

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

COLUMBUS, GA

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Drawing Close to Our Lady Through the Rosary

In all of her apparitions around the world, the Blessed Mother has consistently urged her children to pray the Rosary. She said to Blessed Alan de la Roche, “When you say your Rosary, the angels rejoice, the Blessed Trinity delights in it, my Son finds joy in it too, and I myself am happier than you can possibly guess. After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, there is nothing in the Church that I love as much as the Rosary,” and to Sr. Lúcia, “Continue to pray the Rosary every day.”

Yet, for many of us, praying the Rosary is difficult. Immersed in the busy nature of life, we struggle to carve time for it. Consequently, the Rosary often gets put off until the end of our day when we are too tired to stay awake or remain focused on such a lengthy prayer. This is just one of the reasons that two parishioners, Darlene Buchholz and the late Carole Faletto, felt called to start Holy Family’s weekly Rosary Group.

“We just had this love of Christ and were like sisters,” Darlene says. “We had common spiritual feelings in terms of what we wanted to do and how we were going





The Bible *The Textbook of Stewardship*

Have you ever wished that life came with an instruction manual? What a valuable resource that would be! Whenever you find yourself running in circles, this instruction manual would give you step-by-step instructions on how to fix the problem and reroute your course.

Well, here's some good news. For those living a Christian life, there is such a manual – the Bible.

Sometimes referred to as the “textbook of stewardship,” the Bible is a bountiful resource for the present-day Christian. Written by anointed prophets and sages, this collection of divinely inspired parables, poems and letters is full of testimonials that express the blessings that come from true discipleship, expressed through lives of stewardship.

Stewardship is not a new concept. The Bible gives proof to this claim through passages such as the 26th chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy. We read Moses' words, as he tells the Israelites to offer the choicest portions of their harvest to God: “When you have come into the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you as a heritage, and have occupied it and settled in it, you shall take some first fruits of the various products of the soil which you harvest from the land which the Lord, your God, gives you, and putting

them in a basket, you shall go to the place which the Lord, your God, will choose for the dwelling place of his name... ‘Therefore, I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O LORD, have given me.’ And having set them before the LORD, your God, you shall bow down in his presence” (Dt 26:1-2, 10).

St. Paul briefly touches on the essence of stewardship when he said, “In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort we must help the weak, and keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

Again, in St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, we read about living a life of Christian stewardship: “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:6-7).

While this is well and good, what does it mean for the present-day Christian? Why should it matter that the Bible alludes to stewardship in various passages? It shows us that Christians and Jews have struggled with and benefitted from the concept of stewardship for thousands of years. It ties the message of stewardship to the role of a Christian disciple. It gives proof that stewardship and discipleship go hand-in-hand. It offers encouragement to us, that stewardship is in fact a foundational component of the Christian life, a way of life that one of the founding fathers of the Church – St. Paul – preached about and advocated.

The Bible is indeed the textbook of stewardship. It lays out the steps we must take to become true disciples of Christ. Reading and meditating upon God's Word is always a fruitful exercise. Those who regularly delve into Scripture often develop a deeper understanding of who God is, how and why He loves us, and how we can show Him our love in return.

As you strive to become a grateful steward and live the life of Christian discipleship, develop a love for Sacred Scripture. Allow God's Word to nourish your soul regularly, and watch as stewardship changes from a foreign concept to an integral component of your daily life.



