

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL

CATHOLIC CHURCH



News and Notes from Fr. Jerry

Good and Faithful People

Dear Parishioners,

The Sanctity of Married Love and Family Life have been our pastoral focus for the past year. It began with a parish summit in March of 2011. And it has been a timely focus since these core values of our faith life seem to be under constant attack from the secular influences of our society. Before we move on to the Year of Faith, I'd like to hold another summit and possibly form an ongoing committee that will be charged with fostering strong marriage and family life values within our faith Community.

- As *Stewards of Love* we want to understand that it is God's intention that *Marriage and Family Life* should be a *Communion of Love*.
- As *Stewards of Love* we want to build on each family's strength and help each one meet its distinct challenges.
- As *Stewards of Love* we want to be sensitive to the complex reality of family life.
- As *Stewards of Love* we need to affirm life as a precious gift from God.
- As *Stewards of Love* we want to offer programming that enriches

and supports the sacrament of Marriage and Family Life.

- As *Stewards of Love* we want to give our best efforts to preparing couples for Marriage and welcome young married couples to be active members of our parish.

If these values are important to you, I'd ask you to join me for a "Stewards of Love" summit in our parish hall on Saturday morning, Sept. 15, from 10 a.m. to noon. I hope this summit will provide a good transition for us to the Year of Faith.

As a Deanery we will begin the Year of Faith on the evening of Oct. 10 with a dinner in our school cafeteria at 6 p.m. The Dinner will be followed by a candlelight Eucharistic procession from the Adoration Chapel down to the Church where Bishop Hartmayer will offer a reflection on the beginning of the Year of Faith and conclude with Benediction. It should be a great evening and I hope you will mark your calendar so as to be present for it.

The Year of Faith is an invitation to the universal Church from our Holy

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.

Perpetual Adoration Chapel

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

Setting an Example of Stewardship for Our Children

As we strive to live as grateful stewards, we must remember that each of us has a responsibility to help our youngest parishioners learn what it means to live as a disciple of Christ. Jesus Himself told the disciples, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Mt 19:14). Christ wants children to grow closer to Him and to become His disciples, and parents are responsible for helping to lead their children to this end. The Rite of Baptism reminds us that parents are "the first teachers of their child in the ways of faith."

An important part of faith involves living a life of stewardship, as the proper response of a Christian disciple. So, it follows that parents bear a great responsibility that comes from Christ Himself to raise their children as grateful stewards. However, it may already be difficult for adults to grasp the concept of stewardship and put it into practice in their own lives. How can parents teach their children to do the same?

First and foremost, parents can teach stewardship by setting a good example. Indeed, the example of our lives is so powerful that it can and should be a witness to the Gospel. As parents live the life of stewardship, their children will see the beauty in the stewardship way of life, and they are bound to follow suit. If parents live in thanksgiving to God for all He has given them, their children will grow to see that all we have is a gift from God. And



when parents offer gratitude to God, it will surely impact their children.

Eight-year-old Suzie has watched her dad serve Communion at Sunday Masses throughout her young life. When asked why she thinks he does this, she responds, "We need to help the priest."

Meanwhile, her older sister, Jane, responds to the same question by explaining, "We need to serve God. He does so much for us. We should appreciate it and give back to Him."

It is clear that by witnessing their dad's example, the girls are beginning to understand – each in her own way – that the life of a Christian disciple involves selfless service in gratitude to God. Yet it is not just their father's example that has helped them develop this understanding. Both their father and their mother emphasize stewardship as a family practice. They spend time in family prayer, serve at the soup

kitchen together, bring up the offertory as a family and participate in other acts of service. Such involved participation in the faithful life allows the girls to bear witness to the power of serving others in thanksgiving, even at their young ages.

"We need to help other people," Suzie says. "Jesus wants us to put other people first, and if we want to listen to Him, we need to serve others."

As Suzie's statement demonstrates, the stewardship way of life is not only understood or lived out by adults; Jesus wants children to be His disciples, as well. So it is essential that parents help their children develop a true understanding stewardship, and encourage its practice through the example of an active faith life.

May all Christian parents be not only the first, but also the best teachers of faith to their children, in what they say *and* in what they do.

