

THE MODERN SAINT

Saint Maximilian Kolbe Parish is a Roman Catholic Christian community which unselfishly ministers to all people through hospitality, prayer, formation, and service. Eucharist centered and led by the Holy Spirit we strive to be grateful stewards of all God's gifts.

THE FLAMES BURN BRIGHTLY! FAITH ON FIRE

The Catholic Church teaches very clearly that parents are the primary educators of their children in the faith (CCC 2221-2231). Before you stress out or just throw up your hands in defeat, this does not mean you've got to have all the answers or figure it out all on your own. The St. Max faith formation team has been hard at work over the past two years to help parents not only keep faith formation going through the uncertainties of a pandemic, but to put together a more robust structure that allows parents to take on the role they were always meant to have and do it successfully. The team has worked and continues to work on developing a support structure that will nourish the entire family in the faith. That's great for our families and for our parish as a whole!

The return of Mighty Max this year opened up opportunities for our youngest parishioners (ages 18 mos-4) to experience the faith in a fun, age-appropriate environment. Sarah Lewis got Mighty Max going strong with four 6-week sessions. Each theme-packed week explored Bible stories, saints, and special liturgical events and feasts. They even experienced "field trips" visiting the Baptismal font, lighting votive candles, seeing the Guardian Angel statues and crowning our Mary statue. A fun addition to the program this year was a traveling "Flat St. Joseph". Students got to spend a week with "Flat St. Joseph" and share about their adventures with him at the next class. Sarah sees much fruit from the program and shares, "I love how involved the parents are. These parents are not only there to spend time with their child, but they are also there to grow more in their faith alongside their child." Mighty Max will return

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Mighty Max takes "field trips" to the church to light votive candles.

PARENTS GROW
IN FAITH ALONGSIDE
THEIR CHILD.

SARAH LEWIS

SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD



Fr. Jim holds newly baptized Maren Castner. Maren's father, Todd, on the right, was the first baby baptized at St. Max thirty-three years ago.

By: Fr. Jim Riehle

When I was in the seminary, many of our classes and discussions outside of class centered on what the role of the priest is precisely. Is he simply a sacramental minister? Is he some sort of institutional leader? If he is a shepherd, what does that mean exactly? One way of looking at the role of the priest, especially a diocesan priest, was as that of a spiritual father. Even the title most frequently used to refer to a priest reflects this aspect of the priesthood, "Father." This makes sense to me. A father desires to love and protect his children, to guide them through this wayward world and show them great things. While I may not have biological children, the Lord has blessed me with an abundance of spiritual children, the flock the people I am called to serve in my parish. Like a biological father, a priest certainly receives many gifts in his role as a spiritual father.

As everyone knows, being part of a family means being together and sharing those most important times in life. Whether it is the holiday celebrations, the times of joy, or the times of sorrow, a family goes through it all together. Our lives are marked by these milestones and more often than not, our family is there to be a part of it. The same is true for a priest. What a privilege it is for the priest, a spiritual father, to be there sharing those most important moments in life with his spiritual children. In my priesthood, I have had the joy of holding so many newborn babies, celebrating their baptisms and welcoming them into this life and the life of faith. I have also had the great honor to be

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NOTRE DAME TABERNACLE SOCIETY

By: Colleen Dill

Not many people know about a quiet, little ministry of sewers called the Notre Dame Tabernacle Society, but their work reaches around the world. Literally. Anna de Meeus, daughter of Count Ferdinand of Brussels, was so overcome by the state of the vestments and altar at a poor church she was visiting, that she devoted her life's work to improving these conditions, thus promoting adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Originally started by Anna in 1848 as The Association for Perpetual Adoration and the Work for Poor Churches, the society has grown tremendously and has changed its name. The Notre Dame Tabernacle Society is so named because the society, since its inception, has been given work space by the Notre Dame Sisters – in convents, churches, and schools.

Philadelphia Notre Dame Sister Julia established the first society in the United States in 1866. The society came to Hamilton, OH in 1942, beginning by working out of the home economics room at Notre Dame High School, and bouncing from basement to basement. The Society finally came to rest in the home of a couple who finished the basement of a home that they were building with this purpose in mind. They even added an elevator for seamstresses who may have mobility issues!

