

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

COLUMBUS, GA

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"Pray That We May All Be All That God Wants Us to Be" *An Update on Our Catholic School as it Begins a New School Year*

Fr. Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ, began his career as a Jesuit priest as a teacher of literature and psychology to high school students at Immaculate Conception School in Santa Fe, Argentina. Of course, we know Fr. Jorge better as Pope Francis, but many feel he learned how to communicate and how to structure his message of hope in those early years as a teacher.

He certainly developed a great love and respect for Catholic schools and Catholic education. Speaking to Catholic students and teachers recently he said, "Catholic school is one of the educational environments where one grows by learning how to live, how to become grown-up, mature men and women... Following what St. Ignatius teaches us, the main element in Catholic school is learning to be magnanimous... This means having a big



"Pray that we may all be all that God wants us to be."

heart, having a greatness of soul. It means having grand ideals, the desire to achieve great things in response to what God asks of us and, precisely because of this, doing everyday things, all our daily actions, commitments, and meetings with people well. [It means] doing the little everyday things with a big heart that is open to God and to others."



An Update on Our Catholic School *continued from front cover*



Students representing our school levels.



Athletics are one of many opportunities for growth and education.

We are privileged and blessed here in Columbus to have an excellent Catholic school, St. Anne-Pacelli. It is the only private, Catholic preschool-through-12th grade college preparatory school serving in the entire southwestern portion of Georgia. The school is named for St. Anne, the mother of Mary, and Pope Pius XII, whose name was Eugenio Pacelli. It is the Catholic school for our Holy Family young people.

The school is basically divided into divisions, including preschool and primary for children aged 1 to second grade; intermediate school, third to fifth grades; middle school, sixth to eighth grades; and high school, ninth through 12th grades.

The President of the high school is Ms. Ronie Collins, and the Principal of the other divisions, the lower school, is Mrs. Jocelyn Smith.

The school year officially began with the students' first day of school on Monday, Aug. 8. However, as is always the case, much had occurred prior to that. Both administrators were particularly excited and looking forward to this school year.

"There are so many exciting changes this year," Mrs. Smith says. "One of the things on which we pride ourselves is staying up to date and current in relation to technology. It is almost impossible to mention all the changes which are the result of those updates - everything from interactive whiteboards to Chromebooks. We have a new playground for the lower school, as well. And the diocese has instituted a new science curriculum at all levels."

Ms. Collins concurs with Mrs. Smith's assessment.

"The high school is also keeping pace with the latest technology," Ms. Collins says. "We are instituting Chromebooks and iPads for all students. This gives us access to digital technologies. The students can do almost everything with these, including applying directly to colleges. You might say that we are bringing college technology to our students. We have also added more AP [Advance Placement] classes so students can receive college credits while in high school. We are working diligently to provide our students with the best academic and faith-based education possible."

Pope Francis had advice for administrators and teachers when he said, "Don't be discouraged by the difficulties that the educational challenge presents! Educating in Catholic schools isn't a profession, but an attitude, a way of being. In order to educate, you must go out of yourselves and be amidst the young, accompanying them in the stages of their growth, standing beside them, just as the Lord stands beside them."

"We invite people to visit us, join us for Mass and prayer," Ms. Collins says. "Pray for our school. Pray for our students, faculty and staff. Pray that we may all be all that God wants us to be. That is truly the goal of St. Anne-Pacelli Catholic School."

If you would like more information, please contact the school at 706-561-8232.



The class of 2016 celebrates graduation.

A Letter From Our Pastor

Stewardship: “This Is the Day the Lord Has Made; Let Us Rejoice in It and Be Glad”

Dear Parishioners,

Sometimes, we spend much time looking at, analyzing and speaking about the meaning of various passages and readings from Holy Scripture. Of course, we need to do that – it is important to our spiritual well-being, and to have a complete understanding of the messages revealed to us in the Word of God. As you are aware, most weeks we have four readings as part of our Liturgy of the Word – a First Reading, then a Responsorial Psalm, a Second Reading, and the Holy Gospel.

