



Stewardship Newsletter

March
2014

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Letter from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

Every year, we are asked to make a commitment of time, talent, and treasure to our parish. While we make this commitment for the entire year, it often seems that different aspects of our stewardship commitment are emphasized at different times. For example, there seems to be a greater emphasis on the sharing of our treasure at Christmas time. We adopt needy families for Christmas or are more likely to contribute to different charities at Christmas.

The season of Lent is upon us, and Lent is a time when our commitment of time is emphasized more than those of talent and treasure. Our commitment of time often seems to intertwine with our commitment of talent, but our time commitment is not so much the time we give in service or in different ministries. It is first and foremost a commitment to spend time with God in prayer. That has always been an emphasis during Lent. We try to prepare ourselves for Easter and the renewal of our Baptismal promises by spending more time with God in prayer.

That commitment to spend more time with God in prayer is the part of our stewardship commitment that is easiest to overlook. We tend to think of stewardship more as the sharing of our talents in service and different ministries or the generous sharing of our treasure: our material resources. We don't often think of stewardship in terms of time spent with God in prayer, yet these other commitments flow forth from the time we spend with God in prayer. Spending time with God in prayer helps us to recognize God's generosity to us and moves us to give back generously.

Lent presents us with many opportunities to spend more time with God in prayer, and I hope we will take advantage of these opportunities. One such opportunity we have is our Parish Mission which will take place March 2 – 4 at

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Deacon Mark Phelan named MHR Person of the Year

Every year in January, our Parish Pastoral Council hosts the Parish Appreciation Dinner for all the people who share their time, talent and treasure to make our parish the wonderful community it is. The dinner also provides an opportunity to thank one person or couple specifically for their service and contributions to our parish family with the Person of the Year Award. This year, the award was presented to Deacon Mark Phelan.

I first interviewed Mark for this stewardship newsletter back in December, 2011, for an article introducing him as our newest deacon. It is gratifying to now write an article about his well-earned award just a few years later. For the purpose of a stewardship newsletter, Mark is an excellent example for all of us on how to share our time, talent and treasure with our parish community.

Mary Ann Sheeren, Parish Pastoral Council president summarizes the presentation: "On the evening of January 25, there were approximately 150 people at the Parish Appreciation Dinner. After dinner, Father Hyland got up and thanked all in attendance for their selfless volunteering throughout the past year, and expressed how happy he was to see everyone that evening. He also began to explain that the parish honors one person or couple each year for their exemplary stewardship.



He went on to give little hints who the person was...

This person grew up in MHR Parish, played football for MHR, coached football for MHR, is raising his family here at MHR, is a trustee here in Evergreen Park, and has now dedicated part of his

life to becoming a deacon and serving all the parishioners here at MHR.

Halfway through Father Hyland's speech, I looked over at Mark; it was clear he realized that he was our person of the year. As soon as his name was announced, two of his four kids (Luke and Jennifer) came into the gym to see their dad receive his award. Mark gave a very brief speech saying how humbled he was and how much he loved MHR. The award caught him off guard, and he was very emotional. The whole family posed for a picture before Mark received a framed sketch of MHR that was signed and dedicated to Mark by local artist Tim McCarthy. Mark will also have a brick planted in our brick garden in his honor come May."

I spoke with Mark recently, to congratulate him and ask him about the award. "I am so humbled and honored to receive this award," he said. "I have received so much from MHR, done so well here. I think our Lord wants us to be involved in ministry, more than just writing a check (though the checks are always welcome, too). Any small service I do, I get back ten-fold." Isn't that the definition of Stewardship? Sharing Time, Talent and Treasure.