The Notre Dame Tabernacle Society designs, cuts, sews, and embellishes chasubles and stoles for priests serving in the poorest countries of the world. To provide a seamless chasuble, special bolts of 60 inch wide fabric are purchased from New York to keep costs as low as possible. Priests from around the world can request these beautifully handmade vestments. Each priest is sent an entire liturgical set of vestments: green for Ordinary Time, Purple/Violet for Advent and Lent, White for Christmas and Easter, and Red for feasts and liturgies pertaining to the Holy Spirit, such as Pentecost and Confirmation.

The Society also donates Mass kits to meet priests' needs in celebrating the Eucharist. These Mass kits include a chalice, a paten, a pyx, a crucifix, two glass bottles, two candles, a stole, and linens in a zippered carrying case. There is great demand for these kits as the priests requesting them are working among the poorest of the world and often must travel by foot or bicycle. Rosaries and other religious articles are also sent by the Society. There are gifted and dedicated Rosary makers who have made thousands of rosaries over the years. Donations of religious items like prayer cards, pictures,



Fr. Kizito Okhuoya and newly ordained priests from Nigeria wearing vestments created by the Notre Dame Tabernacle Society; (right) Some St. Max NDTs members presenting vestments to Fr. Simon Peter Wankya.

medals, and rosaries are always welcome to help them meet requests for those items.

Shipping alone can be costly and time consuming to send these vestments and Mass kits to the other side of the globe. A set of vestments and one Mass kit can cost around \$130 to ship. Fortunately, the St. Max Outreach Allocation Committee has generously granted funds to the Notre Dame Tabernacle Society each spring to help keep their mission going. These vestments and kits are sent to missions in India, Ghana, Nigeria, Haiti, Malawi, and Uganda. "Spreading our message of Jesus wouldn't be possible without these donations," shares Lois Latzy, a NDTs member and St. Max parishioner. "Our mission is to provide priests in third world countries with what they need to be able to celebrate the Eucharist," she says.


Members are from many different parishes in Butler and surrounding counties. The society has also expanded to add the St. Henry-Osgood chapter in Osgood, OH. New members are always welcome to join in sewing and rosary making, whether at the home they gather in on Tuesday afternoons, or in your own home. The Notre Dame Tabernacle Society is so appreciative of the monetary grant provided by St. Max parishioners through the Outreach Allocation Committee because donations are their only source of income. These donations have made it possible to send thousands of vestments and Mass kits worldwide and to continue the important work of celebrating the Eucharist!

If you are interested in joining the Notre Dame Tabernacle Society, please feel free to contact Lois Latzy at LoisLatzy@gmail.com or Janet Kempner at JanetKempner@gmail.com for more information!

With your generous giving, our priests are well equipped, and they will contentedly serve in the Lord's ministry.

Robert K. Muhiirwa, Bishop of Fort Portal, Uganda

WORKS OF MERCY



Counsel the Doubtful & Instruct the Ignorant

By: Robin Burbrink

What does it mean to Instruct the Ignorant, or Counsel the Doubtful?

“Ignorant” is not a label we usually want associated with ourselves or others we care about. If we replace the word with the definition, lacking knowledge or understanding, we realize that this can apply to us all. We all have more to learn about our faith and our amazing God. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20) If I lack knowledge and understanding, how can I instruct others? Learn about our faith and be open to talking with others about our beliefs.

While there are some people who are blessed with endless certainty of God’s presence, many of us will admit to having doubts. It is easy to admit to doubts, but not as easy to be willing to ask questions to work through those doubts; to seek counseling and guidance from someone else.

How can we experience and practice these Works of Mercy?

- Recognize that we have to balance personal prayer and reflection with journeying with others. Make time and space for this to happen.
- Pray together as a family for openness and understanding.
- As a family, listen to each other’s stories of the day and find ways that the stories connect to God.