A Letter From Our Pastor

We Cannot Be Part-Time Christians

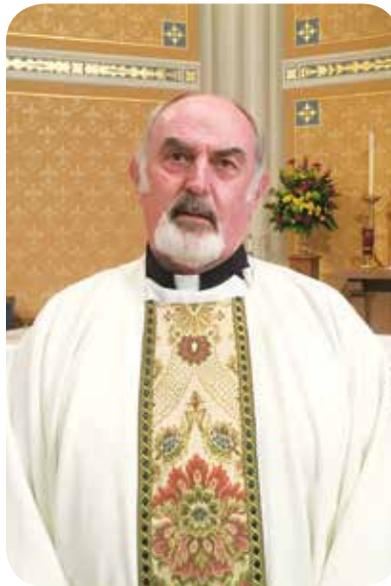
Dear Parishioners,

May is traditionally celebrated in the Church as the month of Mary, our Blessed Mother. As the Mother of the Church, she provides us with an example of what it means to be a servant of God and our fellow humans, as well as how to obediently fulfill the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

As Catholics, we are called to model the life of Jesus. That can be difficult, and there are certainly challenges to living as a disciple of Christ. But living stewardship and discipleship brings intense contentment and joy to those who take that risk. As we hear in St. Paul's letter to the Romans, "All things work for good for those who love God."

After Jesus Himself, we look to our Blessed Mother as an ideal steward and an example of what stewardship means. As the Mother of Christ, she lived her life and her ministry in a total spirit of faithfulness and service. She responded to the call to be a disciple. For us to be disciples, we also need to be good stewards of the gifts we have received. Our Church and our parish are gifts to us from God.

At no point in Holy Scripture does Jesus tell us that following Him is easy. We know it is not always simple and effortless. It requires dedication and commitment. Pope Francis has said on more than one occasion, "We cannot



be part-time Christians and Catholics! We should seek to live our faith at every moment of every day."

I suspect that is how Mary lived her life from that moment she turned it over to God and His Will. So, let us vow together during this month of Mary to follow her example, and seek to be the kinds of good stewards that will make our faith community even stronger and more effective.

I pray that we all can find the strength to live and practice our faith as we should. This means being faithful to the sacraments and looking for ways to help and serve one another. We have a great parish – let us make it even greater.

As we hear in Holy Scripture, "May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! May the Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26). Pray for me, as I pray for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Dan O'Connell
Pastor



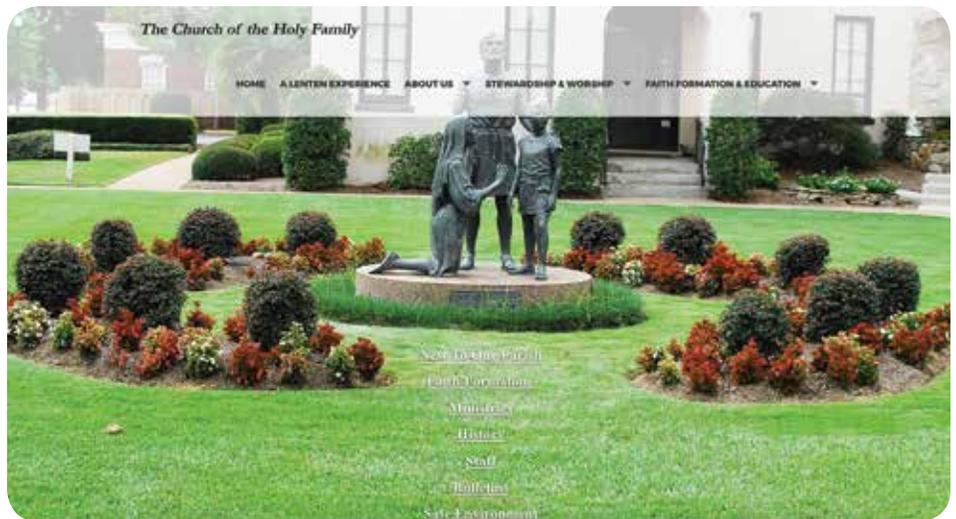


Reaching Our Parish *the Parish We*

Technology moves fast these days - and here at Holy Family, we are putting it to use! Technological advances give us great tools to better reach every member of the Body of Christ. Through the features on our website and mobile app, parishioners can be more connected to the parish and to the Church than ever.

"I've been involved with computers since the early days, and one thing I know about technology is that it is here to stay," says parishioner Rick Vale. "If you can use technology to enrich someone's faith or to help them get involved, I'm all for it! It's a great tool that people can use to get closer to God, and allows us to have connectivity with every member of the parish."

