

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



News and Notes from Fr. Jerry

God's Grace

Dear Parishioners,

You may remember that Fr. Scott Winchel spent some time with our faith community before his ordination to the transitional diaconate. I am delighted that he has returned to St. Mary on the Hill as our Parochial Vicar. I know you will give him a warm welcome. This interview of Fr. Scott by Allison Kennedy shows how important God's grace has been in leading him to the priesthood, and now to us. Enjoy.

Fr. Jerry

Fr. Scott Winchel

You're from Peculiar, Mo. Is your family still there? Yes. My parents are still there. Peculiar is a growing town on the edge of Kansas City that, during my childhood, was primarily farming country. I have two brothers – one older, one younger. They are Gary and Patrick, and my parents' names are Don and Patty.

You were an aviator? I was an aviation mechanic. I was in the Marines for six years, during which I worked on helicopters. After my military service, I continued working in aviation until 2003.

Is there a translation to the priesthood? I guess if I had to make a comparison, in aviation, my job was to keep airplanes in the air. In the priesthood, I'm trying to keep the spiritual life of people climbing up into the heavens, as well.

How did you become a priest? I grew up Southern Baptist and became Catholic when I was 29. My initial contact with the Catholic Church was through a girl I worked with. I'd talk with her about religion and she knew her Faith well, which challenged me in my own faith. I began to pray and read, and started attending a Catholic church.

Were you active in a Baptist church? No. My attendance at church had stopped while I was in the military, and during the time of my conversion I had begun searching out different churches to attend.

What was your parents' reaction when you converted? Their reaction was similar to what I have received since my conversion. There was great concern that by becoming Catholic, I was somehow leaving Christianity altogether. My aunt, a devout Christian, and I were talking a year or two ago about what the Catholic Church believed, and at one point she asked me, "Are you telling me you're a

Mass Schedule

Sunday, 7:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
12:15 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Monday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Wednesday, 7:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m.

Thursday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Friday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Saturday, 9:15 a.m.,
5:00 p.m. (Sunday Vigil)

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday, 3:45-4:45 p.m.
and by appointment

Perpetual Adoration Chapel

Chapel is located at the corner of
Monte Sano and Bellevue.

continued on page 7

Soup Kitchen Opens



With everything that is going on with our economy these days, hard times are still a reality for many in Augusta. Jobs have been terminated, homes have been lost, and the “belt buckle” has been tightened a few times too many. For some, the downswing within the economy has cut much deeper, causing real-life disasters.

The recession of 2007 to 2009 wasn’t anything new. It’s happened before, and will happen again. But in the midst of great turmoil, humanity tends to rise to the occasion. Some of the greatest products, services and programs were born during times of hardship. One such program is the Master’s Table Soup Kitchen. Opened during the recession of 1982, the soup kitchen – which is operated by the Golden Harvest Food Bank – serves lunch to more than 300 people a day, 365 days a year.

For many years, volunteers from St. Mary’s have served in various capacities at Master’s Table. Currently, a group of eighth-grade students volunteers once a month to serve lunch at the facility. Overseeing the students’ efforts is parishioner Patty May, who has been helping out at the soup kitchen for the last seven years. Assisting Patty is school parent and parishioner Maria Novajosky.

When asked why she chose to work in the soup kitchen, Patty says she felt a need to do something for the greater community, beyond the boundaries of St. Mary’s.

“It’s a ‘hands-on’ way to do something for other people,” she says. “You can do it as a family, which teaches your children to give back and to be grateful for the safe, wonderful life they have. It is a first-hand way for people to see how blessed they are.”

As volunteers, the eighth-grade students assist with preparing the meal as well as serving the food and drinks to the people who frequent the soup kitchen. The experience is truly eye-opening for many of the students, says Mary Frances Weber, St. Mary’s eighth-grade teacher.

“The students who return from helping at the soup kitchen are genuinely impressed by the needy in

SMS Students' Eyes

our community," Mrs. Weber says. "They are exposed to an aspect of reality that they rarely experience."

