

Holy Family Area

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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JANUARY
2019

A Letter From Our Pastor

Introducing Our New Parish Newsletter!

My Dear Friends in Christ,

Welcome to the first issue of our new monthly parish newsletter!

As our parish community continues to grow and develop stewardship as a way of life, we have recognized the need for increased communication. Through this newsletter, we hope to share stories that will help us all to better understand who we are as Catholics and what we are doing as individual members of Christ's family. In upcoming issues, we will focus on what's going on in the Holy Family Area Catholic Community, and how those activities and events are changing hearts and minds and helping parishioners grow closer to Christ and each other. Each article will ultimately focus on Christ at work within our community through the stewardship way of life.

Our hope is that this newsletter will be a successful means for ongoing education and formation in our faith. I pray it will be a vehicle through which you are informed and inspired



to become more actively involved in the life of Christ and the parish.

Another way I hope to improve our parish's communication efforts is through a comprehensive parish survey that will be conducted in Fall 2019. Through the survey, I want to hear from you regarding our parish and its future. A survey will be mailed to each home, and then I will ask you to take the time to fill it out and re-

turn it as soon as possible. Your input will be very important, and it will give the Pastoral Council and me a better understanding of your thoughts about our parish.

Perhaps the most important next step in our stewardship journey will occur this month, when we conduct our Annual Stewardship Renewal. The Renewal is the time each year when we ask each other to reprioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time we write down how we will become more devoted to Christ over the next year with our commitments of time (using our time on earth wisely; making time for

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What Does Stewardship Mean?

What comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship”?

Do you think of it as just another way to talk about money? Do you quickly dismiss it as a notion that has nothing to do with being Catholic?

Stewardship is actually a concept that is Scripturally based, and is absolutely vital to our life as Catholics. God tells us, in the very first book of the Old Testament, “Be fertile and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth” (Gen 1:28).

What does that mean to us today? It simply means that God is telling us, “This is yours, so take care of it.” One of the first things God tells us to do is to be good stewards of the gifts He has entrusted to us!

The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to stewardship. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions, or money. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!

As Catholics, we refer to the three facets of stewardship as “time, talent, and treasure.” Although these are three concrete ways to express and measure stewardship, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us that stewardship is part of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call in every aspect of our lives.

The Scriptures and Church traditions teach us one important point that cannot be overstated — that stewardship is primarily based on our need to give

in gratitude, not on the Church’s need to receive. Of course, both the Catholic Church and our particular parish will always need money. However, we are not asked to give simply to defray costs and fund charitable programs. We are instead asked to remember our *need* to gratefully return a portion of our time, talent, and treasure to God, recognizing all that He has given to us.

It is important to remember that stewardship is a way of life, and not a program. True Catholic stewardship involves an ongoing call to live as followers of Christ. It takes time to find and define personal goals. You can begin by examining your personal commitments to the parish. How do you live your faith in your daily life with your family and friends? How much time do you spend in daily prayer, going to Mass or being involved in parish ministries and activities? What percentage of your income should you give back to God every week? What talents do you have that could be used to strengthen our parish family?

In the coming months, we will be increasing and intensifying our education and communication on stewardship. We will be developing a better understanding of how stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call to discipleship. And with God’s help, changes will occur in each of our hearts as we devote ourselves to a stewardship renewal within our parish. Examine how you are currently responding to God’s call to stewardship. If God called you home tomorrow, would He proclaim, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?

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Basic Questions About Our Stewardship Renewal

What is a Stewardship Renewal?

This isn't a parish fundraiser – far from it. Our annual Stewardship Renewal is the time when we ask each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time we write down how we will support our parish.

Why should I fill out a commitment card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving, or what we in the Holy Family Area call "time, talent, and treasure." There's a two-fold reason to complete your card. First, it is an excellent opportunity to move forward spiritually and personally. Second, when you fill out a card, our parish is much better able to manage our many volunteers and make budgeting decisions.

How many parish ministries are there in our Holy Family Area Catholic Community?

"Ministry" is a general term for any parish group, organization, or regular activity. There are dozens of ministries in our parish. You can sign up for certain ministries, or re-commit yourself if you're already involved.