The parish's new website was launched in December, replacing the older website. One of the website's most important features is the calendar, which consolidates the schedules for all parish events



and activities. Rick - who is the chairperson of the Technology and Communications Committee, and also has leadership roles in both the Parish Council and the Building and Grounds Committee - notes that this calendar helps parishioners to take ownership of their parish.

"As part of stewardship, we promote ownership of the parish," he says. "Every parishioner has a stake in what happens at the parish

and in what the parish does. You can't do that if you're not informed.

"We are doing our best to keep the calendar up to date with all our parish activities, to let everyone know what is going on," he continues. "This way, everyone can be aware of all the different ways they can donate their time or their talent, and they can attend and get involved."

The new parish app also makes it easy for parishioners to be aware

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Parishioners Through Website and App

and involved. Created through myParish, the app expands on the website's features and allows you to personalize your experience.

"The myParish app is focused on Catholic life – they have over 1,500 parishes for whom they have created apps," Rick says. "It's a very rich and versatile app, and we're very excited about it.

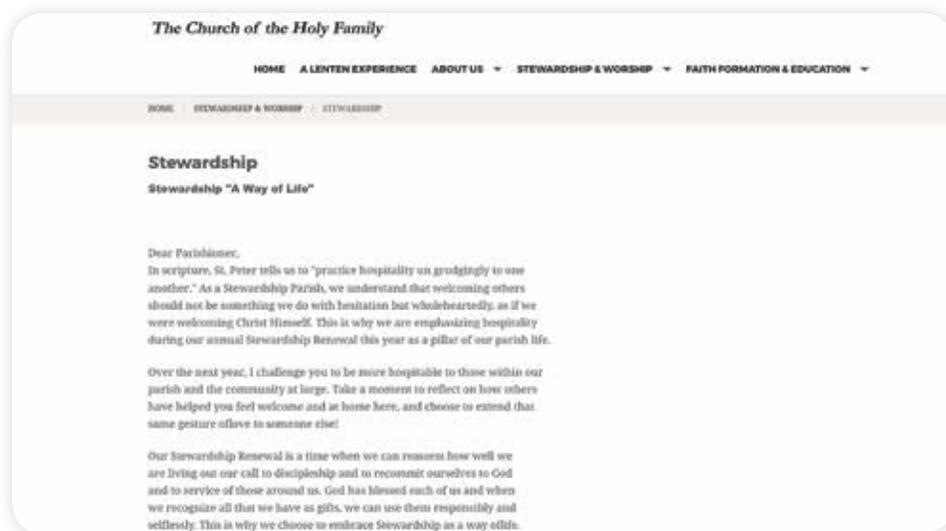
"It has a very visible and user-friendly calendar, which we sync with the calendar on our website," he adds. "It can also bring up events as a notification on your device, and you can choose which events you'd like to be notified about. The app also has a 'Groups' feature – for example, on the app we have an RCIA group, a Parish Council group, a Youth Ministry group, and so on. All of these groups have messaging capabilities, and if you are a member of the group, you can send private messages within the group. Another nice feature is that you can choose the Mass that you usually attend, and 20 minutes before the Mass you'll receive a notification to silence your phone."

While this technology is useful for all parishioners with a computer or mobile device, it's an especially useful tool for the youth of the parish.

"You usually don't see a young person without an iPhone or Android phone or a tablet – why not use that to our advantage to keep them involved in the Church?" Rick says. "We want young people to understand that we are here for them, and the different ways they can use technology to get involved. We want them to keep coming

back and to keep our parish alive and vibrant.

"We always want to have more people involved, who bring fresh and new ideas, and who bring their talents to bear for the benefit of the parish," he adds. "I would encourage anyone who has any ideas – especially technology-driven ideas – to reach out to me or to any member of the Parish Council. We'll listen, so please reach out! We are always looking for ideas that can bring youth and vitality to the parish."



