

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



News and Notes from Fr. Jerry

Sharing Our Gifts with Others

Dear Parishioners,

I love this time of year. In April I am thankful for clear blue skies, the smell of blossoms lingering in the air and the gentle breezes. I rejoice in the generosity of parishioners that will allow me the privilege of enjoying the Wednesday afternoon of Masters Week at the Par 3 Contest. I look forward to a Thirsty Thursday at a Green-Jackets game, even though I don't find myself all that thirsty these days. And, from a distance, I rejoice with my brother Mike as he celebrates his 65th birthday and my Mom as she turns 88. But most of all, in this first week of April I have a deep sense of gratitude as we gather to celebrate our most important and beautiful liturgies of the Church year.

These liturgies of Holy Week, which are so rich and moving, culminate in the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night, during which our newest members receive our Eucharistic Lord for the very first time. It is such a joyous night for them and for us as their desire to belong to us

strengths our own sense of God's great Love for us.

We began this journey to Easter joy 40 days earlier when so many of us received ashes on Ash Wednesday. I like the newer form for imposing ashes, "Turn away from Sin and be faithful to the Gospel." But Fr. Dave Arnoldt insisted on using the traditional formula, "Remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return." These words are not to remind us that we will die. They remind us that we are nothing and have nothing except through God's



generous gifts, beginning with the gift of life itself. Every breath we take, everything we have, do, eat, see, in fact our very being, is only possible through God who gives them all to us out of love.

Even giving all these to us is not enough for God's love. He also gave us His Son, Jesus, as a sacrifice for us. Jesus did not need to be born, suffer and die; He is God. He did it solely for our sake, out of a never-ending, unconditional love for each and every one of us. No matter

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The 18th Annual Msgr. P. James Costigan St. Mary on the Hill School Golf Tournament

It's springtime in Augusta. You know what that means — blooming azaleas, Masters Week, and the annual Msgr. P. James Costigan St. Mary on the Hill School Golf Tournament!

This year's tournament is expected to be even bigger and better than in years past. So mark your calendars for Friday, April 30. The shotgun start is at 1 p.m. at Forest Hills Golf Club. All golfers are invited to step up to the greens and spend the day in fellowship and fun, while supporting a worthy cause.

The entry fee is \$100 per person, which includes lunch, dinner, green fees, a golf cart, and two mulligans per player. All proceeds from the tournament will benefit



the St. Mary on the Hill School Endowment Fund.

"This is a great event for school families, parishioners and friends to gather for a day of golf and fun," says Mary Davis, Director of Development. "Not to mention that the money raised goes to such a great cause. Each year, the endowment fund helps to meet the greatest needs of the school."

Hole sponsors are also needed. The cost of sponsorship is \$125. To register or support the tournament through sponsorship, please fill out the form below. For more information, please call Mary Davis at 706-733-6627. Thanks so much for your support!

Thanks to our sponsors: Thomas Poteet & Son Funeral Directors, St. Francis Animal Hospital (Curt Garner, D.V.M.; Mark Tribby, D.V.M.; Ryan Rhodes, D.V.M.; David Tribby, D.V.M.; Ian Scholer, D.V.M.; Kim Bagnoni, D.V.M.), Rhodes Financial Services, and Asthma and Allergy Center, Jaya Joseph, M.D.

Please complete the form below.

If you have already arranged for a foursome, please list all your players.

Singles will be paired with other participants, unless otherwise noted.

Please note: A new tournament scoring format will be used to make it more competitive.

Name _____	Name _____
Address _____	Address _____
City/ST/Zip _____	City/ST/Zip _____
Phone: (H) _____	Phone: (H) _____
(Cell) _____	(Cell) _____
True Handicap: _____ Club: _____	True Handicap: _____ Club: _____

Name _____	Name _____
Address _____	Address _____
City/ST/Zip _____	City/ST/Zip _____
Phone: (H) _____	Phone: (H) _____
(Cell) _____	(Cell) _____
True Handicap: _____ Club: _____	True Handicap: _____ Club: _____

Entry Fee: \$100.00 per person
(includes lunch, dinner, green fees, golf cart and 2 mulligans per player)

I do not play golf but would like to make a contribution to the St. Mary School Endowment Fund in the amount of \$ _____

Make checks payable to
St. Mary on the Hill School

Please mail this form to:
St. Mary on the Hill Golf Tournament
Attn: Mary Davis
1420 Monte Sano Avenue
Augusta, GA 30904

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____



ST. MARY ON THE HILL SCHOOL HOLE SPONSORSHIP

Every year we seek "hole" sponsors to help underwrite the expenses associated with the St. Mary School Golf Tournament, to benefit the endowment fund.

