



St. Anne Catholic Church

February 2016

Stewardship Council: Deepening Our Parish Relationship with Jesus

Here at St. Anne, we have a wide range of ministries – Coffee and Donuts, Lectors, Rosary Guild, etc. – that seek to bring the love of Christ to others through their service. Maybe you are part of one of these ministries or have been served by one of them.

There is another ministry group that may go unnoticed at times, but plays a vital role in the success of the various ministries at our parish. In its inaugural year, the 10 members of our Stewardship Committee have worked diligently to encourage, support, and cultivate an atmosphere of giving and hospitality amongst our parish community.

"This last year has been a lot of education for ourselves as a council," shares Terry Laughlin, who heads up our St. Anne Stewardship Council. "At our monthly gatherings, we have discussions on how we can promote stewardship as a way of life and how to better support the ministries we currently have."

Giving of our time, talent and treasure is not meant to be a chore or something to check off the list. Rather, it is meant to flow out of gratitude for the gifts that we are given from our relationship with God. The council is dedicated to promoting a spirit of generosity within the St. Anne community of faith.

"We are here to help the parish get people involved in ministries that suit their skills and desire to give," Terry says. "Our hope is that we can come to see that stewardship is



The Stewardship Committee celebrates Fr. Kastl's birthday after one of their monthly gatherings. (Back row, from left) Deacon Tom Moyes, Brenda Moyes, Brianna Noonan, Jodi Erickson, Mena Evans; (front row, from left) Judy Lalicker, Elaine Yarnall, Fr. Kastl, Betty Taylor, Jodi Lalicker.

more than just giving money. As we invest our time in a ministry or get more involved in our prayer life, we will draw closer to God and deepen our relationship with Jesus – as individuals and as a unified community."

It is often the trend that when you freely and joyfully give of yourself, you end up receiving more in return than you could have ever imagined. This proved to be true for

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How Can We Model the Faith for Our Children?



The Church has made it clear that parents are primarily responsible for the spiritual and cognitive development of their children in matters of the faith. As the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, states, "Husbands and wives find their proper vocation in being witnesses of the faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children" (Chapter 4, Section 35). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* further emphasizes this vocation, by pointing out that the moral education and spiritual formation of children is not only the right, but the responsibility, of their parents: "The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable...Parents have the first responsibility for the education

of their children" (CCC 2221, 2223).

But how can we as parents create an environment in the home conducive to spiritual and moral development? As busy adults, how are we to disseminate the knowledge and understanding of the tenets of the faith to our children in the way that a trained and experienced catechist can? Furthermore, how do we strike a balance between teaching our children in the home and not interfering with the faith formation and sacramental preparation they are currently receiving through their parish school or religious education program?

The answer to all of these questions is stewardship.

Indeed, it is important that we reinforce the lessons that our children learn in school and at religious educa-

tion classes by talking to them about the faith, reading Sacred Scripture with them, and spending time in family prayer. And there are several authoritative resources online that can help parents in this task, including Catholic Parents OnLine – www.catholicparents.org – which links parents to numerous websites and documents that can help them in talking to their children about the faith.

But the best way that we can teach our children is by serving as a living example to them of how to live as disciples of Christ. If we want our children to grow up as strong Catholics and to display a lifelong commitment to their faith, then it is important that we ourselves live a committed faith life. This includes an ongoing commitment to our own faith formation as adults and active participation in the sacraments. It also includes the giving back of our time, talent and treasure in service of our community in thanksgiving for the gifts that God has given us.

Parenting can be a tough vocation, and children deal with many influences in their lives that exist in stark contrast to the values that their parents often hope to instill within them. Fortunately for parents, the stewardship way of life provides a simple and effective model for teaching our children in matters of the faith. By living as stewards of God's gifts and reaping the spiritual rewards that accompany this lifestyle, we are tangibly showing our children that sharing of our gifts and talents leads to a life of happiness and spiritual fulfillment. In doing this, we give them a good opportunity to follow in our footsteps and make their faith a top priority for the rest of their lives.

Lent – A Time of Preparation, Introspection and Change

Dear Parishioners,

This is the holiest time of year for Catholics. Lent, of course, officially begins on Ash Wednesday. Most of us are familiar with the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Those are important in relation to repentance and renewal. Everything we do should remind us that Lent is a penitential season.

In the midst of this serious time, however, we must keep in mind that the word “Lent” comes from a Middle English word, which means “spring-time,” and the time of lengthening of days. When we think springtime, our thoughts tend to be lighter and brighter. That is how we need to view Lent, just as we recognize the joy, colors and brightness of Easter.