The one reading which sometimes is ignored is that Psalm. Yet, there are truths and wisdom in the Psalms that are worthy of our comments and our recognition. Psalm 24 (a song of David) strikes me in particular as one rich in meaning for us, especially from the perspective of stewardship. It opens, “The earth is the Lord’s and all it holds, the world and those

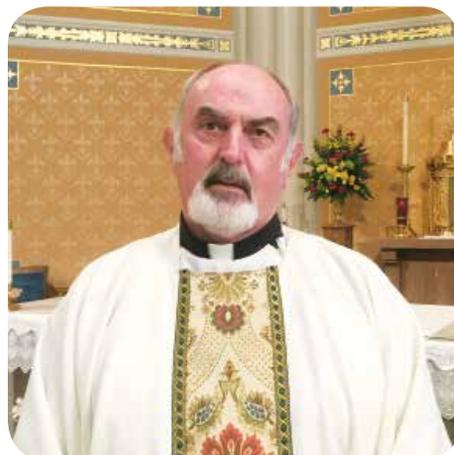


who dwell in it.” For me, that says everything we believe and provides us with all the motivation we need to pursue stewardship as a way of life.

It begins, quite simply, with the statement “The earth is the Lord’s and all it holds.” If we do embrace stewardship as a way of life, we admit and accept that everything comes from God and everything is God’s. Stewardship is not complicated, although we try to make everything complex and complicated, it seems. It is, as stated, merely the realization that our very existence, our lives, our goods all come from and in finality belong to God. We are the stewards of all of this. If we do accept that and try to live that way, we then tend to administer well God’s gifts on behalf of God. That is all stewardship is.

At the heart of all of this is our relationship with the Lord. We can also say that stewardship is all about getting that relationship right. Jesus certainly makes reference to stewards and stewardship in the Gospels. The Gospels were all written in Greek, and the English words for “steward” and “stewardship” are translations from a Greek word that means “to administer what belongs to someone else.”

That is what we do in this life. We receive gifts – we are granted the stewardship of time, talent and



treasure from God. But all of this and all we may be are only gifts. Our use of them to serve one another and all those around us in our community, our parish and the Church Universal is the measure of our stewardship.

In the northern hemisphere, autumn begins on Thursday, Sept. 22. This time of year in the Church is when everything seems to begin or resume. There is another wonderful Psalm that states, “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad” (Psalm 118:24). Let us do that together, and let us be good stewards together.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Dan O’Connell
Pastor



CURSILLO

Deepens Relationship With Christ

There is an opportunity waiting that will enable you not only to develop a deeper relationship and understanding of Christ, but also to share the love of Christ to others, no matter where you are.

“Cursillo is a program designed to build small communities of friends who share the same values,” says Bob Spano, area contact for the program.

Cursillo originally grew in Mallorca, Spain, from the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, when priests had been killed, religion was suppressed, and a whole generation had grown up with no background of faith. A group of laymen organized to begin teaching the faith and to train leaders for pilgrimage.

The concept behind Cursillo that is followed now came from the writings of Eduardo Bonnín Aguiló, one of the early proponents of the movement in Mallorca. His paper, *The Study of the Environments*, proposed that each individual affects his immediate environment by his actions.

The movement was brought to the United States in the early 1960s, and has now become a worldwide program.

Bob explains the concept of one’s environments and how you affect others.

“You have three environments — home, our neighborhood, and work,” he says. “Our neighborhood is often referred to as our movable square meter since we are a mobile society. Those about us will see what we are doing and will be influenced by our actions, good or bad. So where you are, you spread the Gospel by being the Gospel.”

“If you have a problem, you take it to the group, and you can share your successes and thank God. You can maintain the retreat message. In this process, we change the world one person at a time.” – Bob Spano



During a Cursillo weekend, there is time for growing in faith and fellowship – and some fun!

Cursillo is sanctioned by the bishop in the Dioceses of Mobile and Savannah, and, indeed, by Pope John Paul II, but it is not a diocesan-sponsored activity.

The movement involves participants’ gathering at various times and in groups of varying sizes and activities. Since our area is on the border of the Dioceses of Mobile and Savannah, the group takes in both.

“For example, I have a friendship group — we’ve been meeting for over 10 years — that meets for lunch on Wednesdays,” Bob says. “We meet for one hour, pray, share together, and reinforce each other.”

Usually once a month, several friendship, or reunion, groups like Bob’s gather at a host parish for an Ultreya, for a sharing of life experiences based on three facets of Cursillo — prayer, study and action, or on a passage of Scripture. Mass is also celebrated during the Ultreya.

“We have a meal and share for about one hour,” Bob says. “We bring in a speaker to talk about how Cursillo helped them.”

