

Holy Family Area

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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NOVEMBER
2019

Our Offerings to God:

The Presentation of the Gifts Is an Important Part of Mass

As Pope Francis once said, it is good that the faithful bring up the gifts because "they signify the spiritual offering of the Church gathered there for the Eucharist."

The Holy Father places great significance on this part of the Mass because it shows all of our gifts being brought forward to the altar and then transubstantiated to the Body and Blood of Christ. When we present the gifts, Pope Francis says, "the lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with His total offering, and so acquire a new value."

At St. Clara, when Mass is being said for someone who is deceased, the family brings up the gifts, if they are present. If no one is there, the ushers process forward with the bread, wine and gifts, or they find a family who has indicated interest in helping out.

LaVerne and JoAnne Gunter have been bringing the gifts up for many years at St. Clara. Mass is offered each year for LaVerne's sister and parents, while JoAnne has Mass said for her deceased parents, as well.

"It's very special to do this when Mass is being said for a family member," JoAnne says.

LaVerne and JoAnne feel blessed to be able to assist in the celebration of Mass at St. Clara.

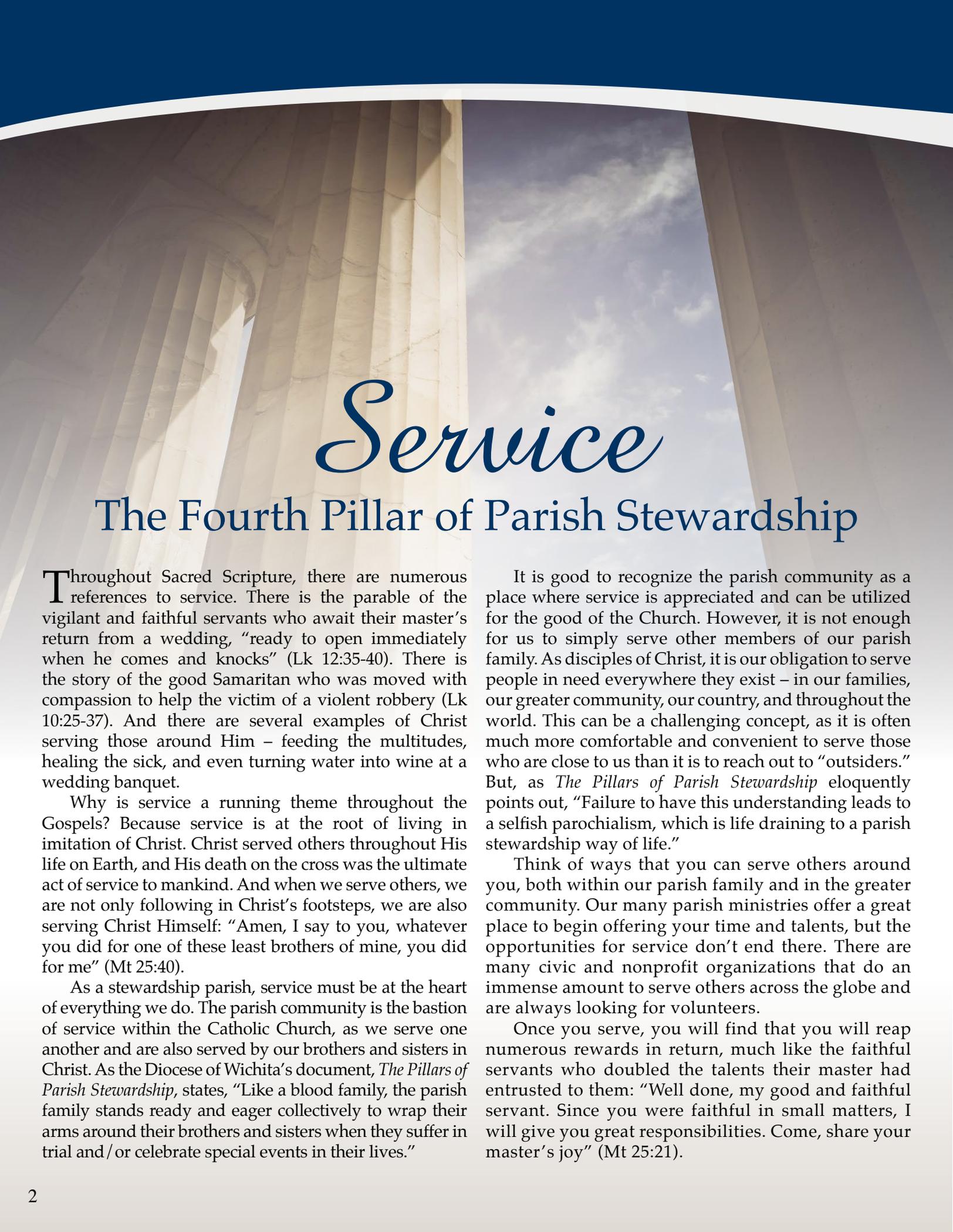


LaVerne and JoAnne Gunter often serve as gift bearers when Mass is being said for a family member.

St. Clara parishioners Jim and Peg Speiser have also had Mass said for deceased family members — Jim for his parents and brother, and Peg for her parents.

"When we've brought the gifts up, when Mass is said for my mom and dad, it's just

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Service

The Fourth Pillar of Parish Stewardship

Throughout Sacred Scripture, there are numerous references to service. There is the parable of the vigilant and faithful servants who await their master's return from a wedding, "ready to open immediately when he comes and knocks" (Lk 12:35-40). There is the story of the good Samaritan who was moved with compassion to help the victim of a violent robbery (Lk 10:25-37). And there are several examples of Christ serving those around Him – feeding the multitudes, healing the sick, and even turning water into wine at a wedding banquet.

Why is service a running theme throughout the Gospels? Because service is at the root of living in imitation of Christ. Christ served others throughout His life on Earth, and His death on the cross was the ultimate act of service to mankind. And when we serve others, we are not only following in Christ's footsteps, we are also serving Christ Himself: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40).

As a stewardship parish, service must be at the heart of everything we do. The parish community is the bastion of service within the Catholic Church, as we serve one another and are also served by our brothers and sisters in Christ. As the Diocese of Wichita's document, *The Pillars of Parish Stewardship*, states, "Like a blood family, the parish family stands ready and eager collectively to wrap their arms around their brothers and sisters when they suffer in trial and/or celebrate special events in their lives."

