



ST. JAMES BASILICA of Jamestown

Parish Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2016



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“I Believe in the Principles of Servant Leadership” *Katie Andersen*

Our mayor, Katie Andersen, was coaching gymnastics when a parent of one of her students arranged a blind date for her. From that first impromptu meeting, Ryan and Katie knew they would be together.

“On that first date, we decided we weren’t going to need to date anyone else,” Katie says. “We had a connection and our Catholic faith in common.”

It is that faith that undergirds Katie’s service to the community as the mayor of Jamestown, a position she has held since 2010. For her, the principles of stewardship apply similarly to serving her parish and serving her community.

“I believe in the principles of servant leadership,” Katie says. “Stewardship is at the heart of everything.”

As an eighth-grade student, Katie joined St. James Basilica with her family and, shortly thereafter, began attending Jamestown High School. From childhood, Kate has found different ways to share her musical talents with her faith community.



The Andersen family – Ryan and Katie with their children, Camron and Keira

“One of the first activities I participated in was the youth choir because I love to sing,” Katie says. “In a previous parish, we had a folk choir. My dad played guitar in that group, and I tagged along.”

Though she spent a few years away at college studying political science at South Dakota State University, Katie soon returned to Jamestown, where she has been living for the past 12 years.

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Hospitality Extends to Our Family at Home and in Our Parish

As Catholics, we are members of two very important family units. First, there are our own families, which consist of our spouses and children. And as a parish community, we are members of a larger “family of faith,” along with our clergy and fellow parishioners. Of course, both types of units share in the Catholic faith, as we gather to celebrate Mass each Sunday.

Yet, all does not appear to be well. The modern media unfortunately seems to place a heavy emphasis on the destruction of both types of family units. Indeed, every day, we are bombarded with disconcerting stories about the various issues that threaten the vital bonds of the family — divorce, abuse, gay marriage, and abortion, just to name a few. At the same time, the “families of faith” in our own parishes have also been threatened by a number of issues, from scandals and mismanagement of resources, to drops in Mass attendance and school enrollment.

All of these threats and issues most certainly promote a hostile environment for today’s American Catholics. In turn, we may feel that there is little we can do to counter the negativity that is so pervasive within our country towards those practicing the Catholic faith.

The good news is that finding the solution to such seemingly insurmountable problems often begins in the most simple and basic of places — at home. In this particular case, it begins in two homes — that of our own family, and in the parish home of our “family of faith.”

Certainly, we would like visitors in our own homes to feel welcome, whether they are extended family, familiar friends or new acquaintances. Therefore, we do whatever we can to make these visitors feel appreciated — we might prepare a homemade meal for our guests, or serve them a fresh cup of coffee, all while we initiate a friendly and insightful conversation.

Of course, this effort to make visitors to our home feel welcome is a wonderful example of providing *hospitality*, one of the four key pillars of stewardship.

So, if we consider our other family unit — the “family of faith” in our own parish — the same can be applied to those entering our church for worship and fellowship. Whether we make an effort to get to know some of the familiar faces we see at church each Sunday, reach out to someone who is new to the community, or extend a warm welcome to those visiting our parish, we are following Jesus’ example of hospitality at its most foundational and engaging level.

Of course, while hospitality serves to enhance worship and fellowship for the entire parish family, it also impacts our community on a day-to-day basis. If we foster a welcoming environment in our parish home and present the many opportunities to minister and serve, involvement will only increase throughout the community! Therefore, if hospitality continues to flourish throughout the parish and its many ministries, so will the stewardship way of life!



A Letter from Our Pastor

Resolve to be *Merciful*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Most of you are aware that we launched a Holy Year of Mercy on Dec. 8, 2015, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. You are most likely also cognizant of Pope Francis' motivation for proclaiming this year. In his announcement the Holy Father stated, "It is indeed my wish that the Jubilee be a living experience of the closeness of the Father, whose tenderness is almost tangible, so that the faith of every believer may be strengthened and thus testimony to it be ever more effective."

If we do nothing else during this Holy Year, each of us must seek forgiveness from the Lord; and we also need to make an effort to forgive others. Mercy is, after all, a two-way street. We receive it, but we must as well show it. In fact, during this month when many make resolutions, let us each resolve to be merciful.

