



ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC PARISH

Christ the King and Holy Spirit Churches

DRAWING OUR YOUTH CLOSER TO THE FAITH

An Inside Look at Our Altar Serving Ministry

Beyond our own personal giving, an important part of stewardship is passing on the torch by involving our young people in the faith — drawing them into the life of the Church and making them feel part of our faith community. Here at Annunciation, the Altar Serving Ministry plays an important role in this process, bringing our young parishioners into the very heart of our liturgy.

“It gives younger people a way to truly participate in the Mass,” says altar server Daniel Vollmer, a high school junior. “Most of the time, ministries like lectors, greeters and the choir are reserved for adults, so this ministry fills a great need. It is so important to give younger people a way they can participate in Mass other than praying and singing within the congregation.”

Daniel first began altar serving at Christ the King around the sixth grade. Inspired by the other young people he saw each Sunday on the altar, he was eager to follow their example. What he didn’t anticipate, however, was how being there upon the altar Sunday after Sunday would dramatically impact his own faith life.

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PRAYER: *Becoming More Generous with Our Stewardship of Time*

A professor stood in front of a class, and in his hand was a big glass jar. He put six big rocks in the jar, with the rocks up to the edge. He then asked his students, “Is the jar full?” And they replied, “Yes.”

The professor told the students, “No, it’s not.” Then, he pulled out gravel and put it in the jar. He then asked, “Now is it full?” The students once again replied, “Yes.” The professor responded, “No, it’s not.” He reached down and pulled out sand, which he poured into the jar with the same responses. Then, he reached down again for a pitcher of water, and poured water in, all the way to the brim. Then he asked, “Now is it full?” And the students replied, “Yes.”

The professor then asked, “Okay, what lesson do you learn from this?” The students responded, “No matter how many things you’ve got in the jar, there’s always room to put a little more in.” The professor told them, “No, that’s not the lesson. The lesson is, if I didn’t put the big rocks in first, they would have never fit!”

Most Catholics can appreciate this story — in particular, how it can apply to our own prayer lives. Essentially, every person has to decide what the “big rocks” are in his or her life. And, for us Catholics, prayer should be one of those big rocks in the jar.

As Catholics, we *know* that prayer is important, and we know that we can and should always pray more. Yet, connecting with God in this way often slips through the cracks of our busy lives.

The stewardship spirituality is about trying to become ever more generous with our Time, Talent, and Treasure. And there is a reason why “Time” is first in line. Time in a stewardship context refers to the time we spend with God in prayer. We need to take time to talk to God and take time to be quiet and seek to listen as He expresses His love for us and wants us to know His inspiration in our lives.

There are many different forms of prayer — from weekly prayer, such as the Mass, to daily personal prayer. A daily Rosary is one of the most universal spiritual practices that can enrich the lives of Catholics around the world. Even if the decades

are spread out throughout the day, or even if you pray just one decade a day, you will find yourself growing closer and closer to the Lord each time.

Morning and night prayer are also important disciplines to maintain. Set aside a comfortable place



in your home where you can find silence. Maybe focus on a spiritual image and take time to center yourself with Scripture or some other kind of spiritual reading.

For many, spending large portions of the day in silent prayer may not always be possible. But make it a priority to find those moments of quiet throughout the day, and to find ways to incorporate prayer in the midst of your busy schedule. When you get into a vehicle, before a meal, after a meal, or if you’re faced with a tough decision, just pray!

Ultimately, the bottom line is this — just as in any human relationship, communication is a central aspect of a vibrant relationship with God. Prayer is fostering this communion of love with God. He loved us into existence and He wants us to enter into a loving conversation with Him. We’ve got to talk to Him. And we have to listen to Him. He will take care of everything if you just trust Him. He’s knocking at the door and waiting for us to open it in prayer.

