

# Saint Mary

## ON THE HILL

### CATHOLIC CHURCH



### *News and Notes from Fr. Jerry*

## Stewardship: "This Is the Day the Lord Has Made; Let Us Rejoice in It and Be Glad"

Dear Parishioners,

Sometimes, we spend much time looking at, analyzing and speaking about the meaning of various passages and readings from Holy Scripture. Of course, we need to do that – it is important to our spiritual well-being, and to have a complete understanding of the messages revealed to us in the Word of God. As you are aware, most weeks we have four readings as part of our Liturgy of the Word – a First Reading, then a Responsorial Psalm, a Second Reading, and the Holy Gospel.

The one reading that sometimes is ignored is that Psalm. Yet, there are truths and wisdom in the Psalms that are worthy of our comments and our recognition. Psalm 24 (a song of David) strikes me in particular as one rich in meaning for us, especially from the perspective of stewardship. It opens, "The earth is the Lord's and all it holds, the world and those who dwell in it." For me, that says everything we believe and provides us with all the motivation we need to pursue stewardship as a way of life.

Let us consider how profound that statement – "The earth is the Lord's and all it holds" – really is.

If we do embrace stewardship as a way of life, we admit and accept that everything comes from God and everything is God's. Stewardship is not complicated, although we try to make everything complex and complicated, it seems. It is, as stated, merely the realization that our very existence, our lives, our goods all come from and in finality belong to God. We are the stewards of all of this. If we do accept that and try to live that way, we then tend to administer well God's gifts on behalf of God. That is all stewardship is.

At the heart of all of this is our relationship with the Lord. We can also say that stewardship is all about getting that relationship right. Jesus certainly makes reference to stewards and stewardship in the Gospels. The Gospels were all written in Greek, and the English words for "steward" and "stewardship" are translations from a Greek word that means "to administer what belongs to someone else."

That is what we do in this life. We receive gifts – we are granted the stewardship of time, talent and treasure from God. But all of this and all

### 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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# "We Need a Guiding Plan to Best Use Our Resources" *Our Priority Planning Group*

## The Priority Planning Listening Session

September 20, 2016,  
from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.  
in the cafeteria/gym,  
facilitated by  
Fr. Gary Kastl



The session will include interactive, facilitated discussions in small groups during which the participants will be asked to identify:

1. What our faith community does well
2. Three priorities we should consider over the next three years
3. What we would like the parish to look like in three years

**Come and bring your ideas!**

*"As a parish community, we need a guiding plan to best use our resources, and that requires careful planning. That planning needs to include as many of our parishioners as possible, and we urge them to become engaged and participate in the process." – Rhee Fincher*

Several months ago, Fr. Jerry Ragan approached the Pastoral Council of the parish with the challenge of carefully planning and preparing for the future. This resulted in the Council serving as a priority planning group to develop a process through which the parish could evaluate its current status and develop a plan for the next three to five years, which would become an ongoing process by which the parish routinely evaluates and adjusts.

Rhee Fincher, a longtime member of the Pastoral Council, agreed to coordinate the effort.

"My role is to coordinate the process by working with the planning group, Fr. Ragan, and our external facilitator, Fr. Gary Kastl," Rhee says. "We began to meet six months ago, but the kickoff is not until Sept. 20. As a parish community, we need a guiding plan to best use our resources, and that requires careful planning. That planning needs to include as many of our parishioners as possible, and we urge them to become engaged and participate in the process."

Of course, such a plan must be effectively developed and implemented. Therefore, Fr. Gary Kastl, the pastor of St. Anne Catholic Church in Broken Arrow, Okla., was selected to guide and assist the committee in the plan development process. Fr. Kastl has gone through a similar process in his own parish, in addition to guiding and helping other parishes throughout the United States. As a definite plan developed, it was decided to begin the process in earnest on the evening of Tuesday, Sept. 20.

Rhee notes the importance of the process and the significance of that first gathering on Sept. 20.

"We know that we have a great parish," Rhee says. "The way our ministries have expanded and grown and the way that people have responded by giving of themselves indicates that. What we are trying to cultivate is a system and plan that becomes an ongoing and never-ending process – something that is continuous, so that we are constantly

# sources, and That Requires Careful Planning” at St. Mary on the Hill Parish

evaluating and updating whatever priority plan we put in place. It all starts on the 20th, and we really need people to turn out for what will, in the most part, be an opportunity to voice your ideas and concerns for the future of the Church.”

Pope Francis has pointed often to the importance of the Church doing things exactly like this at all levels, from the parish to the diocese, to Rome itself and the Universal Church. The pope says, “What we need to discuss is not just the future Church, but the *future future* Church – what the Church should look like in years to come; what we need to be teaching to completely engage our modern young people in particular, because they are the leaders of tomorrow. We want the Church to have our faithful positioned to flourish in the future, no matter who follows me to the Throne of St. Peter, and no matter who is the pastor or Bishop in the local Church.”

