



NEWS & VIEWS

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Fr. Laniauskas blessed the gifts – many of them handmade by Gesu parishioners and school students – recently donated to the families who benefited from this year's Habitat for Humanity Faith Build. Read more about Gesu's volunteer efforts with H4H Faith Build 2022 on pages 10-11.

FROM THE PASTOR

The first time that I stepped into our Church of the Gesù was more than 17 years ago. Though I grew up in Cleveland, I didn't know much about "the Heights," as we lived in Cleveland and Euclid. I had just returned home after a year of being in the novitiate (beginning training) of the Jesuits in Lithuania. It just so happened that when I came home, there was a special Mass and blessing for those who were going to Gesù's mission in Honduras. My dad (a dentist) was recruited by his friend, Dr. Michael Skerl, to bring a dental brigade to the far corners of Honduras. Naturally as this young Jesuit novice, I attended the missioning Mass. I sat in the very pews that I now preach to.

So my first experience at Gesù was one of watching, participating and praying with folks from the parish who wanted to make a difference in the world through service. I knew then, as I know even more so today, service is at the heart of all that we are at Gesù. In a special way this takes place in our mission to Honduras but also in so many other encounters. We are blessed to have Outreach Coordinator Amy Zucca at the parish. Her primary responsibility is to foster and grow our outreach programs for those most in need. I am continually humbled as I walk past her office that is always overflowing with items such as clothes, shoes, blankets and school supplies, all coming to us through the generosity of our community. It is from Amy's packed office that we partner with numerous organizations and outreach centers, and coordinate an army of volunteers.

Central to every time we gather to pray at Mass are the final words of the Liturgy: "Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life." These are not some throw away words, but instead they are words that call us into action and into service of others. How do we glorify God

with our lives? We glorify Him by living a life similar to His, serving the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

In the following pages of this issue you will see the many ways we as a community have committed to be of service to others. My prayer is that you will read about it, become inspired to join the efforts, and sign up for one or more of the many opportunities for service that we have available at Gesù. I have been and continue to be deeply humbled and impressed by the generosity of so many who give their time, talent and treasure.

I also pray for your continued financial support for our outreach efforts. Please consider contributing to the Gesù Food Fund, the Corporal Works of Mercy Fund, our student scholarships at the parish (Dietz/McAuley/Parish endowments), the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for those in need, or to the other collections that we pair with our Sunday giving. All of these, along with volunteering, put into action our call to help others.

Now, some 17 years later, I'm no longer a novice nor sitting in the pews, but I am called to serve as your pastor. My journey with Gesù started with service, and this mission continues. I can't wait to follow in the footsteps of my father and so many others who have traveled to Honduras, let alone to serve you and those most in need in the years to come.

"Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life...Thanks be to God!"

Fr. Lukas M. Laniauskas, SJ
Pastor

GESU'S MISSION IN HONDURAS

DID YOU KNOW?

Gesu's Mission in Honduras is celebrating over 20 years of service! Since 2001, Gesu parishioners and friends have been working with our Honduran partner, Sociedad Amigos de los Niños (The Society of the Friends of Children), to provide much needed medical and dental care for the people of Honduras and to help improve the living conditions in the villages in the area. Honduran Children's Rescue Fund (HCRF), is the name of the not-for-profit group with which Gesu partners.

In September, HCRF once again traveled to Honduras for a week of medical brigades to remote mountain villages where the team consulted and treated over 1,100 patients who have little or no access to medical care and medicines. In addition to the medical work, an important part of the mission is connecting with the Honduran people and enjoying the time spent interacting with them. On this last trip, the team hosted a pizza and piñata party for the children of Nuevo Paraíso, the village where the mission group stayed for the week. A good time was had by all!

Gesu/HCRF will return to Honduras in February for the traditional medical brigades and will also have a number of construction and renovation projects ready to complete. Volunteers are needed! Medical or construction experience is not a prerequisite for this trip. People who volunteer just need to be interested in service and willing to help. We promise that the experience will be memorable, meaningful and very rewarding! Our volunteers pay their own way with the accommodations similar to staying in a motel with meals, laundry and housekeeping all provided.

Join us on our next mission trip to Honduras February 17-24, 2023. Find more information about the program and how to get involved at honduranchildrensrescuefund.org.



By Sadie Hackett

With warm weather, beautiful scenery, countless friends to laugh and pray with...who wouldn't want to go to Honduras? Gesu has a long standing partnership with an incredible organization in Tegucigalpa, Honduras - Sociedad Amigos de los Niños (SAN) - which includes a smaller village community, Nuevo Paraíso, in the Honduran countryside. This organization was founded by the late Sr. Maria Rosa, an exceptional woman who believed her love for God could move mountains. Her deep, unwavering faith resulted in a direct response to the outcries for help from those suffering in her country. She had an ambitious goal to ensure that no child would go without love, health care, education and all basic needs met. When we examine the life of Sr. Maria Rosa, we can certainly say that she worked to achieve this goal until her very last breath.

