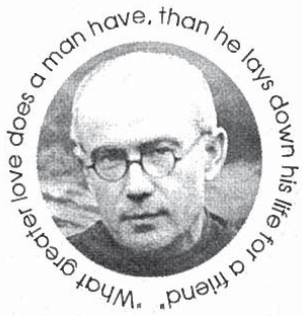


THE MODERN SAINT

Special Needs Ministry

By Sheryl Hudson



Volume 20, Number 11
DECEMBER 2009

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Why me? I've asked this question many times over the years and God always gives me the same answer, "Because I love you". I'm the mother of a 23 year old daughter with Down's syndrome. During my pregnancy there was no suspicion that she would be anything but a "normal", healthy baby girl. Kim was a miracle baby in many respects because there was no reason – other than divine intervention – that she would have Down's.

I've been blessed to have Kim in my life, and I truly know it's because God loves me. That doesn't mean, though, that there aren't challenges that can tap out your energy (and finances!). Many times, those challenges outweigh the successes and camouflage the abundant blessings associated with loving a person with special needs. I continue to pray for the grace to put those challenges in proper perspective. God answers my prayers every time I see the joy on Kim's face when she does something she didn't think she could do ... and when I see how accepting our community is to Kim and others who are also "differently abled" (as opposed to disabled).

That's why I am so excited to be part of a new ministry St. Max has begun – the Special Needs Ministry. We believe the ministry's goals will benefit our entire faith community by:

1. Providing opportunities for those with special needs, regardless of age, to contribute and participate actively within our parish and beyond.
2. Offering comfort, strength and information to the caregivers of these "differently abled" individuals by creating a faith-based venue for support.
3. Educating the broader faith community in how persons can capably participate in other ministries and services within St. Max and our neighboring parishes.

The Morning of Reflection retreat led by Sr. Ann Vonder Muelen and held last month was the first event for this ministry. There were about 20 people from several parishes who were able to attend and many more that expressed interest. It was an opportunity to share personal histories, successes, and concerns about how we can enable our loved ones to live a faith-filled life, discuss strategies to gain even more acceptance within our own faith community, and find ways to thank those who lovingly embrace and accept our loved ones already!

So, where do we go from here? Father Geoff gave us a plug in a recent bulletin about how important it is to accept all members of our community. As a recipient of many well wishes from lots of folks in our parish, I'd like to thank all who go out of their way to meet and greet my daughter and offer her opportunities to be a contributing member at St. Max. Look for communication about the Special Needs Ministry for other events that everyone is welcome to attend. If you know someone who might be interested in benefiting from this ministry, please call us at the contact information listed below and watch for internet updates on our progress.

May God bless you and your families and please keep this new ministry's success in your prayers.

Special Needs Ministry website:
<http://www.saint-max.org/specialneeds.shtml>
Contact Information:
Sheryl Hudson: shudson1960@cinci.rr.com
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From the Pastor's Desk...



My dear sisters and brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

By the time you read this the Pulse of Parish neighborhood meetings will be over! I am very grateful to all who hosted these gatherings and equally thankful to all who have attended. But the end of the meetings is not the end of the process! The follow-up consists of three steps.

First, summaries of each individual meeting have been shared with the pastoral staff. Via e-mail to the group of individuals at a given meeting, the pastoral staff has commented on or clarified any topics which were raised. If you were at a neighborhood meeting and have not received such an email, that is an indication that there were no comments or clarifications from any pastoral staff member.

Second, a volunteer parishioner is categorizing all the comments and combining same or similar comments to determine a frequency of how often a comment was made during all the meetings. I am hoping this summary will be published to you either next month or in February in the Modern Saint newsletter. To coincide with this, there will be a joint meeting of the Pastoral Council and Pastoral Staff to look at all this summary (as well as comments from the Long Range Planning survey from 2007) and determine appropriate action items and responses to parishioners' comments.