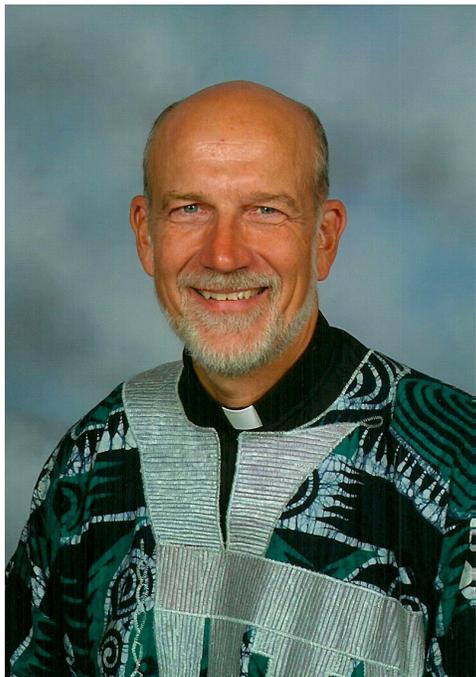
Thank you, Mark, for all that you have done and continue to do for our parish community, and congratulations on your award. You deserve it.

By: Colleen Klimczak



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"Embracing the Call" Mission Prepares Parish for Lent



Again this year, our parish will host a preached mission on the Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday Evenings immediately preceding Ash Wednesday— March 2, 3, and 4. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.

The theme of the Mission is "Embracing the Call." It will offer an opportunity for each parishioner to prepare his or her heart and mind spiritually for the Lenten

season. All members of the parish—young and old—are encouraged to attend one, two, or all three of the services.

The Mission's preacher will be Father Robert Miller, Pastor of Saint Dorothy Parish. Father Bob, as he asks to be called, is a member of the renowned Redemptorist order. Redemptorists are often missionaries and are widely known for their preaching of parish missions throughout the country. Dr. Mark Nimo, a Catholic layman and evangelist from Ghana, Africa, will assist Father Bob in the work of our Mission.

The three services will center on distinct symbols of our Faith: the Bible as the affirming Word of God, the Crucifix as the ultimate statement of the Father's love for us in Jesus, and the Easter Candle as the Light of Christ, dispelling the darkness.

The Sunday evening service will begin with an entrance procession in which members of the congregation carry the Bible to a place of enthronement in the sanctuary. The

procession will be followed by a "Prayer over the Preacher" and his commissioning to lead the Mission. Following Father's homily, the assembly will then be asked to welcome and bless one another with the Sign of the Cross on the forehead.

The Monday service will also begin with a procession and Bible enthronement and "Prayer over the Preacher." Following the homily, the assembly will renew their Baptismal vows and come forward in an "Altar Call" to be received by one of our parish priests who will offer each member of the congregation an individual blessing and words of encouragement.

Tuesday's service will emphasize Christ as our Light and will begin with processing the Easter Candle into Church. Inside the church, each member of the assembly will hold a lighted taper while the lights are dimmed and the full effect of our individual candles will dispel the darkness.

A committee composed of our priests and members of the parish has been meeting to plan the various aspects of the Mission, such as publicity, liturgy, hospitality, babysitting, and transportation.

Each evening will begin at 7:00 P.M. and last for a little over an hour. For those with small children, free babysitting service will be offered in Adamich Hall. Those who cannot drive can avail themselves of our Parish Driver Ministry to drive them to and from each evening service. If you wish to take advantage of the free babysitting services or need a ride to or from each evening, please call the rectory at 425-5354, extension 203.

As an encouragement to attend any or all of the evenings, Father Miller will preach the homily at all Masses on the weekend preceding the Mission—March, 1 and 2.

By: Steve Ligda

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The Sacraments of the Easter Vigil

The Easter season is a time when we, as Catholics, celebrate and honor the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At no other time during the year do we sense the varied emotions that come along with this season. The sadness and gratitude we feel about the crucifixion, juxtaposed with the elation and joy over the resurrection of our Lord, creates a great sense of solemnity in our community.

For adults participating in the process of RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), they may be experiencing the teachings of Jesus in the Catholic Church for the first time. According to the website at Holy Name Cathedral (<http://www.holynamecathedral.org/index.php?page=rcia>), RCIA is for three groups of people:

- Those who have never been baptized in any faith,
- People who were baptized in another Christian faith, and
- Baptized Catholics who have never received the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

During the Easter Vigil, the Mass said in the evening on Holy Saturday, RCIA candidates receive the sacraments of initiation in the Catholic Church for the very first time. The sacraments of Christian initiation - Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist - lay the foundations of every Christian life. According to Church teaching, "The sharing in the divine nature given to men through the grace of Christ bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishing of natural life. The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of the divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church #1212*)

According to Winnie Ligda, who coordinates the RCIA program at Most Holy Redeemer, "there is a difference between a Candidate and a Catechumen. A Candidate is a person from another faith who has been baptized in the Trinitarian Form and seeks to become Catholic. A Catechumen is a person who has never been baptized."