In the Church over the past few decades, we as Catholics have come to the insight that Lent is more than a time to give something up. It is also a time to add something, to take action about our faith in ways that make it more meaningful and real. This does not mean we should not make sacrifices – we need to consider that while sacrifices may mean denying ourselves something, they can also mean we are filling that denial with a positive action.

We are talking about conversion again. We are speaking of stewardship again. This is a time when we should be looking within ourselves. It is a time for introspection. How can we improve? Maybe we need to be a bit more patient with people in our lives – perhaps we need to adjust some of our attitudes. One thing we all need to do is to see and find the



good in many small things in our lives.

Do we spend quality time with God, and with our families? Do we help someone in need? Do we set aside a time each day to pray? The possibilities for change and positive action seem quite endless. The point is to do it. Stewardship is a life of action – Lent should be a time of action.

Rather than being concerned about how others see us, this is a time for us to look at ourselves. We may need to rethink and re-evaluate our faith and especially our relationship with God. The Lord has called each of us to love and serve. Every day and every season is a time for us to carry out that

call – but now, during Lent in preparation for Easter, this is very important indeed.

The 40 days of Lent are a time for us to live life as a disciple and as a steward of our God-given gifts.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Kastl". The signature is written on a light-colored, textured surface, possibly a piece of paper or a card.

Rev. Gary Kastl
Pastor





“Do Not Conform St. Anne’s Youth



Gillian Jenkins



Gillian Jenkins and her father, Michael Jenkins

Faith-filled young adults are a powerful countercultural witness. In a society that lauds instant gratification and empty relativism, they offer an example of seeking not to be “conformed to this world” but to be “transformed” so that they “may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

Living stewardship challenges our young people to center their lives on Christ despite the battering influences of our age. Fortified by formation within the home and anointed with the Holy Spirit through Confirmation, our young people endeavor each day to make decisions that bring them and others closer to Christ.

Within St. Anne faith community, we introduce you to two high school students who offer daily examples of living stewardship by “not conforming to this world.”

Gillian Jenkins

Before middle school, Gillian Jenkins had never been to church in her life. When she went to Mass for the first time at St. Anne, she was overwhelmed with awe.

“The Mass was so beautiful, especially the choir,” Gillian says. “I remember sitting there and thinking, I want to do that, to be in that choir. Actually, it was being in choir that got me interested in converting.”

In seventh grade, Gillian joined the Catholic Church and switched from attending public school to attending Catholic school. Now a senior at Bishop Kelley, Gillian believes that music and the witness of others were and still are the greatest influences on her faith.

“Bishop Kelley is filled with some of the best examples of what it means to be Christ-like,” Gillian says. “My teachers and my friend group have such strong faith that it has been contagious.”

Gillian believes that it is imperative for young adults to foster a relationship with Christ because in middle school, high school and college, young people’s lives are constantly changing.

“That relationship with Christ keeps you anchored,” Gillian says. “In the midst of such uncertainty, having Christ as an anchor takes the pressure off of you. It is His plan, not your plan.”

A cantor and choir member, Gillian has found ways to

Be Transformed.” Live Their Faith

use her gifts for the faith community. Since she loves working with children, Gillian helps lead the children’s choir, teaches third-grade Faith Formation, and assists with the music for Vacation Bible School.

She encourages other youth to find opportunities to give that fit with their talents and interests.

“I was once told that being Catholic is a verb,” Gillian says. “It is important for me to live out my faith because that gives purpose to your faith and helps you become closer to God.”

Daniel Polovich

There’s only one way Daniel Polovich can describe the experience of receiving his Confirmation – eye-opening.

“Confirmation will leave an impression on me forever,” he says. “No matter what problems I have, I can go to my parents or to Christ. I cannot hide anything from Him.”

Before attending youth group, Daniel had a preconceived idea about what it would be like – a bunch of high school students sitting together and praying for two hours.

Needless to say, it was nothing like he expected!

“Youth Group and our youth leader, Brianna Noonan, have redefined my faith,” Daniel, a senior at Broken Arrow High School, says. “I have met more friends in Youth Group than I have in my years in high school. They’re relatable and passionate about their faith.”

Today, the St. Anne Youth Group is thriving – over a hundred young adults gather for youth group every week. Many 11th and 12th-grade students, like Daniel, lead small groups – this way, young adults can learn from their slightly older peers.

“Youth group is fun and active,” Daniel says. “I learned from one of my friends that I am one of the reasons he wants to come to Youth Group. I am making an impact, and I hope to be a good role model for others.”