What if I sign up for a ministry, but later find I'm not very interested?

You are not making a solemn promise to participate in a particular ministry when you mark it on your commitment card. If you find that the parish group is different than you thought, or simply that their meeting time doesn't fit your schedule, you can change your mind. There are plenty of other ministries to consider.

I'm hesitant to make a firm financial pledge. What if I lose my job?

Your commitment card isn't a legal contract. If your circumstances change, your gift will change. In Scripture, we are asked to "give according to our means." So if you lose your job, you may be unable to give at the level you pledged. Likewise, if you get a promotion, you may be able to give more. That is why our standard of giving in the Holy Family Area is based upon a percentage of income.

What happens if I don't fill out a commitment card?

Returning a card is an important part of being an active member of the Holy Family Area Catholic Community. If for some reason you lose your card, we'll send you a reminder letter with an extra commitment card. Please make every effort to return it!



TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE

Please bring your Commitment Card to Mass on **Commitment Sunday — January 26-27.**

How will you use your time, talent and treasure in our parish?

Faith in Action: *The Knights of C*



Knights of Columbus meeting. Photo taken at St. Clara.



Volunteers with the 2017 Trailer of Mercy delivery in front of Sharing and Caring Hands — (front row, from left) John Gertz, Pat Craigmile, Howard Kron, Joyce Kron and Ray Martin; (back) Sandi Gunter

During a bitter winter, Joyce Kron was helping distribute winter clothing to people in need when a man approached her saying, “I’m so cold. All I need is a coat with a hood.”

“I would wake up in the night hearing that man’s voice,” Joyce says. “Think about when it is so cold you don’t want to go start your car and that people are sleeping on the street. The Lord said we were to take care of them, of the homeless, the poor and the hungry.”

The Trailer of Mercy offers us an opportunity to reach out as the hands of Christ to care for those in need. Betty Strommer started this outreach initiative, which was originally called “Stuff the Bus,” in 2009. Parishioners collected clothing that was transported on a bus to be shared with people on the streets.

Then in 2013, the Knights of Columbus became involved in organizing this annual event. The Knights are a Catholic men’s fraternal organization that assists with community service and parish projects.

“Through the generosity of our members, we help many others,” says Howard Kron, Grand Knight of Council 5926. “Different members help with the Community Garden project, the Fall Festival and other events. We also do two ham and turkey Bingo nights and a parish supper.”

The Knights meet once a month from September through May on the second Tuesday in the church basement. Any Catholic gentleman who is 18 years old or older is welcome to join. This December, the Knights had a special event for members and their families.

“We had a potluck Christmas party that brought everyone together,” Howard says. “We have a little over 60 members in our council and enjoy good fellowship together.”

With the support of the Knights, the Trailer of Mercy has continued to grow, and it is now an ecumenical project that includes multiple different groups. For example, women from Big Bend Lutheran, a small rural church, make approximately 15 quilts each year for those in need. In addition, local dentist offices donate materials to help create bags of personal hygiene items.

All year, Joyce and Howard collect items for the Trailer

Columbus and the Trailer of Mercy

of Mercy, and currently they are praying for a trailer that could be permanently used for the collection process.

"It's a bit like the multiplication of the loaves and fish," Joyce says. "We are looking for an enclosed trailer to pack the items as we receive them. You can barely walk down the hallway in our house, and this starts in the spring!"

One day a year, volunteers take the trailer, and after distributing some items at Sharing and Caring Hands, they bring the remaining items to the Salvation Army Harbor Lights in Minneapolis. There everything is organized, and volunteers help men and women find the clothing and the sizes they need.

"We can always use help with sorting, packing and gathering everything together throughout the year," Joyce says.

Come live out the Corporal Works of Mercy and help the Knights of Columbus and other volunteers care for the members of our community struggling during this winter season.

"The people who do this want to live their faith and do what God calls us to do, but they don't know how," Joyce says. "This is an opportunity to live your faith."