Sr. Maria Rosa inspired countless people to join her in her mission; hundreds of those people are from our Church of the Gesu parish community, including me. Many of you have heard my voice as a cantor since 2010, or I had the privilege of working with you when I was at Gesu as the Co-Director of Faith Formation from 2013-16, or maybe we traveled to Honduras together. As a parishioner, I am proud of countless aspects of Gesu, such as the prayerful liturgy, fun community events and Ignatian spirituality, but one thing I am most proud of is Gesu's continuous, direct support of Sr. Maria Rosa's goal in Honduras. We have an incredible legacy of medical professionals participating in brigades to bring health care to the people, of fundraising and development that have built a state of the art hospital among many other projects, and of young adults working on construction projects to continue the growth of the community. Perhaps the most profound impact that has been made is the mutual exchange of friendship between our two communities across the world. I am forever grateful for Fr. Snow's invitation to join eight years ago!

From my experience traveling to Honduras with the summer construction brigades, the most noteworthy memories I can share include the friends I have made on each trip. This is also true for the hundreds of young adults who struggle to leave Honduras because of the strong bonds



they form. I am willing to bet that anyone who has traveled there recalls a name and a story, can pull up a picture on his or her phone, or even can show you a text message exchange after the trip. I feel lucky to be able to do all three! The friendships that form are unique. They may involve a translator or hand motions to break the language barrier, they form fast and are full of joy, and they offer a mutual understanding of what it means to love thy neighbor (even when neighbors might be thousands of miles apart). One of my favorite friends in Honduras is a silly, feisty, playful child named Angel. He is quick to love, gentle in his embrace and fun beyond measure. The hard reality during the Covid-19 travel restrictions was that we were not able to return to see him and the other children. Like so many things, there was a void that I could only fill with prayer – prayers for Angel's and all the children's health and safety, prayers for enough resources to provide for their needs, and prayers that one day we would be reunited.



Music Director Mark Ehrbar and parishioners Sadie Hackett and Lauren Siemborski with Sr. Maria Rosa in summer 2016.

Gesu's partnership in Honduras is beautiful, but also challenging. At the heart of the Gospel, we are called to go



Construction project along the perimeter of Nuevo Paraiso with Gesu parishioners

to the margins and to care for the most vulnerable. When we talk about these communities in Honduras, we are talking about some of the world's most marginalized and vulnerable people, and I hope to always do so with tenderness and compassion. Each of us at Gesu has a special call to offer our gifts and talents through travel, financial means, or prayer, so that we can continue to lift the needs and voices of our Honduran neighbors. When I hear Honduras during homilies, in announcements, through fundraisers or in prayer petitions it makes me feel so grateful to be a part of a community working tirelessly to uphold the Gospel of Jesus. Some of my most prayerful moments, when I have felt the presence of Jesus so intensely, have happened in the chapel in Honduras and in our Gesu worship space. As I think about this, I can't help but feel gratitude for the incredible power of Christ's love working through both of our communities in palpable ways. It is my prayer that all of us can continue to uphold Sr. Maria Rosa's legacy and exchange the love of Christ with our Honduran friends.



Angel, one of Gesu's best friends from Nuevo Paraiso



You can read more about the Honduran Children's Rescue Fund and Gesu's mission in Honduras – check out Gesu's Sunday bulletin for monthly articles.

TURKS ENJOY MAKING MUSIC, BAKING BREAD...AND VOLUNTEERING!

By John Betchkal



Generous. Smart. Energetic. Astute. Optimistic. Those words come to mind when reflecting on Karen and Victor Turk's enthusiasm for volunteering their time and talents.

Sitting in their pristine, inviting University Heights home, Karen and Vic happily recall first meeting while singing folk songs with graduate student friends at The Ohio State University.

More than 50 years later, that fond memory inspires Vic to begin singing a favorite tune – the Kingston Trio's "M.T.A." With no prompting, Karen joyfully joins in as they together sing the entire song.

That college harmony developed into marriage in 1972 in Marysville, Ohio. Vic grew up in Euclid with a younger sister, and Karen's family included five sisters and a brother living on a dairy farm owned by the family since 1860.

Education has always been very important and influential in their lives. Vic has a Masters degree in Metallurgical Engineering. His career began at General Motors and culminated at R.W. Beckett Co., the leading manufacturer of oil burners in North America. It

is here that he earned recognition as a national expert in oil burning technology and fossil and biofuels. In addition to professional activities, Vic was Board treasurer for 27 years for the Neighborhood Alliance of Lorain County, a social service agency.

Karen holds two Masters degrees. Her Master of Science in Genetics prepared her to work in a research lab developing techniques for

detecting chromosome abnormalities. After being a stay-at-home mom, Girl Scout volunteer, and parish bookkeeper, she earned a Masters in Education and taught science in Cleveland high schools.

In 2018 the Turks decided it was time for downsizing and moved from their Elyria home to University Heights to take advantage of walkable neighborhoods and events in the University Circle area. They selected Church of the Gesu to be their parish and immediately, quietly and efficiently began volunteering.

"We both strongly believe that 'To whom much is given, much is required', and we also believe that volunteering ties us together," notes Karen. At Gesu their volunteering starts Monday mornings when they take Communion to Catholics living at Menorah Park. Both are also part of the RCIA formation team, attend Fr. Michael Vincent's Bible Study classes and sing in the Sunday choir. Additionally, Vic is active in the Gonzaga Society at Gesu, and Karen is involved with the Faith Formation Commission.