There also are opportunities throughout the year for members to take part in a Cursillo Weekend that is usually held in a retreat center, or locations such as Visitation Monastery in the midst of Mobile. Men and women attend separate Cursillo Weekends.

CURSILLO

The weekend begins on Thursday evening with orientation and prayers. At this point, it is a silent retreat. On Friday, there is Mass, breakfast, and then a series of 15 talks for the weekend begins. During the Friday talks, participants look at themselves.

“A layperson leads the first talk, followed by a discussion,” Bob says. “Then a religious does the second talk that takes off from the first talk. There are three talks by a layperson and two by a religious on Friday.”

On Saturday, the focus is looking at one’s relationship with God.

“On Saturday, everyone will have at some point, the ‘come to Jesus moment,’ an encounter with the Holy Spirit,” Bob says. “On Sunday, you learn how to take it all home with you and maintain it. That’s why we have small friendship groups. If you have a problem, you take it to the group, and you can share your successes and thank God. You can maintain the retreat message. In this process, we change the world one person at a time.”

This change is viewed as the outcome for joining the Cursillo movement. Evangelization can come about by being an example for others.

“We live the life Jesus calls us to live,” Bob says. “People see it and they are attracted to it. They want to share the joy we have — we’re walking in the path Jesus taught.”

When the Cursillo weekends are held at a Diocese of Mobile location, donations are taken to cover expenses. The Diocese of Savannah locations do ask for \$125 per person. However, the cost should not be seen as a barrier to attending.

“If the Holy Spirit calls someone to attend, we’ll get you there and back,” Bob says. “We believe the Holy Spirit calls people to attend.”

Bob says he would be happy to give a talk on Cursillo at our parish.

“We want all to come,” Bob says. “All you have to be is a Catholic able to receive the sacraments. And during our weekends, priests are available for confessions.”

If you are interested in learning more about Cursillo, please call Bob Spano at 706-304-4457.



The Holy Spirit moves among those taking part in a Cursillo weekend with intensely emotional moments.



Women’s and men’s Cursillo weekends are held separately.



The Importance of Family Prayer

“**T**he family that prays together stays together.”

This famous slogan was coined in 1947 by writer Al Scalpone, and has been frequently referenced ever since. The phrase pinpoints the true power of prayer, and the importance of making family prayer a consistent practice in our lives.

As Christian disciples, we are striving to follow Jesus — to grow in our love of Him and to serve Him through the use of our time, talent and treasure. If we desire to follow in His footsteps, we must first begin by getting to know Him. Spending time with the Lord in prayer forms a foundation on which we can build our lives as Christian disciples, much in the same way that spending time with a girlfriend or boyfriend forms the foundation of a strong relationship.

The Christian family is the first place where children learn to pray. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls the family unit “Ecclesia domestica,” or “the Domestic Church” (1656). Thus, parents have a responsibility to set an example by taking time for personal prayer every day, and making family prayer a regular practice. This not only sets an example for the children, but also provides them with a faith-filled foundation and brings them closer to the Lord — forming them as grateful stewards of their time.

There are many ways in which a family can pray together. One of the most important times for prayer is before meals, where we thank God for His blessings, and for the food on our family table. Families may also share in the formal prayers of the Church, or perhaps pray a Rosary together every night. We can also thank the Lord aloud, asking Him to answer our prayers and offering Him our daily petitions. One often-suggested method of family prayer is ACTS, where we offer Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Families may also go to their church and kneel together before the Blessed Sacrament, offering prayers in Christ’s Presence.

These are just several of the many opportunities for families to pray together. Of course, prayer will be influenced by each family’s dynamics and personalities. But no matter how we pray, it is important that we make the time to do so. This will deepen the family’s relationship with the Lord, our commitment as His disciples will be stronger, and we may continually renew and foster our families’ bonds.



PRAYER OF PARENTS:

God, our Father, I thank you for the gift of my children and for the privilege and responsibility of being a parent, for this is my way of holiness.

May I regard each of my children as a sacred pledge of Your love and a beautiful sign of Your confidence in me.

Help me to pass on to my children our greatest treasures - faith in Your truths, hope in Your goodness, love in Your name for all.

I entrust my children to Your loving care.

Banish from our home any bitterness or lack of forgiveness.

Let us have time, deep concern, and a sense of sacrifice for one another. Teach us never to be ashamed that we are, in name and in fact, a Catholic family striving to live in the way of Jesus, Who is head of our home.