That, of course, is not always easy, and sometimes may not even be convenient. Being able to be merciful requires us to look beyond the emotional, past the self-centeredness that may lead us to be angry and unforgiving. The story is related that soon after becoming pope, an interviewer asked Francis to describe himself – the pope immediately answered, "A sinner." However, he quickly added, "Who has been looked upon by the face of mercy."

Each of us can recall when we have been "looked upon by the face of mercy." This needs to be our motivation for showing to others what we have received. Also, in his letter announcing this Holy Year, the pope called us to have a "deep desire for true conversion." This is what stewardship is all about – not being self-centered, but God-centered. It asks us to recognize, acknowledge, and share our many gifts. Nevertheless, to do that effectively requires a conversion on our part. That needs to be part of our purpose for this year, too.

Stewardship always seems to come back to the concept of "love for one another." One of the misnomers – and a conclusion many have drawn from the Year of Mercy – is that God's essential characteristic is mercy. The Lord's fundamental attribute is love. Mercy is what love looks like when we show it.

Therefore, let us resolve to show mercy and love to all we meet, all we know, and all with whom we may work.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Msgr. Jeffrey L. Wald

Pastor

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“We Want to Be W *Ruthie and Andy Schott’s Jo*



Andy and Ruthie Schott fly fishing the Stillwater River in Montana



The Schott family after Mass at St. James Basilica

Which Church is closest to the Truth? How will I find it? These were the questions Andy Schott asked. He and Ruthie, his wife, were raised in conservative Christian families who truly loved the Lord. Yet, after they were married in an Assembly of God church in 2011, Andy and Ruthie moved twice in the same year and found themselves without a church to call home.

Here in Jamestown, they looked into 15 different denominations and over 30 different churches. Of course, during this search, Andy knew one church that they wouldn't be inquiring about – the Catholic Church.

“I was always of the opinion that most Catholics needed to be evangelized,” Andy Schott says. “But then, I thought there are so many variances in Protestant churches in terms of beliefs. Am I looking for the true Church or am I looking for what I want personally?”

These questions kept coming to Andy's mind and it troubled him. He didn't want his search for a church to be about “feelings.” And that's when a thought, perhaps from the Holy Spirit, came to his mind.

“I thought, ‘Why don't I consider the Catholic Church?’” Andy says.

Andy chose a topic and decided to look up the Church's stance on it. He then noticed a pattern – many of the arguments *against* the Catholic Church were misstated or slanted.

“Then I started to look into the Church,” Andy says. “I watched a video on Scott Hahn's testimony and heard a conversion from a Protestant perspective.”

After that, Andy and Ruthie decided to check out a video series at St. James on Catholicism. They started attending Mass and meeting people. Just over two years later, they enrolled in RCIA.

Ruthie remembers beginning the program with studying the Creed. They were told that to join the Catholic Church, you simply have to believe the Creed.

“RCIA was a very open and unassuming class,” Ruthie says. “I found it surprising how many things

Where the Truth Is” Journey to the Catholic Church

had a biblical backing, and that I agreed with. We started going through the Creed, and I thought, our core values and beliefs are the same.”

At the end of the RCIA process, Andy and Ruthie took another year to discern before entering the Church at Easter in 2015.

“I felt like there was enough there that I couldn’t just deny it,” Andy says. “We want to be where the truth is. Since joining the Church, the pieces of the Bible fit together more.”

Andy particularly appreciates how the Church emphasizes that “what you do matters” and how the things we do in this life bring us closer to Him and others.

“Also, receiving the Eucharist changed how I read passages in Bible about the Body of Christ and having Christ in us,” Andy says. “There is a tangible action I can do that allows me to have Christ in me.”

Converting to Catholicism has certainly changed the family dynamics for Ruthie, Andy and their two sons, Otto and Leon.

“It has brought us closer because we are united in the Catholic faith,” Andy says. “Seeing the family as the domestic church gives me more of an appreciation of the family and helps me define my role in the family.”

For Ruthie, entering the Church has also brought her and Andy closer together as a couple.

“From the very beginning of our marriage, we had been looking for a church, and it was a challenge to both of our faiths,” Ruthie says. “Since we’ve joined the Church, any underlying tensions are gone. It has been very freeing for our marriage!”

Andy and Ruthie are grateful for the many members of St. James who have welcomed them, even “pursued them” with an interest in hearing their story and joining them on their journey. They encourage anyone desirous of finding out more about the faith to pursue it as a treasure of unparalleled value.

