

upcoming events

the bridge

news and views for the Our Lady of Charity community

volume 35, number 10

December 2017

December 3, 2016

*Holy Family
Family Sunday, 10:00 am
9th Grade &
Confirmation Class, 5:45*

December 4, 2016

*St. Ambrose
Liturgy Com., 7:00 pm*

December 8, 2016

*Feast of the Immaculate
Conception*

December 11, 2016

*Discipleship Program for
Grades 1-8 & Adults*

December 12, 2016

*St. Agatha
Holy Name - 7:00 pm
Holy Family
Parish Council Meeting,
7:00 pm, Meeting Room
5*

December 13, 2016

*Holy Family
Parish Penance Service,
7:00 pm*

December 20, 2016

*Holy Family
Spaghetti Dinner - noon*

December 15, 2016

*Holy Family
St. Vincent de Paul Mtg.,
8:45 am*

December 22, 2016

*Holy Family
Spaghetti Dinner 12:30*

December 24, 2016

*Holy Family
Anointing of the Sick
following 8:00 am Mass*

The View from a Pew

By Steve Banko

I'm not sure if all writers find commenting on the Christmas season as challenging as I do but this is a column that I don't always look forward to writing. I say that because there is so little to be said about Christmas that hasn't been said in a million ways over thousands of years. I've written about two Christmases in a combat zone, one Christmas in a military hospital, and various other holiday oddities. But even I run out of new stuff and most writers hate to delve into old stuff. So I did what all writers do at one time or another in their writing adventures: I stared blankly at the empty screen and hoped something would come to me.

I came up with a couple of ideas. One of them came from Shirley, that effervescent fount of inspiration in my life. She read somewhere about parents teaching their kids to turn Christmas around, once they knew that Santa Claus was not exactly what they'd been led to believe. The parents encouraged the kids to become Santa instead of waiting for the Santa effect. They were told to scour the neighborhood and their imaginations to come up with one person in dire need of one thing. The caveats for the fledgling Santas were that they could pick anyone in need but they could never reveal that they were gifting instead of getting. A couple of examples were provided and one included a pair of slippers for a crotchety old woman who lived near a family whose kids were a constant source of annoyance. One of the kids observed that the woman went out to her mailbox each morning in her bare feet to get her morning paper. The youngster went out and bought the woman a pair of warm slippers and left them in her on her front porch. Another teen refurbished her old bike and fitted it with a new seat to give to the sister of a friend whose family could never have afforded such a bike. Those parents were teaching their kids the real meaning of a Christian Christmas. They were teaching the kids to see as Mother Teresa told us to see: with our hearts. They were teaching them to recognize what little it takes to fill a human need. They were providing teaching moments that humanized the gospel of Matthew, which tells us that Christ wants us to recognize Him in the poor, the downtrodden, and the afflicted. We read our missals every Sunday and we hear the words but how often do we actually go out and live the lesson of the words?

The other idea came from staring at the manger scene. The more I looked at it the more I sensed there was not just the message of Jesus sent to redeem us but the underlying message that being human is an extraordinary gift. God loved us so much and loved our humanity so much He sent His Son to share in that humanity; to share our joys and our hopes, our strength and weakness, our love and our pain.

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That gift alone – spiritualizing our human nature and deeming it worthy for Jesus to share it – speaks so profoundly of our special nature. Christ could have chosen any way to teach us of the Father’s love but he chose our human-ness as His vehicle. There are not trappings of wealth or luxury. His less than ordinary birth should be our lasting lesson that we are given the means to rise above our basest nature and aspire to truly be children of God.

So when you look at a manger scene this Christmas, think about how special we are in the eyes of God that His Son became one of us so that we might live lives in honor of His love.



Irish Sweepstakes is Back!

by Donna Graham

Once again Our Lady of Charity will be sponsoring the annual Irish Sweepstakes Fundraiser. This year the proceeds from this event will help to cover the costs of renovating the gym at the St. Ambrose site. Over the past several months, renovations have included a new wheelchair lift for the stairs, upgrades to the bathrooms to improve accessibility, new windows, and cleaning/polishing of the gym floor. Painting of the gym and kitchen is also scheduled in the upcoming weeks. The goal is to make this space enjoyable and accessible for all parishioners.

To show off this newly renovated space, the Irish Sweepstakes drawing and party will be hosted at this venue. Our Sweepstakes committee is working on plans for a fun evening of music, food, drinks and entertainment on Friday, March 9, 2018. A Sweepstakes ticket purchase is admission to the party. A limited number of tickets were printed to keep the odds of winning favorable!