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Take Vacations from Work or School, but Not from God

Dear Parishioners,

By now, many schools across America have let out for the summer. In almost no time, camp programs for younger students will be underway. Meanwhile, many older students are ready to trade their homework and notebooks for seasonal jobs until it's time to return to class in a few months.

Whether or not we're directly involved with schools — as students, teachers or parents — we find that the calendar for the school year also impacts our lives at work, at church and in our leisure time. And although some people are on vacation at any time of year, summer traditionally retains its place as *the* vacation season.

Vacations, no matter when or where we take them, provide us with a wonderful opportunity to look at life from another perspective. It's not about hiding away in a cabin or escaping to a beach, but allowing God to show us something new. No matter where we go, it's important for us to look at how we use our time. The way we use our free time says a lot about who we are and what interests us. We get to spend our time the way *we* choose.

A vacation also provides a good opportunity for us to make some permanent changes in our use of time. When we're free from the demands of everyday life, this is a perfect chance to try something that is not part of our regular routine, such as spending a few minutes a day in prayer or meditation. "Try it — you'll like it!" as the old commercial said. It may have some lasting, positive results in fostering a stronger spiritual life.

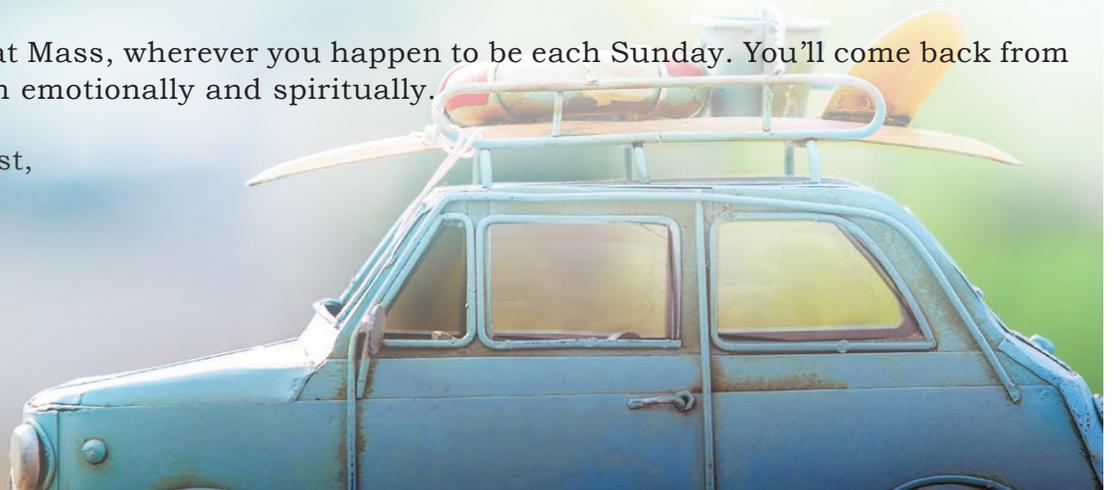
Importantly, we must also remember that this is a time of year when our parish will be welcoming visitors who are on vacation themselves — whether they are visiting family, spending time in the area, or just happen to be passing through on the way to their next destination. So, let us all uphold the Stewardship Pillar of Hospitality and provide a warm welcome to those visiting our parish.

Be sure to worship at Mass, wherever you happen to be each Sunday. You'll come back from vacation refreshed both emotionally and spiritually.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Alex Zenthoef
Pastor





Growing in Faith

WALKING WITH PURPOSE

Several years ago, a friend invited parishioner Stacey Church to participate in a women's book study at another parish. Stacey soon realized something profound — that having participated in the study, she had experienced a real growth in her faith.

"I was amazed how, in six weeks, I felt connected and comfortable with the other women, most of whom I didn't know prior to that," Stacey says. "I could see the great ways that people were connecting, and growing in their faith and their friendships, and I thought it would be a really great fit for our parish."

So four years ago, Stacey brought the Walking with Purpose Women's Bible Study to Annunciation.

