

Queen of the Holy Rosary

CATHOLIC CHURCH



AN INSIDE LOOK AT RCIA THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

Bringing Souls Home to the Church

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Through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) process at our parish, God's grace works wonders. Searching souls come "home" to the loving embrace of Mother Church, inquisitive minds are enlightened with the eternal truths of Christ, and hearts are uplifted by the traditions of our sacred faith.

"I love the fact that people who are not Catholic have an interest in our Church," says Connie Crutchfield, who coordinates the RCIA process. "This is why I love RCIA — it is wonderful to see how the Holy Spirit leads people to come and learn about our faith, and eventually come into full communion with the Catholic Church. By the time they finish the RCIA journey, I hope they have gained a love for Jesus, our Catholic Church, and our religious traditions."

The RCIA classes meet every Tuesday in the church hall from 7 to 8:30 p.m. from October through Easter. During the classes, they cover a host of topics — Early Church History; an Introduction to the Seven Sacraments; the People of God; Christian Moral Living and the Dignity of Life; the Saints and the Blessed Mother. The topics are presented by Fr. Bill Bruning, who teaches most of the classes, as well as by various qualified speakers. For example, Deacon Jim Lavin teaches about eschatology, or the Last Things, while Deacon Bill Scholl covers the Sacrament of Matrimony and Social Justice. After each lecture, there is time for break-out sessions and group discussions. RCIA participants are also highly encouraged to refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Holy Bible, and other enriching materials.





RCIA *continued from front cover*

“I came to RCIA to get my questions answered, and I am really enjoying it,” says Robert Holiday, an RCIA candidate. “I love Fr. Bill, and I appreciate his Masses and his grasp on Christianity. The way he outlines the Catholic faith for us during RCIA is very helpful. He gives the history behind what Catholics believe, along with current examples on how it applies to us today.”

Furthermore, RCIA members participate in various major and minor rites, which coincide with three essential stages — the Precatechumenate/Inquiry, which leads up to the Rite of Acceptance (for the unbaptized) or the Rite of Welcoming (for the baptized); the Period of the Catechumenate which is followed by the Rite of Election (for the unbaptized) or the Call to Continuing Conversion (for the baptized); and lastly, the Period of Purification and Enlightenment which concludes with the Sacraments of Initiation (for the unbaptized) and Full Communion (for the baptized), typically at the Easter Vigil. The process concludes with the *Mystagogia* stage, which helps the newly initiated Catholics discover how to best integrate themselves into the life of the Church.

Those who come to RCIA have beautiful stories of how God’s grace carried them home to the loving embrace of the Catholic Church, their spiritual mother on earth.

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“My wife, Maria, is a cradle Catholic, and we have been married for almost 28 years,” Robert says. “She always wanted to have our marriage blessed by the Church, but I grew up Protestant, so I had some fundamental differences with the Catholic Church. However, during the last few years, every time I turned around, there always seemed to be a good Catholic who was willing to answer my questions with understandable answers. God kept putting Catholics in my path.”

This year, seven RCIA candidates are coming into full communion with the Catholic Church on Easter. Let us keep them in our heartfelt prayers, and give them a warm welcome!

If you would like further information about this beautiful ministry of God’s mercy, please contact Connie Crutchfield at 913-432-4616.



A Letter From Our Pastor

Celebrating Christ's Resurrection

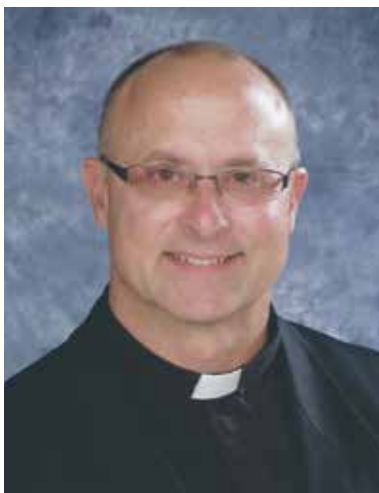
Dear Parishioners,

How did you feel at the end of the Palm Sunday Mass? You may not have noticed, but there was an abrupt shift of tone in that liturgy. It began with great joy, as we celebrated Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to the acclamation of the crowds. But then the mood shifted to sorrow, despair even, when the Passion Gospel was read, for we heard the shouts of "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" from those same crowds a few days later.