Ticket sales will begin after masses Thanksgiving weekend. The price of a ticket remains \$25. Due to popular demand the Grand Prize will remain \$7,500, 2nd prize of \$3,000, 3rd prize of \$1,500, 4th prize of \$1,000, 5th prize of \$500, 6th prize of \$100 (10 winners), and 7th prize of \$50 (5 winners). Three early bird drawings are also planned and include:

Christmas Drawing- December 23, 2017 - \$100.00
Snowflake Drawing- January 20, 2018 - \$200.00
Shamrock Drawing- February 17, 2018 - \$400.00

Participation from all our parishioners is vital for the success of this fundraising event. Ticket sellers for after masses and/or in the community at large are needed. Envelopes of 10 tickets can be signed out at the rectory during regular business hours. Our hope is that every family will buy or sell at least 2 tickets. Incentives for ticket sellers include \$100 to the top seller; \$75 dollars to the second place seller and \$50 to the third place seller. Volunteers the night of the event are also needed to sell tickets, assist with registration at the door, serve food/drinks and set-up/tear down. If you would like to volunteer with any of the following please contact Linda at 491-0696 or Maria at 818-9293. Thank you for all you do to support our parish!

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Don't Let Your Hearts Be Troubled

By Christian Hehr

I think as humans, we are led to believe that our emotions determine ultimately how our lives will go. We tend to live by how we feel. I fall victim to this constantly, almost on the daily. If I don't feel well, my day usually doesn't go well either. If I feel excited about something, my day tends to be more productive and I have a better day.

What no one seems to realize is that we absolutely do not have to live in this way! As a matter of fact, don't our emotions get us into trouble quite often? Maybe someone cut you off on the road and you end up being nasty to a coworker in frustration. Or maybe you woke up feeling depressed and the lack of motivation prevented you from completing your responsibilities. This happens all the time to almost everyone.

You do not have to live according to your emotions. I repeat: you DO NOT have to live according to your emotions. Your emotions do not have to control your life. You have a will, and you do not have to give any authority to your feelings if you don't want to. You have that control over yourself. Paul says in 2 Timothy 1:7, "...God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of self control."

You have the power given by God to feel one way, but to act a different way. When you feel angry, you have the power to stop being angry. If you are worried, you have the power to stop being worried. If you are fearful or anxious, you have the power to stop feeling fearful. This seems like a radical kind of idea, and perhaps you are saying to yourself, "this guy has no idea what he's talking about, I can't help that I feel worried; I'm a worrier!" False. If you were the

angriest you'd ever been and you were throwing the biggest fit of your lifetime, and Father Bryan showed up at your house to visit, I bet you'd be able to calm down rather quickly. Whether you like it or not, you CAN control your emotions.

As a matter of fact, Jesus tells His apostles this very thing after the Last Supper had commenced. He has already revealed He was going to go away, be handed over, and then killed. Naturally, His apostles would be in a state of panic. What does He tell them? "Let not your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). He advises them not to allow themselves to get worked up or be fearful. Why? Because they are to trust God and trust Him. It's that simple, really.

Understand this: God is in control whether you like it or not. God has a plan for your life. When you let your emotions control your life, you are risking missing out on taking the next step in that plan. It is so easy to get caught up in the way you feel, and all it does is stall and distract you from completing the tasks that God wants you to do. Jesus needed his apostles to be strong and stable in order to be prepared to go out and preach the Gospel after His resurrection. God needs you to live the same way. When we are emotionally and spiritually stable, God will be able to give us more of the work we have to do, and more graces to follow.

Due to construction at St. Ambrose ALL Masses will be held at Holy Family:
December 2, 3, 16, 17, 23
Mass on December 24th will return to the St. Ambrose Site.
Check the Bulletin for details.

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Monthly Money Minutes

By Amy Jo Lauber

Certified Financial Planner™ Professional and president of
Lauber Financial Planning

“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God gave it light, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”
Revelation 21:23

The darkest time of year is also when we celebrate the birth of Jesus; the light of the world. It is this light that guides our paths and shows us what we need to reflect upon as we enter a new year.

When we're in the dark, it's difficult to find our way. The same is true with financial decisions; unless and until we know the truth, we cannot make good decisions.

I encourage you to use these short days and long nights to pray that the Holy Spirit shines a light into your life so that you can see clearly and make good decisions going forward.

We welcome into our parish family:

Baptisms

Eleanor Agnes Mulvaney
Sophia Irene Brill
Giana Sofia
Julian Josue Figueroa
Joseph Dennis Long
Liam Mitchell Bolton

New Parishioners

Caitlin Eaton & Josue Figueroa
Joseph Pena
Danielle Miano

Friendship Corner

by Audrey Kunz

“Friendship is the only cement that will ever hold the world together.”

Woodrow Wilson

“Let your door stand open to receive Him, unlock your soul to Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind, and then you will see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the joy of grace. Throw wide the gate of your heart, stand before the sun of the everlasting light...”

St. Ambrose (Feast Day-Dec. 7th)

“I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.”

Charles Dickens

“Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone.”

Charles M. Schulz

“Love is shown by little things, by attention to small daily signs which make us feel at home. Faith grows when it is lived and shaped by love. That is why our families, our homes, are true domestic churches. They are the right place for faith to become life, and life to grow in faith.”

Pope Francis (the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph)

the bridge

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