

# Saint Mary

ON THE HILL  
CATHOLIC CHURCH



*News and Notes from Fr. Jerry*

## We Provide the Gifts, God Performs the Miracles

Dear Parishioners,

It is human nature to try to neatly place things into categories. If we categorize the miracles performed by Christ, the two largest groupings might fall under the headings “Healing” and “Feeding.”

This is exactly what we are about here at St. Mary on the Hill. At the base of all our liturgies is the Eucharist, when we come together in communion with the Lord and with one another to be both fed and healed. Even one of Christ’s most famous miracles – the Feeding of the Multitude – involved both healing and feeding from a spiritual and a literal perspective.

The reason the large crowd gathered was because Jesus’ reputation as a healer had spread and grown. He felt compassion for that crowd, which is another way of saying He loved them and felt sorry that they were hungry due to their willingness to sit and be with Him for so long. Recognizing it was late in the day and that many of them had not eaten, Jesus literally fed them – but that day, He didn’t stop with physical nourishment. He also fed them spiritually with His words, and simultaneously, healed their



wounded hearts by preaching a message of hope and forgiveness in the midst of a dark and hardened world.

The narrative of Christ taking a small amount of food and using it to feed thousands is familiar to all of us. It is reported in all four Gospels. However, I would like to highlight one aspect of that miracle. It all started with one boy who was willing to share what little he had. Because the boy made the gift of his fishes and loaves, the Lord took it and multiplied it many times over, nourishing so many more people than what that little bit initially could.

### 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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# Following St. Francis' T — *Secular Fr*

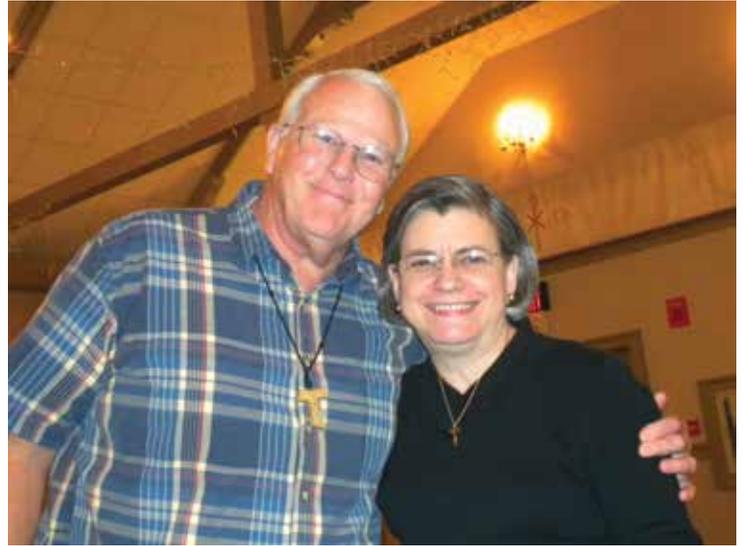
**W**hen someone says the word “Franciscan,” it’s usually the Franciscan brothers and friars who come to mind. However, there are many more kinds of Franciscans within its three main orders – this includes religious sisters in the Second Order, and laypeople and secular clergy in the Third Order. As part of the Third Order, laypeople known as the Secular Franciscans are divided into groups called fraternities on a local, regional and national level. Here at St. Mary on the Hill, several parishioners are members of the local St. Elizabeth of Hungary fraternity.

“The Secular Franciscan order involves Catholic men and women in the world who feel like they might have a vocation to follow Christ in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi,” says Nora Wessling, who is a Secular Franciscan along with her husband, Ken. “The rule and life of a Secular Franciscan is to observe the Gospel, and then go live it – ‘from Gospel to life, and life to Gospel.’”

“One thing that differentiates Secular Franciscans from a lot of the other worthwhile orders in the Catholic Church is that we are not only charged to follow the pathway of St. Francis, but to take that pathway out into the world,” Ken adds. “This allows us to reach other people, and to try to bring them closer to Gospel values in their lives.”

Both single and married laypeople may become Secular Franciscans. In order to do so, they must go through several stages of formation in order to discern their calling. First, there is an orientation period, which allows interested individuals to see what the Secular Franciscans are all about. This is followed by an inquiry period, which can last anywhere from six to 18 months. During this period, inquirers learn more about the order and the spirituality of St. Francis.

If, after this stage, individuals decide they would like to be a part of the order, they may then be accepted into the candidacy. Once an individual has become a candidate, they are officially a member of the order. Candidates then enter a period of further



*Ken and Nora Wessling*

discernment to decide if they want to make a lifelong profession to the order, which usually takes about 18 months. After this period, if they decide they are still committed to the Franciscan pathway, they then prepare for their final profession. Unlike many orders, Secular Franciscans do not take vows – instead, their public profession serves as a promise of a lifelong commitment to the order.