It is good to recognize the parish community as a place where service is appreciated and can be utilized for the good of the Church. However, it is not enough for us to simply serve other members of our parish family. As disciples of Christ, it is our obligation to serve people in need everywhere they exist – in our families, our greater community, our country, and throughout the world. This can be a challenging concept, as it is often much more comfortable and convenient to serve those who are close to us than it is to reach out to "outsiders." But, as *The Pillars of Parish Stewardship* eloquently points out, "Failure to have this understanding leads to a selfish parochialism, which is life draining to a parish stewardship way of life."

Think of ways that you can serve others around you, both within our parish family and in the greater community. Our many parish ministries offer a great place to begin offering your time and talents, but the opportunities for service don't end there. There are many civic and nonprofit organizations that do an immense amount to serve others across the globe and are always looking for volunteers.

Once you serve, you will find that you will reap numerous rewards in return, much like the faithful servants who doubled the talents their master had entrusted to them: "Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy" (Mt 25:21).

A Letter From Our Pastor

A Month Filled with Gratitude

My Dear Friends in Christ,

The month of November of course brings to mind thoughts of thanksgiving. These aren't just thoughts about Thanksgiving Day — although I look forward to it with happy anticipation — but thoughts regarding the many reasons we should be thankful.

We begin the month with a Holy Day of Obligation, the Solemnity of All Saints, on Nov. 1. It is a stewardship feast in so many ways, instituted to honor all saints, known and unknown. The communion of saints — the sharing of spiritual goods by those in heaven to us who are still in our pilgrimage — is a great cause for thanksgiving. We read about the lives of the saints to be encouraged and inspired by their examples. Plus, we are strengthened by their fellowship in the Body of Christ, and their prayers aid us.

We follow All Saints' Day with All Souls Day on Nov. 2 so we can honor and commemorate all those others who may have been "saints" in our lives. It may have been a mother or father, sister or brother, son or daughter, next-door neighbor, good friend, grandparent, uncle or aunt, cousin, teacher, or student — the list is endless. We have been blessed in our lives with people who have shown us what it means to be a good Christian, what it means to be a good steward. During this month of November, we need to thank God for those people in our lives. In fact, we need to thank God period, which is another important element of this month.