“Commit your journey to prayer and study,” Ruthie says. “If the Lord is asking you to join the Church, be open. The Church is where Christ is, and that is where you want to be.”

Katie Andersen *continued from front cover*

Today Katie and Ryan have two children – Camron, 9, and Keira, 4, and have made a commitment to raising their family in Jamestown and being active members of the community.

“If you have a talent and the capability and are asked to do something, then I believe you should embrace that choice,” Katie says. “This sense of stewardship at church also applies to my community.”

Katie continues giving her time and musical talents to her faith community by singing in the choir, cantoring, and, occasionally, playing the trumpet. Her children both participate in the religious education program, and Camron, soon to be a fourth-grader, will have the opportunity to be an altar server.

“If you have an interest in a ministry, make contact with someone who is involved in it,” Katie says. “If you’d like to be a lector, ask a current lector about the firsthand experience. At the same time, if you are already involved, encourage others to participate. Make suggestions.”

Here at St. James Basilica, Katie explains, there are a variety of opportunities to give in both public positions as servant leaders and through quiet “behind-the-scenes” acts of stewardship. Both help foster our growing community and our connections to one another.

“So much of helping your parish and your community grow takes place in the background,” Katie says. “There is a rewarding role for everyone. Every time you contribute, you enhance the lives of others. Take that opportunity.”



A Saint for Life: St. Gianna Beretta Molla

As disciples of Christ, the Lord of Life, we are called to respect and defend the life of every human being, from conception until natural death.

In today's world, a pro-life mindset is not only largely unpopular, but sometimes even dangerous.

However, the facts remain the same — the gift of life determines our humanity, and as Catholic Christians, we are responsible for its protection. With the strong examples of people such as St. Gianna Beretta Molla, we are able to witness the value of being a people of faith, a people living to build up a culture resting on Christ's values — a culture of life.

From early childhood, Gianna lived an exemplary Christian life. She attended daily Mass with her mother and her brothers, and was a faithful member of Catholic Action, a lay apostolate dedicated to worldwide evangelization. Gianna often wrote beautiful prayers to the Lord, promising to follow His will no matter the consequences.

As a teenager, Gianna understood the importance of obeying God's will and made a series of resolutions to always follow His guidance. "I wish to die rather than commit a mortal sin," young Gianna once wrote. Yet, at the time, Gianna was not aware of what God had in store for her life.

Throughout her life, Gianna constantly prayed, "O Jesus, I promise You to submit myself to all that You permit to happen to me, make me only know Your will." As her life progressed, Gianna would live such prayers in a radical way.

In 1961, as the mother of three and pregnant with her fourth child, Gianna was diagnosed with uterine cancer.



To preserve her health and life, doctors suggested Gianna undergo a radical hysterectomy — a surgery that would undoubtedly save her life, but consequently terminate her pregnancy. Gianna decided to wait for God's direction. Doctors removed portions of the tumor, but knew that complete eradication would require a full hysterectomy. However, Gianna was determined to keep her uterus intact, and determined to give birth to her unborn baby. Knowing the serious dangers ahead, Gianna instructed her husband a few days prior to delivery, "If you must decide between me and the baby, have no hesitation: choose — and I demand it — the baby, save him."

As it turned out, Gianna's tumor had progressed so far that a few days after she delivered her fourth child, she passed away — a martyr for her child! Caring for the life of her unborn child meant the loss of her own life, but such knowledge never weakened her respect for life in the least. Gianna knew that her child's life was just as valuable as her own, and she needed to care for both of them. Gianna ultimately lost her life because she wasn't willing to sacrifice her child for her own sake. What a strong woman!

Though this seems radical, we are all called to respect the lives of the unborn just as Gianna did, and Gianna's fate only secures for us the reward we will receive if we work to build a culture of life, just as she did. In April 1994, Gianna Beretta Molla was beatified by Pope St. John Paul II, and in May 2004, she was declared a saint. Because St. Gianna lived as a defender of life, she now enjoys eternal life with the Almighty God! Let us heed her example and build a culture of life!

“Their Love for the Parish Shines Through” The St. James Tabernacle Society

Have you ever wondered how the parish manages to do all that it does? There always seems to be something happening at St. James Basilica, from the regular Masses to all of the special events and activities that take place in our home parish. The Tabernacle Society holds a valuable place in the long history of the many groups that keep everything running smoothly at St. James.

