



BLESSED TRINITY PARISH

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.”

1 Corinthians: 4-7

Serving with Unity and Variety - **Embracing our Spiritual Gifts**

by Diahne Goodwin

These words of St. Paul begin the second reading on January 16. Note that he stresses that this applies to everyone, not just a few special people. This means me...this means you! As Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells within us and graciously endows us with unique gifts, for the purpose of serving God by serving others, in a way that we could not do by our mere human strength alone.

Paul goes on to list some types of spiritual gifts. While some may be more common or outwardly apparent, having one spiritual gift or another should not cause anyone to be thought of as “more spiritual” or important than another. By sharing our diversity of gifts, we are united in our mission to love and serve. God has a plan for us all. Why would God give a person something that was not of value or of use?

It is often easy to recognize the spiritual gifts of others, especially in those called to the religious vocational ministries (In this newsletter, you will read some amazing stories of people called to various religious vocations.) However, it is important to not minimize our own gifts. While all of us may not be called to serve in religious vocations, the call to use our gifts to serve is the same. Whether you are married, a parent, or single, you have been uniquely given the gifts you need to serve God’s will within the Church and world in your own context.

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Homebound Ministry - by Rich Chenell

One of the blessings of today's technology is that we can almost always find a Mass to watch, whether on TV or online. Yes, watching Mass this way is spiritually uplifting and is the next best thing to being there. Unfortunately, those watching at home aren't able to participate in the primary reason for going to Mass, the sharing of the body of Christ through the Holy Eucharist.

During the height of the COVID pandemic when the Archdiocese suspended Masses for a period of time, online Masses became popular as a way for people to stay connected to our faith and our parish. Even though many people still like the convenience of watching Mass at home, now that the Archdiocese has lifted the special dispensation, Catholics that are able to, are once again morally obligated to attend Mass in person so that they can share in the Eucharistic Sacrifice that is the Mass.



Terri Forde, Kathy McGourty, and Steve Forde

But there are many people who aren't able to attend in person due to physical limitations, whether temporarily while recovering from surgery, or longer term due to an illness. For them, there is a group of people in the Homebound Ministry that will bring Communion to them at home.

Thérèse Keoseian has been the Homebound Ministry Leader for several years. "The Homebound Ministry has been a beautiful blessing for me as it has allowed me to bring the Eucharist to those who are unable to come to the church. My visits have, in multiple situations, enabled me to learn more about the lives of our homebound parishioners, and in several situations, form

long term friendships. I consider myself blessed to be a part of this compassionate ministry."

Terri Forde started receiving Communion at home after learning about this ministry through a friend. "I had a friend who was a Eucharistic Minister for the homebound long before I needed to receive at home. I met him when our dear friend and neighbor, who was very ill, invited us to come to his home to receive with him during one of his homebound visits (we used to go to church together when he was well enough). Shortly after that, I had surgery and needed to start receiving Communion at home for what I thought would be a short time."

But, sometime after Forde started receiving Communion at home, the Archdiocese stopped visits because of the COVID pandemic. Now that visits are allowed again, Forde receives the Eucharist at home from Kathy McGourty. "I still have the need to receive at home," said Forde. "Kathy is easy to talk with and is always flexible when we have to change our regular time. She also brings Communion for my husband too, even though he is still able to attend Mass in person every week. It's nice for us to still be able to receive together."

McGourty became a member of the Homebound Ministry in 2008 when Hal Lobo, the previous ministry leader, asked her if she could bring Communion to a woman who was unable to attend Mass. "I stayed with her for four years," said McGourty. Asked why she continues in the Homebound Ministry, McGourty replied, "I know that I am doing God's work by bringing Jesus to the homebound through the Eucharist and feel that I am part of their faith journey. You can sense the peace and comfort those I'm visiting feel when receiving at home and it brings me joy knowing that I am part of the reason for that."

If you or someone you know are not able to attend Mass in person and would like more information about receiving the gift of the Holy Eucharist at home, contact the Blessed Trinity Parish office at 978-320-4220. Leave a message and someone will be in touch.