St. Mary's Senior Center A Soul-Warming Place to Be

This spring, soon after Sr. Laura Ann moved, she found herself in a tough predicament. She came to the Senior Center for assistance.

"In the midst of the move, Sr. Laura Ann had misplaced her medications, her money, and her cell phone," Senior Center Director Patty LeZotte says. "She was sure they were in her new apartment somewhere, but she didn't know where. She told us, 'I could just weep,' and we told her to relax, have a Coke and sit down. A few of the people from the Center went to her new place, helped straighten up some things, and found everything for her. It put Sister to rest knowing she had somewhere to go in a time of crisis. It was truly a beautiful thing. This is the kind of place we want the Senior Center to be for our parishioners!"

This "beautiful thing" is actually just one of the many things that happen every day at the Senior Center.

"The Senior Center is a place of joy and fun, and I wish we could be open all the time," Patty says. "We have an aging population, and our parish has made a

special effort to support them. I am very grateful for the support of Fr. Jerry and all of our seniors."

The Senior Center is an outreach of our parish, and is located adjacent to our Adoration chapel.

It is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The additional Senior Center operators are Anita Irvin, Patty May and Therese Evans. Adults at the Senior Center enjoy fellowship and activities such as bingo, card games, movies and luncheons. It also offers classes and guest speakers highlighting topics such as safe driving, preventing identity theft and hospice care.

The presence of the Senior Center draws its participants, in a creative and impressive way, to what is most important in life – Christ.

"Many of those who come to the Center go to Mass beforehand," Patty says. "Some will go and pray at the Adoration chapel for a while. Our presence encourages people

to come to church more often, and get to know their fellow parishioners. The Center is truly a wonderful, spiritual, and soul-warming place to be."

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"I wish that even more people would come and experience the Senior Center. It is such a blessing!"

— Patty Le Zotte

St. Mary on the Hill A and School Imp



Every seven years, St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is required to undergo an accreditation process in order to remain accredited under the Florida Catholic Conference — one of the accrediting bodies for the school. The accreditation process consists of a study that is performed throughout an entire school year, involving everyone in the school community — faculty, staff, students, and even parents.

“It encompasses everything,” says Principal Joe McBride. “We look at the academic side of our school — to see where things are at from the previous study, to see how we’ve done, and also formulate a new action plan that will be put in place for the next seven years. All these things are done with the teachers, parents and other stakeholders of the school. It also takes into account our Catholic identity, to make sure we are doing what we as a school should do, both academically and spiritually. It gives us a measuring stick of where we’ve been and where we want to be.”

St. Mary carried out this study during the 2011-12 school year. At this time, teachers and parents took part in all aspects of the accreditation process. Part of the process included the creation of a School Improvement Plan. Each teacher was assigned to a committee. These committees conduct research and surveys for the development of the School Improvement Plan. Parents completed surveys and participated as representatives on the committees. Students also took part in the surveys. The survey data and research went into the action plan portion of the School Improvement Plan, which the school will implement over the next seven years.

A committee from the Florida Catholic Conference visited the school and reviewed the School Improvement Plan. Parents and students participated in committee focus groups, while the students were also part of the school’s opening presentation for the committee.

As a result of the Florida Catholic Conference’s review, St. Mary on the Hill received full accreditation status. The results of the study have given the school

Accreditation Process Improvement Plan

a clearer view of its stronger areas, as well as areas where improvements can be made.

“The first area of strength was our Catholic identity,” Mr. McBride says. “You can tell by the things that we do that our Catholic identity is a high priority.”

Indeed, there were several strong areas highlighted by the study — the recent hiring of a reading specialist, technological advances in infrastructure and hardware, using data to identify student needs, and the inclusion of all stakeholders throughout the School Improvement Process.

The study also highlighted several recommendations for improvement. A number of these recommendations were to simply continue some of the efforts already being put forth — updating technology within the school, implementing program changes to help reach School Improvement Plan goals, and employing data-driven methods to enhance instructional decision making. Another recommendation was to survey stakeholders on an annual basis in order to keep the action plan current.

“The study was very helpful to St. Mary’s, in that it allows us to look at what is working in our school, and continue to build on those areas,” Mr. McBride says. “It also allows us an opportunity to see what things have not worked out from the last accreditation process and make the changes as we move forward, and strive to provide the best education for our students.”

