

SAINT BARBARA CHURCH

CROSS TALK

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RCIA CLASS OF 2017

by Elizabeth Penn

As a lifelong Catholic, I am sometimes guilty of forgetting what a privilege it is to live in a nation where I can practice my faith without fear. Attending Mass may feel like an obligation rather than a joyful celebration. My mind wanders during my prayers, and I think about my grocery list. And then the new RCIA class is announced. Once again, I am inspired by the dedication and commitment of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) candidates. My faith receives its annual “booster shot in the arm,” as I am reminded that that these individuals are seeking the *very* Church that I have been taking for granted. This year is no exception. As always, I am humbled by the faith of the newest members of our parish.

Deacon Chuck Melville is responsible for guiding the RCIA candidates through their preparation. He writes that this “has been such a great year for the RCIA program. They came together, mostly as strangers, called by the Holy Spirit. We have a terrific group of people who joined together on their journey of Faith. (I say that every year, but each group is a new and challenging experience for me.)”

The RCIA program began meeting in August, 2016 and culminated at the Easter vigil on April 15. Deacon Chuck “was surprised by how quickly this group came together. They weren’t shy about voicing their questions and probing the limits of my experience. I am *very* grateful for their participation and the challenges. Each person comes into the program with a story.”

A number of the participants were kind enough to share those stories with us. Three generations of the Baker and Lee families came together to become a part of the United Catholic Movement. Chuck Baker wrote, “The RCIA program has been a blessing for me and my family. My granddaughter and daughter-in-law are both candidates, with my wife, brother and son as sponsors. This was a family event.” Tommie Lee Melson III also wrote of the family connection. “I was drawn to the Catholic faith because I wanted to be closer in faith with God and from going to Mass with my wife, I felt this was the right path for me.”

Pat Bunch’s family was also an important factor in her decision to come to St. Barbara’s. Her son and daughter and their families “had *very* positive, welcoming spiritual experiences here.” Pat said she “wanted to be a part of the community embraced *by my* children, grandchildren, extended family, and friends.” She had assisted as a volunteer



with the St. Barbara Vacation Bible School Program and decided to “become a full member of this spirit-filled, and welcoming, Christian, Catholic community of believers.”

Deacon Chuck was “humbled by the determination of each person.” Janet Middendorf was so determined to join the Church that she made arrangements to participate in the program at a local parish while she and her husband were in Florida. Frank Monterosso began the program at another parish but moved to St. Barbara’s when the schedule conflicted with his work schedule. Dianna Shelton described her experience as a “subtle pull towards the Catholic faith for some time. I am so glad that I finally acted on it, and that St. Barbara’s Parish was there to receive me with such open arms.”

Like Dianna, other members of the class commented specifically on the RCIA program at St. Barbara’s. Chuck Baker wrote that “It was easy to see Deacon Chuck’s commitment to faith. Father Sterling and Father Knight were available at almost every class to answer questions and to share their perspectives.” Tommie Melson wrote that he “enjoyed the church and the people” and that he “would recommend the RCIA program to anyone who might be looking towards the Catholic faith.”

As he looks toward the future, Deacon Chuck expects “our new brothers and sisters to continue to grow in their faith and to actively join our parish activities and become truly a part of the Body of Christ.” The St. Barbara’s Parish family congratulates and welcomes its newest members. We also thank the RCIA class of 2017 for reminding us that our faith is a truly special gift.

The Deacon's Musings

by Deacon Chuck

Looking at the past few weeks, it has been *very* busy here at St Barbara. On Easter we had 14 souls join the Church at the Easter Vigil. Five were baptized and all 14 were confirmed and received their First Holy Communion. There have been infant baptisms, weddings, funerals and on April 30th we had 30 children receive their First Holy Communion. On top of all that we began our United Catholic Movement. What a busy time of the year! Thank goodness school is coming to an end, and Summer vacations are just around the corner.

So what's next? What will the next couple months bring? More activity I'm sure. But, traditionally, we see a drop in attendance at church through the summer. People go off on vacations, and that leaves lots of room in the pews. What a great time to reach out and invite someone to come to church with you. Personally ask them to join us to celebrate Mass one Sunday. Reach out, share a little bit of your time, a little bit of yourself. Join the Movement!

Gratitude for Blessings Bestowed

by JoAnn McQueen

The word "gratitude" means thankfulness. Such a small word, but it somewhat encompasses the overwhelming feeling of thankfulness that I have for my parish family. This parish family here at St. Barbara is truly "family," always giving and helping and sharing. Whatever the need that arises, we step up and are present, ready to ease the load.