- Create an environment where the activity of asking questions and learning is cherished and welcomed. Encourage the participants to share in small, safe groups their image of God and God’s activity in relation to the given topic.
- Share knowledge and facts about our faith.
- Share doubts, ideas, fears and ‘Aha’ moments.
- Talk with friends AND listen to friends.
- Be prepared to talk to community members, in the parish, in the school, in play and in work. Do we seek out modern theologians who themselves are wrestling with new questions about God in these times of wonder and threat, scientific opportunity, discovery and even some danger?
- Talk to deceased community members. Think... Communion of Saints. Do we spend time in reflection upon the lives and works of those who preceded us? Praying with them?
- Trust your own religious imagination enough to be open to changing it as you grow and hear of the religious imagination of others. What is your image of God? How has it changed? How will it change?
- Follow Christ with the witness of your life so that others may see God’s love revealed in your actions.
- Accompany a friend who is struggling with believing to join a parish group for service or faith formation, share

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WORKS OF MERCY, Continued from Page 4

a book you found useful in dealing with your friend's faith concern, and worship at Sunday Mass.

- Pray for someone you know who is making a big life decision.
- Go on a service trip or short term mission trip. No time? Donate to support someone on their service trip.
- Volunteer to help with religious education programs.
- Invite someone to go to Mass with you this weekend.
- Know your faith! Read a spiritual book or watch a program on FORMED to find out more about the Catholic faith and how to live it.



SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD, Continued from Page 2



Todd Castner, the son of Gary and Kathy Castner, baptized by Fr. Porter in 1989

there as loved ones take their last breath, leaving this life for the one our Father in heaven has in store for them. In between those bookends of life, I have been able to celebrate so many First Communions, Confirmations, and weddings. I have prayed with so many as they've struggled through some trials and I have laughed, a lot, with families within the joy that our faith so rightly brings about. It is a great privilege for a priest, certainly for me, to share in these momentous occasions in life.

It is with this idea of being a spiritual father that I would like to share with you a wonderful milestone. Earlier this year, on February 6, I baptized my 100th baby, Noah Tuan Nguyen. Every baptism is a joy, of course, but that one certainly will be remembered for me as a special occasion.

Shortly after that, with my 101st baptism, another milestone, of sorts, was reached. After the baptism was over, the mother of one of the babies came over and shared that her husband was the first baby baptized in St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish. Todd Castner, the son of Gary and Kathy Castner, was baptized by Fr. Porter on August 13, 1989. This was back before we even had a church building, of course, but the parish of St. Max had been established. What a wonderful thing to learn that now, thirty-three years later, Todd and his wife Tessa, who also grew up as a St. Max parishioner, have brought their son, Maren, to be baptized in our parish.

It can be easy these days to lose sight of the blessings and joys that we have. The culture reminds us quite regularly that faith and religious affiliation are on the decline. On top of that, we know that in many ways our faith stands in stark opposition to so many beliefs and practices that the world promotes and accepts. With all of this, it can feel pretty discouraging.

That is why it is so good to celebrate such a simple and wonderful gift as a baptism, of celebrating a story like this right here in our parish, in our family. It reminds us that the Church grows from heart to heart, passed on from one generation to the next. Yes, there are challenges. Some fall away. Some stray from the faith, but we do not lose hope nor should we be afraid. As we hear in Scripture, our help is in the Name of the Lord. We are to trust in the will of our heavenly Father and that in Him there is always help and hope.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

By: Sarah Merkel

Christ is present in the liturgy in four unique ways. He is present in the Eucharist, in the presider and in the gathered assembly. And lastly, Christ is present in the Word when the scriptures are read in the church: it is Christ who speaks, not merely the lector or the psalmist or the deacon.

Lay ministers, called Lectors, can be trained and given the opportunity to proclaim Sacred Scripture during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass. They read the scriptures, with the exception of the Gospel, which is read by the Deacon or Presider. A lector can also read the intentions for the Universal Prayer and, in the absence of a psalmist, recite the Psalm between the readings.

