



ST. JOSEPH PARISH

NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

PARISH NEWSLETTER

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St. Joseph Parish
 200 Saint Joseph Drive
 Amherst, OH 44001
 (440) 988-2848
 stjosephamherst.com

Nativity of the BVM Parish
 333 South Lake Street
 South Amherst, OH 44001
 (440) 986-7011

JUNE 2023

Get to Know Parishioners

Sherryl and Jim Saccardi

"Follow God's Will — Whatever He Has in Store for You"

Sherryl Saccardi recalls that when she was growing up, her mother baked pies for Lenten fish fries in their home parish.

"My mom didn't drive so I remember walking over, bringing the pies over for church," Sherryl says. "We lived close to the church. We always went to church. My parents did support the fundraising for the church and I remember, that set a model for us too — for Jim and I to contribute treasure."

Sherryl and Jim Saccardi have been parishioners at St. Joseph for many years. Sherryl joined in 1962 when her family moved to Amherst. Jim was likewise raised in the Catholic faith, having served as an altar boy from sixth grade.

"I served mostly Sunday Masses and some weekday Masses," he says.

A mutual friend introduced Jim and Sherryl to one another in college.

"We started dating and got engaged our senior year in college," Sherryl says. "We married the year after we graduated. When we were dating, we used to go to



Sherryl and Jim Saccardi have been parishioners at St. Joseph for many years.

church in the school gym. The church was ready and we were able to get married in December 1972, right before Christmas."

The Saccardis have been involved in different ministries and initiatives over the

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Summer Stewardship for Children

School is out! We hear many children say, “I’m bored!” or “there’s nothing to do!” Here are a few ideas to help children grow in their understanding of Stewardship as a Way of Life.

“Bean” a Good Steward: Give children several bean seeds and a small pot or plot of ground. Have them prepare the soil, plant the seed, and give it water. Make sure it is in the sunshine! Talk to them about the importance of taking care of God’s seed. (The seeds will sprout quickly in the summer heat!)

Have a neighborhood talent show: Talk to your children about how everyone has been given a talent from God, and they could plan a special show to entertain the neighbors, family members, and friends. Encourage them to recruit participants with a variety of talents such as: singing, dancing, showing an art project, telling a story, reading a poem, showing an athletic skill. Decide on a place, date, and time. They should create invitations and handle all the work.

Plan and carry out a neighborhood clean-up and recycle day: Make one day each week your stewardship of your neighborhood day. Give each child a garbage bag and latex gloves. Make one garbage bag for recyclables and the other for garbage. Go for a walk, picking up the trash and putting it in the proper bag. When you get back to your house, put the material collected in the proper receptacle.

Write a Litany of Gratitude: Give your children a special notepad and pencil for recording a Litany of Gratitude. Ask them to write down things for which they are grateful all during the day. Some examples might be a kind word from a friend, a beautiful flower, the softness of a puppy, some help with chores, a favorite song, a refreshing swim, cold lemonade, etc. At the end of the day make the litany part of your night prayer. Have as a response, “Thank you, God, and help us to care for all You have given us.”



A Letter from Our Pastor

Remember to Keep the Faith This Summer



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

As we enter the month of June and kick off our summer, I want to take a moment to reflect on the importance of stewardship in our daily lives as Catholics.

Stewardship is a way of life that calls us to recognize that everything we have is a gift from God, and that we are called to use these gifts for the good of others and the building up of God's kingdom.

Here are a few ways in which we can live out stewardship in the month of June:

- **Practice gratitude:** Take time each day to thank God for the blessings in your life, both big and small. A grateful heart is essential to living a life of stewardship, as it helps us to recognize the gifts that God has given us and to use them for the good of others.
- **Give generously:** Whether it's donating to a local charity,

volunteering at a soup kitchen, or simply offering a kind word to a neighbor, there are countless ways to give of ourselves to others. Consider making a financial donation to our parish or to a local charity that is doing good work in our community.

- **Pray for others:** Stewardship is not just about giving of our material resources, but also about giving of our time and talent. Take time each day to pray for the needs of others, whether it's for the sick, the poor, or those who are struggling in their faith.
- **Share your talents:** We are all blessed with unique gifts and talents that we can use to serve others. Consider volunteering to teach a religious education class, joining the choir, or using your professional skills to help those in need.

- **Be a good steward of the environment:** God has entrusted us with the care of His creation, and it is our responsibility to be good stewards of the environment. Consider ways in which you can reduce your carbon footprint, recycle more, or conserve resources.