Responding to God's Call - Saying YES!

God is still calling many to serve in religious vocations. Fewer are saying yes to this call, and many don't even hear it. But rather than focus on why so many are turning away, let us reflect on those who **do** respond—those who say, "YES!"

Luc Lambert, a parishioner at Blessed Trinity Parish, is in his fourth and final year of deaconate formation. In reflecting on his journey, he posed three questions to himself and others in the community who said Yes to the call to serve:

1. How did you first hear God calling you and what was your initial reaction?
2. For many, first hearing the call did not necessarily incite an immediate response. Describe when and how you answered the call?
3. Where are you on your vocational journey now?

Below is a summary of responses. For full stories, be sure to check out blessedtrinitycatholic.org/vocations



Luc Lambert: "I didn't see it at the time, but looking back, my calling came in incremental nudges." Luc's journey

started during a difficult time while at the Air Force Officer Training School and happened to find a chaplain's cross patch. This cross provided comfort and a reminder

"The Lord's call is not an intrusion of God in our freedom; it is not a 'cage' or a burden to be borne. On the contrary, it is the loving initiative whereby God encounters us and invites us to be part of a great undertaking."

Pope Frances, 2013
World day of Prayer for
Vocations Message

to lean on God for strength and to listen to his call to serve. He began to get more involved in serving at Mass at the chapel. He also had the support, encouragement and wisdom of others to guide him. More than one person suggested he might make a great deacon. "I believe Jesus called me a lot, but I wasn't a very good listener then. So, He sent people into my life to relay His messages." The final nudge came at the annual Stewardship Drive at Blessed Trinity. The time felt right to finally commit to that Yes and begin the journey. God willing, Luc will be ordained in October of 2022. "It has been an amazing journey so far, and the Lord has opened my heart to experience His love in ways I would never have dreamed possible...I am constantly assessing where I am today, where I am going, and praying for His guidance and direction along the Way."

Fr. Chris Lowe was naturally exposed to the possibility of becoming a priest during his years as an altar server in his youth but the thought was suppressed while he discovered other passions. Remaining active in his faith, he went on to college, received a degree in Chemical Engineering and fell in love with the woman who would become his wife. Shortly after his wife died in 2009, he heard the call again. "I woke from a sound sleep to a voice saying, 'Now will you follow me?'"



At the same time a **Come and See** retreat weekend was being offered at the seminary. After a year of praying and listening to advice and encouragement from friends and deacons, and yet another retreat, he felt it was time to say Yes. Chris thinks of all those who encouraged him to this path, and knows it was from God. "God speaks to us through others in our lives."

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Responding - continued from pg 3

Sr. Kelly Francis, of the Community of the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal, first sensed a call in high school when she was invited to try a form of devotion she had never heard of—adoration. It proved a powerful form of prayer as she sought to know what God had planned for her. *"One month, as I spent time in adoration, I remember considering and speaking with the Lord about the idea of religious life. I did not experience a clear "call" at that time, but I felt that He was asking for my openness to His plans."*



Br. Seamus and Sr. Kelly

She spent her college years pursuing a degree in civil engineering and also exploring the call and remaining open to God's plan. By the time of her college graduation, it felt right to enter the convent and begin her formation. The joy her vocation brings is evident! *"I love being a sister, it is a privilege and a gift, though not without its challenges, too!...All that He's really wanting of me (and you) is that I choose to follow Him each and every day, wherever He may lead."*

Deacon Bill Dwyer had heard the call for five years in his adult life before he acknowledged it. While unemployed, he experienced a Cursillo weekend and left there with a new, personal relationship with Jesus and also the desire to grow in prayer. It was during his time of prayer and journaling through the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius that a yes to the call was beginning to take seed. Over the next few years, through intentional prayer, spiritual direction and encouragement and support of those around him his yes solidified. Deacon Bill's hopes he too can be a source of encouragement for others. *"It is a joy to walk with another as others have walked with me. Listening, encouraging, challenging, and loving another as they too, journey to know, love and follow their God trying to be the person God has called them to be."*



Fr. Brian, his two aunts, and his mother, Francine (seated).