Rhee notes the outline for the opening meeting.

“We will begin at 6:30 p.m. with prayer, and follow that with our opening session at which Fr. Kastl will explain the goals and process,” Rhee says. “It is imperative that our members, our parish leadership, and our parish and school staff are present and engaged. We will break into small discussion groups with each group talking about three basic defined questions: 1. What our faith community does well? 2. Three priorities we should consider over the next three years? 3. What we would like the parish to look like in three years? I repeat that this is just the beginning. We wish in the coming months to have a clear three-year plan, which has, as I said, as one of its elements, something that makes it enduring and constant.”



For more information on the Priority Planning process, please contact Rhee Fincher at 706-736-5274 or [rfincher@augusta.edu](mailto:rfincher@augusta.edu), or call the parish office at 706-733-6627.

## Pilgrim Welcoming the B



**W**e may typically think of pilgrimages as journeys to places like Rome, Lourdes or Mexico City. But here at St. Mary on the Hill, a unique prayer ministry allows families to experience the presence of Our Lady of Guadalupe right in the heart of their own homes. Through a program called the Pilgrim Queen of the Family, parishioners receive the graces of our Blessed Mother in a special way.

Rhonda Wallace brought the Pilgrim Queen to our parish after hearing about it in 2008.

“I thought it sounded like a wonderful program that St. Mary’s could benefit from, so I started the first group,” she says. “We were a group of 10 families living in North Augusta. You have 10 families in a group, and once a month, each family keeps the shrine for three days and prays the Rosary. Then they pass it on to the next family.

“The shrine is a wooden box that folds up, and when you open it up, it has a beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in it,” she continues. “The Rosary beads are hung up in the shrine and there are prayers on the sides. While it’s in your home, I recommend you keep it in a permanent place and light a candle next to it as you gather around to say the Rosary. The primary thing the program promotes is to pray together for the intentions of the Church and the Pope, vocations, and families and friends. It comes with a little bag so you can pack it up to take to the next person.”

Currently, there are about seven groups – consisting of 70 families – participating in the Pilgrim Queen here at St. Mary on the Hill. Ideally, groups are formed among families living in the same neighborhood in order to facilitate the transition of the shrine from home to home, but also to encourage the strengthening of relationships among the families. While most

# Pilgrim Queen of the Family: Blessed Mother into Our Hearts and Homes

participants are parishioners of St. Mary on the Hill, some attend other Catholic churches in the area.

“What I like about the program is that you can gear it to where your family is,” Rhonda says. “You’re meant to say the whole Rosary, but sometimes with a lot of kids around, you can’t do the whole thing and may just do a decade. It’s neat because the whole family can do it together and it’s a small time commitment, but I’ve had a lot of families who tell me it motivates them to say the Rosary more regularly.”

Ray Boudreaux and his family have been a part of the Pilgrim Queen program ever since Rhonda brought it to our parish. Ray is thankful for the opportunity that this prayer ministry provides for his family to come together regularly in the faith.

“With a busy family life, it’s a rare time that you get to sit down as a family and do something quiet and meaningful like that,” he says. “The kids like it, and I think it’s a great experience for them to see us doing something prayerful as a family besides Mass on Sundays. It strengthens our faith and pulls us together.”

In addition to the graces received through regular prayer to the Blessed Mother, the Wallace and Boudreaux families also enjoy the increased sense of fellowship they have been blessed with through this ministry.

“You are part of a group that is passing the shrine back and forth and it strengthens that group,” Ray says. “And it’s been good to meet other parishioners that we wouldn’t have otherwise met.”

Pilgrim Queen groups also have the option of keeping a prayer journal with the shrine, so families are able to pray for one another’s special intentions. Over the

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years, Rhonda has witnessed how these shared prayers have led to the development of intimate bonds among the families in the group. The families gather a few times a year – whether it is to celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe’s Feast Day, spend a day on the lake together, or just meet up at a park. They have also been there for each other during illnesses and other difficult times, offering prayers and support or bringing hot meals when a family in the group is in need.

“It shows you how God works and how the blessed Mother works, to put the right people together at the right time,” Rhonda says. “You form a special bond with the other families.”

While we may dream of someday going to visit the sacred sites of our Mother, through this special ministry right here at St. Mary on the Hill, the Blessed Mother herself is the pilgrim who travels to us, bringing graces and blessings beyond compare!

Interested in learning more about the Pilgrim Queen of the Family? There are a few openings for new families in some existing groups in the parish, and it is also very easy to become a “guardian” and begin a new group in your own neighborhood! More information about starting a group can be found at [www.pilgrimqueen.org](http://www.pilgrimqueen.org), and Rhonda Wallace is happy to help anyone who wishes to join this ministry. Please contact Rhonda by email at [rhondawallace@comcast.net](mailto:rhondawallace@comcast.net) or by phone at 706-825-4350.