And third, I hope to schedule a few "open forum" meetings in May (especially for but not exclusively for those who attended the neighborhood meetings) to give them an update and for them to hold me accountable for the comments they made. This could entail sharing with them actions that have been taken to address issues successfully or attempts to address issues that have not yet been successful. I do feel this accountability is important so that the time people spend at the neighborhood meetings "was not wasted" and that comments made are being addressed.

As a personal follow-up to these neighborhood meetings, based on comments people have made to me personally about current events in the Church and issues that have been raised in Sunday homilies, I am hoping to host in late January or early February several "Everything You Wanted to Know about the Catholic Church and Were Afraid to Ask" meetings. I am initially considering scheduling several of these gatherings in one week here at church, on various times and different days, to informally meet with whoever wishes to come. The format would be question-and-answer. I've done two such evenings entitled "Stump the Priest" with the north and downtown Dayton Theology of Taps series.

The laws and teachings of our Church are beautiful, based on both two thousand years of Tradition and also Sacred Scripture. Are some of these teachings challenging? Yes. Do some of these teachings go against the direction of modern society? Yes. Do we as Catholics have a responsibility to understand why the Church teaches what it teaches to the best of our ability and have well-formed consciences? Yes. I am hoping these informal catechetical evenings will be beneficial to all as together we continue to build up that unique part of the Body of Christ which is St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish.

That's all for now. God bless one and all!
Fr. Geoff
Rev. Geoffrey D. Drew,
Pastor ✠

Reconciliation Preparation

By Mary Montour – Coordinator RFY 1-8

Children of St. Max who are preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation gathered on October 24 for the first of four prayer and preparation sessions. Each session has a theme and covers an important component of the sacrament. The theme of the first session was, “Renewed in your Love;” the retreat stations gave the children a sense of this theme as well as all of the elements of reconciliation. On Tuesday, Nov. 3, the second session, the theme was, “Give us a New Heart.” The children were asked with the help of their parents/companions, to write a prayer resolving to move away from sin.

Following are sample prayers written by second graders:

- “To not yell at my mom, and my sisters. To be a good person for God and to be nice to all my frends and to all my frends and to be frends with everyone and I am sorry for being selfish.”
- “Dear God, I will be a good person. I will not steal. I will not hit.”
- “To think befor I do a sin. God, plese help me stay away from sins.”
- “Dear God, being nice to my sister and mom. Not picking up the cat. Do homework befor playing video games. Giving mom candy. Love, B”

The third and fourth sessions focus on, “*We show our great love for you,*” and “*We love God with all our hearts.*” The children prepared to celebrate Reconciliation for the first time during the Advent Parish Reconciliation Services. ✠



Fr. McCarthy giving the children explanation of the sacrament of Reconciliation.



Mom and daughter discussing and illustrating the Reconciliation Booklet.

MND 1st Quarter Honors

First Honors

Rachel Drumm
Megan Harmon
Mary Lutz
Chloe Meyer
Melinda Reed
Jennifer Schoewe
Taylor Simmons
Katherine vonErden

Second Honors

Olivia Angel
Emma Beyer
Rebecca Biehle
Sarah Bushman
Elizabeth Chambliss
Alexandra Crumb
Hanna Dittrich
Mary Carroll Erns

Elizabeth Gilkey
Madeline Haubner
Kathrine Kelczewski
Ashley Keppler
Rebecca Knue
Theresa Lingardo
Stephanie Lutz
Sarah Menke
Natalie Reed

Ashley Seiter
Mackenzie Shiver
Brooke Teaford
Hannah Zink

St. Gabriel News

By Joe Epplen, Principal SGCS

St. Gabriel Consolidated School students helped a village in Africa by participating in the Heifer Project. Monies were collected to purchase ducks, chickens and a goat. CRE Mary Lou Smith read the book *Beatrice's Goat* to all of the primary grades which stimulated student interest in the project. In another service project, a coat drive for the St. Raphael food pantry in Hamilton garnered two barrels of coats, sweaters and jackets.