Palm Sunday, of course, was the beginning of Holy Week, the most important week in the Christian year. The confusion of conflicting moods is spread through the week, especially during the Easter Triduum — from sundown Holy Thursday to sundown Easter Sunday.

Holy Thursday offers us the glorious Mass of the Lord's Supper celebrating the institution of the Eucharist before we pass to the sadness of the betrayal and arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. The next day brings us the Good Friday Liturgy of the Passion with our recognition of what our sins did to the Incarnate Son of God. Then, after a day of waiting as we mourn Jesus' burial and repose in the tomb, we celebrate His victory over sin, Satan and death at the Easter Vigil on Saturday night or at the Masses the next day. If we have participated in all the main services of the Triduum, we arrive at Sunday evening exhausted but joyful.

This year, Palm Sunday fell on the final Sunday of March, and we observe Holy Week and Easter Sunday early in April. That means we will spend most of April in the Easter Season, a period filled with joy and thanksgiving. Our gladness comes not only because Christ rose from the dead, but also because we benefit from it. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (§654) puts it, "The Paschal mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life."



In other words, Christ's Resurrection is the source of our own future resurrection. St. Paul wrote about it to the Romans in the following words (Rom 6:5): "For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection."

Eternal life in union with Christ — a hope for a new life beginning now and extending on into heaven — is the result of Jesus' Resurrection. What greater grounds for thanksgiving can there be than this Easter hope? We should sing with joy about this promise

from God!

What's more, Paul also wrote (Col 3:1-2): "If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth."

Jesus' Resurrection and His promise of a new life for us mean that we need to live in conformity with our status as adopted children of God.

And how do we show our joy and our gratitude to God for this amazing gift He has given us? We join in worship and praise God by word and song. We share the Good News of Jesus' victory over death with our family, friends and neighbors. And we offer back to the Lord a portion of the time, talent and treasure He has entrusted to us. Yes, the Easter message that we share in the benefits of Christ's Resurrection is the ultimate foundation for all Christian stewardship.

The Lord is risen, alleluia!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. William Bruning
Pastor



STEPHEN MINISTRY

Meets Essential Spiritual Needs

An important part of stewardship — as one of the Four Stewardship Pillars — is service. We may initially think of service in terms of the Mass, from our lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to our ushers and greeters. But outside of the Mass, there are types of service that aim to address essential needs within our community, especially for those who are struggling spiritually. Meeting these spiritual needs is the core purpose of the Stephen Ministry.

Our Stephen Ministry is currently training a new group of six parishioners who will be joining the 15 other members in offering special care to others. The ministry members are not counselors, but they help those struggling in their lives to find a caring God.

“We’re a caring ministry, a listening ministry,” says John Audley, ministry coordinator. “The goal is to take people who are struggling and show them Jesus still cares. He’s with them, and He is using us as an instrument to let them

know this. All we do is open the door so God can go in and fix what needs to be fixed.”

Our Stephen Ministry at Queen of the Holy Rosary has been active since 2018 when Deacon Jim and John organized it. Area parishes have offered the ministry for more than 10 years.

The non-denominational Stephen Ministry was founded in 1975 by Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D., a Lutheran minister in St. Louis. He realized that when he was being overwhelmed by parishioners who needed to talk about their difficulties, laypeople who are trained in understanding could be helpful.

The Stephen Ministry at Queen of the Holy Rosary offers informational pamphlets, which are placed on a stand in the back of the church. Those wishing to contact the ministry for care can write their names on the form provided and place them in the lockbox nearby. The ministry will then contact them.