Fr. Brian McGrath felt the tug toward priesthood early. *"I remember feeling the tug towards priesthood when I was in elementary school. So much of what I saw around me made so little sense."* He looked into it briefly in high school, but had no idea what that meant nor did he seek help. During college, his faith was strong and the tug was still there. He met a wonderful woman and romantic love won out over seminary, for a while. He got a masters degree and began a career in teaching. A short time later, he lost his job and decided to do a year of service at Covenant House in NYC. It was during this time when he had the opportunity for more prayer, deeper discernment, and guidance from his spiritual director that he knew it was time to answer the call with a Yes. Fr. Brian loves being a priest and prays daily to serve every day in love and humility. *"My vocation journey was not simply what brought me to seminary...but also how God kept speaking to me throughout seminary and all these years of priesthood. Every day I recommit myself to the Lord and try my best to serve him in love and humility."*



In these stories we learn that God is patient and that discernment can take many paths. Often pivotal are listening to the wisdom of others, taking things to prayer and making the space to listen to God.

Is God calling you?

A LETTER FROM FATHER PETER - *Investing in Disciples*

You and I have received a sacred commission from the Lord Jesus Christ. ***"Go out to all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."*** Going out to the world involves calling forth men and women to fulfill that mission. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we the people of God must identify individuals with the necessary qualities to accomplish this sacred task.

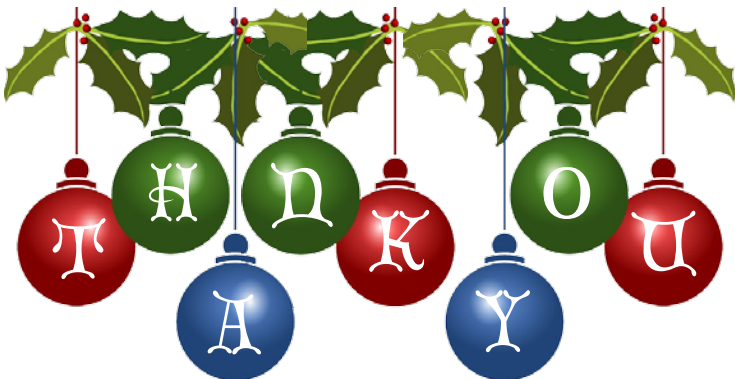
Once called to participate, individuals need to be encouraged, supported emotionally and financially in order to be formed for their unique vocation. When I entered the seminary college in 1964, all the way through graduate school until 1972, the financial expenses were assumed by parishioners like you, as a member of the Church. I had many times publicly expressed my gratefulness for the amazing generous support of parishioners for my education.

Investing in the faith life of others so they could minister to God's people is the responsibility of the entire faith community. Over the years our parish has supported emotionally and financially those pondering different ministries:

- Priesthood: Fr. Tom Macdonald, Fr. Chris Lowe
- The Diaconate: Bill Dwyer and Luc Lambert
- Pastoral Ministers: Peg Hicks, Sue Gormley
- Faith Formation: Mary Collins, Arianne Lakuta, Nicole McDonald and Kari Decelles
- Stewardship: Debbie Rhodes, Director;
30+ Attendees at Stewardship Conferences
- Music Director: Kelly Clark



This was all due to your generous support. Then in 2020 the Holy Spirit prompted us to eliminate fees for faith formation amounting to \$160,000 for 7 working people, 130 hours each week. This proposal to eliminate faith formation fees was presented to the Finance Council a while back. They understood Fr. Joe's and my vision. However, they were deeply concerned about how we would make up the \$160,000 funding necessary. We said to them that we would go to the parishioners and explain to them the reason behind our thinking. When you reflect upon what we are all about as a Church it points directly to our fundamental responsibility of providing faith instruction (catechesis) and formative spiritual experiences for God's people with our given resources.



Thank You! Thank You! For your spiritual and financial support that enables Blessed Trinity to invest in the faith life of God's people and fulfill our primary mission as a people of God.

