

## Our Need for Christian Community

By Deacon Chuck Melville

We were all looking forward to the end of 2020. The election would be over, and maybe the pandemic also. But wait, yes we have a new President but the health crisis goes on and our lives are still being disrupted. Life goes on. Even though many of our activities have been cancelled or moved to virtual, we still must carry on.

Time moves on within our Church Community. And therein lies a problem. Due to the effects of the pandemic, the social distancing and other health requirements, our identity as a Christian community has suffered — little things like coffee and donuts after Sunday Mass, holding hands, hugging during the Sign of Peace, greeting one another before and after Mass. Our meetings are held online or in very small groups separated by a 6-foot buffer zone. We're isolated; so much seems to be missing.

In Genesis, God says *"it is not right that man should be alone."* We don't flourish as people by being isolated and living by ourselves, but by engaging as full members of our community. Our Faith tells us that we are all brothers and sisters of Christ. We come together in worship to receive the Body of Christ, and to become the Body of Christ for each other. Each of us has a special unique purpose in God's plan. A favorite hymn says that *"we are many parts, we are all one body, and the gifts we have, we are given to share."*

**We have an obligation to help and support those around us, while at the same time allowing ourselves to be supported.**

The place most of us first experience a community in our lives is in our family, where we learn to share and to communicate first in the family unit. As we grow, we begin to experience life outside of the family group but the need for community, for belonging, is present and growing.

We have reason for hope. Many have already received the vaccine for the Coronavirus and many more are scheduled to receive it as soon as it becomes more readily available. We pray that soon our churches and our schools will be full and the sounds of singing, and joyful reunions will again be a part of our daily activities.

Stay strong! I offer you my prayers, and my faith in God, that with a bit more patience and a lot of prayers, we will see this crisis through and we will together be stronger together as a Christian Community.

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## Thank You for Supporting the DPAA

The 2020 DPAA Campaign was extended and will end on March 31. All payments and pledges should be fulfilled by April 15 to be credited to the 2020 Campaign.

Some payment reminders were late being mailed for the end of the year. Your patience and generosity is much appreciated, as always.

If all donors fulfill their pledges, St. Barbara will once again surpass our mandatory goal of \$121,200.

The agencies and programs assisted by the DPAA are in greater need than ever, and humbly thank all who have been able to donate.

For more information and to donate, visit [covdio.org/stewardship-missions/dpaa](http://covdio.org/stewardship-missions/dpaa).



## Lent and Easter Schedule

Evening Lenten Mass.....Wednesdays, 7pm  
 Holy Thursday Mass.....April 1, 7 pm  
 Passion of Our Lord.....April 2, 3pm  
 Way of the Cross.....April 2, 7pm  
 Holy Saturday Mass.....April 3, 8:30pm  
 Easter Sunday Masses.....April 4, 9 & 11 am

## Ministry Spotlight: Mustard Seed

By Courtney Mueller

In 1978, Monsignor Gregory Ramkissoo started the first Mustard Seed Community in Kingston, Jamaica. About thirteen years ago, Gerry Benzinger started taking an annual trip with friends to visit the Mustard Seed Community, Jacob's Ladder. Since then, the group has grown to become a diocese-wide ministry that sends many groups each year to serve the residents.

Jacob's Ladder, one of several Mustard Seed communities in Jamaica, is home to approximately 100 residents. Though their mission is to serve the Jacob's Ladder community by helping to build and remodel, volunteers from the diocese are encouraged to take time off to interact with residents. Volunteers enjoy playing soccer and talking with residents.

In addition to the residents, Jacob's Ladder also employs about 40 caregivers. When discussing the ministry, Jeff Jehn expressed his admiration for the caregivers, who work for a meager wage, but who do their work so joyfully that they sing as they arrive in the morning after walking for a mile in the dark to reach the community.

In 2017, St. Barbara also started sending a group of women to the Mustard Seed Community in Jamaica. This group has been led by Gwen McCormack and Tina Melville and typically makes the trip in October. Tina Melville has participated in two mission trips and commented, "I have been blessed beyond words on my mission trips... The words HE IS HERE are posted throughout Mustard Seed buildings. From the joyful, uninhibited celebrations of Mass to the individual residents who touched my heart, to the Jamaican staff who dedicate themselves to caring for the residents, when they, themselves, live in extreme poverty, there is no doubt that God's presence is everywhere."