Winnie Ligda reports, "The Easter Vigil is the high point of the church year. The Paschal Candle reminds us that Christ is our Light and as baptized Catholics we are responsible for sharing his light with the world. The service recounts our salvation history through the seven Old Testament readings, Paul's epistle, and the gospel. The Paschal candle makes holy the water in the baptismal font and we are blessed with that water and reminded of our own baptism."

This year, there are three people in our parish seeking to become Catholic: one Candidate and two Catechumens. This year the Easter Vigil will take place on Holy Saturday evening, April 19th at 7:30 p.m. The events of the night will be the culmination of the journey of faith undertaken by these three people since last September. Be sure to join our parish's newest members of the Catholic faith at this very special ceremony.

By: Lisa M. Downey



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Society of St. Vincent DePaul Helps Neighbors in Need

As you read this newsletter, the liturgical season of Lent is fast approaching. Lent, the 40 days leading to Easter is characterized as a time of prayerful reflection, penitential practices, fasting, and almsgiving. As our parish marks the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, the collection at all the Masses that day will benefit the Society of St. Vincent DePaul. Perhaps, this Lent, we might add the work of the Society to our Lenten practices by helping the Society; we can foster the spirit of our own stewardship.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul is an international Catholic lay organization which originated in Paris, France. Its members join together in friendship and grow spiritually by providing person to person services to those in need. The Society was one of the early ministries of Most Holy Redeemer Parish at the time of its founding more than 70 years ago; however, it became dormant for many years. Then in 1980, the Pastor of MHR, Father Peter Franzen approached some of the parish members who had participated in the first Christ Renews the Parish weekend program to reinstate it. There was a great deal of skepticism among the CRHP participants about whether there was an actual need since the economy in the area seemed to be healthy. However, Father Franzen had personally witnessed and helped many who were economically challenged and who preferred to be helped confidentially. Despite initial doubts, the Society was reinstated and continues to work with those who need help today.

As some of the original founders moved or passed away, other parishioners have aided in the ministry, contributing their time and talent to the ministry. Over the last three decades, numerous neighbors-in-need have been aided as they experienced job losses, accidents, illness, disability and other unexpected turmoil in their lives. This winter's



extreme cold and the change in long term unemployment benefits will probably cause more in the area to seek help.

Most frequently, the help is for living expenses, utility bills, medical needs, and food. The Society will also refer those in need to social service agencies that can be of assistance. Anyone living in the geographic area of Most Holy Redeemer parish is eligible to receive help from the St Vincent de Paul group regardless of their religious affiliation. A call to the rectory asking for help will be referred to the Society. All information obtained is considered privileged.

Funding for the work of the Society is provided entirely by special collections and the receipts from the Poor Boxes. How can you help the Society continue its work and show your



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practice of stewardship at the same time? First of all, be as generous as you can for the collection on Ash Wednesday knowing that as you share your treasure, your neighbors will be helped. In addition, you can combine your Lenten penances with the Society. If you are giving up Starbucks for Lent, you can drop the almost \$5 that you would spend for a Carmel Frappuccino into the poor box. If you are forgoing movies, the cost of a ticket or a Redbox rental could also be dropped in. The practice of sharing your treasure can be shared throughout the year too. As you clean your closets and cupboards, drop your unwanted clothes and household goods either in the bins near 95th St. in the parking lot or take them over the St. Vincent DePaul store at 93rd and Western. Finally, since you probably pass the Poor Box most weeks on your way into church, dropping change or folding currency is always a good way to share with those in need no matter what the season.

The MHR Society of St. Vincent DePaul team members share their time and talent helping those in the area who need their aid. While most of us cannot do that, we can share our treasure—both during Lent and throughout the year.