Toward the end of the month we celebrate what is mainly a secular holiday, Thanksgiving, but this national holiday is so grounded in our Christian stewardship tradition. This year is the 156th anniversary of the first official Thanksgiving in the U.S., as proclaimed



by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863, during the horrors of the Civil War. In the beginning of that proclamation, President Lincoln stated, *"To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God."* Lincoln takes great care to recognize God's presence in all of the "thanks."

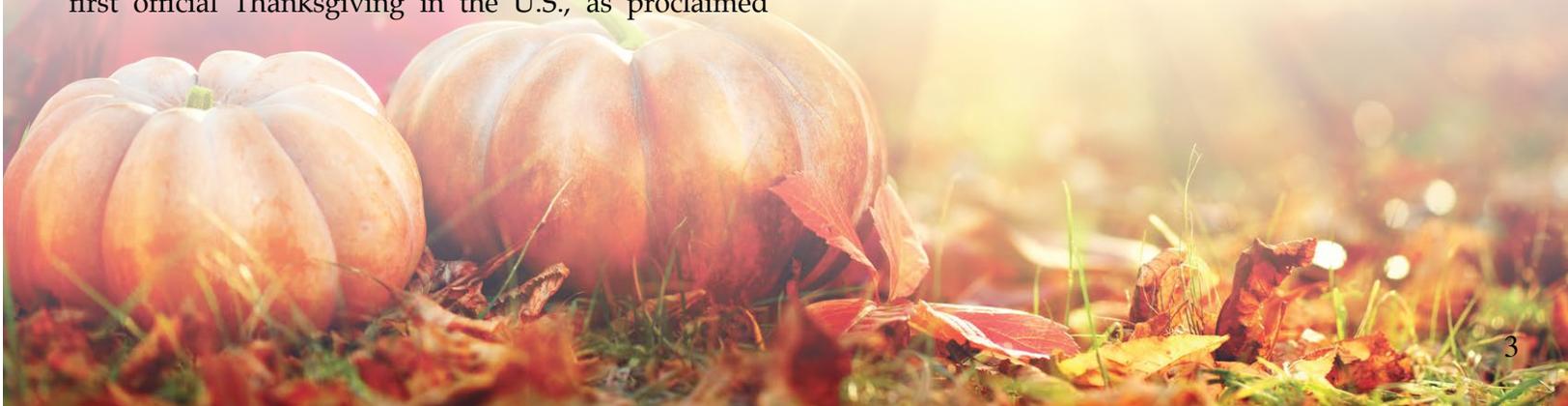
Couldn't we say those words of Lincoln about our lives, about the life of the Holy Family Area this year? In fact, we could say it every month. Stewardship is the appreciation of our many, many blessings, both personally and as a faith family.

From the beginning of the month, when we thank God for the example of the saints and for the example of the "saints" in our lives, to the end of the month, when we thank God for basically everything we have and everything we are, November is a time to remember and to approach the Lord with a grateful heart. That is what stewardship really is — approaching God; approaching each day; approaching all those with whom we come in contact — with grateful and loving hearts.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Paul Timmerman".

Fr. Paul Timmerman,
Pastor



Decorating Committee Works to *Welc*

No matter how far our work or school may take us, we may always consider our parish church “home.” After all, it is where many of us were baptized, made our First Communion, received Confirmation, or married, and where we placed loved ones to rest. It is our spiritual home.

When the St. Joseph Decorating Committee prepares to enhance the interior of our church, “home” is very much on their minds.

“The group of us in the committee mainly try to make the church feel like home,” says Amy Reidinger, Co-Chair of the committee along with Sue Botten.

“Sue really got me involved in the committee,” Amy says. “She has

been in charge for many years. We ‘tag team’ with it.”

The committee secures the flowers for weekly Masses and decorates the church for Christmas. At Easter, the group traditionally fashions a rock garden complete with a fountain.

The challenge for decorating the church is coming up with new ideas in order to keep things fresh.

