

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



The Stewardship Way of Life: *The Key to Growing in Faith*

By Deacon Don McArdle

Our parish has been focusing on Stewardship for well over 20 years. However, sometimes we get so used to hearing the word “Stewardship” that we take for granted that we understand it and are living it. So, perhaps a brief refresher is in order.

It begins with our understanding of what happened at our Baptism and Confirmation. Our lives were transformed into a new creation and the life of God was poured out into us. The same thing that happened to the first Apostles on Pentecost has happened to each one of us. As you remember, when they came out of that upper room they were transformed. We see these early disciples who were cowering in that upper room now speaking boldly about the things of God, and who went forth to do the works of God – just like Jesus said would happen if they waited for the Holy Spirit.

As disciples of Jesus, we recognize that all good things that come into our life come by way of gift from our Heavenly Father – not because we are entitled or earned them, but because He loves us. Our very lives, our faith and all the talents and material resources



are gifts from Him out of His pure unconditional love for each and every one of us.

We live in an entitlement culture that influences us to constantly compare what somebody else has to what we don't have. This way of seeing life always results in a lack of pure joy.

Recently, I had the privilege to attend a young woman named Tatum's profession of vows to enter the religious life and serve Christ fully with her life. It was a very moving event to see this young woman make a lifetime commitment to serving Christ and His Church while living out the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. As a

Mass Schedule

Sunday, 7:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
12:15 p.m. and 5:30 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.

Perpetual Adoration Chapel

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

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father of nine children, I could not help but be moved by watching her family, and particularly her parents, give this daughter of theirs that they knew and loved since birth to Christ and His Church for the building of His Kingdom on Earth.

During the liturgy for Tatum's profession, we were all reminded of a young woman, Mary, that about 2,000 years ago said "yes" to God to be the mother of Christ with her famous words: "Let it be done to me according to your word." Our Father took Mary's gift of openness to bring salvation to the world – something each and every one of us benefit from daily.

Each of us, by our Baptism and Confirmation, are called and gifted to be disciples of Jesus, just like those first disciples who came out of the upper room on the first Pentecost. Stewardship is the practice of a disciple recognizing that every good thing in his/her life is a pure gift, and responding to God out of love and gratitude with giving those gifts back to God by asking Him how we are suppose to use them.

Each of us as disciples are called as much as the young woman, Tatum, to follow Christ with our whole heart and lives. Most of us are not called to live a professed religious life, but instead are called to live in the world but not be of the world.

Do you want to experience more joy in your life? Then say "yes" more to Jesus from the heart. It was obvious that Tatum was filled with joy, and yet she had renounced the world and all material things in order to follow Christ. Stewardship

offers each of us the opportunity to say "yes" to God on an ever-deepening level and, consequently, experience more joy in our life. Our "yes" needs to be unconditional with the knowledge that we are responding to God Himself.

Many people think the practice of Stewardship is about raising finances to operate the parish and school, or to motivate people to volunteer for various works within the parish. Stewardship is about something far deeper than that. It is all about our relationship with Christ and living the life of a committed disciple. It is not a group parish "esprit de corps" to get things paid for and work done, but a very personal commitment to Christ and the building of His Church. He knows exactly what we are doing in each area of our lives and why we are doing it.

How do you know if you are responding adequately to God with your time, talent and treasure? Pray and ask Him, and do whatever you believe He is telling you to do and err on the side of being more generous with God and not less. Remember what Mary told the stewards to do when the wine ran out at the wedding at Cana. She said, "Do whatever Jesus tells you to do." And when they did that, the large jars of water were turned into wine – and not any wine, but the best of wine. This new wine is symbolic to us of new life in the Holy Spirit. So if you want to experience more joy in your life and more closeness to God, then you need to do whatever you feel Jesus is telling you to do.

In the time and talent area of Stewardship, we need to be discerning as to the ministries and services to which God is calling us to be active. Our lives have seasons – for our young families with children, their primary ministry in serving God is by building a good Catholic home and raising young disciples of Jesus. For others, we have extra time to devote to other areas of building God's church. There is no "one size fits all" here, but we need to discern what God is calling us to in our particular circumstances and at this time in our lives.

In the financial area of Stewardship, our parish has encouraged everybody to use the Biblical tithe (returning 10 percent of your gross income to God – with eight percent going to the parish to finance our ministries and activities, one percent to the Bishop's Annual Appeal, and one percent to other places) as a guideline in living a Stewardship way of life. For some of us, it may take several years to reach that guideline, and for some of us, God may call us to go well beyond the guideline.