Students and teachers hit the ground running in November as we had a full week of activities for History Week. Each day was devoted to a different era of history which included Immigration Day, Southeast United States Indian Exploration, Medieval Mania, and Ancient Egypt. A walk through a time machine at the two main entrances of the school gave students a look backward in time from the late 1800's to ancient Egypt. Displays, readers, theatre demonstrations, a lacrosse match, singing and instrument playing were some of the activities seen and heard throughout the week. A cross pollination of grade levels working on like projects energized the entire student body and helped to bring a fun perspective to the learning of history.

The following week's book fair encouraged students and parents to add to their collection of books for personal reading as well as to take advantage of potential Christmas gifts and



Students participate in History Week activities.

stocking stuffers for students of all ages. Our parent conferences held on November 12th and 13th enabled parents and teachers to discuss the many successes of student progress throughout the first quarter of the year.

All of us were truly ready for the Thanksgiving break – a time to breathe and to realize and be thankful for the many blessings given to us throughout the year. ✦

Who are Permanent Deacons?

By Deacon Jeff Merrell



In April of 2010 three men from St. Maximilian Kolbe, Mike Lippman, Mike Hinger and John Back, will be ordained Permanent Deacons. Accordingly, this is a good time to reacquaint ourselves with what this ministry entails. Three years ago, prior to my ordination, I wrote a series of articles in this regard. Updating them, I present them again.

We ask the questions what are permanent deacons and why do we have them, providing some of the history of this order. Also, we will explain how the deacon is a minister of the Word, what his liturgical role is and why the deacon as a minister of charity is a vital part of his ministry. This information should help us understand better the place of the Permanent Deacon in our parish especially for those who may never have had one in their parish experience or as a refresher for those who may have worked with a deacon in the past. Additionally, for those men who may be called this may provide some insight into the ministry for future discernment.

According to the Vatican Document *Lumen Gentium* deacons are “strengthened by sacramental grace” and “dedicated to the People of God... in service of the liturgy, of the Gospel, and of works of Charity”. continued on page 7

Watch the St. Max Family Grow!
Welcome New Parishioners!



Steve & Suzanne Beck and children Lily and Ella
 John & Rebecca Berna and children John, Priscilla
 and Salvatore

Shari Cashman

Michael & Michelle Currin

David & Emily DeSalvo and children Isabella and Max
 Allen & Barbie Donathan and children Davin and
 Gabbi

Mark & Jackie Eckles and children Nicholas and Luke
 Darian & Sara Edwards and child Makayla