Hole sponsorships can be purchased for \$125.00 per hole. Last year the tournament raised over \$12,000 for the school's endowment fund. Patron signs will be provided to thank you for your generous sponsorship of this event. Your support of this worthy event is greatly appreciated.

*SPONSOR'S NAME AS IT SHOULD APPEAR ON THE SIGN:

* _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Hole \$125.00 - Total \$ _____



Guests Invited To Reception

All participants, their family members, guests and sponsors are invited to join us at Forest Hills Golf Club after the tournament for the 19th hole reception (dinner will be provided) and awards presentation. This is a wonderful way to wrap up the Annual Golf Tournament to benefit St. Mary on the Hill School Endowment Fund. Please make plans to attend.

Stewardship

Becoming Fishers of Men

Whether you hold a high-profile position in our faith community, or have more of a behind-the-scenes role as a coordinator of a ministry, God has called you – as a parish leader – to help build His Church.

This call and challenge is just as important as the call of any other Catholic leader, including the earliest disciples.

When Jesus walked along the Sea of Galilee, He urged a group of fishermen, “Come follow me.” Jesus promised if they laid down their nets and followed Him, He would make them fishers of men. These men were among His original disciples, and they knew Christ’s call was so important that they left their secular occupations to follow Him.

In a similar way, Jesus calls each of us today. He is not necessarily asking us to leave our secular careers, but He is asking us to put Him first in our lives and to share His message of love with others.

God truly wants us to serve Him and to build His Church through the secular occupations we have chosen. It is through the Church that new disciples are born, and it is in the Church that disciples continue to mature. Forming disciples of Christ is the most important work that can be done on earth, and each of us has been called to play an active role in this work.

So, how do we go about building the Church? Where do we find the plans?

Some people mistakenly think that building the Church – in particular, building our own parish or diocese – is no different than building a successful business. But in fact, it is different. The goal of building the Church is to change hearts, a goal which only God can accomplish.

Secular society has not prepared us for this work. However, the Holy Spirit – sometimes referred to as the “Architect of the Church” – has the plan. In order to implement this plan, we must become good listeners. We must open ourselves to the workings of the Holy Spirit as He transforms us and guides us to carry out



God’s work and to serve as His instruments on earth, building the Church together with Him.

This is where spiritual exercises, such as retreats, come into play. A retreat offers the individual an opportunity to spend time alone with the Lord and allows God to draw the person deeper into the mystery of who He is, who we are, and what He is doing in our lives. Stewardship retreats, such as our parish’s annual leadership retreats, can offer parish leaders the opportunity each year to spend time with the Lord as He directs them in the ways of discipleship. As leaders, we must take time to meditate on the scriptures and allow Jesus to open up His Word to us. Then, as we grow deeper in our understanding of what God wants of us, we can exclaim, just as the first disciples did on the road to Emmaus, “Our hearts are burning within us” (Lk 24:32).

God has placed an extremely important call on the lives of all parish leaders, no matter how big or small the role. It is vital to spend time discerning how we, as parish leaders, can best answer His call. What, in particular, is the Lord calling each one of us to do? He most likely is not asking us to drop our nets, but to pick them up and become “fishers of men.” We must discern how we can most effectively cast our nets for Him.

Serving Jesus in the Dying

Mother Teresa once said of the dying, “They are Jesus in disguise.”

Ronnie Merry, the volunteer coordinator for the hospice program at Trinity Hospital, certainly feels that way. In fact, she began her work with hospice as a way to escape working for “Man” and begin working for God.

“Working for the Lord is definitely different than working for the secular world,” Ronnie says. “In a lot of ways it is harder. But knowing that Christ is in the midst of the work makes it very rewarding.”

Based on the good works the hospice volunteers do each year, it is clear that God is blessing their willingness to serve.

Trinity Hospice has 43 volunteers who assist the professional team with its hospice duties. While the doctors, nurses, social workers, chaplains and aides do their jobs caring for the dying, the hospice volunteers step in to provide assistance in many ways. Some work in administrative roles, some assist with bereavement groups, and some visit patients at their home – providing socialization and respite for the caregiver. Most importantly, however, the hospice volunteers show they care and are committed to serving the dying and their families. Ronnie insists that, whatever a volunteer’s particular role, he or she plays a special place in the ministry of hospice.

“They offer a service that no one else in hospice offers,” she says. “The patients and their families know that these people are not getting paid. They’re serving out of the goodness of their hearts, and that offers the families a sense of peace. They are always

very grateful for the volunteers in the midst of a time that is so trying for them.”