Young people helping with the Trailer of Mercy — (from left) Gabriella Rud, Dylan Rud and Alexandra Rud



Parishioners enjoying the Knights of Columbus pancake supper at St. Clara Parish [image used with permission from the Clara City Herald]



Volunteers sorting and packing the Trailer of Mercy

If you would like more information about becoming involved in the Knights of Columbus and supporting the Trailer of Mercy, please reach out to Howard and Joyce Kron at 320-367-2584.

Forming Young Parishioners in Faith, Youth Ministry Plants the Seeds of Our Future

Through His words in Matthew 28:19 — “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” — Jesus taught us all that evangelization is a core part of our discipleship calling. Only by sharing the light of Christ with others can we ensure that it spreads, transforming the world around us. And though there are many ways for us to accomplish this here in the Holy Family Area, perhaps none is more far reaching in its effects than our parish Youth Ministry and Faith Formation programs.

“We have to keep forming the next generation in the faith, otherwise there won’t be any Church left,” says Area Coordinator of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry, Christina Wangen. “Our youth don’t just stay here. They go out into the real world — into college or the work force. So, it’s important to help them build that relationship now, so that they have a strong foundation when they go out. I feel like youth ministry really helps give them that foundation, drawing them closer and forming that personal relationship with Jesus.”

This is why discipleship remains the core focus of each parish’s particular Youth Ministry program, using a personal approach to help build relationships amongst the youth, with the parish as a whole, and, most importantly of all, with Jesus Christ.

“We work to form relationships with the youth, getting to know them and their interests and helping them feel comfortable with us,” Christina says. “This allows us to go much deeper, helping them truly build a

connection or relationship with Jesus. This looks a little different with each kid, because every teen is in a different place. That’s why building that relationship is so essential, allowing us to really meet them where they are and bring them toward Christ.”



Families working together to make an Advent wreath for their homes at St. Andrew's Advent Family Formation Night.

To accomplish this, says Christina, she and her fellow adult volunteers work to maintain an important blend of fun and formation. Gatherings include elements of fun, fellowship, faith learning, Scriptural reflection, and personal prayer time. Christina also works to involve teens both in parish life and in large-scale events such as Catholic HEART Workcamp and the Steubenville North Conference so as to make them feel more actively part of the Catholic Church.

“We want them to see that there is a place for them in the Church now and that it’s not just for the adults of the community,” Christina says. “We want to help them see that the Church is much bigger than our little area — that they are part of something much greater.”

By working to evangelize and spread the love of Christ in these ways, adds Christina, adult volunteers can’t help but be transformed themselves. For as the old saying goes, it’s impossible to give what you don’t already possess, or to teach what you don’t first understand.

“It makes you realize that if we stop growing in our own faith journey, then we won’t possibly be able to teach it or show how important it is to the next generation,” Christina says. “So, by us teaching and supporting that relationship in the hearts of our youth, we’re really all continuing in the discipleship journey.”

Faith Formation classes and opportunities are available to youth of all ages at each of the parishes, typically occurring Wednesday evenings. We are also currently accepting seventh through 12th grade registration for Catholic HEART Workcamp on June 15-22, and Steubenville North on July 12-14. Please refer to the parish bulletin for additional information or contact Christina Wangen at 507-920-0122, sacoordinator@holyfamilyarea.org or Ann Voller at 320-226-5205, sjocoordinator@holyfamilyarea.org.

HOSPITALITY WEEKENDS

Greeting Parish Visitors with the Love of Christ

Twice a year, during Hospitality Weekends, each parish in our cluster opens its arms to visitors in a powerful, meaningful way.

"We want people to feel the love of God when they come to church, and this is what the Hospitality Weekends are all about," says Melinda Hedman, Administrator for Holy Family Area Catholic Community. "We want them to feel welcome so they desire to be at church, and come back again and again."

Each parish offers Hospitality Weekends in a way that suits their community the best. For example, in honor of All Souls' Day this past November, they each hosted a meal after their weekend Masses. St. Joseph's Parish hosted a Knights of Columbus sausage and pancake breakfast; St. Andrew's Council of Catholic Women offered a salad and sandwich luncheon; and St. Clara's Parish gave out refreshments of coffee and donuts. Overall, the Hospitality Weekends hosted last fall provided a beautiful opportunity to welcome families that came to church to remember their deceased loved ones.

