

A New Year – A New Beginning! 2020 is behind us – Whew!! It's been quite a ride and one we hope not to be on again. With this New Year, we're adding a bi-monthly insert to our bulletin filled with news of our community – both church and surrounding area. You'll find lots of interesting tid-bits and stories and we hope you'll share some of yours.

In the Covid era many of us are struggling with the loss of community. We're not seeing our families and hugging those we love. We're not dining out with friends. We're not gathering for football games, hockey games, card games, or celebrations of any kind. There is a sense of loss we've not experienced before.

We hope this will help us to again feel more a part of our community. Let us know what you think and how we can be community to one another within these pages.

Our Neighbors in the Pew

We have worshipped with many people over the years. Some we know well. Others – not. So let's take some time to get to know one another.

John & Terry Mac Donald



John hails from Albany, NY. His affiliation with St. Joe's began when he was hired as a Director of Religious Education back in 1978 after he had completed his Master's Degree at St. John's University in Collegeville. It was while there that he met Terry who was teaching in St. Cloud. They were married in June of 1979, and after that Terry also became a part of the St. Joe's community.

John & Terry's daughter and two sons all graduated from Centennial High School. Two of them went to college in Iowa and one in MN. One of their sons served in the Air Force. They also have two grandsons and a granddaughter.

John's favorite hobby is fishing. During the winter when

he can't get out on the lakes, he reads about and watches videos on fishing. Terry's favorite hobbies are reading and planning things to do with their grandchildren. Both enjoy traveling, especially road trips! During the summer of 2013, they traveled Route 66 from Chicago all the way to California. They have visited many MN state parks where they like to hike. That activity has been curtailed in the last several years while John had a knee replacement and a couple of back surgeries.

During the isolation brought on by Covid 19, family visiting has been in the backyard or in the yards of their children. Going to parks where they can be outside together has also helped them keep in touch. They have come up with ways to stay busy at home with games and jigsaw puzzles, re-watching their collection of movies, reading, cleaning and organizing the house, fixing up the flower bed and, of course, relying on their favorite TV shows.

They enjoy the hospitality found at St. Joe's and are proud of our beautiful church & church environment, the many programs offered, the music at all of our services, the many community outreach programs that St. Joe's sponsors and the parish staff for their talents and dedicated work.

Lemonade from Lemons

Many of us are really struggling right now. Isolation, unemployment, home schooling, working from home – all taking a toll on us. Our mental health is slowly deteriorating and we're feeling scared and uncertain about our future. How do we move from day to day with all of this to deal with? How do we make lemonade from such sour lemons?

Let's start with our mental health this month. Mental health professionals offer several options to help us cope. Here are a few.

- Sleep. It's important to rest our bodies and our minds. Energy resources are easily depleted during times like these.
- Nutrition. Eating healthy is essential to being and staying healthy. Eat an extra fruit or vegetable today.
- Meditation. Just a few quiet moments to think of nothing is a major rejuvenator. Allowing the spirit within to speak to us provides new energy for coping.

Lemonade from Lemons—Continued

- Connection. Call a friend or neighbor. We may not be able to go out for a cup of coffee or glass of wine, but we can still share our lives with one another.
- Hobbies. If you don't have one, try one. It doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive. Crossword puzzles, coloring books, paints, jigsaw puzzles, baking, all offer a break from the pressures we're experiencing.
- Exercise. We hear this one a lot! But it works. Exercise outside if you can. Fresh air is great. Or do a few jumping jacks, slide across the wood floor, dance to music, walk in place, play catch with the kids, lift a couple soup cans above your head a few times. All movement counts :-)

Read any Good Books?

This will be a regular feature. We'll review books of all kinds. Maybe you have a favorite that you would like to share. Let us know. Here are a couple for consideration.

White Fragility – While It's so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin DiAngelo.

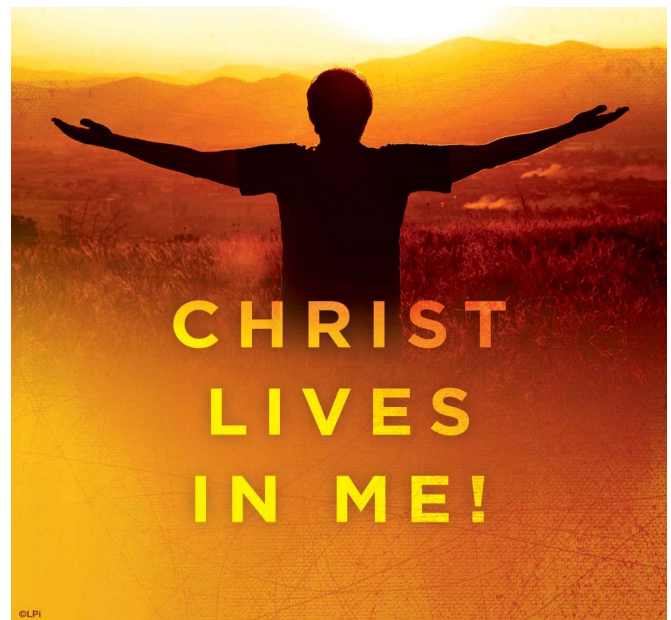
This past year has really brought into focus the disparities and agonies experienced in non-white communities. It's difficult to talk about these things. Robin DiAngelo does a remarkable job of helping us understand why that is. To truly make changes in our society, we need to understand some of the mechanisms at work that often hold that back. This is a must-read for those of us determined to move forward in changing society and the social structures that hinder each of us from living up to our potential as children of God.

The Return of the Prodigal Son by Henri J.M. Nouwen.

We have all known loneliness, rejection, anger and jealousy. We have all had feelings of hopelessness and dejection, feeling unworthy to be loved. We have all had occasions where we've been tempted to withhold our love. This remarkable meditation of a very familiar story will uplift and inspire. Nouwen is familiar to many. I believe this is one of his best writings.

Serving You

Our parish can be a wonderful resource when you find yourself in need. Barb Uschold Anderson, our Director of Pastoral Care is available to provide assistance in accessing mental health care, food and housing assistance, and spiritual care. She has put together a list of community resources which is on the following page. You may want to hang it up in an easily accessible location and share it with family and friends. She can be contacted at 651-784-3015 x112.



“. . . be strong in the Lord and in the source of his power.” (Ephesians 6:10)

This is OUR community, so . . . We would love to highlight you in *Our Neighbors in the Pew*. If you've read any good books you'd like to share, let us put your review in our *Read any Good Books?* Are there any Community events to publicize that you think would be of interest—these suggestions are welcome. We're here for you. Please contact Ivy Cavegn at icavegn@msn.com, with your ideas, suggestions and contributions. No guarantees we can accommodate everything, but we want to hear from you.

Blessings on your day. We are grateful for each of you.