We are just beginning our Annual Stewardship Renewal at St. Mary's. This is a time to renew our commitments to God in the areas of time, talent and treasure for the next 12 months. Remember, you cannot outgive God in the area of generosity. I urge you to pray and do whatever you think God is telling you to do, and err on the side of being more generous with God than less with your time, talent and treasure.

A Living Extension of Christ's Message

Dr. Shirley George

Early this year, St. Mary on the Hill Catholic Church lost a very active and dedicated member of our parish family — Dr. Shirley George.

"This is someone who went to Catholic school and very clearly felt the need to act," says Marci Wilhelmi, who served on the first Coordinated Health Services Board with Dr. George. "She was a living extension of Christ's message."

Dr. George passed away on Feb. 28, 2014, after a 10-year battle with Alzheimer's disease. Her memory will live on in our community for years to come, in more ways than one.

"As she never married, as she was married to her job and career, she left no heirs for her estate, and it was a rather substantial estate," Marci says. "She left it to St. Mary on the Hill Parish, St. Mary's School Endowment Fund, and Aquinas High School Endowment Fund, so that other like-minded individuals would receive the education they needed to carry out Christ's mission."

Dr. George was born in Buffalo, N.Y., where she attended Sacred Heart Academy. From there, she went to Boston University for her undergraduate degree, then through several other institutions, as she worked toward her master's. She went on to earn a doctorate in Public Health and Education from Indiana University. She moved to Augusta and became a parishioner of St. Mary on the Hill in 1984, and remained a part of our parish family until her death in February.

She was recruited to the Medical College of Georgia and worked in the community nursing department. At that time, she began to notice that there were very few support systems for the homeless and seasonal migrant



Dr. Shirley George

workers in our community. The only care these individuals were receiving was in the emergency room. So, in 1989, she was able to secure grant money to conduct street surveys, where she physically counted how many homeless people there were in Augusta. The biggest group was living under the 13th Street Bridge, with a peak of 6,000 homeless people in the month of March.

She then, with other members of the department, began building coalitions with area hospitals for the care of this population outside of the emergency room setting. Dr. George eventually real-

ized that it would only work if she was treating the entire family, not just the individual homeless person. So she approached Fr. Jim Costigan, who was pastor of St. Mary's at the time, about locating an outpatient clinic for this population on the St. Mary on the Hill campus. Twenty-five years later, that clinic is still in operation, with financial support from all the area hospitals, and a new building called St. Vincent de Paul Respite Center, an 18-bed post-discharge hospital facility downtown, operates successfully today.

"She was totally devoted to the care of others," Marci says. "She never thought about herself first, she always thought about others."

Her dedication continues to live on through the estate she left to our parish and the two school endowment funds. The money she left to the two endowments generates interest, bringing in more revenue for the schools to be used to help provide strong Catholic education for the children in our community.

"Her kindness and foresight will continue to reach our parish community for generations to come," Marci says.

"This is someone who went to Catholic school and very clearly felt the need to act. She was a living extension of Christ's message – [Dr. George's] kindness and foresight will continue to reach our parish community for generations to come."

– Marci Wilhelmi

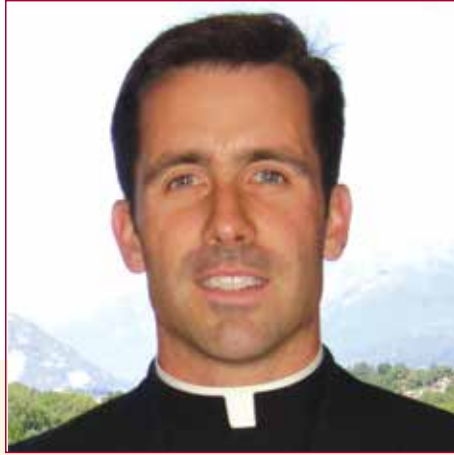
Fr. Richard Sutter

A Priestly Presence on

Student, sports enthusiast, Ironman triathlete, United States Army Infantry Officer, businessman, deacon, priest. While it may seem incredible that one individual can be all these things, the fact is Aquinas High School's new chaplain, Fr. Richard Sutter, is all these things and more. And Father says that all those things were essential to his discernment journey, for otherwise he wouldn't be who he is today.