At school, Daniel also works with young students



Jim Detello, Daniel Polovich, Bishop Slattery, and Jim Polovich

through a school program that brings high school students into kindergarten classrooms to help them with basic lessons.

“They look up to me and can relate to me,” Daniel says. “I have to be a good example for them and a better person each day.”

If any young adults in the community want to take the first step into a deeper relationship with Christ and the faith, Daniel offers a simple suggestion.

“Get into Youth Group,” Daniel says. “It’s makes the faith more fun and has brought me further into the Mass. Get a good relationship with Christ during these years.”

“That relationship with Christ keeps you anchored. In the midst of such uncertainty, having Christ as an anchor takes the pressure off of you. It is His plan, not your plan.” – Gillian Jenkins



A History of Lent and Lenten Practices

When we approach the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, we look toward a season of preparation, sacrifice and penance, culminating in Holy Week and the joyous celebrations of Easter. And while the liturgical season of Lent offers us a time for solemn reflection, it is also widely welcomed each year as an opportunity to be drawn ever closer to our faith.

But just how did this penitential season come to be? And how did the reverent hallmarks of Lent – such as fasting and prayer – become so deeply ingrained in our observance of this season?

To understand the Lenten season, it is important to understand the word “Lent” itself, which is derived from two Anglo-Saxon terms: *lencten*, meaning “spring,” and *lenctentid*, which is the term for both “springtide” and “March” – of course, Lent often falls throughout most of the month of March, and during the transition into (and renewal of) the spring season. In Latin, the corresponding term for “Lent,” *quadragesima*, refers to its dating from the 40th day before Easter.

This brings us to another hallmark of the Lenten season – its length of 40 days. However, Lent was not originally observed for this length of time. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, Easter preparations consisted of three days of fasting and prayer. In some places, this preparation was extended into the entire week prior to Easter – which we now observe as Holy Week. There is also some evidence that, in Rome, Easter preparation was as long as three weeks.

In its early form, Lent was an intense period of spiritual and liturgical preparation for catechumens who were to be baptized at Easter. At the time, many members of the community observed this period of preparation alongside the catechumens. But, as time passed and more people were baptized as infants, the connection between catechumens and Lenten preparation gave

way to a focus on the themes of repentance and fasting during Lent for all Christians.

It was not until the fourth century – upon the legalization of Christianity – that Lent developed into its current length of 40 days, which mirrored the length of Jesus’ fast and temptation in the desert, as chronicled in Luke 4:1-13.

Yet, interestingly, the Lenten observations of fasting and prayer did not always take place for 40 consecutive days. For instance, in Jerusalem, fasting was observed for 40 days, Monday through Friday, but not on Saturday or Sunday – thus, Lent lasted for a total of eight weeks. In Rome and the West, fasting took place for six weeks, Monday through Saturday, with Lent being observed over six weeks. The practice of fasting for six days over the course of six weeks eventually prevailed, with Ash Wednesday being instituted to account for 40 fasting days prior to Easter.

And as the length of Lenten observance developed over time, so did the observance of fasting itself. At first, some areas of the Church abstained from all meat and animal products, while others made exceptions for certain foods, like fish. And while a person was to only have one meal a day, a smaller repast would be allowed so that manual laborers could maintain their strength throughout the day. Eventually, eating meat was allowed throughout the week, save for Ash Wednesday and on Fridays.

In fact, two of our most common and beloved Lenten and Easter traditions – the Shrove Tuesday meal and Easter eggs – developed from these early Lenten observations. Initially, abstinence from dairy products was observed during Lent, with dispensations given if pious works had taken place. Eventually, this particular rule of abstinence was relaxed entirely. Today, pre-Lenten pancake breakfasts, Easter egg decoration and egg hunts remain as enjoyable seasonal opportunities for fellowship and fun within our parish families!

Lenten Confession Opportunities

All Saturday afternoon confessions in Lent will be from 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Wednesdays, from 12-1 p.m. and 6-6:45 p.m.

Parish Penance Rite – March 10 from 5-7 p.m. in the church

Good Friday from 4-5:30 p.m.

Lenten Parish Mission

Fr. Godfrey Mullen, OSB, will return to St. Anne once again for our Lenten Parish Mission. The mission will start with Fr. Godfrey preaching all the Masses on the weekend of Feb. 27-28. Fr. Godfrey will also celebrate Mass on Feb. 29, March 1 and March 2 at 7 p.m. each night with an extended Lenten message. A reception will be held after each Mass in the parish hall. The nursery will be available.