“Whether we meet depends on how busy everyone is,” Amy says. “When we have time we can get a few of us together and talk about ideas. We try to do something different. Everyone is so busy and it’s hard to come up with new ideas.”

No matter how much work is involved, the committee believes

that their efforts are worth it to make the church inviting.

“It’s just nice to help make big events even bigger, especially Christmas and Easter,” Amy says. “It’s good to have this environment that sets the tone. We like to have all the folks — college kids and visitors coming home — feel like they are home. There is just something about making it feel like home.”

The décor placed in the church helps set a thoughtful tone for Mass, and deepens the worship experience.

“Having some decorations just relaxes people,” Amy says. “When you have lots of flowers, you have the colors and scents. It’s just not plain walls. It’s comforting, maybe.”

One way our parishioners let

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Amy Reidinger’s family purchased this large vase with memorial donations for her father’s passing two years ago. Amy makes sure it’s a welcoming piece for our church.



Sue Botten and Amy Reidinger work closely together with the St. Joseph Decorating Committee to make sure St. Joseph’s is beautifully decorated for each season.

Come All "Home" to Our Church

the Decorating Committee know how much their work is appreciated is through the donations given for supplies. There are also times when parishioners donate money as a memorial for a loved one. Memorial funds given for her father enabled Amy to buy a large vase to hold flowers in his honor at the front of the church.

As with many ministries, the Decorating Committee can always use additional hands.

"Always," Amy says. "A big project will be cleaning out the big storage shed. And we'll try to condense our Christmas décor."



A creche with a folk style is part of St. Joseph's Christmas decorations.

If you are interested in joining the Decorating Committee please call St. Joseph's Amy Reidinger at 320-226-3990, or St. Clara's Kim Bosch at 320-226-3477, or St. Andrew's Kristy Rasmussen at 320-564-4006.

The Presentation of the Gifts continued from front cover

special," Peg says. "You think of them. It's a good way of remembering them and sending prayers up for them."

Peg helps with the scheduling of gift bearers and encourages more families to get on the list.

"When the kids bring up the gifts, that is nice to see," she says. "The kids love it. They love to have a job."

JoAnne agrees that this a simple ministry to do since it takes place during the Mass. She encourages parishioners to help out as gift bearers if they see a need. With our Holy Family Area Catholic Community mission "to Embrace, Nurture and Reflect the gift of God's love," what better way to embrace God's love than to present our gifts to Him?

If you would like to help with the Gift Bearer Ministry, please contact Peg Speiser of St. Clara at pjbjc@hcinet.net or 320-296-6650, Linda Busch of St. Joseph at cruisergranny@gmail.com or 320-226-2362, or Kim Rupp of St. Andrew kimrupp569@gmail.com or 320-226-2700.

Understanding the Role of *Sacramentals in Our Faith*

Most Catholics are familiar with the idea of *sacraments* in the Church, of which there are seven. Sacraments are the foundation of the spiritual life for an individual and the Church. Sacraments are sources of grace — God’s very presence in our lives and unmerited favor from God. They are signs of God’s love, and these signs make present what they signify. Although a person benefits — receives the gift of grace — from the sacraments regardless of whether he or she is well disposed to them, one must cooperate with what the Spirit is doing in the sacrament to receive its full benefit.

Sacramentals are different. These are also sacred signs that can build holiness, but they do not work on their own. One must be aware and fully conscious of the sacred action. Sacramentals sanctify us to get the most benefit from the Sacraments (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1667). Sacramentals are given to us to make holy certain actions in life and life’s circumstances. There are many such sacred signs that are reminders to us of God.

The sign of the cross is perhaps one of the most fundamental of these signs, and for Catholics, this invocation is done at the start of every sacred action and prayer. Holy water is a sacramental, as it reminds us of our Baptism. By dipping our fingers into holy water and making the sign of the cross, we are combining two foundational symbols of the Christian life and the Paschal Mystery — the passion, dying and rising of Christ — and bringing them to life in us.

The exchange of peace in the Mass — and at other Catholic rites — is another example of a sacramental. By making some kind of meaningful sign of peace, we are giving the peace of Christ to another person. The chalice and other sacred vessels at Mass also are sacramentals,

as they remind us of what they are to contain — the very Body and Blood of Christ.