St. Mary on the Hill will continue to use the information gathered from the results of the accreditation process, with the continuing goal of improving our parish school. The next few years will see the implementation of the action plan from the School Improvement Plan. The school will also continue to survey its stakeholders and students. The surveys will be evaluated in order to determine what portions of the plan are working, and where there is room for improvement. Indeed, St. Mary on the Hill is moving forward to make our school the best it can be.



Celebrating the Feast of the Archangels

Every Sept. 29, the Church celebrates the feast day of the Archangels — St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael. We are indeed blessed to be inspired by these “servants and messengers of God” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 328, 329).

The term “archangels” has its scriptural basis in the New Testament (1 Thes 4:16, Jude 9:1), indicating a chief or leading angel. “Archangel” generally refers to St. Michael, St. Gabriel and St. Raphael, as they are the three angels most frequently mentioned throughout Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. The fact that these three angels are mentioned by name on multiple occasions indicates the significance of their roles in the history of salvation. It is because of these important roles that we take pause to celebrate on Sept. 29.

St. Michael is mentioned by name on several occasions in Sacred Scripture (Dn 10:13, Rev 12:7), and his role in the Tradition of the Church has been well documented. He has been widely referred to as the “great prince,”

and is most often associated with the apocalypse — the final battle against Satan. Christian Tradition gives St. Michael four different roles, but he has primarily been regarded as the patron and protector of the Church.

St. Gabriel is mentioned by name in Scripture (Lk 1:19), and Tradition has also assigned him implicit roles within Scripture where he is not specifically mentioned. Most important, however, is St. Gabriel’s role as the messenger of God, delivering to Mary the announcement of the birth of Our Savior (Lk 1:26).

St. Raphael is mentioned by name only in the book of Tobit, where he is responsible for healing Tobias. Raphael means “God has healed” and thus, he has also often been associated with the “angel of the Lord” (Jn 5).

The feast day on Sept. 29 gives each of us the opportunity to consider our own role in the Church,

as we gratefully commemorate the Archangels responsible for carrying out their roles of defender, messenger and healer.



St. Mary’s Senior Center *continued from page 3*

Each and every day, people continue to witness the love of Christ that is alive and well at the Senior Center.

“One participant’s daughter had been going through brutal surgeries, and on the day of one of her surgeries, she came to the Center and said she needed to just not be home during the surgery,” Patty says. “She sat down and we talked with her, and Fr. Scott Winchel said a prayer for her. It was such a witness to me of the parish community’s support for her.”

And just a few years ago, a couple met at the Senior Center, started dating and got married. They even held a lovely wedding reception at the Senior Center, in thanksgiving for the wonderful role it played in their lives.

“I wish that even more people would come and experience the Senior Center,” Patty says. “It is such a blessing!”

Good and Faithful People *continued from front cover*

Father, Pope Benedict XVI so that as people of faith we may have an ever deeper sense of God's presence in our lives. It begins on the 50th anniversary of the opening of Vatican II and twenty years after the introduction of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It is a call to celebrate the Good news of God's love in our families, among our co-workers, in our association with other people of faith, in our reception of the sacraments and in all the work that we do for the building up of God's Kingdom in our world.

As you can read in this issue of the *Marianite*, in our parish school and at our Senior Center, we are coming together as people of faith in some wonderful ways. Moving forward with the Year of Faith, my hope and my prayer will be that when people look at our parish, they will say, "What good and faithful people they are!" They have been good stewards even in the face of

economic uncertainty. They have faced threats to the Church from without, and scandal from within. And yet they have remained faithful. They have kept praying. They kept coming to Mass. They kept supporting and encouraging one another. They kept participating in the life of their faith community. They kept on giving of themselves for the sake of God and His Church, and through their efforts and the grace of God, the world around them started to change. In and through the people of St. Mary on the Hill the love of God's Kingdom is a great reality in our world. Amen! Amen!

God bless you,



Fr. Jerry

Ad Placement

Saint Mary

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daughter of Kent and Danielle Posey



It's not too late to participate.
Please contact Mary Davis at the
parish office at 706-733-6627