The St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity doesn’t just include St. Mary parishioners – it also has members from parishes in two other dioceses. The fraternity regularly meets once a month, and members focus on a set of goals called the Four Pillars – Formation, Spirituality, Fraternity and Apostolate.

“We try to include these pillars not only in our meetings, but also in our lives and in everything we do,” Nora says.

“Formation is a key element to Franciscan spirituality – you are expected to be open to continuous and lifelong religious formation, and also to the daily conversion of your spirit,” Ken says. “We also do a lot of spiritual activities – for example, morning prayer together as a fraternity, or praying the Rosary during the month of May. The fraternity pillar is

# Teachings in the World

## Franciscans



*The St. Elizabeth of Hungary Secular Franciscan Fraternity meet for their monthly gathering. (Front row, seated, from left) Doris Maxwell OFS, Helen Jenkins OFS, Lucy Splichal, Janet Hulshof OFS, Linda Gledhill, Helen Balogh OFS. (Middle row, from left) Mary Ann Williamson OFS, Audrey Binet OFS, Barbara Meyer OFS, Charles Meyer OFS, Theodora Szuba, Becky Bresnahan OFS, Theresa Christie OFS. (Back row, from left) Renee Strunk OFS, Cliff Splichal, Barbara Ouellette OFS, Jerry Ouellette OFS, Rich Herdegen OFS, Dick Herdegen OFS.*

our social time together during our gatherings, and having mutual support in our interactions with our brothers and sisters. Finally, each person has their individual apostolate, where they serve in the parish and society in some way. Each fraternity also has a group apostolate, where they work together as a fraternity to serve different parts of the community.”

Nora and Ken were first drawn to the Secular Franciscans about 10 years ago.

“I go to perpetual adoration, and one time during adoration I had this enlightenment involving this quote from St. James – that you can have all the faith in the world, but without action, it is dead,” Nora says. “I felt like I was being called by the Holy Spirit to do something about my faith.”

As Ken notes, around that same time, both he and Nora were feeling that they wanted to deepen their spiritual lives.

“There were a number of different things we looked at, but we were both very blessed that we

both put the Secular Franciscans at the top of our lists,” he says. “From the very first time I heard the prayer of St. Francis, it had a very special meaning to me – I wanted to learn more about what Franciscan spirituality was all about.”

“A lot of people, when they think of St. Francis, they think about him with the birds, the environment,” Nora says. “All that is wonderful, but there is also the idea of the Gospel to life, prayer and contemplation, love for the Eucharist, detachment from material goods, justice, peace and respect for life. [All these aspects of Franciscan spirituality] have made me a more faithful and active Catholic, and I have more peace and calm. I have also learned a lot about humility, and thinking of others before myself.”

By growing in these values and in their faith, Secular Franciscans serve as stewards of Christ.

“We try to be more aware, and make efforts to take care of others,” Nora says. “It really depends on the individual, what they choose to get involved in. For example, if you wanted to take care of the environment, you could get involved in an environmental agency, or you could just make sure you recycle. If you have the funds to donate to organizations that are working hard, you can do that too. You can even be a steward of the environment by helping other people’s souls.”

*For more information about the Secular Franciscans and the local St. Elizabeth of Hungary fraternity, please contact fraternity minister Dr. Theresa Christie at 706-399-2670 or formation director Janet Hulshof at 706-294-0884.*

# Doing Small Things With Great Love

## *The Ushers Ministry*

While most of us may only notice ushers as they take up the collection at Mass, the duties and history of an usher go beyond this action alone. Historically, the role of an usher is linked to the role of the porter, whose main task was to guard the door at Mass from anyone who may intrude during the service. Today, the task of the usher is built on hospitality, welcoming those who are attending Mass to the parish family, as well as ensuring that parishioners and visitors can keep their focus on the Mass.

“Being an usher has changed my experience at Mass,” says Lewis Blackstone, who has served as an usher for about 15 years, and as Ushers Coordinator for about five years. “It gets you more involved with what’s going on instead of being a passive participant.”

While the ushers do collect the money during Mass, they also direct parishioners to seating, answer any questions, and provide help where needed, among other important duties.

“We get a couple individuals to take up the gifts at Communion,” Lewis says. “We fix up the pews after/before Mass, and we help the people who may need assistance with Communion – we let Eucharistic Ministers know that they need Communion if they’re sitting in the back and need help. If anyone has a problem at Mass, medical or otherwise, ushers help with that. That is more rare, but it’s still what we are there for.”

There is no specific training required for becoming an usher at St. Mary on the Hill, nor is there is a rotation for ushers’ schedules. Instead, each Mass time has a coordinator. And if you are interested in becoming an usher, Lewis will visit with you and put you in touch with the specific coordinator for your preference of Mass time. After visiting with the coordinator and being shown what to do, you can be an usher at any Mass you’d like to attend.