As we continue to navigate the challenges of our world, let us remember that we are called to be faithful stewards of the gifts and talents that God has given us. By living out stewardship in our daily lives, we can make a difference in the world and build up the kingdom of God.

May God bless you and your families abundantly this month, this summer, and always.

Gratefully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor,
Pastor

Nativity Altar and Rosary Society: *Fostering Stewardship in Selfless Service*

"We want our members, and really the parish community as a whole, to know that we love and support them. The community piece of this ministry is such a blessing. I have enjoyed the fellowship within this community of some amazing, loving, caring and giving women." — CINDY MILLER



Mary was the first disciple — she lived her life for her Son, loving and serving Him in everything she did. There is no better model of discipleship lived through stewardship than the Blessed Mother herself, and it is with her example in mind that the Nativity Altar and Rosary Society carries out its own loving service to Christ and His Church.

"Our mission is to take care of the altar, promote devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to contribute to the plight of the needy through local charities," says Cindy Miller, the ministry's current treasurer. "Being able to use my time, talents, and treasure in ways that they are truly needed gives me so much fulfillment and builds my faith."

A cradle Catholic, Cindy says she has always had some form of devotion to the Blessed Mother and a desire to serve the Church, but she says that her involvement in the Altar and Rosary Society over the last 10 years has added such depth to her devotion and service that she now lives her faith in a whole new way.

"Serving through the Altar and Rosary Society has given me an understanding of the faith that I never had before," Cindy says. "It has helped me truly understand what it means to live a life of stewardship; to serve Jesus as Mary did; to love the Blessed Mother in a greater way; and to give of my time, talents, and treasure in every way I can."

The Nativity Altar and Rosary Society is constantly at

work in loving service. They take care of all of the linens used at Mass— the linens on the altar as well as the purificators and the table linens and any other linens Father uses for Mass.

"Every week one of us checks out the linens," Cindy says. "We make sure they are clean, and if we see a spot on any of them, we will take them home, clean them, press them, and bring them back. It is a beautifully sacred service that we take great care in doing."

Yet, that's not where the ministry's service ends! They meet on the first Tuesday of each month to pray the Rosary together and to discuss any upcoming needs that they can fulfill.

"We are a community, and we want to be there for one another as a community," Cindy says. "So we organize bake sales and other fundraisers to raise money. That money is used for a multitude of things. We support local charities and even offer scholarships to families who need assistance sending their children to St. Joseph School."

The group's service is truly multifaceted, and they emulate Mary's loving service so well. Even in death, they honor their members, just as Mary honored Christ standing by the cross.

"We provide an honor guard at the funerals of our members or their family members when they ask us to," Cindy

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Nativity Altar and Rosary Society *continued from page 4*

says. “And we will lead a Rosary at the funeral if the family requests it.”

In addition, the ministry hosts receptions after funeral Masses.

“We want our members, and really the parish community as a whole, to know that we love and support them,” Cindy says. “The community piece of this min-

istry is such a blessing. I have enjoyed the fellowship within this community of some amazing, loving, caring, and giving women.”

Clearly, the Altar and Rosary Society is full of selfless servants! And Cindy invites all of us to join them.

“The ministry is open to all women of our parishes,” she says.

If you are interested in joining the Altar and Rosary Society, please contact Cindy Miller at 440-670-1300.

Sherryl and Jim Saccardi *continued from front cover*

years. Sherryl got involved with the Gardening Ministry shortly after retiring 13 years ago, and Jim has led it for the last year.

“I didn’t want to be tied down, I wanted something I could do on my own time,” Sherryl says. “With gardening, if it’s a nice day, I can go over and do this on my own time. Being a teacher for so many years, that’s what I wanted to do.”

Jim and Sherryl have also been involved for many years with the Vincentians, assisting the local community. Through the ministry, they’ve had the opportunity to serve alongside Old Stone Evangelical Church.

“It’s been rewarding to meet people in another church that have a ministry they do out of the goodness of their heart,” Jim says.

Living out their faith is a daily practice for the Saccardis. They prioritize attending Mass even while traveling, pray regularly, and seek to put God first in their lives.

“Everybody has family issues, but God has gotten us through everything,” Sherryl says. “We’ve never been unable to handle something. Sometimes it seemed pretty desperate, but since I was a little girl, I always relied on my faith and praying to God. You learn later in life that as

a child, you pray for things. As you get older, you pray for the strength to follow God’s will — whatever He has in store for you.”