# The Catholic Church in Augusta in the Post-Civil War Years as We Look Towards Our 100 Year Celebration

Augusta's Catholic population, as old as the colonial city itself, was growing by leaps. St. Patrick's – or what we know as Church of the Most Holy Trinity today – was built in 1811. Irish immigrants and French refugees from Santo Domingo came in large numbers to work on the Augusta Canal in the 1840s, crowding the original church. The structure we know today was begun in the 1850s and was consecrated in 1863. It also served as a Confederate hospital during the remainder of the war.

The years following the Civil War were bustling and productive ones for the Augusta community. Huge mills were erected, workers flooded in and many local Catholics became prominent movers and shakers – mayors, editors of the daily newspapers, senators.

During the Reconstruction years, then-Bishop William Gross invited two Jesuits to accept a new parish in Augusta. With a generous grant from the Jesuits, the Diocese and the New Orleans Mission, plans were announced on Feb. 22, 1874, to construct a church building and a school open to children of all denominations. A church was designed which could be readily converted in to a school as soon as the proper church could be erected.

A grammar school operated by the Sisters of Mercy opened in 1876 just below the Convent – called Sacred Heart Academy at the southwest corner of McKinne and Ellis Streets. Their order also operated St. Mary's Academy – where Bell Auditorium is now. The Sisters of Mercy volunteered as nurses caring for patients at St. Patrick's during the Civil War. During Reconstruction, the Sisters of Mercy continued their excellent war-time record as administrators of the new City Hospital – behind the Medical College – from 1870-1890.

Interestingly – given our current political climate – the new Sacred Heart Academy was incorporated in to the public school system of Richmond County, as were St. Mary's and St. Patrick's Schools. The public school system had begun in 1871, the teachers (nuns) received the same salaries as other public school teachers and used the same textbooks. Religious classes were conducted before regular school hours began. So, Catholic nuns were trusted to teach and guide non-Catholic children – who represented roughly 50 percent of the student bodies!

In 1898, the cornerstone was laid to build the magnificent Sacred Heart Church, and it was consecrated on Dec. 2, 1900. The old church building then became available for its original intended purpose – and it was renovated to house college classrooms. The Jesuits opened classes in 1900 and the first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in 1905. Facing stiff competition from Richmond Academy, which was tuition free, the college closed in 1919.

Natural disasters also had a destructive effect on the block where Sacred Heart church, schools and rectory were located. Devastating floods in 1908 and 1912 rushed between the buildings, flooding the basements and first floors as the waters rose from both the Savannah River and Augusta Canal. Another catastrophic event would occur four years later with profound implications for the establishment of our parish on the Hill!




*The graduating class of Sacred Heart College, June 1918.  
(From left) John F. Armstrong, Stanley Maher, John P. Mulherin, the Rev. John Salter, S.J., Carl Selber, Tomas Maher, Stuart A. Cash, Edward J. Cashin*

## Stewardship: "This Is the Day the Lord Has Made; Let Us Rejoice in It and Be Glad" *continued from front cover*

we may be are only gifts. Our use of them to serve one another and all those around us in our community, our parish and the Church Universal is the measure of our stewardship.

In the northern hemisphere, autumn begins on Thursday, Sept. 22. This time of year in the Church is when everything seems to begin or resume. There is another wonderful Psalm that states, "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad" (Psalm 118:24). Let us do that together, and let us be good stewards together.

God bless you,



Fr. Jerry

# Ad Placement



# Saint Mary ON THE HILL

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## Recent Donations to St. Mary on the Hill

### St. Mary on the Hill Church

*In Memory of Thomas  
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Norman Schaffer  
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### St. Mary on the Hill School Endowment Fund

*In Memory of Tom Edry  
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### Men On A Mission Outreach Ministry

*In Memory of Chris Wisner  
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### St. Mary on the Hill School

*In Memory of Maria Stair  
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### Adoration Chapel

Kris R. Gordon

## Baptisms

**June 4**

Daphne Jane Smith and Asher Felton Smith  
*Daughter and son of Joseph and Sarah Smith*

**June 12**

Virginia Fields Dinos  
*Daughter of Jeffrey and Jordan Dinos*  
Ricardo Diaz  
*Son of Ricardo and Elizabeth Diaz*

**June 18**

Lincoln James Cirillo  
*Son of Craig and Rebecca Cirillo*  
James Patrick Davila  
*Son of Samuel and Michelle Davila*

**June 19**

Teagan Genevieve Gumas and Alexis Rose  
Gumas  
*Daughters of Leslie Gumas*

**July 10**

Benjamin Michael Andrews  
*Son of Paul and Brook Andrews*  
Kinsley Paige Speering  
*Daughter of Justin and Marie Speering*

**July 13**

Stella Marie Hawk  
*Daughter of Nicholas and Regina Hawk*

**July 17**

Landan Arthur Utley  
*Son of Mark and Mary Utley, Jr.*