If something else pops up that needs to be done, they are a phone call away from doing the task. "No matter what happens in life, somehow God uses those moments to give us opportunities to do good," says Vic.

There's one activity close to their hearts that Karen and Vic would

like to help expand at Gesu. "We would be very interested in creating opportunities for people to form very small prayer faith-sharing support groups. We participate in a group now and also still keep in touch with people who were in a group with us 40 to 50 years ago. It's very faith affirming and strengthening," says Karen.



In addition to their time spent at Gesu, Karen and Vic enjoy

calls and visits with their four children and grandchildren. Also, Vic keeps his fingers nimble playing his 70+ year-old accordion and Karen enjoys baking. "I love to bake," she says enthusiastically. "Vic's Slovenian relatives say my potica is superb!"

For the Turks, volunteering is both a philosophy and a way of life.



Music making and bread baking are important to Karen and Vic Turk.

A HEART OF GOLD THAT TOUCHES SO MANY

By Colleen Clemens, Development Assistant



Deb Straniero is a woman of courage. Her energy and positivity are infectious, and her never-ending spirit is inspiring. She has a heart of gold, and Gesu is lucky to have her as a faithful parishioner and friend.

Deb is an “Army Brat,” the daughter

of (Retired) Colonel Joe Sarakaitis and the late Martha Sarakaitis. She spent most of her years on Army bases in Oklahoma, Kentucky, Kansas, North Carolina and Maryland. She and her siblings attended many different schools all over the country. Deb landed at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, for college where she met her future husband, John Straniero, a loud and gregarious Italian from Cleveland with a passion for Cleveland sports.

John and Deb married in 1988, and shortly after they settled on the east side of Cleveland to be close to family. With John having been raised in Catholic schools, they chose Gesu as their parish with plans of raising a family and strengthening their faith through involvement and service in the community.

Deb officially began her service career when working as an 8th grade teacher at Roxboro School in Cleveland Heights. She and Kathy Manning, a co-worker and fellow parishioner, desired to find hands-on opportunities for their students to help those with disabilities as an extension of a unit titled Disability Awareness Week. They heard about the Brecksville Challenger Baseball Program, a Little League program for individuals ages 5-22 with physical or cognitive disabilities. The two visited one Sunday and were hooked! They carpooled several 8th grade volunteer students each Sunday that summer and began an East Side Challenger Baseball program in Cleveland Heights in the summer of 1998. Deb and Kathy still run the East Side program today, nearly 25 years later.

Deb's service at Gesu began with programs connected to her three children, all Gesu graduates. She helped run Brownie and Girl Scout troops and the Children's Liturgy Program, just to name a few. She was very active in Gesu Young Families and many of her closest friends today she met through GYF playgroups. In the early 2000s, Deb took over for Amy Zucca as a coordinator of the Gesu Bread Ministry, a service group that delivers day-old baked goods from the University Heights Heinen's to various food pantries in need. Deb continues this important mission by leading a group of approximately 10 volunteers who make weekly bakery deliveries to the Fatima Center in Hough.

In the summer of 2007, Deb's world was turned upside down when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. While the doctors and nurses at the Cleveland Clinic were a wealth of knowledge and helpful in coordinating a plan for her recovery, Deb needed someone who had personally walked this path to answer her questions and guide her on this journey. She turned to a friend and fellow survivor named Kathleen for help. From this connection was born one of Deb's proudest accomplishments, the Pink Posse. This group, which has grown to about 70 breast cancer survivors, serves as a resource for those individuals and families who are facing the difficult challenge of fighting all types of cancer. They have volumes of information, experience, compassion and love to share with those fighting the good fight. Deb says, “We are proof that hopefully everything will be okay.” In fact, among the 60 members of the Pink Posse, they share almost 300 years of survivorship!

In the summer of 2008, Deb and the Pink Posse began hosting monthly rosaries for all those in need of mind, body and/or spiritual healing. “The Gesu Prayer Warriors,” who continue to meet today, gather on Monday evenings at least once a month to pray the rosary for all those individuals and families in need of God's love and strength. Even during the pandemic, the group prayed on, using ZOOM and outdoor venues to continue this powerful mission. Deb plays an essential role in leading the rosaries, staying connected with those families in need, and supporting meal trains and gift card collections to help during the difficult times.



Organized by Deb, members of the Gesu community gather each month to pray the rosary for those suffering from illness and in need of healing prayers.

As if breast cancer wasn't enough, in 2009 Deb was hit with another bombshell in the tragic loss of her husband John. Though there isn't a day that goes by where Deb doesn't think of the love of her life, she has found a way to honor her husband through yet another act of service. Because John was a registered organ donor, Lifebanc, a nonprofit organ and tissue recovery organization, reached out to Deb to offer counseling services for her and her family upon his death. She remains involved with the program as a co-facilitator of grief support groups throughout the year. Even 13 years after her loss, Deb finds comfort and guidance from the very people she is committed to helping.

Today, in addition to her service work, Deb teaches in the Gesu TOPS program and is an aide in the preschool, sharing her spirit, faith and love with the little ones of our community. She always wears a smile and is happy to share a hug with those around her. Gesu is blessed to have such a wonderful woman serving in our community and beyond!

