hope that you have made a commitment to worship at Mass at least on Saturday evening or on Sunday and spend some time each day in prayer. Maybe you have promised to use some of your talents in parish ministries and service to the community. You may even have turned in a card at our last renewal to indicate your pledge of a portion of your treasure to be used in God's service.

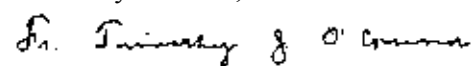
I hope you have done all of these. If so, both the Holy Spirit's grace and your response were involved in your decision. And the Holy Spirit will give you the strength to fulfill your commitments — or even to get started again.

This Pentecost, make the Alleluia verse we will sing just before the Gospel your personal prayer:

Alleluia. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love. Alleluia.

If you do, you will find the Holy Spirit working even more strongly in your life. You will be happier, and the world, at least your little corner of it, will be a better place.

Gratefully in Christ,



Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor,
Pastor

Parish Picnic Committee Prepares for Return of Favorite Annual Event

If you missed having the St. Joseph Parish Picnic last year, you'll be excited to know that the Parish Picnic Committee is hard at work planning the picnic for September. The committee has been meeting since April to bring us a fun and family-friendly event for the whole community. Carol Shinsky has led the committee for about 10 years and is looking forward to all of the food, fun, and activities for kids that the picnic will offer this year.

"It's an event that we hope pulls everyone together, to meet new people, and to enjoy time as a parish family," Carol says. "It's sort of a celebration of the parish by the parish community."

The Parish Picnic, which takes place on Sunday, Sept. 18, begins with the 11 a.m. Mass, followed by food, fun and fellowship on the parish grounds. This year's event is more family-focused. Historically, the picnic would be preceded by a polka Mass and the polka band would stay to perform at the picnic. This year, the committee has opted to put their creativity towards making sure that there are lots of games, crafts, and a scavenger hunt for the kids so that parents and kids alike can enjoy the good food and community at the picnic. There will still be music for everyone to enjoy. Worship and Liturgy Coordinator Christina Dupre will be planning music for both the 11 a.m. Mass and the picnic will immediately follow.

It takes many hands to make the picnic a success. Carol is grateful for the teamwork of the committee and for all those whose hard work made the Parish Picnic possible over the years. From food to decorations, to



(From left) Carol Shinsky, Kathy Flynn, Brenda Snell, Tracy Shamhart, Maria Mrosek and Suzanne Strader

publicity, and kids' activities, there are a lot of small details and the committee members meet every month to share their progress. However, the planning doesn't stop there. On the day of the picnic, there is a lot to get done and Carol invites anyone and everyone to come and help. Everything from set-up to clean-up happens thanks to generous volunteers.

"You can just show up and say, 'What can I do to help?'" Carol says.

In the past, the picnic was more of a potluck — the parish provided a catered main course and parishioners brought side dishes and desserts. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the committee decided that this year the parish would provide the entire meal. This means that enjoying the picnic is even simpler for families.

"Just come and have fun!" Carol says.

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"It's an event that we hope pulls everyone together, to meet new people, and to enjoy time as a parish family. It's sort of a celebration of the parish by the parish community." — Carol Shinsky

Parish Picnic Committee Prepares for Return of Favorite Annual Event *continued from page 4*



(From left) Jim Pecchio, Kathy Flynn, Carol Shinsky, Lillian Zaworski, Joe Danicki and Maria Mrosek

The Parish Picnic Committee welcomes new members as they are less than halfway through the planning process. All parishioners of both St. Joseph and Nativity are welcome to come and enjoy the music, food, and fellowship.

If you would like to volunteer your time on the Parish Picnic Committee or would like to know other ways you can help, please call the parish office at 440-988-2848.

Meet Parishioner **Nicki Allsop** *continued from front cover*

“very spiritual, kind and loving.” Nicki’s mother, Helen, instilled her great faith in her children. She inspired Nicki as a woman who worked full-time outside of the home, and yet still made time for the faith, especially when taking the family to Mass on Sunday.

“We grew up in South Amherst and we did not have a lot, but my parents always provided for our needs and seemed so content, which is a rare quality these days,” says Nicki. “We always spent Sundays after Mass at my parents’ house for coffee and catching up, since we all worked outside the home. After our parents passed away we kept the tradition going and now have Sunday breakfast every week at my brother Joe’s home.”

Nicki knows and understands how difficult it seems to find time to volunteer when also working a full-time job. However, she believes that if you can find a few hours to help at the church, you will find it to be very rewarding. Plus, you get to meet some of the nicest and most fun-loving people!

“When I pray during adoration is when I really feel the presence of God. It is such a wonderful way to spend an hour of meditation and prayer. It not only brings me closer to God but to my parents, Albert and Helen Gentile.”