By: Jan McAuliffe

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the Parish Newsletter instead of a print copy, please send an email to ltrasko@mostholyredeemer.org

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Liturgical Schedule of Events

Date	Event	Time
March 2nd	RCIA Rite of Sending	11:00 a.m.
March 2nd	Parish Mission	7:00 p.m.
March 3rd	Parish Mission	7:00 p.m.
March 4th	Parish Mission	7:00 p.m.
March 5th	Ash Wednesday Masses	6:30 and 8:30 a.m., 7:30 p.m.
March 5th	Ash Wednesday Prayer Service	3:30 p.m.
March 8th	Family Mass	4:30 p.m.
March 13th	Adoration Chapel Open House	6:30 p.m.
March 15th	Saint Joseph's Mass and Table	4:30 p.m.
March 20th	Ministry Commission Workshop	7-9:00 p.m.
March 22nd	1st Scrutiny - RCIA	4:30 p.m.
March 30th	2nd Scrutiny - RCIA	8:00 a.m.
April 6th	3rd Scrutiny - RCIA	9:30 a.m.
April 6th	Family Mass	9:30 a.m.
April 8th	Taize Prayer Service and Reconciliation	7:00 p.m.
April 12th	Extended Reconciliation	3-4:30 p.m.
April 13th	Palm Sunday	Celebrated at all Masses
April 15th	Private Reconciliation	7-8:00 p.m.
April 17th	Holy Thursday Liturgy	7:30 p.m.
April 18th	Living Stations	3:00 p.m.
April 18th	Good Friday Liturgy	7:30 p.m.
April 19th	Private Reconciliation	10-11:00 a.m.
April 19th	Easter Basket Blessing	11:00 a.m.
April 19th	Easter Vigil	7:30 p.m.
April 20th	Easter Sunday	Masses at 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 a.m.
April 27th	Divine Mercy Sunday	1-4:00 p.m.
May 1st	School May Crowning	12:00 p.m.
May 3rd	First Holy Communion	11:00 a.m.
May 4th	May Crowning	11:00 a.m.
May 26th	Memorial Day	Mass at 9:00 a.m.
June 6th	Anointing Mass	8:30 a.m.
June 11th	Carnival	6-10:00 p.m.
June 12th	Carnival	6-10:00 p.m.
June 13th	Carnival	6-11:00 p.m.
June 14th	Carnival	4-11:00 p.m.
June 15th	Carnival	3-10:00 p.m.

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Address Service Requested

Mass and Reconciliation Schedule:

Weekday Morning Masses:
Monday-Friday 6:30 and 8:30

Weekend Masses:
Saturday: 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.
Sunday: 8:00 a.m. 9:30 a.m. 11:00
a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Reconciliation:
Saturday 4:00 p.m.

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7 PM in the church. Father Robert Miller, the pastor of St. Dorothy church in Chicago, will be conducting the mission this year. He is a very energetic and enthusiastic speaker. Why not spend some time renewing yourself spiritually by joining us for the mission?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a good way to spend some time taking stock of our lives, asking God's forgiveness, and beginning again to follow our lord more closely. Why not take advantage of the opportunities offered to receive this sacrament during Lent, especially if it's been a while since your last confession? The sacrament is offered every Saturday from 4 - 4:30 PM, after the morning Masses on Wednesday, or by appointment. We also have a communal reconciliation service during Lent.

Many people will attend Mass more often during Lent. More will take part in devotions such as the Stations of the Cross, or attend classes or scripture programs offered during Lent, or just devote more time to personal prayer. We can also try to attend more of the Easter Iridium services during Holy Week. These are all are ways in which we can make a greater commitment of our time during the weeks of Lent.

Our commitment of time is often the most overlooked aspect of our stewardship commitment. I hope that we will see the upcoming season of Lent as an ideal time to work on this aspect of stewardship. I hope that we will take advantage of the opportunities given to us during Lent to spend more time with God in prayer. Doing so will have us prepared for Easter. It will also help us in our practice of stewardship as we become more aware of God's goodness to us through the time we spend with God in prayer.

In Christ,



Fr. Jim Hyland, Pastor