This is exactly what I witnessed at the sudden death of my best friend and husband. To many Richard may have been just the man who sat near the back at 9:30 Sunday Mass, but to our family he was everything... father, grandfather, and friend. My gratitude was not just for the many people who attended the funeral, brought many gifts of food, and offered so many hugs and prayers. It was also for our outstanding Bereavement Committee who steps up at a time when you really don't want to think of practical details.

Get Informed About FORMED

by Tina Bowen

Here at St. Barbara we have been given a great gift from the parish with having access to the FORMED program. The credit for making this happen goes to parishioner Debbie Wood who introduced the possibility of having FORMED here for everyone at St. Barbara. Debbie was introduced to FORMED while attending a retreat in Chicago. FORMED is offered through the Augustine Institute which was developed after a visit from Pope John Paul II. During the World Youth Day in Denver in 1993, he called all Catholics to a New Evangelization. FORMED grew from this call, giving us the tools and programs to grow in our faith.

FORMED will be an exciting program to have for the parish for the United Catholic Movement. Catholics that have been *away* from the faith can find programs that will help them renew their love of faith and feel welcome in coming back to Mass. For example, on FORMED you will find sessions on forgiveness, confession and judgement. So, when you ask someone to attend Mass, introduce them to FORMED.

If you haven't registered for FORMED you can register at www.formed.org. Use the St. Barbara parish code: XXJDHH. It is free!! Once you register you will have access to all the programs and sessions that you can use for just yourself, your family and even prayer groups. If you have questions about FORMED you can contact Debbie Wood at wigby@me.com.

But they are there, assuring that the liturgy is meaningful, and the food is nourishing.

All of these things are reminders that I am not alone. I am still part of a spiritual family who celebrates the Eucharist together, who is there when God calls one of us home, who rejoices when our families enlarge with the birth or adoption of a new child, and celebrates the entry into the Church of the RCIA group.

It has been said that it "takes a village to raise a child." What is equally true is that grief takes a parish family to enable one to be willing to continue the path of life. Thank you for being the circle of caring that I needed.



St. Barbara Goes For The Gold

by Jackie Koop

St. Barbara turns nifty fifty this year. The parish, that is! Yes, it's our golden anniversary, and like any anniversary, it's a perfect opportunity to celebrate. So mark your calendars, put the date Saturday, July 29th in your cell phone reminders, and join us for fun, food, fireworks, and a delightful reunion of St. Barbarans, young, old, and everywhere in between. It is said that we should look to our past history to learn, and plan for the future. Photos, and fifty years of memorabilia will be displayed to help evoke stories and memories of the history of our parish.

The Rocktoberfest 2017, coming on September 8, 9, and 10, will also incorporate the fiftieth anniversary theme into the three day event, with specially designed logos on balloons, banners, and signs. Even the eagerly anticipated tee shirts will recognize the milestone.

Commemorative ornaments will be available as our anniversary year ends in December, and plans are in the works to publish a new "anniversary edition" parish pictorial directory.

We all believe that St. Barbara Parish is "Golden," for the spiritual nourishment we give and receive, for its welcoming spirit, for amazing pastoral leadership, and for the generous stewardship of our members. We look forward, with faith and gratitude, to our next fifty years.

St. Barbara Youth Report

by Courtney and Meredith Mueller

For the last two years, we have had the privilege of accompanying our fantastic youth group on one of our new favorite traditions: our annual mission trip. We are always blown away by how willing our kids are to lend a hand and work with those who are less fortunate. To say that this has been a rewarding experience would be an understatement.

But before the trip, before the hard work the youth group puts in, before the "Beach Ministry", before the vans roll out of the St. Barbara's parking lot very early on a Saturday morning in June, our fearless leader, John, is planning our route, our outings, and our budget. We have been so fortunate to have a generous parish that cares so much about our Youth Group. And our parishioners have certainly not disappointed since we started this new tradition.

This year, we are planning to bring thirty Youth Group members with us to Florida, which is more than we have taken with us in the past. They have all been working hard to raise the money to able to make the trip with us, including working Fish Fries, cleaning up after the Flying Pig, and working the coatroom for St. Barbara's events. Included in this fundraising drive, we have started to hand out tubes of Mini M&Ms after all the weekend masses. We invite parishioners to take a tube and enjoy the candy, but to refill the tube with any spare change they may have and return it to church to help offset the cost of our mission trip. We thank you in advance for your support and prayers as we prepare for our third trip and what we know will be an amazing experience the Youth Group will never forget.