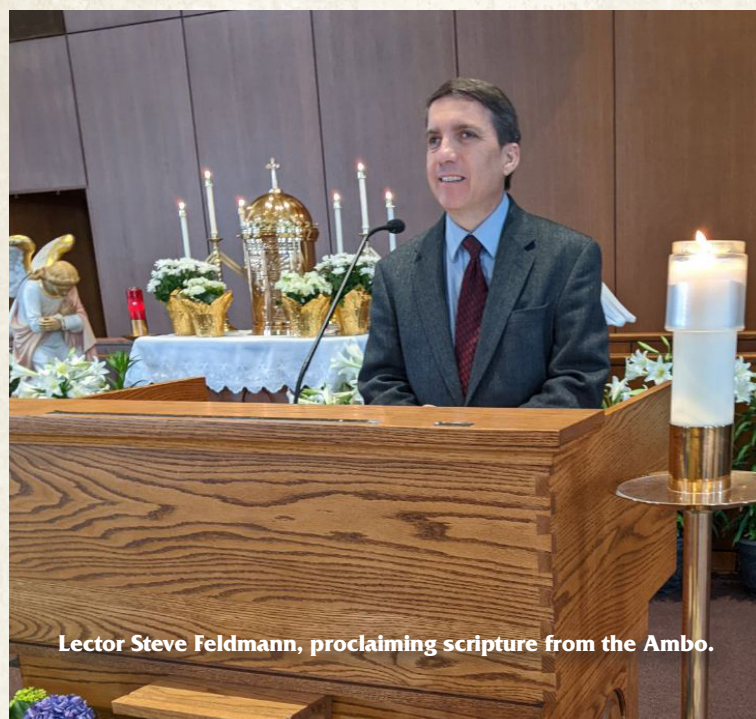
"Proclaiming the Word of God is an honor," says Karen Agircola who has been serving St. Max as a lector since the 90's.

Michelle Meyer echoes this sentiment by saying, "It brings me much joy to proclaim the holy Word of God to His beloved people. I can't imagine a greater privilege! I know I am not worthy, yet God accepts me as I am."

Certainly this great privilege does bear with it great responsibility, but it is nothing that should scare prevent someone from volunteering in this way. Lector coordinator, Kay Isacson, meets with interested volunteers one on one to train them in this great ministry and to provide them with the necessary tools.

Each lector receives a lector workbook which has all of the year's readings so that when they are assigned to a Mass, they can prepare and practice at home. There is also a pronunciation guide available at church to help with those tough names.

Perhaps, a less obvious benefit to being a lector is that by practicing your assigned readings ahead of time it forces you to stop and spend time with Sacred Scripture before Mass. "Each and every passage is so beautiful, and when I prepare to lector, Mass becomes even more meaningful. Ideally I'd prepare for every Mass the way I do when I'm scheduled to lector. God reveals himself through His word, and deep inside, that's what we all desire" says Michelle Meyer. Karen says "For me, the greatest joys of being a lector is that it has brought me closer to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and knowledge of the stories on which our faith is based so that I am able to share them with others."



Lector Steve Feldmann, proclaiming scripture from the Ambo.

Many shy away from being a lector because they are nervous getting in front of so many people. John Buchanan, who was a lector at his previous parish as well before coming to St. Max encourages those by saying "It may be out of your comfort zone, but being a lector is a rewarding part of participating in the Mass and connecting with your fellow worshippers. As far as being up in front of everyone, it isn't so bad – and it gets easier every time you do it".

Proclaiming the Word of God at Mass is a cherished honor for many that brings them closer to Christ in His Word and allows them to use their talents for the good of the community. Mike Froehle, who has been a lector for more than 30 years says he says a prayer right before he reads. "As I approach the ambo, I say a prayer asking God, through the intercession of the Holy Spirit, to open my mouth to proclaim His Word as He wants it proclaimed", he says.

It is important to remember that when Sacred Scripture is read at Mass it is God Himself speaking to His people. This is a good thing to be reminded of whether you decide that you want to give lectoring a try or you are in the assembly listening to the readings at Mass.

If you are interested in becoming a Lector please contact the Lector Coordinator, Kay Isacson at Lectors@saint-max.org.

FAITH ON FIRE, Continued from Page 1

the 2nd week of September. Registration will begin the first week of August at www.saint-max.org/mightymax.