— Nicki Allsop

Focusing on Fatherhood

WITH PARISHIONERS

Doug Sadowski AND Joe Farkas

When Doug Sadowski looks at his six-month-year-old daughter Koralline, he can't help but see God's love and glory coming alive before him.

"Being a father has helped me learn more about God and His plans," Doug says. "It has been so wonderful, amazing, and fulfilling. It has been all smiles for my wife, Hope, and me. We have been head over heels enjoying every minute of it. I am trying to just soak it all in, and I am getting so much more out of it than I ever thought was possible! Fatherhood just isn't valued as much as it should be in today's society."

In fact, since Koralline has come into his life, Doug has grown and changed in many wonderful ways.

"Being a father has shown me a whole different way of looking at

life," he says. "Before she was born, my priority was to get the best job and make the most money I could, but now it is being a loving father. I now see the things that don't matter as much as having a family and loving them. The Church teaches you to treat everyone as you want to be treated, and pass on this love to the next generation, and that is what parents do."

As one of the youngest fathers in our parish family, Doug's testimony is inspiring to us all. Furthermore, as one of the oldest fathers in our parish family, Joe Farkas' story is inspiring as well.

"I am 94 years old, but even at my age, I really enjoy life, rain or shine — I enjoy it all!" he says. "I am just an old buzzard, and I don't have a computer, cable, or a cell phone, but I am so happy!"

As a devoted father, Joe enjoys spending quality time with his three children, Kathy, Mike, and Maryann — son Joe died in a truck/motorcycle accident in 1993 — 10 grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren. St. Joseph Parish Office Manager Kathy Flynn is his oldest daughter.

"If you know Kathy, she is an example of what has come up from me," he says. "My youngest daughter helps me a lot, as well. She and her family come over on Thursdays, make a meal for me, and then we eat together. Sometimes we have wood-burning cook-outs in our backyard and they play games. We really love being together!"

Joe and his wife, Ruth, were wed here at the old St. Joseph Church located on Tenney Ave. on Nov. 25, 1948. They were married for 65 years until Ruth's passing on Aug. 10, 2014.

When Joe and Ruth were raising their children, they made sure they received a Christ-centered education.

"All of my children went to St. Joseph's Parish School, and my daughters went to Catholic high schools as well," Joe says. "Even though I couldn't always afford tuition, the school helped us and it all worked out."

Kathy remembers, "As a parent, he always made sure we learned and prayed our morning and bedtime prayers. Dad always started the prayer before and after meals and we joined in as a family



Doug Sadowski and family celebrating daughter Kora's Baptism



Doug Sadowski and family

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Focusing on Fatherhood with Parishioners

Doug Sadowski and Joe Farkas *continued from page 6*

to pray together. To this day, next to his favorite lazy boy recliner he has his prayer books, many holy cards, and a rosary that he uses daily. Dad tried his best to instill in us a strong foundation for our Catholic Faith.”

Looking back over his good, long life, Joe sees many ways in which God provided for him and showed compassion for his family through others.

“When we first got married, we didn’t have much money, but we were so blessed because people at that time were so patient with us,” Joe says. “When Kathy was born, the doctor didn’t even charge me for her birth! Even the garbage collection man kept coming to our house, even though I was behind on payments. I built my own home, and we made it by. My parents were from Slovakia, and they had it rough too. I have learned how to get along in life without much.”

With a heart full of gratitude, Joe is thankful for the opportunities he has had

to give back to God and others as well. For many years, he served as an usher and was involved with the Vincentians.

“When I was younger, I used to be in the Knights of Columbus and help out with Bingo, but I can’t do that anymore,” he says. “However, I try to help out now by donating to the school for tuition. Now that I am able to take care of myself, I am glad to pay something back for all of the kindness people have shown to me in my life.”

“To this day, my dad tries to set an example of attending daily Mass when he is able,” Kathy adds. “He attends Sunday Mass weekly and Mass on Holy Days. He attends all Liturgies and special church events when able, just like we did when we were growing up.” Joe would like to add, “Now that my kids are grown, I feel like they respect me more than I ever realized.”



Joe Farkas

A Prayer for Father's Day

*God, Our Father
 God, our Father
 Bless these men, that
 they may find strength as fathers.
 Let the example of their faith
 and love shine forth.
 Grant that we, their sons
 and daughters,
 may honor them always
 with a spirit of
 profound respect.*



(Top row, from left) son-in-law Glenn, daughter-in-law Robyn, son Mike, son-in-law Nick, grandson Andy, grandson Nicholas; (bottom row, from left) grandson Ryan, granddaughter Nicole, granddaughter Leann, daughter Kathy, Joe Farkas, and daughter Maryann; not pictured, wife Ruth and son Joe (both deceased)

Technology That Keeps Us Connected to Our Faith:

There's an App for That!



“Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved and forgiven.”

These words from Pope Francis weren't delivered during a homily in St. Peter's or in a speech from St. Peter's Square — nor were they written in a papal bull or apostolic letter. Rather, they were delivered in an instant to millions of Catholics around the world through the pope's very own Twitter account.

The technology of communication has perhaps changed more in the past century than in the previous 20 combined. And with these developments, the Catholic Church — led by our Holy Fathers, from Pope St. John Paul II through Pope Francis — strongly encourages that the faithful adopt and adapt these resources for the all-important task of spreading the Gospel throughout the whole world.

Just as St. Paul used every convenience at his disposal to spread the Gospel throughout the far reaches of the Roman empire, today's

evangelists are using every resource available to them. Examples of Catholic figures using the new media with great success abound.

Only a few months into his pontificate, Pope Francis took the Vatican's social media efforts to a whole new level. In spring 2013, the Vatican released *The Pope App*, which featured quotes, news, images and videos of all the Holy Father's latest doings. Having since been relaunched as the *Vatican News App*, it continues to offer the latest news and information from Pope Francis and the Holy See.

Following the pope's lead, bishops, priests and apologists have taken the technological gifts at their fingertips and are utilizing them to spread the Gospel throughout the world in a variety of ways.

One great example is Bishop Robert Barron of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, whose Word On Fire Ministry has produced wildly popular YouTube videos discussing everything from controversial Church teachings to movie reviews from a

Catholic perspective. Word On Fire also released the critically acclaimed *Catholicism* DVD documentary series.

Independent Catholic bloggers and internet-based media are also widely established and provide their audiences and readership with Catholic news and cultural commentary.

Throughout America, parishes, Catholic schools, dioceses, and even the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops are utilizing these tools as well, creating first-rate websites, maintaining Twitter and Facebook accounts, and more.

All of these resources are geared toward a wide variety of audiences — those entirely new to the faith, fallen-away Catholics and active parishioners.

Being knowledgeable of the new media tools available to us as Catholics is a great way to be more effective in our universal call to evangelization. Take some time to see what media resources our parish and diocese are using, and be sure to pass them along to those in your sphere of influence!



You Have Been Claimed!

By *NATHAN FRANKART*

Pace of Christ to you! Isn't this exciting, I have a June edition this year!

As my semester at St. Mary's Seminary was coming to a close, I did something that was very out of character for me. I made an impulsive decision. It takes an awful lot for me to be impulsive, but when it comes to retreats, I find it really hard to say no!

I took advantage of working at a local retreat for a community here in Cleveland called Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) as the assistant spiritual director. (As a side note, it's not just for teens but for young adults and adults too! If you are interested in making a retreat I highly recommend it! Go to <https://northcoasttec.com/> to sign up for one in July!)

Okay, enough with the advertising Nathan, what happened at this retreat?

During Mass on the weekend, I began to reflect on the alb, the white garment you'll see priests and altar servers wear in the sanctuary. There's a great amount of theology and symbolism tied into this garment. In particular, it is the

liturgical garment for all the baptized, which means anyone can wear an alb, which you probably already knew.

I started to think about the significance of that garment, and what it means to even be baptized. You see, Baptism is not revocable. You cannot be unbaptized. And there's a very good reason for it! Baptism is more than just the freedom of original sin, or the way to salvation — it includes a personal stake made by the Lord. Baptism is a claiming of your heart, soul, mind, dignity, and everything into the life of God.

That should be a cause for celebration! It was a cause for my celebration during Mass on this retreat as I recalled this beautiful moment of my life. Even though I was an infant, I still am aware of God's claim to my very being.

As the Lord had reminded me, let me remind you. You are not alone, and you will never be alone by virtue of your Baptism. Don't let it be a momentary event, something that occurred in the past and doesn't inform your present or future. You have been made new, and Jesus will ever renew you as you grow in love of God and love of neighbor. Rejoice!

AD SPACE

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& ST. JOSEPH PARISH & NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

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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.

Upcoming Activities and Events

Last Day of School for SJS

Thursday, June 2 — early dismissal at 11 a.m.

First Friday Rosary

Friday, June 3 — 11 a.m., Nativity Church

First Saturday Rosary

Saturday, June 4 — 9 a.m., St. Joseph Church

Faithfully Fit Yoga Classes

Tuesdays and Thursdays in June —
9:30 a.m., Mill Hollow Park

Men's Group

Tuesdays June 7 and 21 —
7 p.m. St. Joseph Social Hall

Celebrating First Communion

April 30