It might be helpful to organize the types of sacramentals into categories, as author Michael Pennock lists in *This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*:

“*Actions* (blessings; genuflections; the sign of the cross; bowing one’s head at the name of Jesus; church processions); *Objects* (candles; holy water; statues and icons; holy pictures; blessed ashes; palms; rosaries; relics; incense; vestments; scapulars; church buildings; crosses; religious medals); *Places* (the Holy Land; Rome; Fatima; Lourdes; the National Shrine in Washington, D.C.; and other places of pilgrimage; chapels, retreat centers, and even Catholic cemeteries); *Prayers* (short prayers we say throughout the day; grace before and after meals; prayers at rising and going to bed; praying the rosary, praying a host of other traditional Catholic prayers and devotions); *Sacred Time* (liturgy; holy days; feasts of saints; your saint’s name day; special days of prayer; fasting and abstinence; retreats, etc.)” (*This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 176-177).

“Sacramentals...prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it” (CCC 1670). In a word, sacramentals, through the prayer of the Church, bring us to holiness in Christ. All devotions of piety, including sacramentals, should point us toward the liturgy of the Church, a connection to a local parish community, and to the Eucharist (CCC 1675).

The Church, through Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, has given us these sacred signs to lead us in holiness, and to better recognize an authentic Christian life. How many sacramentals can you recognize in your life? Probably more than you think.

The Church, through Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, has given us these sacred signs to lead us in holiness, and to better recognize an authentic Christian life. How many sacramentals can you recognize in your life? Probably more than you think.

Experiencing the Mercy of Christ Through the Healing and Deliverance Ministry

“We are trained to help people overcome obstacles in their relationships through the healing power of Jesus. Everyone has their own personal issues to deal with in their lives, and if they are not dealt with properly they can become obstacles in their relationships with God, others or even themselves. If their wounds are not healed, they can cause a lot of anger, unforgiveness, anxiety and fear.” — Deacon Mike McKeown

Through the Diocese of New Ulm Healing and Deliverance Ministry, many people have encountered the infinitely merciful love of God, and have been blessed with heavenly peace and joy.

“I really believe that this ministry helped me,” Pamela Jacobson says. “In February, I began meeting members of the ministry and praying with them. They asked me questions to help me see what may be affecting me and why.”

After experiencing God’s presence in a unique way in prayer, they have been strengthened and renewed on their spiritual journey.

“I was struggling with trying to forgive myself for sins I had committed in the past,” Pamela says. “When they prayed for me, I was able to let go of the guilt, feel God’s forgiveness deeply, and gain freedom. My husband also ended up participating in the ministry, and found it to be very healing as well.”

The Diocese of New Ulm Healing and Deliverance Ministry includes a group of qualified intercessory prayer team members who meet with people upon their request on an individual basis, as their schedules permit.



“We are trained to help people overcome obstacles in their relationships through the healing power of Jesus,” says Deacon Mike McKeown, who serves as the director of the ministry. “Everyone has their own personal issues to deal with in their lives, and if they are not

dealt with properly they can become obstacles in their relationships with God, others or even themselves. If their wounds are not healed, they can cause a lot of anger, unforgiveness, anxiety and fear.”

During their meetings, they help the participant identify the source of

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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

4:15 p.m. — St. Andrew, Granite Falls

The Healing and Deliverance Ministry *continued from page 7*

their woundedness, such as a childhood trauma or recent painful event, and then prayerfully lead them through the five following keys — Repentance and Faith; Forgiveness; Renunciation; Authority; and The Father's Blessing.

"As we work through these keys with them, lies that the devil has told them are revealed, and they often experience peace, healing and freedom in ways they never expected," Deacon McKeown says. "This ministry is very important because the devil can really work on a person through their unhealed wounds."

In the end, those who open their hearts to the graces God wants to give them through this ministry will find their lives changed in amazing ways.

"I would absolutely recommend this ministry to anyone who may have a wound or other hurts in their life that they want to be healed from," Pamela says. "I would encourage them to remain open and just let the ministry be what it needs to be for them. I didn't come to the prayer meetings with a lot of expectations, which was a good thing."

If you would like more information about this beautiful ministry of healing, please contact Deacon Mike McKeown at 507-430-1690 or visit www.dnu.org/healing-ministry.