“For myself, I look at people like Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates, and I feel like I’ve been blessed more than they have,” Jim says. “They have more money than I have, but I’ve been blessed in my life with my family. I really feel I’ve been greatly blessed.”

“Since I was a little girl, I always relied on my faith and praying to God. You learn later in life that as a child, you pray for things. As you get older, you pray for the strength to follow God’s will — whatever He has in store for you.”

— SHERRYL SACCARDI



Meet the Cub Scouts

Cub Scout Pack 429 has a strong 61-year history at St. Joseph. Since 1962, Pack 429 has developed young people into faithful, responsible, and moral men and women. Chris Phillips is the sitting Pack Committee Chair and has been an involved parent since his son started as a Lion Scout in kindergarten. He has been blessed to witness his son and the other scouts grow in leadership, spirituality, and practical survival skills.

“Participating in the scouts as a family is very rewarding,” Chris says. “It has allowed us to participate in fun activities with our son and helped us grow spiritually in Christ through the religious advancement badges.

“The mission of the program is to prepare young people to make good ethical and moral choices over their lifetime by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Scout Law,” he adds.

The Scout Oath is a commitment for the scouts to always do their best and honor God, help those around them, and be moral individuals. The Scout Law describes the scout as a person of loyalty, leadership, and self-discipline.

To accomplish this mission, the scouts are introduced to a variety of tasks and adventures that push them out of



their comfort zone and teach them life lessons.

“Scouts play team sports with their den, cook healthy meals with their parents, meet community service men and women, and perform community service projects like cleaning local parks and donating food and clothes,” Chris says.

“Scouts also participate in outdoor activities to learn leadership skills and self-reliance,” he adds. “These include overnight camping, campfire cooking, pocketknife use, hiking, and rock climbing. Throughout the year we have a Pinewood Derby race, Raingutter Regatta boat race, Fishing Derby, and pack camps.”

The scouts go to many nature preserves and visit the

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“Participating in the scouts as a family is very rewarding. It has allowed us to participate in fun activities with our son and helped us grow spiritually in Christ through the religious advancement badges.” — CHRIS PHILLIPS

Pack 429 Immerses Itself in Adventure, Faith and Valuable Life Lessons

Firelands Scout Reservation, where they are immersed in an outdoorsman's haven of activities like archery and high ropes rock climbing courses.

But beyond the fun activities and outdoor adventures, the scouts hold God at the center of their lives. They take honoring God seriously and strive to grow closer to Christ through the study of Scripture and faith-based discussions.

There are three different awards and badges that the Diocese of Cleveland offers to scouts who fulfill the required duties and learn lessons. Each of these awards necessitates the Cub Scout to do faith-based projects and workbook assignments with their family. At the end of the projects, the scout meets with Fr. Tim to review their work and discuss their progress.

The combination of faith and fun offers scouts an opportunity to develop amazing friendships with their peers.

"They support each other and help each other with their advancements," Chris says. "My son has participated in Cub Scouts since kindergarten and has formed great friendships with the eight to 10 other scouts in their rank over the past five years."

"We currently have 37 active scouts in our pack," he adds. "We are always looking for parent volunteers."



If your son would like to join the Cub Scouts, visit www.beascout.scouting.org

To get involved as an Assistant Cubmaster, Den Leader, or Committee Chair, contact Lisa Phillips at 440-315-5158.

The Feast of Corpus Christi

Understanding How Much Jesus Loves Us

If you were to make a list of “famous people from history” to invite for dinner, there’s a good chance Jesus Christ would make the cut.

As a historical figure alone, the meal conversation would no doubt prove interesting.

Yet, the thought of spending personal time with Christ ushers in additional considerations that far exceed a mere “getting to know you” routine. Jesus Christ is the only human being in history who is also your Creator — He already knows you intimately!

You might then imagine that if Christ revealed Himself to you personally, then you would immediately love Him deeply and believe without doubt. You might think to yourself, “If I could just meet Him once, it would be easy to believe.”

There is a bit of truth in this thought. As human beings, we are affected by personal presence, and the most intense communication transpires through physical contact. Just ask the apostle, Doubting Thomas. The sight of Christ alone was not enough – Thomas required physical touch to be satisfied.