"The idea of the priesthood first registered when I attended a silent retreat during my junior year of high school," Fr. Richard says. "After that, the idea of the priesthood would come in waves – usually reappearing every Lent when I was more focused on my spirituality. Really, I considered it as something I could do if other things didn't work out. It wasn't at the top of my list."

So Father graduated from high school, studied at Belmont Abbey College, served in the ROTC as well as in the North Carolina Army National Guard and, after graduating, received his commission as a 2nd lieutenant in the U.S. Army, where he served six years. When considering his options once he left the military, Father again thought about the priesthood, but once again decided to wait. Instead, he worked as an Information Technology Project Manager for Quest Diagnostics.



How, then, did Father make the leap from military officer and successful businessman to serving as our campus chaplain? Again, Father didn't take the most direct path. When he answered the call to the priesthood, he received his formation with the Legionaries of Christ and was ordained as a priest in the Legion. But a few years later, Father found himself once again discerning when the Legion was undergoing a renewal period. Ultimately, Father felt that God was leading him in yet another direction. As a result, he left the

Legion of Christ, applied to the Diocese of Savannah to serve in a parish setting, and received his first assignment here in the heart of Aquinas' "Irish Nation."

"I never doubted that I was meant to be a priest, even when I decided to leave the Legion of Christ," says Fr. Richard, who is the first cousin of Fr. Justin Ferguson, who served as Parochial Vicar at St. Mary's from 2006-08. "I knew that God brought me to the priesthood, and while I will always be grateful for my seminary experience with the Legion of Christ, I am very happy in my new home in this diocese and with my new assignment here at Aquinas High School."

Now that Father will be working with the students, with all the laughter, angst and drama that often accompanies the teen years, many can't help wondering how he was at this age.

"Academically, I was a disaster," Fr. Richard says. "The problem with me was that I played basketball for three hours, and then studied for

"The invaluable presence of a priest in high school or college is a priceless ministry – especially if the ministry is not so much about what the priest is doing, but simply who he is to others. My objective here at Aquinas is that the students, faculty and staff, despite my imperfections, will have a positive experience of a priest in their life."

– Fr. Richard Sutter

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15 minutes. I like to tell people to focus on effort and not necessarily on results, but in high school I definitely wasn't putting forth the effort and I was a solid C student. But that changed later in college. At Belmont Abbey, I didn't play basketball, so suddenly I was studying for three hours and made straight As that first semester."

Having experienced much of what today's teens are going through, Father likes to point out to our young men and women that while the greatest gift is the gift of life, the second greatest gift is that of freedom. But it's a freedom that comes with restraints – like guardrails on a bridge that allows you to drive, but ultimately keeps you from driving off the side. Admittedly, teens need to experience this freedom. In fact, their guardrails may be a little wider than they were in grade school, but those guardrails of life – homework, curfews, rules – will ultimately help you experience true freedom.

"The fact is, culture promotes a freedom absent of any restraints that prevent you from doing what you want," Father says. "But true freedom is the freedom of our Lord. Scripture says that knowing the truth shall set you free, and it is that freedom that will help you become all you're capable of becoming."

Interestingly, God's gift of freedom also includes the freedom to

discern. Father says that receiving a call to serve God is something very special, but while God is inviting you, he also wants your collaboration. And having traveled the discernment road, Father hopes that his story will inspire anyone who feels they may be hearing God's call to know that the very fact they are even discerning may be an invitation to at least come and see.

"Part of discernment is demystifying the call, so start by visiting a convent or a seminary," Fr. Richard says. "Pope Benedict's reminder to 'be not afraid' was meant as an invitation to open the doors of your heart. The pope then continued by saying that God takes nothing away, and he gives you everything."

Finally, everything Father has been – student, sports enthusiast, Ironman triathlete, Army officer, and businessman – has come full circle to who he is as a priest. While here at Aquinas, his goals are



Fr. Richard Sutter with sophomore Elizabeth Whitfield, who plays first base for the Aquinas High School softball team

threefold – to be available (before school, in the lunchroom, at a football game), to be approachable (for Catholic students, non-Catholic students, parents, and faculty), and most importantly, to serve with joy.

"The invaluable presence of a priest in high school or college is a priceless ministry – especially if the ministry is not so much about what the priest is doing, but simply who he is to others," Fr. Richard says. "My objective here at Aquinas is that the students, faculty and staff, despite my imperfections, will have a positive experience of a priest in their life."