GOHRING ROOTS ARE DEEP AT GESU

By Maria Tayek



Tom and Mary Sue Gohring, longtime Gesu parishioners

“If you build it, they will come!”

Come they did, drawn by the presence of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) who were asked in 1926 by Archbishop Joseph Schrembs to lead the new Church of the Gesu on Cleveland’s east side. Among the first families were Stephen Gohring, his wife Anna, daughter Mary Ann (Hain), and sons Raymond (deceased), Ralph and Tom, a current Gesu parishioner.

“The Jesuits were the drawing card for us to come here,” explains Tom Gohring, 87, a Gesu Catholic School graduate. His ancestors immigrated to the city of Cleveland in the 1890’s, where Tom’s family belonged to Holy Trinity parish at E. 71st and Woodland Avenue. The Gohrings decided to move further east, building a home on Barrington Road in University Heights, so that the family could worship at the Church of the Gesu. “They were excited to have the Jesuits here,” Tom explains of his family’s commitment to worship here. That Jesuit presence was important to the family then and today. “Jesuits bring the Church up to date. The Church is now. Jesus is here now,” he believes.

Tom’s deceased older brother Raymond, a Marianist brother, was the first child to attend Gesu Catholic School. His sister Mary Ann was part of the first class to attend Gesu from first through eighth grade. Tom entered the parish school as a member of the class of 1949.

Tom and his wife Mary Sue (Mills) have been part of the fabric of Gesu parish since their marriage in 1966. The couple’s families were actually friends, and Tom and Mary Sue knew of each other as youngsters. But, according to Karen, their middle daughter, it took some convincing for Mary Sue Mills to date Tom. In fact, Mary Sue didn’t want to attend family get-togethers. “Mom didn’t want to go because she would have to hang out with that Tom!” The families encouraged Tom, she laughs. “They would say ‘You should meet this girl, she’s a nice girl.’” Daughter Karen tells a funny story of divine intervention as it relates to their relationship when her mom had

been given a gift of a statue of the Infant of Prague.

“My mom took it out of the box, shook it and said, “You’re not coming out of this box until you find me a husband!” Tom called Mary Sue the next day! The couple dated for a year and were married at Blessed Sacrament Church, Mary Sue’s parish on the west side of Cleveland.

Tom and Mary Sue, Pepper Pike residents, continue the Gohring tradition of worshipping at Gesu. They have given of both time and talent to benefit the Gesu community. Tom became active at the parish at a young age, serving as an altar boy at morning Mass. “I would pedal my bike up there for early Mass,” he laughs. The early Mass at that time, he explains, was usually for police and firefighters.

Tom followed in his dad’s footsteps by becoming a union plumber. He was often tagging along when his father was servicing the new boiler in the school basement. Tom has also helped with preparing vessels for Mass, was involved in marriage encounter groups which met in parishioner homes, and assisted in the church hall with tables set up for funeral lunches – “funeralizing” as he calls it.

Mary Sue, who attended Fenn College (now Cleveland State University) and studied Secretarial Science, contributed her skills by taking minutes for the Gesu parish council. She also worked as an American Cancer Society volunteer making bandages for cancer patients in parishioners’ homes.

The Gohring family has a rich Gesu presence. All three daughters, Beth Stec, Karen Gohring Richards and Nancy Gohring, are Gesu Catholic School alumnae. Beth married David Stec (current president of Padua High School) at Gesu in 1994, and Karen married Chris Richards in the Gesu Marian Chapel in 2000. Nancy, who currently resides in Pittsburgh with her husband, fondly remembers being the recipient of the Fr. Francis Dietz, SJ Scholarship in 8th grade at Gesu.

Church of the Gesu is fortunate to have so many families who laid a solid foundation for the parish and began a strong tradition of service. Thanking the Gohrings for sharing their story, Fr. Lukas Laniauskas, SJ, Pastor, comments how blessed the community is to have these founding families. “History is the foundation we build upon...You and your family are the shoulders we build it upon.”



Mary Ann Gohring Hain (front row, second from left) with the Gesu class of 1948

AN AGE OF REFUGEES

By Len Calabrese, Parishioner



We live in an Age of Refugees. One of the defining signs of the times in our contemporary world is the movement of millions of people from their native lands and homes to other societies, including the United States. Most are fleeing violence, oppression, war, government sponsored terror, grinding exploitation, misery and extreme poverty. The vast majority of our brothers and sisters who are on the move are seeking safety for themselves and their families, some minimal recognition of their God-given human dignity and a glimmer of hope for a better tomorrow. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees reported at the end of 2020 that there were 82.4 million refugees in the world. That is a stunning number and pre-dates Russia's war on Ukraine.

Pope Francis has pleaded for a more compassionate response to refugees on numerous occasions. He has declared that the Cross of Christ raises and extends its arms towards everyone, especially those in desperate situations. It is our Christian duty, he reiterates, to be welcoming. He has met refugees in migrant camps and personally taken refugees back to the Vatican. In July of 2013 the Pope held a powerful Penance Service on the island of Lampedusa, between North Africa and Italy. He prayed to Mary, as the Protector of migrants and itinerants, to assist with the maternal care of all forced to flee their lands in search of a future and of hope. He decried a "globalization of indifference," exhorted Christians and all people of good will to respond with compassion to the plight of refugees and begged God to give us the gift of tears over the prolonged suffering of so many migrants in our world.