This experience opens the eyes of volunteers, asking them to step outside their comfort zones and showing them that one does not need much to live a joyful life. Those going on the mission trip are responsible for covering the cost of their airline tickets and contributing an additional amount for expenses. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, mission trips have been suspended. This has led to a severe lack of revenue and materials for Mustard Seed. Amazingly, however, parishes from across northern Kentucky combined their efforts to collect more than \$1,000,000 from friends and benefactors and also sent a shipping container full of critically needed items to Mustard Seed, filling a much-needed gap in their overall budget for 2020/2021.

For more information or to get involved in Mustard Seed, call the parish office or contact Gerry Benzinger, Jeff Jehn, Tina Melville, or Gwen McCormack. Monetary donations can be made at [www.mustardseed.com/kentucky](http://www.mustardseed.com/kentucky).



### Our Parish Family

#### New Parishioners

Rodney & Susan Black  
Herbert & Christy Boemker  
Kathryn Markus  
Colleen O'Connell  
Jeffrey Rowekamp  
Connie Ryle

#### Newly Married

Zachary Damron & Abigail Scherrer

#### Born to Eternal Life

Patrick Gaspard  
Sharon Hemsath  
Ronald Hinken  
Janet Jehn  
Marjorie Rasbach  
Shauna Sterling  
Mary Wormald

## Come Visit Our Welcome Center

By Jackie Koop

Have you visited the St. Barbara Welcome Center lately? Located in the right front corner of the church building, the Welcome Center is connected by a hallway to the Narthex (the entrance area that leads directly to the church sanctuary). Attractive bookcases form a lending library with many inspiring books, reference materials, CDs, DVDs, Bibles, and interesting reading and listening items, available for readers and listeners of all ages. Brochures, registration forms, event handouts, and copies of the *Crosstalk* newsletter can be found on the table in the Welcome Center. In the Reflection and Relaxation area are comfortable chairs and tables to provide a space to peruse, reflect, or take a break from our busy lives.

Make 2021 a year of personal, spiritual growth, and positivity. Stop by and see what's available in the parish Lending Library, and choose some titles that appeal to you. Parish librarian Joyce Levo catalogs and maintains the many items which have all been donated to the Lending Library. The collection is arranged by topic, including Papal writings, Mary and the Saints, Church History, Biblical Studies, Christian writers, Matthew Kelly and Dynamic Catholic publications, Chicken Soup for the Soul, Self Help, as well as works of fiction and science. A number of the books were donated by Father John, so you know there are some good ones there! A complete listing of items is diligently managed by our volunteer librarian and can be found on the parish website ([stbarbaraky.org/Lending-Library](http://stbarbaraky.org/Lending-Library)). The checkout process is simple: just sign your name, item title, and date in the journal provided on the bookshelf, then return materials when you are finished.

The Welcome Center is open every weekend, before and after Masses, as well as on Wednesday evenings before, during, and after CCD classes. It is also available to those visiting the Perpetual Adoration Chapel. We welcome parishioners of all ages and hope you will visit often!

## Covered in Prayers and Blessings

Do you or someone in your life need some extra prayers? (Don't we all?)

Please stop by the display of beautiful prayer shawls and small blankets in the parish Welcome Center. These coverings have been lovingly crocheted and donated by parishioners and friends.

They come in many colors and designs, are washable, and are looking for good homes. There are even small ones to put in your pocket.

Take one for yourself or a friend or loved one. This prayer blanket program is coordinated by the St. Barbara healthcare Hearts and Hands health ministry.



## Crusaders Celebrate!

By Dennis Wolff, Principal

Open house kicks off Catholic Schools Week each year and this year we celebrated, albeit a little bit differently, the value of a Catholic education. Each day during Catholic Schools Week there are different themes: we celebrate the community, the nation, our students and families, our staff and of course vocations. Catholic Schools Week is a good reminder of the positive difference a Catholic education makes in a student's and family's life, and everyone in our community enjoys celebrating together.



In November, St. Henry School had a new fundraiser to support our school since our other fundraisers are not able to happen – CruGiving. Because of the help and support of many, including yours, we raised over \$50,000! We're thankful for the generosity of others.

Every year, 8th-graders in the area take a high school placement test at the high school they will be attending. Diocesan high schools award scholarships based on those results. This year, we had four students earn scholarships, including for the highest overall scorer, for St. Henry District High School. We're proud of our 8th-graders and wish them the best of luck in high school.