If you would like more information, or if you have any ideas, please contact Rick Vale at rickvale@att.net. Please visit the parish website at www.holyfamilycolumbus.com, and check out the app at myparishapp.com.



Celebrating the Coronation of Mary *The May Crowning*

For many Catholics, May Crownings of statues or icons of the Blessed Mother have become rites of spring. Like flowers blooming or Mother's Day, this annual Marian devotion reminds us that the cold of winter is behind us, and it ushers in a month during which the Catholic Church pays special homage to Mary as the Queen of Heaven and Mother of God.

Generally taking place during the first weekend of the month, May Crownings bring children – often, recent First Communicants – out in their Sunday best to participate in processions and adorn statues of the Blessed Mother with crowns of flowers or actual gold crowns. Additionally, the children often place roses at her feet, and Catholics carry out similar practices in their homes by placing roses around statues of the Blessed Virgin, or even adding ornamentation to images of Mary. But where did this practice come from, and how did it develop into the tradition that we currently know and love?

The Coronation of Mary had been a popular subject in European art and literature for centuries, but the tradition of the May Crowning can be most accurately traced back to the late 16th century. Perhaps inspired by the practice of adding ornamentation to Marian icons that had been carried out by some Eastern churches, Pope Clement VIII added two crowns to the icon of Mary with the Infant Jesus in the St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome. The crowns were eventually lost, but were replaced by Gregory XVI in 1837 in a rite that was to become the standard practice for crowning.

While the May Crowning is not an official liturgical celebration on the Church calendar, it is an important practice in honoring Mary as the Queen of the Universe, and its imagery is especially influential in the faith formation of children. As Liz Kelly writes in *May Crowning, Mass, and Merton and Other Reasons I Love Being Catholic*, "One of the defining aspects of being Catholic is devotion to Mary. I favor no Marian celebration more highly than May Crowning, the feast that recognizes Mary as queen of heaven and earth. To a person of any age, this is a mighty big title, but to a child of five or six or

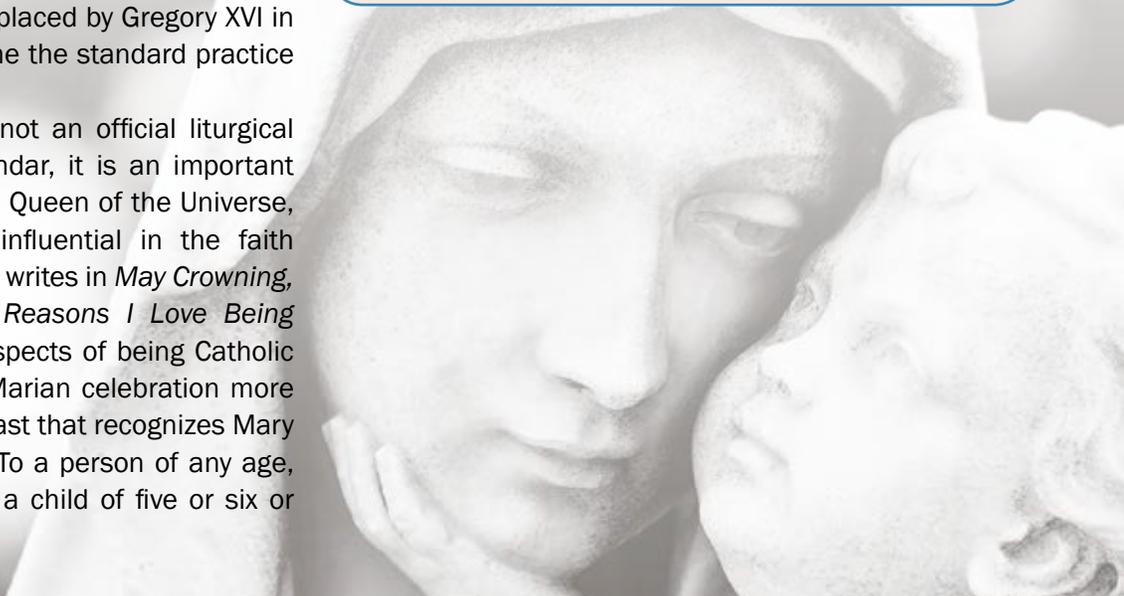
seven, it expands to enchanting, magical proportions. How many queens does one get a chance to meet in a lifetime, much less crown?"