Chris & Kristina Ferretti and children Nicholas and
 Dylan

Alan & Emily Hazelbaker and children Alyson and
 Grace

Joshua & Rebecca Huff and child Cain

Randall & Tamara Huss and child Aiden

Patrick & Mandi Kelly and children Gabrielle,
 Savannah, Ian and Kendall

Jonathan Koopman

John & Stacy Krause and child Phoebe

Orlando & Ana Martinez and children Jean Paul and
 Jessica

Lucille Patrick

Russell & Jennifer Vehorn and child William

Patrick & Kate Zink and child Eli

St. Max Welcomes our

Baptisms



Newest & Smallest Parishioners

London Danelle daughter of Jason & Amy
 Adams

Savannah Yvonne daughter of Dale & Michelle
 Boolton

Delaney Jane daughter of Gary & Marcie Calvert

William Matthew son of Dominic & Laura
 Franchini

Greyson Christopher son of Christopher &
 Melissa Hoff

Rachel Elizabeth daughter of Eric & JoAnn
 Hopkins

Thomas Henry son of Earl & Barbara Johnson

Anika Rose daughter of Nicholas & Emily
 Kamphaus

Graham James son of Jeffrey & Bridgett Risk

Allison Mae daughter of Adam & Heather Strang

Olivia Lu Yin daughter of Leonard & Christine
 Traficanti

William Russell son of Russell & Jennifer
 Vehorn

Sean Robert son of Ryan & Melissa Wesley

Married in Christ

Riely Ian Thompson & Kathleen Patricia Fitzpatrick

Simon R. Ekelund & Susanne C. McDonough

Joshua Ray Gibson & Jennifer Maureen Phillips

Mark Alan Belkofer & Sara Anne Hacker

Michael John Bruce & Sara Jane Flick

Robert Thomas Franke & Lindsay Nicole Hinger

John James Marrone & Tai Nicole Lunsford

Jeffrey Craig Bean & Erin Margaret Donnelly

Adam Russell O'Neill & Stephanie Ann Von Wahlde

Nicholas Anthony Forslear & Danielle Karen Kempner

Joshua L. Six & Lindsey A. Baumgartner

Matthew Andrew Brand & Jennifer Paige Arozarena

James Richard Hansman & Lauren Rains Moore

Cory Robert Niehaus & Sarah Elizabeth Driscoll

Mark Christopher Rapien & Sarah Nicole Walsh

Todd Klesch & Megan Coleman

Nathaniel Ecker & Marianne Torantali

Whole Community Catechesis

In Whole Community Catechesis, do we still refer to the persons involved as “students”?

It would help tremendously to stop referring to people in our catechetical process as students. In our culture the word “student” suggests academic learning, even if the meaning of the word could be broader. It suggests a school year period of study, ending in graduation. That ending is a key problem. Nearly every adult in the Church today believes that he or she has completed their religious education. They’re no longer students. They’re adults now. However, learning to follow the way of Christ never ends, as the bishops tell us in the GDC (General Directory for Catechesis). There is no graduation from catechesis; it’s a lifelong journey of faith, a lifelong process.

So instead, why not give those engaged in faith formation another name? Maybe we could call them simply “learners.” A learner is one who is learning how to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, one who is learning a way of life. This name suggests a never-ending, non-academic process of growing to live as Jesus taught us to. Learner is a biblical word; anyone who refers to himself or herself as a learner is making a serious commitment to growth. A learner is one who comes to encounter Christ not merely

to know about him.

You may find the right term for a [your] parish by asking those in catechesis what they would like to be called. This change (no longer using the word “student”) may be one of the most difficult at the parish level. Why? Because we have thought of those who are being formed in the faith as students for so long, in fact, for several generations.

The word is ingrained in the Catholic vocabulary of the present generation of parents and guardians. On the other hand, all the efforts to change from student to learner or apprentice are worth it because the entire parish is thus re-educated about whole community catechesis. When you announce that anyone who wishes to follow Christ more closely in his or her life may be part of the catechesis assemblies as a learning disciple, people will notice. After all, we learn to refer to those in the catechumenate as catechumens or candidates, both words quite foreign to us at first. We can make this change from student to learner as well if we put our hearts into it.

(Permission is granted to copy this page for us in your parish. Handbook for Success in Whole Community Catechesis by Bill Huesch, pages 133-134, Twenty-Third Publications, 2004.)

"A Christmas Gift to remember"

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someone who’s lonely that brought the spirit of the Christmas Season back into our lives.

- Slow down, listen to your heart and look through the eyes of Jesus. Go back and remember the blessings and the special memories of Christmas past.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help or accept help. Remember it is in giving that we receive. The gift you may give someone is allowing them to help you.
- If you cannot decorate or send cards, that’s okay; but still find a way to share the light of your love with others.
- Take the time to create a special ornament by placing a note to your loved one inside the ornament and ask others to do the same.
- If you’ve lost a child and want them to be a part of the family’s gift exchange communicate with your family that you would like your child to be remembered by having them buy a gift for a child in need. You can even ask them to wrap a picture of what it is that they bought and open it up when gifts are being exchanged. Remember it is giving that we receive.
- And if you’re a family member or a close friend please know that we really need your love and support and we need for you to remember our loved ones now and forever.

Our wish for you is a moment, when least expected, and when you need it most that that someone will say to you Merry Christmas. From our families hearts to yours we wish you very Blessed Christmas.

St. Maximilian Kolbe Companions on a Journey Grief Support Group invites those who have had a loved one die and their families to join for: Taking Time to Remember on Monday December 14, from 7-9 pm for pizza and light refreshment as we explore ways to embrace the Christmas and Holiday Season. And we will create special ornament to remember our loved one. If you’d like, bring a picture of your loved one to share. Please RSVP to Patti Strube 755-3306 and let her know the number of people who will be attending with you.