In order to serve as a hospice volunteer, individuals are required to go through extensive training and background checks.

“There are about six to eight weeks worth of required procedures that the volunteers go through,” Ronnie says.

First, they must be United States Citizens. Then, knowing that requirement is met, the volunteers go through training, drug testing, and TB testing. Afterwards, the volunteer candidates are interviewed by hospice personnel, who determine if the candidate is appropriate for the hospice philosophy.

For those considering the possibility of becoming a hospice volunteer, Ronnie gives the following advice: “Working with the dying, while it is very rewarding, is not for everyone. It’s really a mission, something you have to be called to do.”

Ronnie feels that God has certainly called her to this type of work. She knows that her

service, as well as the service of the entire hospice team, allows those in great need to feel God’s love.

Do you feel drawn to show compassion to those who are dying? If so, consider applying at Trinity Hospice to serve as a hospice volunteer. The approval process is extensive, but the work is so rewarding. Besides, as Ronnie says, “We always need more help. God’s work is never done,”

For more information about how you can serve as a hospice volunteer, or if you or a family member are in need of a hospice volunteer, contact Ronnie at 706-729-6328.



*Ronnie Merry (left) and Lorraine Beran (right)
of Trinity Hospice*

Let the Children Come to Me

In St. Matthew's gospel, Jesus instructs His disciples: "Let the little children come to me, and do not prevent them." (Mt 19:14).

The disciples, who could not appreciate the rowdy and curious children, felt compelled to prevent the children from disturbing Jesus. However, Jesus' instructions were contrary to the disciples' compulsion. Christ knew that by running to and being near Him, the children would come to know His love. Adults, such as the disciples, discover the love of Christ in a different way, such as by quietly listening to His teachings and parables.

At St. Mary's, our faith formation program recognizes the variance in how different age groups come to know the Lord. Without a doubt, children approach our Faith differently than adults. So, instead of forcing our young ones to sit through a lecture they can't possibly understand, the parish reaches out to them in a way that meets their needs. In particular, volunteers of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) program allow our children to discover the Faith in age-appropriate ways.

"The hands-on method that Catechesis of the Good Shepherd uses allows the children to take ownership of their faith," says Carrie Roberts, who co-directs Catechesis of the Good Shepherd with Joan Purucker, Director of Religious Education. "It brings everything to a personal level, allowing them to spend however much time they need on different lessons."

The teaching format of CGS is much like that of a Montessori curriculum: children are allowed to interact with and discover the Faith in whatever way serves them best. Teaching tools consist of hand-made materials representing Bible parables and other passages, child-size rep-

licas of sacred vessels used during Mass, such as patens and chalices, and other hands-on materials. During each CGS session, the children also listen to a teaching about a particular Bible passage, element of the liturgy, or season of the liturgical calendar. Following the teaching, the children are encouraged to ask questions as well as spend time working with and learning from the hands-on materials.

"We let the Spirit work in them," Carrie says. "He draws some of them to re-create the parable with figurines, while others are drawn to the child-sized liturgical items."

The teaching methods used by CGS volunteers may seem outlandish to some. In fact, Carrie admits that to many adults a CGS session

might look more like play time than learning-in-progress. However, in the eight years CGS has been offered at St. Mary's, Carrie, Joan and the other volunteers have been amazed at the way in which the children have responded in faith.

"Their insights are amazing," Carrie says. "Sometimes their comments and their questions dumbfound us. They take something that is so deep and theological and simplify it in such a manner that the reality of the particular truth is made more wonderful in our eyes – even as their catechists."

CGS is offered to all kindergarten, first-, and second-grade children. St. Mary's School children participate in CGS during the school week, while those in religious education attend on Sundays.

For Carrie, serving as a catechist for CGS has been a great blessing. She greatly enjoys exploring the Faith with the children.

"Seeing the Faith through the eyes of the children is priceless," she says.

If you are interested in serving as a CGS volunteer, please contact Joan at 706-733-6627. There is a particular need for volunteers during the school week.





Meeting Special Needs

by Katie Conner

I've been the mother of an adopted child with special needs for all of three months now, and while I know that does not qualify me as an expert (or even terribly experienced) I can't help but make a few observations about our new addition and my expanded job title.

First, I just can't seem to think of myself in terms of the aforementioned title—and it's not because of the newness of it all. I don't think of myself as the mother of an adopted child or the mother of a special needs child. I'm Gabe's mother, just as simply (and as deeply) as I am the mother of my other seven children. He makes my heart melt just like the others do. He makes me crazy just like the others do. He is the most amazing and special little person in the world to me, just like his siblings are.