When asked about their experiences at the Master's Table, many of the eighth-grade students were willing to share their thoughts and feelings.

"It makes me feel great to serve those in need," Baileigh Williamson says. "You can just tell on their faces how thankful they are to see students serving them."

Fellow student Alexis Wagner says the experience has impacted her relationship with Christ.

"It has changed my relationship with the Lord by showing me how much people are in need of our help," she says. "My favorite part of serving is seeing the smiling faces of the people."

Some of the responses were also humorous. When asked about his favorite part of serving at the soup kitchen, student Johnny Murphy answered, "I get to handle food." Fellow classmate Nick Woo, also with food on his mind, answered, "Being able to eat some of the dessert."

Regardless of their reasons for serving, all of the students felt that it was a rewarding experience on many levels. Everyone at the soup kitchen leaves for the day with a smile on their face. Some simply feel good about having had a delicious meal, while others appreciate the chance to serve those in need.

Additional volunteers are always needed to serve at the soup kitchen throughout the month. For more information on how you can help, please contact Tammy Jackson at tjackson@goldenharvest.org.

"The students who return from helping at the soup kitchen are genuinely impressed by the needy in our community. They are exposed to an aspect of reality that they rarely experience."

*-Mary Frances Weber,
St. Mary's eighth-grade teacher*



Bringing the The Secular Fr

St. Francis of Assisi is one of the most well-known and beloved Catholic saints. Still, many people are unaware that St. Francis founded three religious Orders, including one for lay people.

During St. Francis' lifetime, many men began following him and his guidelines for their religious lives as priests and brothers, which became his first Order. Many religious sisters also chose to live under Franciscan Rule as Poor Clares, which became his second Order. St. Francis established the third Order, now known as the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO), for religious and lay people who were unable to join the first or second Orders due to the responsibilities of work or family.

Ronald Pihokker, SFO, a jubilarian in the Order, sums up the SFO's philosophy nicely in his article on the Pauline Rule of the SFO.

"The SFO's current rule is not an invitation to secularism – which denotes religious skepticism or worse, the idea that religion has no place in public life – but to secularity, the sense that life in the world is holy because the world is holy and we are called to that holiness, no matter what our station in life or the mode of our living," he writes.

The SFO is an international Order. The Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region, which includes Georgia and four other states, is one of 30 SFO regions in the United States. Our region alone has nearly 500 members. The local fraternity in Augusta, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, has 36 members, 28 of whom are professed members. Seventeen St. Mary parishioners are Secular Franciscans.

"This Franciscan family, as one among many spiritual families raised up by the Holy Spirit in the Church, unites all members of the people of God, laity, religious, and priests, who recognize that they are called to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi," says Audrey Binet, the formation director of the St. Elizabeth of Hungary fraternity.

The Order's goal is to attain balance in the four pillars of the SFO: Franciscan spirituality, formation, fraternity, and apostolate. The local fraternity gathers once a month for formation and to provide an opportunity for members to support each other in living this way of life.

Outside of fraternity gatherings, Secular Franciscans seek this balance through a devoted prayer life. Each member prays the Liturgy of the Hours daily, as well as the seven-decade Franciscan Crown Rosary, to honor Mary as the Queen of the Franciscan Order. Some Secular Franciscans use the *Lectio Divina* ("divine reading") method of prayer and Scripture study, and all members read, reflect, and respond in written word to their monthly formation lessons.

"The mission that Francis received when the Lord spoke to him from the San Damiano Cross was to rebuild the Church, because it is falling into ruin," Audrey says. "That is our mission also. The Gospel, the Rule and the Four Pillars help us to rebuild the Church."