Fr. Richard Sutter with a group of Aquinas High School seniors

Parish and School Community Set to Celebrate Annual Carnival



With all the games, prizes, food, music, and fun, it's no wonder the St. Mary's School Carnival is a much-anticipated event for kids and grown-ups alike! The family-style carnival will be held Saturday, Oct. 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the St. Mary's School campus. A Preview Party for adults will be held Friday, Oct. 17 from 7 to 11 p.m. in the St. Mary's School gym and cafeteria.

Brian and Therese Rhodes are serving as chairs for this year's Carnival.

"We are very excited about our theme this year, 'Tailgates and Touchdowns,'" Therese says. "Drawing inspiration from an exciting fall football tailgate, we will carry the theme throughout the entire weekend. We will kick off with a 'game day' atmosphere at the Friday night Preview Party. On Saturday, the theme continues with booths and games at the carnival decorated to represent some of our favorite college football teams. This promises to be loads of fun for kids and adults alike. Keep an eye out for your favorite school!"

The Carnival will feature a host of favorite activities and games, including the Hair Factory and the Goldfish Toss booths. Crowd-pleaser Tara Scheyer and the Mud Puppy Band will make an appearance once again. The Country Store will offer the best of our home cooks' kitchens, with everything from breads and desserts to frozen casseroles available for purchase.

During the Preview Party on Friday night, a selection of themed baskets and many other special items will be available for auction. The Preview Party is a wonderful event for the adults of our parish, with gourmet food and drinks, including a signature drink this year. The evening includes a D.J. and dance floor, games to play for prizes, and of course, a silent auction.

"There will be over 150 items available for auction ranging in value from \$15 all the way to \$2,000 – and even some priceless items!" Therese says. "Some examples include an outdoor grilling system, an American Girl doll, and four passes to Disney World, as well as raffle tickets for a week-long stay at a villa in Tuscany."

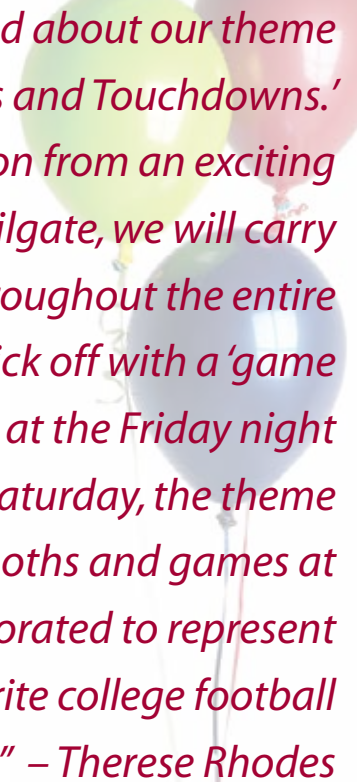
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Annual Carnival

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The Carnival weekend is the only fundraising activity for our parish school, directly benefiting our students. Last year's event enabled the school to purchase three mobile iPad carts, enhancing technology-based learning for our school community. The weekend also provides a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and community building for all ages.

To purchase tickets for the Preview Party, please contact Mariah Sellers at 706-231-2738 or mmcinteriors@knology.net. Carnival tickets are available for purchase at the door, including wristbands for unlimited games. Raffle tickets are available for sale at the school or by school families. To get involved, please contact Therese Rhodes at ThereseRhodes@yahoo.com or PTO President Megan Jackson at Megansjackson@hotmail.com.



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Augusta, GA 30904
Phone 706-733-6627
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Baptisms

Henry Dixon Shelnut
Son of Jonathan and Melanie Shelnut

Charles Keane Viebrock
Son of James and Melanie Viebrock

Ryleigh Anne O'Keefe
Daughter of Ryan and Ashleigh O'Keefe

Aiden Miles Newton
Son of Abraham and Amanda Newton

Recent Donations to St. Mary on the Hill

St. Mary on the Hill Church
Nicole and Paul McDonough

*In Memory of Martha Mitchell
Jean and Billy Pannel*

*In Memory of Lucille Cashin
Patricia L. Davis*

St. Mary on the Hill Music Ministry
*In Memory of Ben Bush
Pat Bush*

St. Mary School Endowment Fund
*In Memory of Michael Hagler
Jessica Loring and Laurence Rasmussen*

St. Mary on the Hill School
*In Memory of Dolores Hoffman
Philip Dula and Family*