He is special because of all the qualities that make up his essential "Gabriel-ness." He is charming, mischievous, affectionate, strong-willed, funny, and full of energy. He loves to eat, dance, wrestle and be in the midst of the activity in our house. He loves to help his daddy with chores. He loves bath time and, based on his antics in the tub, he is going to be quite a swimmer. He also has Down syndrome. And I just can't help thinking of him this way. Sometimes I think of him as one of my "little" kids. (He is number seven in birth order.) Sometimes I think of him as one of my boys. (There are five of them.) Sometimes I think of him as one of my stubborn ones. (Okay, I think I have eight of those.) But very quickly I stopped thinking of him as my adopted child, and sometime in the last few months, I stopped thinking of him as my child with Down's.

Certainly his special needs will always play a role in his life. I am well aware of this reality. We have already

met some wonderful therapists who are helping him acquire skills that come more naturally to other children. But the more I get to know him, the more I see the boy and not the syndrome. The more I see the possibilities and the less I see limitations.



What is most interesting to me is that since Gabriel has joined our gang, I'm also seeing more clearly the uniqueness of all my children. My "typical" seven are no generic group because of their lack of disability. Somehow having Gabe among us has made me more aware of the special ways in which each of them likes and needs to be treated. Some need extra encouragement; some need their own space to figure things out.

Some thrive on activity and excitement; others need regular times of quiet. And then there are the myriad little things—one likes his cereal drowning in milk, another must have it dry. One can't stand hot weather, another dislikes the cold. And on and on.

We all have our little quirks; we all, to a certain extent, have "special" needs. For a family to live in harmony, we must be continuously stretching and bending to meet each other's needs. Achieving that harmony takes creativity and energy and lots and lots of patience, so much it hurts sometimes. It takes grace. For family life to work—with such a variety of needs present under one roof—we have to look to our Father in heaven to fill us up so we can in turn fill each other up. In so many ways I am learning that Gabriel's needs are no more and no less special than anyone else's in my family. Just like everyone, he needs all the love we have to give. How wonderful to have a Father with an endless supply of love and infinite special ways to give it!

Sharing Our Gifts with Others *continued from front cover*

what we do to try to make God stop loving us, His love cannot diminish. God yearns for us to return to Him. There are only two things God asks us to do in response to everything He gives us: love and spend time with Him, and with a deep sense of gratitude share with others the gifts we have been given. This is the heart of stewardship.

We need to spend time with God, building up our relationship with Him. We also need to share our God-given gifts, our skills, talents and material possessions with others. Sharing our time, talent and treasure are not just nice things to do; they are required of each of us by the God who gives them to us. Jesus Himself promised that by sharing our gifts, we will not have less, but be even more blessed. In Luke's Gospel, He says, "Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap."

Sometimes, I fear that the shadow side of stewardship is a sense of entitlement. If we are not careful, we can easily begin to move towards a "gospel of affluence," which cannot be found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We dare not take God's Love for granted. So, this year, to counter balance

this shadow, we are focusing in on "Gratitude: the heart of Discipleship." Therefore, in order to help us share the gifts we have been given with others, the Pastoral Council with the help of the Service Commission has committed us to a Gratitude Project. We will return to a project that this faith community did so well in the 1990s. We have committed to building another Habitat for Humanity House. I am so very excited for this opportunity to put our faith and our deep sense of gratitude into action. Actual work on this project probably will not begin until late in the summer, so there will be time to keep you updated on the details and how you can be involved. For now, I simply ask you to rejoice with me in another opportunity to share the Good News of God's Love. For Jesus Christ Is Risen! He Is Truly Risen!

In Christ,



Fr. Jerry

Ad Placement

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Recent Gifts to St. Mary on the Hill

St Mary on the Hill Church

*In memory of Kathryn May
Tucker and Brenda Vaughn*

*In honor of Tony Vaughn
Comcast Corporation*

St. Mary on the Hill School

*Target Field Trip Grant
Scholarship America*

St. Mary on the Hill School Endowment

*In memory of Howard Funke
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Cundey*

Baptisms

Mary Margaret Babbitt
daughter of Lee and Ashley

Turner Alan Stevenson,
son of Joe and Emily

Benjamin Garrett Fortson
son of Lombard and Katherine

Kaely Blake Rudder
*daughter of Brandon and
Katherine*

Garrett Michael Gamble
son of Travis and Cheryl

Carlee Ann Tharpe
daughter of Sean and Heather

Charles Tripp Morris
son of Tripp and Venus