His prophetic words and actions are deeply rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, which is based on the Church's reflection and lived experience for two millennia on the life

and Gospel of Jesus, as well as the Hebrew Scripture. This is a living tradition which is meant to help Catholics and others form their consciences and take moral action in our time and place.

Gesu Parish has held very successful bedding and back to school supply drives for recent immigrants and refugees in our nearby Cleveland neighborhoods. We are currently holding a Coat Drive with a goal of 1,000 gently used and new coats, with a focus on delivering them to the students enrolled at Natividad Pagan International Newcomers Academy and their families. We are blessed to have opportunities as members of Gesu Parish to be Good Samaritans for refugees right here in Greater Cleveland.



The Gesu community has come together to provide school supplies, bedding and coats to refugees in the Greater Cleveland area.

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with the Catholic Community Foundation on **#GIVINGTUESDAY**
Northeast Ohio's Online Day of Catholic Giving

SAVE THE DATE!
TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 29

Gesu Students Fulfill Their Mission to Serve

By Meagan Salata, Admissions and Marketing Director



One of the five pillars of the Gesu Catholic School Mission Statement is Service to Others. Gesu students live this mission each day – in their classrooms, on the playground and in the community.

Students at Gesu learn new skills each day – how to read and write, solve math problems and apply knowledge to new concepts. Along with forming student learning, Gesu educators are also committed to modeling compassion, social awareness and civic responsibility. While it is woven into the fabric of all that we do at Gesu Catholic School, we also strive to provide meaningful and tangible opportunities for students to come together as a whole school community to serve. Among these opportunities are long-standing traditions of school-wide service, in addition to newly formed volunteer groups, which meet regularly throughout the school year to participate in ongoing service opportunities.

Annual Food Drive



Run by Miss Clare Hogan and the Gesu Student Council, the annual Thanksgiving Food Drive has been providing food to several organizations throughout Northeast Ohio for many years. Each grade level, starting with preschool, is encouraged to donate a variety of canned goods and non-perishable items. Witnessing middle school students helping three-year-olds and Kindergarten students with bags of donations is impactful. This project is truly a whole school effort! As Gesu students gather and assemble items to be delivered to places such as the Thea Bowman Center, St. Catherine's Hunger Center and St. Herman's Hunger Center, they are developing meaningful and lasting connections to the service they are providing.



Hike for Hunger

Hike for Hunger is a service tradition that has spanned generations of Gesu students and parishioners. After seeking sponsorships, students in Grades 1-8 participate in a school-wide walk through the neighborhoods surrounding the school. They are greeted and encouraged by many along the route. This support from families, neighbors, parishioners and friends is just one indicator of the Gesu community's dedication to service. Spearheaded by Mrs. Rosemary Nemeth, the Gesu Hike for Hunger has raised over half a million dollars in its 39 years! All the dollars raised is given to local charities.

in Grades 4-6. This group participates in service activities on school grounds. They meet after school at various times throughout the year to complete projects that benefit specific communities in need. Assembling Journey Bags for children in foster care and making sandwiches to be distributed throughout the community are just two examples of the kinds of service students are providing. We are excited about this opportunity and hope it instills the importance of service in our students while also allowing them to experience the joy that comes from helping others.



Along with six student leaders, Miss Melanie Bielecki is planning a variety of service activities that take Service Club students in Grades 7-8 off campus. These opportunities allow Gesu students to represent their school out in the community by helping clean up a public space, facilitating activities in a nursing home or assisting younger students with school assignments. These students are able to deepen their understanding of the Catholic social teaching they are learning from their classes by connecting it with their service in the community.



New! Service Clubs

Although service has always been woven into the fabric that makes us Gesu, for the first time this year students have been invited to join a club specifically dedicated to providing service to the community. There are two separate Service Clubs – one for students in Grades 4-6 and a second for students in Grades 7-8. We are proud to say that both clubs were filled within a day, proving that the student community is committed to continuing the Gesu tradition of service, using their time and talents to care for others, all for the greater glory of God.

Mrs. Mary Beth Soeder leads the Service Club for students



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY FAITH BUILD

By Amy Zucca, Outreach Coordinator



Gesu has once again been partnering with Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity on the Faith Build 2022 project to rehab a single-family home in the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood of Cleveland. The parish is collaborating with twenty local churches sharing their time in prayer, talents in construction and renovation, and treasure in helping to sponsor this work. Gesu has committed to financially supporting this project with a \$5,000 donation and volunteering at the site.

People of all ages are able to contribute at various skill levels, from sanding and painting to plumbing and electrical work. Volunteers Rick Ambrose and Honor Wolfe state, "Working as a team to make a difference in people's lives through Habitat for Humanity is an amazing experience. The only skill

required is a willingness to help others."

In addition to our on-site crew, Gesu also had individuals contribute to the project in other ways. Volunteers crafted items and provided essentials to each of the new homeowners of three Elwell Avenue houses. Thanks to the generosity of these parishioners and our school family, Gesu filled three laundry baskets with cross stitched hand towels made by Mary Carol Jones; a set of hand knitted washcloths and potholders made by Karen Smith and the Knitting Group; throw pillows and teddy bears made by the school Sewing Club; and laser cut home signs with address numbers designed by students in the Gesu STREAM Center. Bedding, household essential tool boxes and Home Depot gift cards were donated from the Supler family. And cleaning supplies and Target gift cards were also donated by a special group of parish friends.