"I have grown to see that faith isn't just going to Mass every Sunday and it's not separate from the

rest of my life," she says. "It's recognizing that God is present in everything and He's always working in the circumstances of my life, no matter what they may be and even if I can't always understand how."

There are two Walking with Purpose Women's Bible Study groups — one that meets Monday evenings, and the other on Tuesday mornings, both at the parish center at Christ the King.

"The purpose of this study is to address the issues women deal with through the teachings of the Church and Scripture," Stacey says. "It's helped improve every area of my life, my marriage, my parenting, volunteering, friendships — everything. It just makes you look at things differently than you have before."

The group appeals to a diverse group of women,



and Friendship:

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

in all stages of life and faith.

“The beauty of this program is that it’s for women of all ages, so we have some young single girls, we have people in their 40s, and people in their 70s,” Stacey says. “It’s so awesome to see everyone learn from each other and it’s been a great way for those different age groups to get to know each other in a meaningful way.”

“It’s very friendly to anyone, wherever your faith is,” she adds. “If you’ve not had any Bible study experience, it’s great for you. Or if you’ve had lots of experience, it’s great, too. We’re never all the way there. There’s always more to be learned and ways to grow in your faith.”

For Stacey, the aspect of fellowship with other women has been particularly valuable.

“It’s been awesome because I’ve gotten to know people who I wouldn’t have otherwise gotten to know,” she says. “It’s been really great to have other women who are like-minded and who are wanting to deal with things in the same way, through their faith.”

The group is also an opportunity to grow deeper in faith, and to foster a strong relationship with God through prayer.

“I definitely find that when I’m struggling with something or have an issue I’m trying to deal with, that’s my go-to now,” Stacey says. “I turn to God first and try to rely on God and be open and present to where He’s trying to lead me or what He’s trying to say to me. Women in the group frequently talk about how their prayer lives have improved. They

have all made daily prayer a priority and see the way their lives have changed because of it.”

Stacey hopes that, amidst the busyness of life, other women will make a priority of spending time growing in their relationships with God and other Catholic women.

“There is someone in our group who lives right across the street from the parish — she works full-time and she has three school-age kids and she says, ‘Every Monday night, it’s the hardest thing to walk out my front door and take those 10 steps across the street to the parish, and to leave my family, but it’s always the best thing and I’m always so glad that I did,’” Stacey says. “I think everyone who has made the commitment to stick with it has found that same thing.”

Earlier this year, Stacey also helped to pilot Walking with Purpose’s Blaze Ministry for middle school girls, at Christ the King Campus.

“That’s been really exciting and they’ve responded really well to it,” says Stacey, whose eighth-grade daughter participates in the ministry. “There is a girl who came to the first session and she said, ‘My mom made me come. I have to come three times and then if I don’t like it, I don’t have to come.’ And she’s been coming ever since.”

Stacey encourages the women of the parish to consider joining a study. A new series will begin in the Fall, but people are welcome to come in the middle of a series, as well.

“You can join at any time,” Stacey says. “There’s always an empty chair!”

If you would like more information on the Walking With Purpose Study groups, or if you’re a mom at Holy Spirit who would like to start a group for middle school girls, please contact Stacey Church at 812-480-1789. You can also learn more about Walking with Purpose at www.walkingwithpurpose.com.



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.

CHURCH CLEANING MINISTRY

Making Annunciation Shine with Love for Jesus

There can be something therapeutic about cleaning. Popping in a pair of headphones, cranking up your favorite tunes, and zoning in on making your surroundings shine can be great therapy. And for some in our parish, that therapy takes place at church.

Elizabeth Casteel, Holy Spirit Music Director, recalls one such member of the parish Church Cleaning Ministry who says she feels at her best when she's dusting the altar or wiping down pews.

"She would come at 10 p.m. at night and put headphones on and listen to music, and this was her form of worship," Elizabeth says. "She said, 'I just focus on the Lord and I just like that time with Him in solitude.'"