The beauty of the Gospel message is that it is universal. Just as the resurrected Christ invited Thomas to touch Him in the flesh, so too does Christ invite us — His disciples in 2023 — to meet Him physically in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

So, if you would like to share a meal with Christ, the time is here! You have already been given a perpetual, open-ended invitation to dine with Him, in His Father’s house. Through the gift of the Eucharist, we are invited to share in the eternal banquet of heaven. This belief is the incomprehensible glory of our Catholic faith.

We celebrate with great joy, therefore, the night in which Christ instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Although “re-presented” at every Mass, we commemorate this event on two special feast days of the liturgical calendar — on Holy Thursday and on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

The joy of this “holy gift” cannot be adequately expressed on Holy Thursday, due to its nearness to Good Friday. Therefore, the Feast of Corpus Christi — also known as the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ — is given its own day on the liturgical calendar.

Throughout the rest of the world, the Feast of Corpus Christi is normally celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday, thereby mirroring Holy Thursday. However, the U.S. does not maintain this feast as a Holy Day of Obligation. It is considered a “moveable feast” — this year, the Feast of Corpus Christi occurs on June 8, but the celebration is transferred to the following Sunday, June 11.

On this glorious feast, take the time to thank Our Heavenly Father for the gift He bestows on us through the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In the words of St. Teresa of Calcutta: “When you look at the Crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you then. When you look at the Sacred Host, you understand how much Jesus loves you now.” Happy feast day!





Next Stop: St. Ambrose in Brunswick

By *NATHAN FRANKART*

Pease of Christ to you! I have some exciting news! (As a general note, the further I get along this road to eventual ordination, the more exciting news I'll have to offer.)

Recently, the formation faculty here at the seminary has decided on the next significant step in my discernment and journey towards priesthood! Back in November of 2022, I got the opportunity to sit down and lay out what I believe I will need in the upcoming years in order to further prepare myself for ministry in the future. From that discussion, members of the faculty came together and in conjugation with a certain parish here in Cleveland, a decision was made for my internship. For this upcoming academic year of 2023-2024, I actually will not be living or studying at St. Mary Seminary in Wickliffe.

Rather, I will be living and interning at St. Ambrose in Brunswick under the pastorship of Fr. Bob Stec, and I will be living in community with two other priests, Fr. Andrew Hoover and Fr. Dan Samide, the parochial vicars at St. Ambrose. This experience happens to be one of the

most-looked-forward-to times in all of seminary formation! Under Fr. Bob Stec, I will be fully immersed into the life of a parish, the meetings, the ministries, the administrative challenges, and most importantly, witnessing the sacramental life of the priest on behalf of his parish family.

Whenever Fr. Bob or the other priests receive a late night call for an anointing, I will be there with them. When there is a funeral or wedding taking place in the parish, I will most likely be there to witness it. The various councils, meetings, and plannings that make a successful parish thrive, I will get to have a hand in. For the first time since entering seminary, I will be fully immersed in the real, practical life of a priest every single day, with no classes to boot! (This might be the best part)

The real best part will be the preaching I will do on Sundays for the congregation at St. Ambrose! Wish me luck! I'm incredibly blessed to be spending my internship at this parish, please join in me in offering a prayer of thanksgiving to the Father such a wonderful assignment!

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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.

Upcoming Activities and Events

Vincentians Meeting

Thursday, June 1, 15 and 29 —
9 a.m., Conference Room

Eighth-Grade Graduation

Thursday, June 1 — 7 p.m.,
St. Joseph Church and Hall

SJS Last Day of School

Friday, June 2 — dismissal at
11 a.m.

First Friday Rosary

Friday, June 2 — 11 a.m.,
Nativity Parish Church and Hall

First Saturday Rosary

Saturday, June 3 — 9 a.m.,
St. Joseph Church

Hospitality Tuesday

Tuesday, June 6 — following the
8 a.m. Mass Nativity Parish Hall

Altar and Rosary Society

Tuesday, June 6 — 6:30 p.m.,
Nativity Parish Hall

Wonderful Women

Tuesday, June 6 — 7 p.m.,
St. Joseph Social Hall

Parish Health and Wellness

Blood Pressure checks

Saturday, June 10 and Sunday,
June 11 — following the 4 p.m.,
8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Masses
(St. Joseph Church)

Altar and Rosary Pilgrimage to Sorrowful Mother Shrine

Wednesday, June 14 — 9 a.m.
carpool to Bellevue, Ohio leaving
from Nativity Parking lot

Happy Father's Day

Sunday, June 18

Faithfully Fit Yoga Classes

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