Cleveland has been named one of the largest and poorest cities in the United States. Fifty percent of children living in Cleveland move one time per year, and thirty percent move even more often. As home ownership contributes to the safety and stability of families, the Faith Build project is a



Gesu Catholic School's Sewing Club donated hand-made throw pillows and teddy bears to the new home owners.

great opportunity for Gesu to support the community and Cleveland families in need.

The parish has one remaining build date scheduled for December 3, 2022 - Gesu Service Day. We thank all of the volunteers who have generously contributed their time and energy to this important project.

Parishioners interested in supporting the Faith Build project may send a donation to Gesu Parish with "H4H Faith Build" noted on the memo line of the check.



Left to Right: Amy Zucca, Jerry Zucca, Mande Jones, Abby Jones, Dave Bongorno, and Tim Thoma (Gesu 5/21/2022 Build Team) and Kristyn Thompson (H4H Orientation Leader) on front porch of home



Left to right, top to bottom: Mary Abood, Martin Santelli, Tim Thoma, Carol and Bridget Krus, Honor Wolfe, Rick Ambrose

H4H Volunteer Testimonial

There are several reasons on various levels that I volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. I have always volunteered to help others in many ways as I was growing up. This is just one of them. I think we should all help others whenever we can. I am fortunate to have grown up in a Catholic household and a family that had good housing.

On a personal level, it is satisfying to help others. It is important to make the most of our God given talents to help others in any way that we can. Working with my hands to help refurbish old homes for those who need them is a wonderful way for me to do that.

Sharing what we have, whether it is through physical labor, giving clothing and other items, or through financial support are ways to give thanks for what many of us take for granted.

It is also very satisfying at Habitat to see the prospective homeowner working at the job site and/or seeing the family members when the house is presented to them. You can tell how excited the children and parents are to have a "brand new" house that they can call home.

I thank God every day for all that we have, and I hope to share that with others to make their lives a little bit better.

- David Bongorno



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Make a charitable donation to the new **Angel Scholarship Fund** and "**turn tax dollars into tuition**" through an Ohio income tax credit of up to \$750 (\$1,500 if married filing jointly) against your 2022 state tax liability. Donations can be designated to benefit Gesu Catholic School or another school in the Diocese of Cleveland. **The process is simple!**

For more information or to make a contribution, visit: catholiccommunity.org/angel

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CATHOLIC EDUCATION!



EUCCHARISTIC VISITATION & SACRAMENTAL ANOINTING

BY FR. MICHAEL VINCENT, SJ
ASSOCIATE PASTOR



As Catholics, we share the Eucharist with others through our words and actions, our reach extends beyond the walls of our Church and out into the community. In our own parish, this reach includes many Gesu parishioners who, after years of very active participation, find themselves unable to be as involved in the parish as they used to be. Some are homebound, while others reside in area assisted living venues or skilled nursing facilities. Many are unable to attend Mass on a regular basis yet want to stay engaged with Gesu.



Staying connected with all members of our parish community is so important, and it is an essential part of our Gesu mission. Bringing Communion to those who can no longer attend Mass is a need that continues to increase and just one way that Gesu reaches beyond the walls of our Church. We are very fortunate to have several members of our parish who perform this ministry faithfully and take the time to visit with our Gesu friends.

Currently, Gesu has Eucharistic Visitation teams that visit McGregor Home in East Cleveland and Menorah Park in Beachwood every Monday morning. The teams include over fifteen Gesu volunteers and are led by Judy Curran and Vic and Karen Turk. During their visits, the volunteers talk with the

Gesu parishioners living in these facilities, pray with them, and share the Blessed Sacrament with them. What a beautiful way to personally bring Christ to others!

Our Gesu priests along with other priests from surrounding parishes also visit these facilities and various hospitals in the area including University Hospitals, Ahuja, The Cleveland Clinic and South Pointe. They bring Communion to Catholic residents and administer the Anointing of the Sick to those suffering from chronic illness, preparing for surgery or who just happen to be ill. A monthly Mass is also offered by a Gesu priest at Menorah Park for the many Catholic residents there, some of whom have not been part of a parish for a long time. We are so grateful to our priests for sharing their time with the people and families of those who are lonely and suffering and for bringing the comfort and love of Jesus to them.

If you are interested in joining the Eucharistic Visitation teams, please contact Amy Zucca in the Parish Offices at (216) 932-0617 or azucca@churchofthegesu.org. She will be able to share with you the details of the program including the requirements to participate and the commitment involved. We wholeheartedly welcome new volunteers and would love for you to be part of this important ministry!



FAITH IN ACTION AT SCHOOL MASSES

By Mary O'Neill, Director of Faith Formation for Children & Families

Each Friday morning, the students and faculty of Gesu Catholic School gather to celebrate the Eucharist as one community. We are thrilled to witness faith in action at these Masses, especially on the part of our young people. Participation is not lacking, as students sing and pray with their whole hearts and voices. Much of this can be attributed to the leadership of many of our older students who take on several of the ministerial roles in the Liturgy. Through their service, they encourage the participation of others even before Mass begins.