At Holy Spirit, teams of cleaners meet weekly to tackle the floors, windows, doors and altar. While many of those involved with the ministry are retired, Elizabeth — herself a dedicated ministry member — says it's a great way for families to get involved in ministry together.

"I have a couple of people who clean and bring their children," she says. "Homeschool moms bring their kids and they help. Kids can do a lot of stuff that we don't take the time to do."

Over at Christ the King, ministry coordinator Susan Ford says parishioners will gather on an as-needed basis to take the task of deep cleaning the church off the parish and school's janitor.

"We clean the pews and all the woodwork and windows and everything up on the altar," she says. "We do the windows in the cry room."

Susan, who also assists with laundering and caring for altar linens, says taking care of the church is her way of giving back to a place her

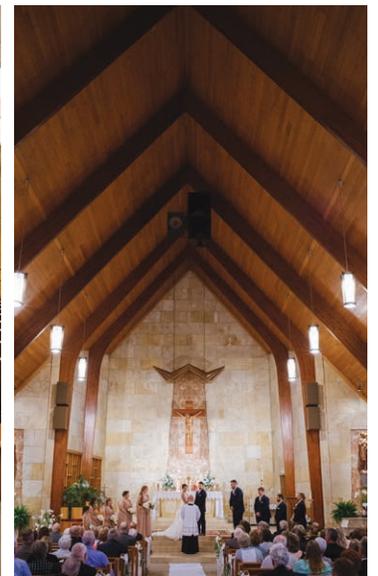
family has spent so much time.

"All of my kids went to Christ the King School, and you don't think about it too much — but when you do you think of how much difference it's made in our lives, this is our way of giving back," she says. "I like to clean, and this is my way of giving back for all that Christ the King has done for us."

Both women say keeping the House of the Lord clean hits on a personal level that should remind us all that the church is our home.

"I love our church and I take great pride, as do all of us, in how it's maintained and how it looks," Elizabeth says. "We want it to be beautiful and clean and be a wonderful home for the Lord to be worshipped."

"It's our place of worship and we want it to look nice for visitors, so it has to be maintained," Susan says. "It's one of those things that has to be done, just like at your house."



Ministries at both churches can always use help. To volunteer at Christ the King, please call Susan Ford at 812-454-4524. At Holy Spirit, Elizabeth Casteel can be reached at 812-477-1738 or ecasteel@evdio.org.



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Altar Serving Ministry continued from front cover

“I like being up there so close to where the sacraments are happening,” Daniel says. “It is like having a front row seat at a show. It’s inspiring and pretty awesome to know that I am serving on the altar, where bread and wine actually become the Body and Blood of Jesus.”

Not only does the Altar Serving Ministry transform parish youth from bystanders to active participants in the liturgy, but it also blesses the entire parish community through their reverent service. And, says Daniel, it’s also “lots of fun” with “nothing bad about it!”

“It gives younger people a way to truly participate in the Mass. Most of the time, ministries like lectors, greeters and the choir are reserved for adults, so this ministry fills a great need. It is so important to give younger people a way they can participate in Mass other than praying and singing within the congregation.” — Daniel Vollmer

Young parishioners can begin altar serving during the fifth grade. Parish youth interested in becoming an altar server may contact either Diana Braun at 812-476-3061 or Diana Dewig at 812-477-1738.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Holy Spirit: Saturday: 4:00 p.m. | Sunday: 9:00 a.m. | Tuesday: 6:00 p.m. | Wednesday: 8:30 a.m.

Christ the King: Saturday: 5:30 p.m. | Sunday: 7:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Monday: 7:45 a.m. | Tuesday: 7:45 a.m. | Thursday: 8:30 a.m. | Friday: 7:45 a.m.

Confessions: Saturday: 3:00 - 3:45 p.m. at Holy Spirit | Saturday: 4:30 - 5:15 p.m. at Christ the King