Every spring, each parish usually offers a Hospitality Weekend as well. The events help bring to life the stewardship vision in our midst.

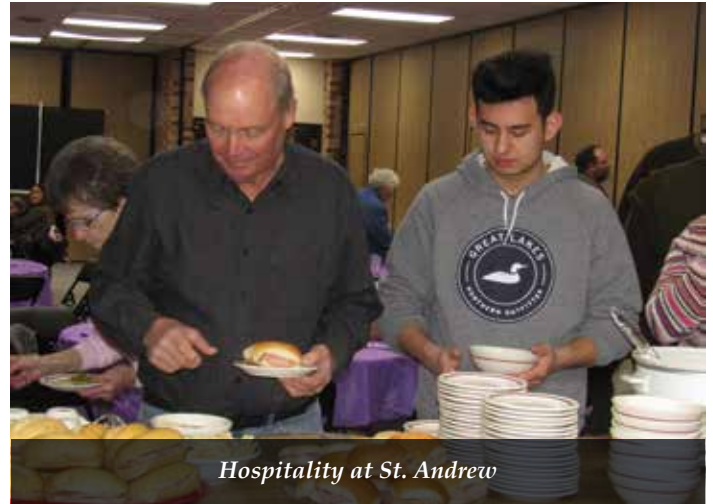
"We try to offer the Hospitality Weekends at times when new people come to visit our parishes," Melinda says. "We want to welcome the new faces and families that haven't joined our parish yet. We want to thank them for coming, and share the love of Christ with them, offering fellowship to them. Hospitality is such an important aspect of stewardship nowadays because so many people are lonely, and they don't make quality time for each other."

Ultimately, the hope is that newcomers will make at least one friend at the Hospitality Weekend event so that they will feel more comfortable at future parish family gatherings.

"Even if they can just get to know one person, they will feel they have a connection to come back to our parish again," Melinda says. "The Hospitality Weekends have been so helpful because through them, we have been able to introduce both old and new parishioners to each other, along with newcomers."

All are welcome to come and take part in this outreach of God's mercy, either by volunteering to help with hospitality weekends in the future, or simply taking part in them.

"I would encourage parishioners to participate in these weekends to strengthen their bond with their fellow parishioners," Melinda says. "This will make our Catholic area feel more like a family."



HOLY FAMILY AREA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

512 Black Oak Ave.
Montevideo, MN 56265

www.holyfamilyarea.org

MASS TIMES:

Sunday

8:30 a.m. — St. Clara, Clara City

10:30 a.m. — St. Joseph, Montevideo

Tuesday

10:30 a.m. — Luther Haven, Montevideo

Wednesday

9:30 a.m. — Clara City Care Center, Clara City

Thursday

Noon — St. Joseph, Montevideo

Friday

10 a.m. — Granite Falls Manor, Granite Falls

Saturday

5 p.m. — St. Andrew, Granite Falls

7 p.m. — St. Joseph, Montevideo in Spanish

CONFESSION TIMES:

Sunday

8 a.m. — St. Clara, Clara City

Thursday

11:30 a.m. — St. Joseph, Montevideo

Saturday

9-9:30 a.m. — St. Joseph, Montevideo

4:15 p.m. — St. Andrew, Granite Falls

Our New Parish Newsletter

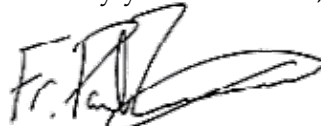
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personal prayer, family prayer, and quality time with friends and loved ones); talent (using our God-given gifts to strengthen the Church through service to parish ministries and other activities), and treasure (the wise and just management of our financial resources; giving a proportionate amount of my income to the parish).

As we strive to develop stewardship as a way of life in our Holy Family Area Catholic Community, the support and involvement of each individual parishioner is necessary to sustain the life of our parish. All of you have a place here, and all of you have a role to fill in the life of the parish as we live our lives as disciples of Christ.

May the Holy Spirit renew and refresh all of us as we work together to build our parish family through the use of our time, talent and treasure.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Paul Timmerman,
Pastor