Gospel to Life Franciscan Order

The group's work includes various apostolic endeavors. The SFO contributes financially and through formation to the mission of one of its members and his wife, which is located in Antigua. Some local Secular Franciscans minister to youth, while others minister to those seeking the refuge of Rachel's Vineyard, a post-abortion healing ministry. In addition, the group has a Rosary Apostolate that has thus far made and sent more than 1,000 rosaries to different missions around the world.

Audrey says that her own personal spiritual growth has been a testament to the value of the Order. She was very unhappy to leave her life in Arkansas when she moved to Augusta in 1988. Before she left, she felt that God helped her to see that she would experience her most mature experience of faith in Augusta.

"In 1990, an acquaintance invited me to a fraternity meeting," she says. "That was just the beginning. Realizing that the SFO could be the way the Lord would fulfill His promise, I was compelled to continue seeking community, apostolic life, and a more intimate relationship with the Lord. My prayer life became more disciplined, intense, and vibrantly Catholic. I learned to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. The Rule began to give me focus and direction in my faith journey, and it encouraged me to embrace the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, more fully.

"More than ever, the Church and the world need the Franciscan presence. The Secular Franciscan Order offers that presence – bringing the Gospel to life and life to the Gospel."

The fraternity meets on the second Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at Trinity Hospital. Audrey welcomes all visitors to attend the SFO gatherings to find out more. For more information, please contact Audrey Binet at 706-855-0906, or via e-mail at sfobinet@aol.com.



First Communion Participants

Congratulations to all and their families



God's Grace *continued from front cover*

Christian?" Shocked, I responded, "Of course I'm a Christian." It seems to be a somewhat common misconception that Catholics aren't Christian.

Any surprises so far in your ministry? I've learned that the focus is on Christ anyway, and we're merely the vessels and instruments. We're here to help the people find Christ, like a mediator. I try to remember that it's all about bringing the people to Christ and getting out of the way.

But you do have to be up front preaching and teaching. Yes, there is leadership required. But it's easier when I realize that it's not all about me; instead, it's all about Christ.

Was it daunting to realize you'd have to give up the idea of having a wife and family? Yes, but even people who are married have to make the choice. The married person says, "I'm going to give up all other people in order to be married to this one person." It's not really a loss, but instead is a gain. In a similar way, the priest says, "I'm going to give up the married life in order to gain a special

relationship with God." It's not so much about what we are giving up, but what we are gaining.

What's a myth about priests you'd want to dispel? The myth that it is abnormal for a priest not to get married. Sometimes, people will say it is not natural for a priest or a man not to get married. I would say, "You're right it's not natural, but it is super-natural." To choose God in a special way over and above things of the natural world is super-natural.

What do you do in your spare time? I like to exercise. I like to go bicycle riding and going on walks – being out in nature. I like to read. I usually have a spiritual book going, and I also like to read classic novels and Pulitzer Prize winners.

What were your first impressions of the South? It's hot, it's slower than other parts of the country – which I like – and I'd also say the South has great food. I love the Southern cooking and, last but not least, the people tend to be friendlier.

Ad Placement



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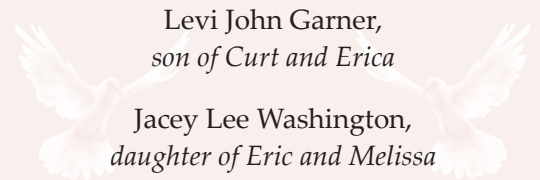
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Baptisms



Levi John Garner,
son of Curt and Erica

Jacey Lee Washington,
daughter of Eric and Melissa

Nathan David Noyce,
son of Brian and Jill

Heaven Belole Pencille,
Trinity Belole Pencille,
John Mark Pencille, II,
Ethan Mark Pencille,
children of John and Lilian

Mary Margaret Stiff,
daughter of Meredith and James

Judson Daniel Rudder,
son of Katherine and Brandon

Please welcome our new seminarian summer intern, Jason Adams. He just finished his third year of study at Pontifical North American College, Rome with a projected Ordination Year of 2012. His home parish is St. Theresa in Cordele, Ga.