Through Listening, Caring and Being Present



Others often call the parish office or Fr. Bill directly, and callers are referred to the ministry. The ministry also is listed in the parish directory, with many sending an email, text, or phone call seeking care.

The first contact typically is to John. During his initial talk with the person, he determines if the Stephen Ministry's care is appropriate for that person. He takes the next step to pair that person with a ministry member, with everything handled in confidence.

"Once that pairing is arranged, I step aside," John says. "It's up to the care receiver to determine how the care is given. Now, a lot is going virtual. Most care is done over the phone. They've found a way to make it work."

Before the pandemic restrictions were put into place, many of the care meetings were done in the receiver's home. Others met in rooms in the parish convent. However, several ministry members know their receivers' pandemic

safety habits well enough that they meet while masked in the receivers' homes.

The key attribute needed in a Stephen Ministry member is the willingness to help. John cites a video on the ministry's website that featured those who had received the ministry's care. One recipient in the video said the best thing about the Stephen Ministry caregiver was "they showed up."

"Some of those interested in joining have been hesitant at first because they think they're in no position to give advice," John says. "We don't do that. Fr. Bill, when talking about the Eucharist, says, 'bread not broken can't be shared.' We're looking for broken individuals willing to share."

The ministry members have been meeting virtually twice a month for what John calls "Stephen Ministry for Stephen Ministers." The group maintains confidence about their care receivers, but they talk about how the relationship is going and get feedback from the other members. In normal times, the group has met in person. While John notes this has been "difficult and different," he is ever hopeful that the ministry will continue to grow.

"I hope people feel comfortable and trust us," he says. "We are a special resource. We're not to replace the priest or deacon, but we hope to offload some work from them. Growth and continuance is my biggest hope."

"We're a caring ministry, a listening ministry. The goal is to take people who are struggling and show them Jesus still cares. He's with them, and He is using us as an instrument to let them know this. All we do is open the door so God can go in and fix what needs to be fixed." — JOHN AUDLEY

Anyone who is interested in joining the Stephen Ministry may call John Audley at 913-645-4286. Although the training class is currently under way, John can locate a class in the area, thanks to the partner relationship with other parishes.



TEACHING BY EXAMPLE

The Importance of Prayer in a Child's Life

“I want to be just like Mom and Dad!” Perhaps nothing lifts a parent's heart like hearing these words. While certainly affirming, such words also remind us of the great responsibility that comes with parenthood.

Children often examine the lives of their parents when making decisions that will affect their own lives. For example, a young boy may dream of becoming a physician one day, just like his father. Or a young girl may hope to become a veterinarian, just like her mother. Could the same be said about their parents' faith lives?

Just as children learn traits and values from their parents, they should also learn the importance and great joy of developing a personal relationship with Christ. And the foundation of such a relationship is prayer — conversation with God.

How should we go about teaching our children to pray? There are several methods, but none works as well as teaching by example. Begin teaching the importance of prayer by praying openly with your spouse. This teaches children that prayer is meaningful and important, and not just a ritual. Also, pray with your children — in the morning and in the evening. Show your sons and daughters the importance of beginning and ending each day in prayer.

While a fortunate dilemma, it's a dilemma nonetheless — Catholics face the challenge of discerning which prayers to use, considering the thousands available. A good rule of thumb is to start simple — maybe an *Our Father* or *Hail Mary*, and then move into something more complex — *Hail, Holy Queen* or *Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel*,

among others. Begin with prayers your children can pick up fairly quickly. Not only will this show them that praying can be fun and easy, but shorter prayers are also usually easier to understand.

Teach your children the importance of spontaneous prayer, rather than just prescribed prayers. Spontaneous prayer is any prayer that is created at the same time it is offered. Another way to think of spontaneous prayer is “praying in your own words.” Structure spontaneous prayers according to the ACTS acronym — Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. In layman's terms, this means beginning each prayer with words of adoration, such as “You are the Lord God Almighty. I love you.” Move into a period of contrition, asking God's forgiveness for the sins you have committed. Then, give words of thanksgiving, thanking God for the gifts He has given. Finally, spend time sharing with God your heart's desires. These intentions can be personal or on another's behalf. Following this format ensures that spontaneous prayer “covers all the bases,” and doesn't become just a mental wish list. While God wants to hear and grant our wishes, He also expects words of adoration, contrition and thankfulness.