This year, make a special effort to honor the coronation of Mary through participation in a personal or public May Crowning devotion.

Bring Flowers of the Rarest

**Bring flow'rs of the fairest,
Bring flow'rs of the rarest,
From garden and woodland
And hillside and vale;
Our full hearts are swelling,
Our glad voices telling
The praise of the loveliest
Rose of the vale.**

**O Mary! we crown thee with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May,
O Mary! we crown thee with blossoms today,
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May.**



Bereavement Committee Provides Care in Grief

When we suffer the loss of a loved one in death, it's a great comfort to have friends around us embrace us with understanding care. That, in essence, is what our Bereavement Committee does as it ministers to parishioners who are grieving.

The Bereavement Committee makes arrangements for a meal to be provided to the family either after the funeral, or after the prayer the night of the wake.

Belinda Johnson, Parish Social Director, is the direct contact for families served by the committee.

"Usually how it works, when someone passes, we receive a call at the parish office, and Fr. O'Connell responds," Belinda says. "He speaks with the family and if they need our ministry, I get the family's phone number. I'll call to ask what their needs are."

If the family so wishes, the meal is delivered to their home. However, if there is not enough room in the home, the meal is served in the parish hall. The committee handles all arrangements, and the Bereavement Account covers the cost.

And while the thought of a meal might be simple in itself, this outreach to those grieving their loss has a tremendous impact.

"It's very important for the church to be doing that, at a difficult time for the family," Belinda says. "The family needs to know that the church is there for them, to help any way they can. This is something the church has done to show them, in their time of need, that the parish is there for them. It's really important to the family."

Belinda has had the opportunity to witness the impact that the ministry has made for many families.

"The families are extremely thankful," she says. "Having the meal after the funeral brings families and friends together, and they have a nice meal to share. It makes them feel part of their church, and they are very grateful. This is just a nice way to say 'we care.'"

The Bereavement Committee welcomes new volunteers. Anyone interested may send Belinda Johnson an email at belinda4johnson@yahoo.com.



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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.

Drawing Close to Our Lady Through the Rosary

continued from front cover

about things. We just had a desire to gather people together regularly after daily Mass, inviting them to partake in praying these prayers.”

Putting their plan into action, the ladies began gathering parishioners together every Tuesday afternoon following the 12:10 p.m. Mass to pray the Rosary and every Thursday afternoon for the Divine Mercy Chaplet. They created banners to display in front of the statue of the Pieta, letting parishioners and visitors know that these prayers would be said after Mass. They also began passing out pamphlets on the Divine Mercy Chaplet, helping people become more familiar with this other special devotional.

Over the years, this simple ministry has produced many good fruits as parishioners have drawn closer to Our Lady and each other through her beloved prayer. At the beginning of each new Rosary, participants are invited to share their prayer intentions either aloud or by writing them down. Oftentimes, this leads to joyous celebrations as new births or healings from illness are shared. And in

times of suffering or sorrow, comfort is given from our Sorrowful Mother herself and from the faith community now joined together through intercessory prayer.

“It’s been a great source of community and spiritual strength,” Darlene says. “People just show up. It’s available for anyone who wants to participate, whether they’re a parishioner or just visiting.”

Though Carole is now gone and Darlene’s participation is limited due to work commitments, their legacy continues to live on through the weekly Rosary and Divine Mercy gatherings. All parishioners are invited to join this ministry of prayer as they honor our Heavenly Mother and, through her, Jesus Christ.

If you would like more information on the Rosary Group here at Holy Family, please contact the parish office at 706-323-6908.