“A lot of our work is behind-the-scenes work,” explains Peggy Vandal, the organization’s current president. “Just knowing that the Tabernacle Society does [all of this] for the parishioners, knowing how much they care – it’s an awesome thing.”

Bishop Shanley founded the Tabernacle Society in 1890, as a way for the women of the parish to become more formally involved in the life of the church. By 1922, the group had become so large that the members, who at that time were still meeting in each other’s homes, began forming smaller groups of 10-15 women, called Circles. In 1956, Rev. Msgr. Thomas Hendrickson referred to the Tabernacle Society as the “strong right hand” of the pastor, recognizing the numerous spiritual and financial contributions that the group regularly made to the parish.

This description of the Tabernacle Society still holds true today. From helping at funerals to managing parish kitchen supplies to throwing birthday celebrations at the county hospital, there is almost nothing that this group of parish women doesn’t do! The Tabernacle Society also takes care of many of the financial needs of the parish, such as furnishing the new rectory, purchasing new vestments for the altar servers, and offering scholarships to parish youth to help



The Tabernacle Society holds an annual spring social that is open to all women of the parish.

defray the costs of attending retreats and other diocesan events.

“Everyone in Tabernacle Society is a good steward,” Peggy says. “To have that time together and form friendships and bonds working together is a good example for each other, and hopefully all of the parishioners can see that we are involved in many things.”

While they have a hand in many aspects of parish life, reaching out to the bereaved is one of the greatest gifts that the women of the Tabernacle Society offer. In addition to baking and serving at all parish funerals, they also organize the annual November Memorial Mass in honor of all parishioners who have passed away that year. As a part of this Mass, the

continued on back cover

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– Peggy Vandal, Tabernacle Society President

Tabernacle Society Mission Statement: *To bring the ladies of the parish together in an effort to foster personal sanctification, improve family life, and promote the spiritual welfare of all women of the parish.*



ST. JAMES BASILICA OF JAMESTOWN

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Weekend Mass

Saturday Vigil
4:30 p.m. Mass

Sunday
8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Mass

Daily Mass

Monday thru Friday - 12:10 p.m. Mass

Saturday - 8:00 a.m. Mass

Reconciliation

Monday thru Friday - 11:40 a.m. - 12 noon

Saturday - 3:30 p.m.

Adoration

Every Thursday - 1:00-5:00 p.m.;

Monthly – 1st Friday All Night adoration
8:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Saturday

The St. James Tabernacle Society *continued from front cover*

deceased are remembered during a special Rosary and candle lighting ceremony.

Peggy particularly treasures the memory she has of the Memorial Mass during which her own father was honored.

"My mother came and my two sisters, and my husband and children," she says. "We met in the Community Room and they gave us the candle, and then you processed in with the candle. As your loved one's name was read, it was just – your heart was on fire. For us, it was like, 'Okay, Dad, you're okay, you're in a better place.' It was a very moving Mass."

In addition to their special ministry to the bereaved and the many ways in which they help the church with practical matters, the Tabernacle Society also sponsors monthly spiritual programs.

"The programs are open to everybody in the parish, including men and families," Peggy says. "I come away from programs feeling enriched and energized, and I bring that to my own life and family."

For Mary Olson, who has been a part of a Circle for over 30 years, the close bond she has developed with the other members has been one of the greatest gifts she has received from her participation in the Tabernacle Society.

"When Circle members get together, we share joys and blessings, sorrows and disappointments," Mary says. "It's a group that you can trust with your heart."

Mary is also thankful for the great examples of faith and encouragement that her participation in Circles has brought her over the years.

"In this group, you see other people that have a wonderful strength of spiritual faith," she says. "They live their faith, and they know how to turn to God. Seeing other people like that makes you think, 'If they can do it, I bet I can, too.'"

At the heart of this organization is the desire of its members to live out their faith by giving of their time and talent in service to the parishioners of St. James.

"The ladies are so wonderful to work with," Peggy says. "Their love of the parish shows through in the Tabernacle Society."

*Did you know that all female members of the parish are official members of the Tabernacle Society?
If you would like to become more actively involved, or would like to inquire about joining a Circle, please contact Peggy Vandal by email at vandsandp@daktel.com, or by phone at 701-252-5002.*