Throughout the Mass there are so many ways that the students are involved. When the school children and parishioners enter the church, a group of students is on hand to welcome everyone and distribute worship aides for the upcoming Liturgy. The School Liturgical Choir members use their talented voices to encourage all gathered to join in the hymns, while student lectors proclaim the readings for all to hear the Word of the Lord. Altar Servers take an active role by attending to various tasks throughout the Liturgy, some of which include leading the procession, attending to the



Roman Missal and bringing the Sacred Vessels to the Altar. Finally, at Communion, student ushers guide students and parishioners to receive the Eucharist in an orderly fashion.

This commitment on behalf of the older students in our community to assist at Liturgy is so important. They set the tone and encourage the younger students to participate by singing and responding in genuine and heart-felt ways. Each week, these students share their faith with others and set good examples for their peers in worship. It is beautiful to see our Gesu students taking active roles in their faith.

We encourage you to join us on Friday mornings at 8:30 am to worship with the school community. All are welcome!



SAVE THE DATE

Gesu's Annual Service Day: December 3

Women's Guild Christmas Boutique:

Friday, December 9 - Shaker Heights Country Club

Gesu Catholic School Open House:

Sunday, January 29 - 12:30-2:30 pm

Mardi Gras: Saturday, February 4

Annual Pancake Breakfast:

Sunday, February 26, After all Masses

Parish Mission/Novena of Grace:

March 4-12 - 7:00 pm

**Lenten Fish Fries: Partnering with
EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute**

Fridays in March - Gesu School Cafeteria

Fair Trade Festival: Saturday & Sunday, April 22 & 23
After all Masses in McAuley Hall

Volunteer Opportunities at Church of the Gesu



There are many volunteer opportunities available at Church of the Gesu. If you are interested in helping in any of the areas listed below, please fill out this form and return it to the Parish Office or drop it in the Sunday Collection at Mass. A description for each committee or activity can be found on our website at churchofthegesu.org.

Please add my name to the volunteer list and contact me for more information regarding activities I checked off below.

Name: _____

I would prefer to be reached by ☐ phone: _____ ☐ email: _____

Community Life Commission:

- ☐ 50+ Club
- ☐ African American Families of Gesu
- ☐ Athletics Boosters
- ☐ Block Party
- ☐ Cub Scouts
- ☐ Donut Sunday
- ☐ Funeral Receptions
- ☐ Girl Scouts
- ☐ New Parishioner Welcoming
- ☐ Pancake Breakfast
- ☐ Scouts BSA
- ☐ Turk-A-Tron
- ☐ Women's Guild
- ☐ Young Families

Administration Commission:

- ☐ Buildings & Properties Committee
- ☐ Communications Committee
- ☐ Parish Office Volunteers
- ☐ Sunday Counters

Faith Formation Commission:

Adult Spiritual Growth

- ☐ Bible Study
- ☐ Book Clubs
- ☐ Discussion/Speakers

Ignatian Identity

- ☐ Christian Life Communities
- ☐ Ignatian Prayer & Faith Sharing
- ☐ Ignatian Retreats

Sacramental Preparation

- ☐ Adaptive Needs
- ☐ Baptism (Teen or Adult)
- ☐ Confirmation (Teen or Adult)
- ☐ First Reconciliation & First Communion
- ☐ Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)
- ☐ RCIA Adapted for Children

Youth Spiritual Growth

- ☐ Gesu School
- ☐ Parish School of Religion
- ☐ Youth Spiritual Growth

Worship Commission:

- ☐ Baptism Helpers
- ☐ Children's Liturgy of the Word
- ☐ Choirs and Musicians
- ☐ Eucharistic Ministers
- ☐ Funeral Attendants
- ☐ Greeters/Hospitality Ministers
- ☐ Lectors
- ☐ Liturgical Art & Environment
- ☐ Sacristans
- ☐ Servers
- ☐ Ushers

Outreach Commission:

- ☐ Adaptive Needs Ministry
- ☐ Advent Angel Tree Project
- ☐ Bereavement
- ☐ Bread Ministry
- ☐ Budget & Project Oversight
- ☐ Caregiver Support Committee
- ☐ Catholic Worker Storefront
- ☐ Eucharistic Visitors
- ☐ Fair Trade Festival
- ☐ Fisher House & Ronald McDonald House
- ☐ Gesu Hunger Project
- ☐ Gonzaga Drivers
- ☐ Honduras Mission
- ☐ Legion of Mary
- ☐ Our Lady of Peace Food Pantry Collection
- ☐ Pink Posse/Healing Rosary
- ☐ Red Cross Blood Drive
- ☐ Respect Life Committee
- ☐ Ronald McDonald House & RMH Vets
- ☐ Sangrada Familia Meals & Latina Project
- ☐ Service Day
- ☐ St. Pat's Hunger Center
- ☐ St. Vincent de Paul Society & Ozanam Center at St. Philomena Church



2022 GESU ANGEL TREE PROJECT

By Co-Chairs Martha Maher & Beth Rinz



Parishioners are invited to help make someone's Christmas a little brighter by participating in this year's Angel Tree Project. This annual giving event has been a Gesu tradition for over 20 years. Last year Gesu provided gifts for nearly 400 individuals experiencing hardship. Local parishes, agencies and service organizations provide the Angel Tree Project Committee members with wish lists from the individuals and families they serve.