The best time to begin praying with your children is right now. The sooner they learn about prayer, the sooner they can begin cultivating their own relationship with Jesus. Many parents even pray with their children before birth, hoping their unborn son or daughter can hear their words in utero. Remember, there is no better way to teach one's children about the value of prayer than by example.



MEET DELORES AND DON OSWALD

Dedicated Longtime Parishioners Embrace Family, Fellowship and Stewardship

It's often in the most difficult moments of life that you find out who will be there for you. For longtime parishioner Delores (Miller) Oswald, this was true. When she suffered the sudden loss of her first husband, she was blessed by the support of her parish community.

"I've always said that it was by the grace of God that we get through these things," Delores says. "The parish gave me an outlet and by God's grace, I was able to stay connected."

Delores and Charles Miller joined the parish when they moved to the area in 1960, with their then-infant daughter. The family quickly became involved in the life of the parish and school, with all five of their children attending and graduating from Queen of the Holy Rosary and Bishop Miege High School. Charles and Delores were active in the community, with Charles being one of the first Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and serving on the Parish Council, and Delores serving with Queens Ladies, Room Mothers, Girl Scouts, and Den Mothers.

"Queen of the Holy Rosary became my second home," Delores says.

The family was devastated by the sudden loss of their patriarch to heart failure in 1997 but experienced the support of the community coming together in their grief.

"His funeral was one of the largest they ever had — he touched a lot of people," Delores says. "We were grateful for the support of the parish and friends."

Several years later, Delores experienced another loss. This time, it was a friend, the wife of a couple with whom she had traveled to Fatima on pilgrimage. As her friend was nearing the end of her illness, Delores brought her a statue of Our Lady of Fatima to bring her comfort. After her passing, the friend's husband, Don Oswald, returned the statue to Delores.



Parishioners Delores and Don Oswald love serving and connecting with their friends at Queen of the Holy Rosary.

"I always say it was Our Lady who brought us together," says Delores, with a smile. "He brought the statue back and we started going to lunch because we were both alone and we enjoyed each other's company."

"It's amazing," she adds. "God works in special ways."

The couple was married in 2003 and the community of Queen of the Holy Rosary was quick to welcome Don into the parish. The couple soon became involved with the Seniors Club, helping with potlucks. Don became an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion

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Queen of the Holy Rosary

CATHOLIC CHURCH



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Delores and Don Oswald *continued from page 7*

and an altar server at daily Mass, and Delores continued to serve as an Extraordinary Minister and helping with funeral luncheons, making baptismal garments and altar linens, and bringing Communion to the homebound.

“Everyone made Don feel welcome,” Delores says.

Between them, the Oswalds now have nine children, 26 grandchildren, and are beginning to welcome great-grandchildren. However, the community they have at the parish will always hold a special place in their hearts.

“It has been a privilege to serve our parish and we are thankful for all of God’s blessings,” Delores says. “The

parish has been our lifeline for faith and friendships — parish life has meant everything.”

Delores encourages her fellow parishioners to find ways to become involved in the parish community and to invest in relationships with others in the family of God at Queen of the Holy Rosary.

“Make the time for church and friendships,” Delores says. “I have been so blessed, I can’t even tell you. I can’t imagine life without my parish family.”

Thank you, Delores and Don, for the ways you serve our parish community. We’re grateful for your witness through the years!

“It has been a privilege to serve our parish and we are thankful for all of God’s blessings. The parish has been our lifeline for faith and friendships — parish life has meant everything.” — DELORES OSWALD

WEEKEND MASS

Saturday: 4:00 p.m. | Sunday: 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

DAILY MASS

Tuesday - Friday: 8:15 a.m. | First Saturday: 8:15 a.m.