“Our Children Are Becoming Excited About Their Catholic Faith”

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Thanks to the new Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) program at St. Anne, the Catholic faith has come to life for the children at our parish and has taken on a whole new meaning.

“Through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program, our children are becoming excited about their Catholic faith,” Faith Formation Coordinator Brianna Noonan says. “When they come into church, they know what Mass is about because they have worked with it in catechesis. Importantly, the goal of the program is to touch their hearts, and help the children foster a real wonder about their faith. Every time the catechists read something from Scripture, we light a candle and they know we are doing something special. Whenever we ask them what they have heard, their hands shoot up. In CGS, the kids really listen to the Word of God and want to respond to it.”

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Montessori-based approach to the religious formation of children, rooted in Sacred Scripture, liturgy and respect for a child’s authentic relationship with God. Central to CGS is the Atrium, a room containing beautiful, handmade materials that focus the child’s attention on Scripture passages or liturgical moments. Each CGS session begins with an introduction of a theme by the catechist, and the children are invited to work with a material on their own to continue their meditation. Because children learn by using their hands, working with materials allows them to enter more deeply into meditation, nurturing their relationship with God.

At this time, our parish offers CGS to children in preschool through first grade as part of their regular faith formation experience. It is offered about every other Sunday from 10:15 to 11:15 a.m. in



The map of Israel and the Good Shepherd material, which the children are able to work with through the program.

the newly furnished Atrium located in Dabrowski Hall. In the future, St. Anne’s hopes to offer CGS to older students, as well. In addition to Brianna, CGS is undertaken by several trained catechists; Debbie Adamson, Tobi Kula, and Judy Ewing, as well as All Saints Preschool Teacher Mrs. Beth Calvin.

“We chose this type of catechesis because every parish or school we have heard of that has used it has really raved about it,” Brianna says. “It is a special type of catechesis that helps children truly learn about their faith, because everything that they are doing is hands-on. It allows them to go at their own pace, and use actual materials they can touch.”

The Atrium has been carefully prepared by the catechists, and features “work stations” with materials that have been handmade with love by our parishioners. Some of the items it includes are a map of Israel, a Good Shepherd figurine with sheep, and dioramas for the Annunciation, Incarnation and Visitation. The Atrium also has a Practical Life area, which

includes materials to help the children engage more fully in Mass, such as handmade prayer cards and altar cloths that go on a model altar.

All of the CGS lessons follow the liturgical year. For example, during the Lenten and Easter Seasons, the children get to work with a Last Supper diorama, as well as an empty tomb.

“In the Atrium, we let the children wonder about aspects of their faith, and use their imaginations,” Brianna says. “We don’t just tell them everything.”

In all, CGS is a fantastic example of what it means to bring the stewardship vision to life. It makes prayer and faith formation a living reality, not to mention service.

“As the children grow older, they will come to appreciate that someone made all these catechesis materials for them,” Brianna says. “The witness of the time that the catechists put into the program exemplifies stewardship. They went to eight eight-hour days of training just to teach Level One of training!”

Prospective catechists willing to undergo extensive training will be needed in the future to be part of this wonderful effort to make Catholicism come alive for our parish children. People with craft and building abilities are especially wanted.

For more information about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, or if you would like to learn how to help, please contact Brianna Noonan at 918-251-4000.



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Stewardship Council continued from front cover

Terry. When he graciously said “yes” to offer his time to head up the Stewardship Council, he had no idea of the impact it would have on his life as well as his family.

“Through my involvement with the Stewardship Council, I have the opportunity to see people at their best, and I can truly see the Spirit of Christ living in those around me,” Terry says. “This inspires me to be a better disciple and has challenged me to grow deeper in my faith. My family has also become more in tune with our faith because of my participation, and we have increased our prayer life together as a family.”

The St. Anne Stewardship Council is the backbone of the ministry and service opportunities in our parish by way of its support and encouragement. The Council sponsors various events throughout the year – a leadership retreat, ministry fair, and stewardship renewal in the fall. The group is still taking shape, and has many hopes and goals for the future of stewardship at St. Anne, such as introducing some new ministries that will provide more opportunity for involvement and ways to serve! Please join us in praying for the work of our Stewardship Council and the overall success of this way of life in our parish!

“Through my involvement with the Stewardship Council, I have the opportunity to see people at their best, and I can truly see the Spirit of Christ living in those around me,” Terry says. “This inspires me to be a better disciple and has challenged me to grow deeper in my faith.” – Terry Laughlin