Generous parishioners visit the Angel

Tree page on our website, at churchofthegesu.org/gesu-angel-tree-project, to view the wish lists and sign up to shop for individuals or families. Parishioners can also drop off a donation check made payable to "Church of the Gesu" at the Parish Office indicating "Angel Tree Project" in the memo line and a volunteer will do the shopping.

Parishioners are invited to pick up an ornament made in Gesu's STREAM Center from the Angel Tree in the Church Narthex as a reminder.

Parishioners are asked to purchase, wrap and label gifts and bring them to McAuley Hall on Service Day weekend, December 3 & 4. Volunteers will deliver the gifts to the organizations for distribution at Christmas time.

This year, Gesu's Angel Tree Project will fulfill wish lists from the following organizations:

AIDS Task Force: support for people living with, affected by, or at risk of HIV/AIDS

Cleveland Heights and University Heights families

EDWINS: culinary training and residential support for previously incarcerated individuals

Family Promise: temporary housing and support for homeless families

Hattie Larlham Center: Residential care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Haven Home: emergency housing and other support for under-resourced women

Heights Emergency Food Center: gifts for client families

L'Arche: people with and without disabilities sharing life in communities

La Sagrada Familia: Hispanic Catholic parish on near West side of Cleveland

St. Jerome: Catholic parish in Collinwood neighborhood of Cleveland

St. Philomena: Catholic parish in East Cleveland

Womankind: maternal and prenatal care center

Zelie's Home: support for pregnant and parenting women

UPCOMING ADVENT & LENTEN PROGRAMS

Contact Marcia Leous for more information: mleous@churchofthegesu.org

Advent:
Season of Divine Encounter
By Amy Ekah

Honor the Advent season by reading this short booklet and gathering for prayer and reflection in November and early December.

Prayer, Biblical
Wisdom for Seeking God
By Michelle Franci-Donnay

Get ready for Lent 2023 by learning a little more about prayer through this brief text and three small group sessions in February.



For Gesu Service Day on Saturday, December 3, the Gesu Community will continue its tradition and volunteer throughout Northeast Ohio at 35+ agencies. There are projects for all ages and abilities. Bring your friends and family along. This is a great opportunity to give back to our community, celebrate this legacy of shared service, and even earn service hours.

**Note that we may still have to be FLEXIBLE regarding what we can do at different sites due to varying covid restrictions.*

Register for Service Day at
churchofthegesu.org/service-day

We'll kick off with a "stay and eat" or "grab and go" breakfast from 8:00-10:00 am and 9:00 am Commissioning Prayer at Gesu. Invitations will be sent to volunteers who register for Service Day.

The 4:30 pm Mass on Saturday, December 3 will have a special focus on service. We encourage all to attend.

After all December 3 & 4 weekend Masses we'll celebrate what we're doing, engage new volunteers, and keep Outreach going all year long! Cheese, crackers, cookies and Sunday doughnuts will be offered.

Questions?

Contact Amy Zucca, Outreach Coordinator:
azucca@churchofthegesu.org
(216) 932-0617 x129

MISSION STATEMENT

Gesu Parish, a Catholic community in the Jesuit tradition, is committed to:
Eucharistic living, Lifelong learning, Generous serving “all for the greater glory of God.”



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Thursday, December 8:

7:30 & 8:30 am (also school Mass);

12:00 & 7:00 pm

Communal Reconciliation Service

Monday, December 12: 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve

Saturday December 24:

4:30 pm Church; 4:30 pm Bulldog Gym;

6:30 pm Church; 10:30 pm Church

Christmas Day

Sunday December 25: 10:00 & 11:30 am

Monday, December 26 - Friday, December 30

Morning Mass at 8:30 am in the Marian Chapel

Vigil for the Feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Saturday, December 31: 4:30 pm

Feast of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Sunday, January 1: 8:00, 10:00 & 11:30 am

Feast of Epiphany

Saturday, January 7: 4:30 pm

Sunday, January 8:

8:00, 10:00 & 11:30 am

PARISH AND SCHOOL STAFF

Rev. Lukas M. Laniauskas, SJ, Pastor

Rev. Michael Vincent, SJ, Associate Pastor

Rev. Gregory Hyde, SJ, Priest in Residence

Rev. Dr. James O'Donnell, Deacon

Sr. Kathleen Flannery, OSU, Parish Life Director & Liturgist

Marcia Leous, Director of Faith Formation for Adults

Mary O'Neill, Director of Faith Formation for Children & Families

Mark Ehrbar, Director of Music Ministry

Susanne Knauer, Director of Finance & Operations

Mary Kate Farrar, Development & Communications Director

Brittany Lynch, Communications Coordinator

Colleen Clemens, Development Assistant

Amy Zucca, Outreach Coordinator

Regan Kazel, Principal

Katelyn Seliskar, Assistant Principal

Debbie Lautenbach, Preschool Director

Matthew Culkar, Athletic Director

Michael Martinek, Technology Director

VOLUNTEER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Gesu Communication Committee

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All efforts have been made to provide accurate information. Please contact us for corrections.