God love,

Fr. Peter

Welcome to the Sodality - of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The word Sodality comes from the Latin word *sodalist*, meaning "companion". A Sodality is an organization of companions or friends.

it seeks to make its members good Catholic Christians.

Within our Blessed Trinity Parish, the Sodality was first formed in

Saint Anne's Parish in March of 1955, under the spiritual direction of Reverend Edward Desmond. Its membership currently includes a total of 125 Sodalists.

The Sodality of Our Lady, also known as the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was founded in 1563 by Jesuit Priest Jean Leunis when he decided to gather his pupils, boys and men, in front of the Altar of Mary to consecrate themselves to her, and to place themselves in her hands so they would be guided in defending our Catholic Faith from those who at the time, were seeking to undermine it. Membership spread quickly throughout Europe and later to America, but it wasn't until 1751 when Pope Benedict XIV extended membership to women and girls. Today, the Sodality membership is worldwide and includes the Holy Father, Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, Nuns, and lay persons of all ages.

The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary was organized to increase the personal holiness of its members and to train them in the charitable work for others. It aims at fostering in its members an ardent devotion, reverence, and filial love towards the Blessed Virgin Mary, and through this devotion and under her protection,



Some of the events the Sodality has organized in the past include:

- *The Valentine "Heart-to-Heart" Project where Confirmation candidates work with Sodalists to put together cookie and fruit containers to deliver to approximately 140 recipients across the region.*
- *Sponsor and award a \$600 Scholarship in collaboration with the Knights of Columbus, to a deserving college bound parishioner.*
- *Participation in Littleton Holiday Bazaar – Sodalists bake and sell*

cookies, chili, and breads of different kinds, as well as raffle multiple donated items. Proceeds help fund the Sodality's charitable events.

- *Organized the Wine Tasting Festival – Proceeds from this event have helped fund gifts to the Parish such as the Easter candle, etc.*
- *Host speakers throughout the year to present on inspirational topics related to community outreach and works of mercy.*
- *Organized different kinds of social events to promote the Sodality's rules while helping raise funds to support its mission.*

The Sodality of Our Lady welcomes new members of all ages. We meet four times a year and are currently looking for suggestions on new events. If you are interested in joining this remarkable and rewarding ministry, or if you are interested in sharing any feedback, please contact Jennifer Canfield at jennifer.canfield@verizon.net or Gloria Rios-Monarrez at grm4654@gmail.com. You can also contact the parish office at (978) 320-4220.



Spiritual Gifts – continued from pg 1

What are your spiritual gifts? How can you share them? Maybe now is the time to really sit with this letter from Paul to the Corinthians. Spend some time in prayer, and bring these questions to God. Dive deeper into related scripture or other spiritual writings. Talk with others, or seek out some spiritual direction to help see how God is using or needs to use you. God loves you so much and gave you the most precious gifts, uniquely designed for you. Maybe it's time to unwrap them.





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Saint Anne Church
 75 King St.
 Littleton, MA 01460

Saint Catherine Church
 107 N. Main St.
 Westford, MA 01886

CURRENT MASS SCHEDULE:

Weekend Schedule:

Saturday 4:00 pm – St. Catherine Church (live streamed)

Sunday 8:30 am – St. Anne Church

Sunday 10:30 am – St. Catherine Church

Weekday Schedule:

Mon & Tues 8:00 am – St. Anne Church

Thu & Fri 8:00 am – St. Catherine Church

Reconciliation:

Saturday 3:00 pm or by appointment

St. Catherine Church

Fr. Peter Quinn 978-320-4201

Father Joe Rossi 978-320-4202

Leadership
 Praying with the Spirit
 Encouragement
 Pastoring
 Faith Tongues
 Giving
 Discernment
 Administration
 Arts and Crafts
 Miracles Preaching Mercy
 Intercession Wisdom
Spiritual Gifts
 Music Missions
 Apostleship
 Service Knowledge
 Evangelism
 Hospitality
 Teaching
 Healing

*Take time to
 discover yours!*