While our 8th-graders are preparing for high school, we're also beginning to prepare for next school year. If you missed our open house on January 31, or if you would like to visit again, please call the school office to arrange a tour (859.342.2551). Enrollment is currently open in all grades.



Stay connected with us at [facebook.com/sthenryschool](https://www.facebook.com/sthenryschool) and our website [sthenryschool.net](http://sthenryschool.net). St. Henry and St. Barbara, pray for us!

## COF's Commitment to Caring

By Mark Hehman

The Catholic Order of Foresters has been "Bringing Catholic Values to Life" since 1883 by protecting Catholic families. In addition to our state-of-art life insurance and annuities, our members are eligible for COF's unique value-added fraternal benefits. This is what set us apart from other life insurance companies.

We support Catholic education, by offering scholarships, tuition assistance as well as educational awards. At our parish, the Catholic Order of Foresters financially supports the youth group. We are answering the call in Matthew Chapter 25 through our Feeding God's Children program, our year-round effort to feed people spiritually, physically, and mentally while serving and caring for our community. Volunteer opportunities are also available through our Feeding God's Children program.

When you purchase your life insurance from the Catholic Order of Foresters, you may add our Fraternal Legacy Rider to the policy. This rider provides an additional 5% death benefit to the Catholic Charity of your choice, at no additional cost to you. Currently, \$199,383 is earmarked to St. Barbara Parish from members choosing our parish as their favorite Catholic charity.

Whether you are the primary income earner for your family or a fulltime stay at home parent, your life is constantly changing. Catholic Order of Foresters are committed to protecting and serving you and those they love. Call Mark Hehman 859-468-4019 to discuss how your family as well as St. Barbara can benefit when you protect your family through the Catholic Order of Foresters.



Freshly fallen snow at St. Barbara.

## Inspiring Stewards Among Us

By Jeff Jehn

Since joining the parish in 1988, I have come to know St. Barbara as an inviting and welcoming church community. My parents had been members for several years prior. I always felt a desire to be more than just a member, and I was quickly approached by the pastor, Fr. Ed Baumann, who asked me to join the Board of Total Catholic Education. A few years later, I was nominated for the Parish Council and served for three years. I joined the Holy Name Society and served as an officer for two terms. For most of my time at St. Barbs, I have been a Minister of Extraordinary Communion as well as a Lector. I also serve as the St. Barbara parish leader for the Mustard Seed mission team.



A ministry that I am particularly fond of is being a part of the Cursillo Community in the diocese of Covington. Cursillo is built on the concept of fostering piety, study, and action into one's life, and one of its tenements is that being part of a community is important, as we need each other to sustain our spiritual lives. This is achieved primarily through being a part of a prayer group. I am proud to join over 150 St. Barbara parishioners in this movement. I was honored to serve as the Diocesan Lay Director of Cursillo from 2014 - 2018, and am currently the parish liaison for St. Barbara.

Many of my best friends are people I have come to know through the parish. From celebrating my 25th and 40th anniversaries to dressing up as a shepherd during the Live Nativity and helping at fish fries, turkey shoots, and Rocketoberfest, my memories at St. Barbara are a tapestry of fun times. I have taken seven trips to Jacob's Ladder, a Mustard Seed community in Jamaica with friends from our parish. I have learned a lot from them. And I have learned that church is not only a place of community but also a place of healing. I have finally gotten to a point in life where I attend church, not because I have to, but because I want to and I need to. I now find great comfort and peace in our church, especially the adoration chapel. I come to be fed, to be challenged, and to learn. I believe that if others think of church that way, as a hospital instead of a club or an organization, they too will grow as I have.

My wife Vicki and I have been married for 45 years and we have two children and five grandchildren. I've been a lifelong northern Kentucky resident. After retiring in 2017, I now enjoy spending time with my family. In my spare time, I like to play golf and devote time to nonprofits, such as CareNet and Catholic Charities, as well as the Northern Kentucky Chamber. I have been so blessed in my life, so I feel it is time to step up my goal to assist others when I am able.

To learn about stewardship opportunities at our parish, please go to the Ministry tab on our parish website or app.

### Who inspires you? Share the good news!

Suggestions for the Stewardship and Ministry features are welcomed and can be sent to [crosstalk@stbarbaraky.org](mailto:crosstalk@stbarbaraky.org).