Fuel with Pflaum is the faith formation offering for youth in preschool through 8th grade. So much thought, prayer, and research has gone into the development of this program. While family faith formation programs are on the grow within our Archdiocese and around the country, this is still uncharted and undeveloped territory. At St. Max, families have the option to do a complete at home program using the materials and resources provided, or they can choose a blended option which adds a monthly family in-person component to the home program.

The monthly meetings begin with parents and students gathering together in prayer. Youth are then dismissed to classrooms while parents enjoy faith formation opportunities to help them deepen their own faith. The session closes with everyone joining back together to enjoy a skit presented by the older students. This year's theme focused on two forms of prayer: *Lectio Divina* and Adoration. Guest speakers helped parents explore theme related topics each week.

This was the 2nd year for this format and some great fruit came from it. One catechist, moved by the students' presentation of the Stations of the Cross said as she wiped a tear away, "Wow! That was amazing!" One dad said, "I really enjoyed the small groups that allowed me to get to know other parents and to share our faith with each other."

Ablaze and *Ignite* for high school and junior high continue to lead our older youth into encounter and relationship with God in a more peer oriented setting. The *Ablaze* high school youth group was able to enjoy a full year of in-person programming with weekly youth nights, fall and spring retreats, and finally—after a two-year hiatus—the Steubenville Youth Conference. The year was packed with ministry and witness as the upper classmen planned and led the retreats for their peers. A group of high school youth and parents also joined other Cincinnati prolife groups for the mini-march downtown in January to witness and pray for the most vulnerable in our culture.

The witness and ministry were not limited to the high schoolers within their group. Many high school teens helped seven dedicated adult volunteers with the *Ignite* junior high group. They helped with set-up, clean-up, games and small groups. The high schoolers were a powerful example to their younger peers that the faith



At the monthly family events the 6th-8th graders put on skits. Here they are acting out "Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem".

journey continues even after confirmation and the formal *Fuel with Pflaum* formation program.

Some great changes are coming for *Ignite* next fall! Sixth grade students will be joining the fun! The move from monthly to bi-weekly meetings was a positive change this past year that will continue into next year. *Ignite* will also transition back to being the junior high youth group instead of an in-person formation option. This change will allow *Ignite* to be an additional faith enrichment opportunity that will help these youth build a solid faith community with their peers.

Faith on Fire has a lot of great things to look back on over this past year and even more great things to look forward to next year! Registration for the 2022-23 year can be found on the St. Max website at www.saint-max.org/faithonfire.



TOGETHER WE GROW CAMPAIGN

Don't forget about our Together We Grow Campaign! You can see status updates about the campaign and make a pledge online at saint-max.org/TWG.



Saint Maximilian Kolbe
Catholic Church

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**FR. SIMON PETER FAREWELL CELEBRATION
FORMAL DINNER AND PROGRAM**

Saturday, June 18

6:30 – 9:30 PM

Reservations required

RSVP online at

saint-max.org/farewell

Fr. Simon Peter will also be available after all Masses on June 18 & 19 to receive well wishes. He will be in the St. Patrick's conference room after 4:30 Mass on Saturday with snacks and beverages and in the gym after the 8:00, 10:00 and Noon Masses with coffee and donuts.

SEND US AN UPDATE

Have you moved, or do you have a new phone number or new email address? Please contact the office at 513.777.4322 ext. 101 or cgroh@saint-max.org to give us an update!

15 MINUTES 1% CHALLENGE
Daily Encounter with God's Word

WHAT IS THE 1% CHALLENGE?

1% OF YOUR DAY IS 14 MIN AND 24 SEC.

JUST 1% OF YOUR DAY given to God in focused prayer will change your life. We would like to challenge you to spend just 1% (let's round up to 15 min) OF YOUR DAY EVERY DAY PRAYING with Scripture through a Catholic tradition called lectio divina.

**WANT TO RECEIVE THE 1% CHALLENGE
DAILY EMAIL WITH SUGGESTED READING?**

Text 1percent to 42828.

More info on the 1% Challenge can be found on our website at saint-max.org/takethechallenge.