Women's Team to Travel to Jamaica

by Pauline Baumann

Inspired by the leadership of Jerry Benzinger and his son Chris, our men's involvement in the Mustard Seed Community's work in Jamaica has grown from one team to ten over the years. Their dedication and talent has wrought miracles of improvements and additions to the buildings at Jacob's Ladder, a home for developmentally disabled men and women. And add to that, these men came away with a new appreciation for God's presence among this vulnerable population.

Finally, it is now time for the St. Barbara women to step up and be part of this amazing ministry of serving various groups in Jamaica more suited to their talents. At the present time, nine women have signed up to be part of the mission that will travel to Kingston in mid-October. They will have an opportunity to visit four different home for pregnant teens and their babies and disabled children and adults before completing their time in Jamaica with a visit to Jacob's Ladder to see the progress that has been made.

While their involvement will not be as physically demanding as the men who traveled before them, the women's value will certainly be seen in their nurturing and maternal instincts. As Gwen McCormack, one of the participants, noted, "I am looking forward to sharing this spiritual experience with other like-minded Christian women. I think, like others, I often forget that our freedom and lifestyle are true blessings and a gift from God."

The projects actually undertaken by the women will be determined once the group is settled. Who knows what talents lie within this group that can be of value to the places they visit? Darla Kettenacker, another team member and a single mother for most of her adult life, noted that she has developed a lot of home repair and maintenance skills out of necessity. So, it seems that God will work through these women to bring His love to these women that many consider less than worthy.

This first women's mission will be limited to approximately 12-15 women who will travel with Deacon Joel Ballantyne. Those who may still be interested in joining the group, can get more information from Gwen McCormack (859-468-9922) or Susan Finney (508-242-9622)... the representative from the Mustard Seed Community that sponsors these mission trips.

This Year's Fish Frys - Another Great Success!





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St. Henry Grade School News

by Julie Nelson

Congratulations to 8th grader, Ashlyn Schlake, on placing **THIRD** at State Finals in Individual Future Problem Solving! Ashlyn's showing gained her an invitation from KAAC to compete individually in GIPS at FPSP International Competition in LaCrosse, Wisconsin in June!

Congratulations to our faithful seventh grade servers who received the Serra Club Server Award. The Serra Club for Vocations honored and awarded our faithful seventh grade servers at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. The following servers will be received the awards: Cassi Divita, Noah Bilz, Julia Dennemann, Kate Grayson, Claire Hulett, Lauren Klein, Brooke Meyer, Evan Rowekamp, Mark Ryan, and Owen Setters.

If you are interested in registering your child for the 2017/2018 school year, please contact the office as soon as possible because classes are filling up! Don't forget, as a St. Barbara parishioner, you are eligible for the "Participating Tuition," which is a rate less than Standard Tuition.

St. Henry High School News

by Grace Von Lehman, SHDHS Grade 11

In March, over 60 students participated in the musical production of Grease: School Version. These students worked for almost four months to prepare for the show. Many students, staff, alumni, and others came to the fun performance! After performing all four shows, senior Seamus Sweeney, who played the role of Kenickie, remarked, "I loved the feeling of the cast coming together to put on a show with a message we all cared about." Grease was directed by Mrs. Emily Himonidis, Ms. Eileen Bird, and Mr. Michael Fay.

Now that we are nearing the end of the school year, students look forward to ending successful seasons in sports. Tennis, baseball, softball, and track and field seasons are soon coming to a close. Both the girls' and boys' track teams look forward to high achievement at regional and state levels!

The final big events of the year are quickly approaching. Prom took place on April 28, and Graduation is May 25 at Thomas More College. As we round the final stretch of the year, we hope to finish together and to finish strong!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon	May 29	Memorial Day Mass, 10:00 am
Sat/Sun	Jun 24/25	Peter's Pence Collection, All Masses
Mon-Fri	Jun 26-30	Vacation Bible School, 9:30 am - Noon
Sat/Sun	Jul 8/9	ACUE Collection, All Masses
Sat	Jul 29	Parish Picnic, 6:00 pm
Fri	Aug 4	Holy Dames Pink Party, 6:30 pm
Mon	Aug 14	Vascular/Mammography Unit, 2:00 - 6:00 pm
Tue	Aug 15	Assumption Holy Day Masses, 10:00 am & 7:00 pm
Sat/Sun	Aug 19/20	Roctoberfest Volunteer Sign-ups, All Masses
Sat/Sun	Aug 26/27	Roctoberfest Volunteer Sign-ups, All Masses
Mon-Fri	Sep 4-8	Rocktoberfest Set-Up
Fri-Sun	Sep 8-10	Rocktoberfest Weekend
Sat-Sun	Sep 16/17	Catechetical Sunday
Thu-Sun	Oct 5-8	Men's Cursillo, St. Anne Retreat Center