"Permanent Deacons" continued from page 4

This details the threefold ministries of service to which the deacon is called. The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains further that "Deacons ... do not receive ministerial priesthood, but ordination confers on them important functions in the ministry of the word, divine worship, pastoral governance, and the service of charity, tasks which they must carry out under the pastoral authority of their bishop."

In the early Church deacons played a vital role in the service of the bishop and are mentioned in Paul's letter to Timothy, the writings of St Ignatius of Antioch and the writings of St. Justin Martyr. The roles seem to have been that of administration, preaching and taking care of those unable to be with the assembly. While many early popes and martyrs were deacons, after the Church became established as the official religion of the Roman Empire and during the period of great expansion, the concept of the Permanent Deacon in the West faded. This corresponded to the need for priests, who are ordained to the "transitional diaconate". Thus, by the time of the council of Trent, the order of deacons as a permanent order in the Church had all but disappeared. Of note, however, St. Francis was ordained a deacon providing him the sacramental grace to preach.

While the council of Trent did in fact call for the restoration of the permanent order, it would not occur until after Vatican II in 1967 by Pope Paul VI. In our area the first permanent deacons were ordained in 1973 in Toledo and in 1976 in the archdiocese of Cincinnati.

It is important to note in closing, that the Permanent Diaconate is a complimentary ministry to priesthood. It is an order called to serve all aspects of the Church and in so doing express in a particular way the service of all the baptized, who are called to serve Christ. The three areas of diaconal service will be explained further in my next article. ✦

Christ Renews His Parish

Reunion Mass

All past participants of Christ Renews His Parish, men's and women's teams, are invited to a CRHP Reunion Mass on Friday, January 8, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in church. Christ Renews His Parish, here and elsewhere, has been a solid and consistent conduit of God's abundant blessings. There will be fellowship following the liturgy.

NOTE: If you did not receive a letter from Fr. Geoff about the CRHP Reunion Mass, it means that the lists of CRHP teams in the parish office are incomplete. Please call the parish office and let them know if you were on a CRHP team at St. Max so you can receive future mailings.

Men of St. Max,

SAVE the weekend of February 27 & 28, 2010

All men in the parish are invited to attend the next Christ Renews His Parish weekend on February 27 and 28, 2010. This retreat weekend is a great opportunity for spiritual renewal, to make new friends, and to grow in your faith as an active member of our Christian Community. Please contact Earl Hill, 513-889-0083 or the parish office for information.

Women of St. Max...

Your next Christ Renews His Parish weekend will hopefully occur later in 2010. As details are determined, information will be publicized. ✦

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THE MODERN SAINT

A Christmas Gift to Remember

By Sheila Munafo-Kanoza and Tom Kanoza

In Memory of Vince Munafo and Suzanne Kanoza's love

When the death of a loved has touched your life, Christmas itself can take a hold of our emotions. After being widowed Tom and I were blessed with the gift of a new love and our four families became one. There was Tom family, Sue's family, Vince's family and my family.

For Tom, Christmas was the season when his wife Sue died. He has shared that when Thanksgiving comes he takes a deep breath and says to himself, 'Let's go,' finding ways to manage. Tom doing all the necessary duties and chores that were once done by two people, wanted to make sure that his two young sons still had a special Christmas. This was a horrendous task after losing a wife only a week before Christmas.

The first Christmas for my children and I, without their father, Vince, brought a different type of grieving for me. I wanted to remember Vince, but I was afraid of the pain of not having him here. Vince loved to buy and decorate for Christmas. Christmas morning at our home was like a winter wonderland.

For Tom and I and our children, the season of Christmas will never be the way it was before the cornerstones of our families died. Christmas has changed, not ended. After the death of our loved ones there was a hole in our hearts. We miss their presence; we long to hear the mention of their names. As a new family we worked together to establish new traditions. Each of us still remembers Christmas past, the special ornament that we shared, and the precious memories that were made. It was getting back to the basics of giving, thanking, remembering, or visiting

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