Give us Your Holy Spirit to unite us throughout this life and let the circle of our family be unbroken in the Kingdom of Your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Guiding Children in the Faith: The Grier Family

The words of Proverbs 22:6 – “Train the young in the way they should go; even when old, they will not swerve from it” – instruct us on the great importance of bringing children up in the faith. Here at Holy Family, parishioners Scott and Michele Grier are devoted to teaching our Catholic faith to both their own children and other children of the parish. Involved in the Children’s CCD program here for almost 15 years, the couple feels blessed by the opportunity to serve some of our youngest parishioners.

The Griers first began teaching CCD when their now-adult son, Chris, was going through the program’s fourth-grade class. While Scott also helped with the younger ages for a few years as their daughter, Lexi, was going through the program, both Michele and Scott

have a special affection for teaching the fourth-grade level and have spent most of their volunteer time with this age group.

“We like the fourth grade in particular,” Michele says. “They’re like little sponges. I love the fourth grade because we talk a lot about mercy and stewardship, their role in the community, and the Corporal Works and Spiritual Works. So, it’s when they’re starting to get a good idea about what they can do to contribute, and you can actually have discussions about how to use their abilities and talents to do things for the community, as well as how they can show their love and be merciful, especially to those in need.”

Scott, who describes himself as the “doer” who provides hands-on help with the arts and crafts in the classroom, also enjoys working with the fourth grade.

“It’s great to teach them new things and provide them with the essential knowledge they need to build stronger faith,” he says. “They’re good listeners and they actually teach us some things, too. They’re just a lot of fun to be with.”

The Grier family is also very active in helping with the parish outreach ministries for the needy, such as the St. Vincent de Paul and lunch programs. They enjoy packing lunches and distributing items with the ministry coordinator, GG Whaley-Wong. The Griers’ daughter, Lexi, even initiated a new ministry to the poor at a very young age.

“When Lexi was in fourth grade, they learned in school about how an assembly line works, and that sparked her to bring something into her CCD class,” Michele says. “So, she brought a fleece in and she showed the kids in the class how to cut scarves from it – how to cut fringes and roll them. During the Christmas season, she would come to the class and they would make the scarves and then hand them out to the homeless. Lexi is a sophomore in high school now and that is still going on, six years later.”

While she was distributing the scarves for the first time, Lexi had a touching experience that has continued to shape her faith and her desire to serve others.

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The Grier family – Scott, Lexi, Chris, and Michele



THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

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Weekend Mass

Saturday Vigil

5:00 p.m. Mass

Sunday

8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Daily Mass

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

12:10 p.m. Mass

Reconciliation

Saturday

4:00 p.m.

Guiding Children in the Faith: The Grier Family

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“The first time she distributed the scarves to the homeless, this homeless man kissed her on the forehead,” Michele says. “Then he said, ‘God bless you,’ and left, and Lexi turned around and said, ‘That could have been Jesus.’ That [moment] impacted her whole life, and she is now forever giving of everything.”

The Griers’ son, Chris, has also made serving others an important part of his life. He spent many years as an altar server and participated in the Teen Talk Ministry. Now a teacher by trade, he still helps with Teen Talk intermittently and is planning on lending a hand in the CCD program, as well.

Given the example that Lexi and Chris grew up with in the home, it is no surprise that both siblings have such strong hearts for stewardship. As Scott explains, their family is built on the belief that we are called to serve others.

“[Service] is more or less a passion of ours,” he says. “We love to do for others and it’s very important to us. If

someone is in need of help, we will more or less drop what we’re doing to help them. It’s just something we do.”

As the assistant principal of Columbus High School, Michele is witness to the importance of cultivating strong values in the family.

“We love to do for others and it’s very important to us. If someone is in need of help, we will more or less drop what we’re doing to help them. It’s just something we do.”

– Scott Grier

“We lead by example, and our children can be role models in their own age group,” she says. “Teenagers are hard, so it’s important to have strong connections to your faith and to the Lord, to be an example of a good steward. That’s really what we’re trying to teach to our children so they can also teach it to their peers. God said, ‘I gave you these talents and skills and this is what I expect of you.’”

Holy Family thanks the Griers for devoting themselves to instructing not just their own children, but also countless other children of our parish, in the faith. Their family’s many examples of faith in action are a blessing to us all!