Parishioner John Donahue retired in October of 1990 and moved to Georgia – looking back, he recalls that it may have been the next Sunday after his arrival that he became an usher at St. Mary on the Hill. But John had already been an involved parishioner before moving to Georgia, having previously served as an usher.

“I enjoy doing it,” John says. “It’s nice to greet people and to get to know them and to have them get to know you. As ushers, we help where we can.”

According to John, the best way to find out if you’d like to be an usher is to give it a try for a few Sundays and see how it goes.

“I’ve found that the best teaching sometimes is by action, not always by word of mouth,” John says.

While it may seem like a simple position, serving as an usher is a great way to connect with the people who attend the Mass and get to know some members of your parish family you may otherwise not meet!

# A Chance to Share Our Faith

## *CCD at St. Mary on the Hill*

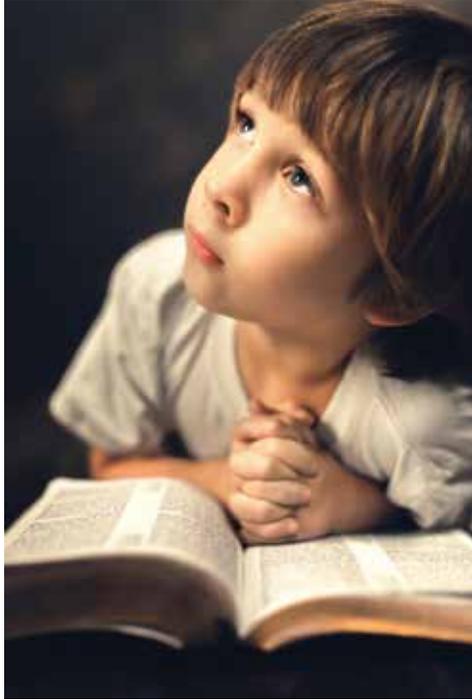
**B**arbara Kareis certainly understands the importance of sharing our Catholic faith with our children while they are young.

"I started when my oldest son was in kindergarten," says Barbara, who directs CCD at St. Mary on the Hill, along with Joan Purucker. "This is my 30th year involved with CCD. It's a chance to share your faith with not only the kids of the parish, but if you have kids in the program, to share your faith with them. You learn more about your faith and it makes you stronger in your faith. We all need that. We all need to share our faith, and that's what this is all about."

Our CCD serves children in kindergarten through eighth grade who do not attend a Catholic school. This year, there are around 250 students participating in CCD.

"These kids are in public schools or other private schools that might be of a different faith," Barbara says. "It's always important to be able to come together with people of your same faith and people you have things in common with. They come together and they see that these kids aren't different – we're a Christian faithful group and we're everywhere. We're not just in the Catholic schools, but also in the public. And it's important for these kids to be able to understand their faith – to defend it, but especially to explain their faith."

CCD classes begin on the Sunday after Labor Day and continue through the school year, and the classes are held weekly on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. in the school. The kindergarten and first grade classes use the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and a regular curriculum for second through eighth grades. The classes start with a "gathering," when the students come together and hear one of our parish priests read the Gospel. Then, they sing a song, a small offertory is taken up, and there is also typically a saint of the day that the catechists discuss with the students.



For students in second and eighth grades, CCD also involves sacramental preparation. The second-graders prepare for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, and the eighth-graders prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The CCD program also offers sacramental preparation for students in third grade and above who did not receive their First Reconciliation and First Communion in second grade.

Every catechist with the CCD program at St. Mary on the Hill is a volunteer – there are also many young adult volunteers who assist the catechists in the classrooms.

"A catechist is somebody that's not just a teacher, but through their faith and their actions, they're able to share their faith with the kids," Barbara says. "So we want someone who is active in their faith to help share that with the kids and help make our faith alive."

The Church teaches that parents are the primary teachers of the faith for their children. Religious education programs do not take that role away from the parents, but rather seek to enhance parents' ability to instruct their children in the Catholic faith.

"The first teachers of your faith and the ones that really teach them stewardship is their family," Barbara says. "We're here to support the parents and the family and help them to understand what it means to be a steward. Whether they go to school or CCD, it's the parents' responsibility, and the school and CCD are here to support them. Parents are the first teachers and the strongest teachers, and we're here to support that."

For more information about our parish's CCD program, please call the CCD office at 706-733-9908. Registration is currently open, and registration forms are available at the parish office or on the parish website, [www.stmaryonthehill.org](http://www.stmaryonthehill.org). The cost of CCD is \$35 per student or \$70 per family.

## 2015 High School Graduates

| Name                | High School Attended    | College                            |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Harrison Catalano   | Aquinas High School     | Ave Maria                          |
| Christian Bowles    | Lakeside High School    | Georgia Tech                       |
| Benjamin Tallent    | Lakeside High School    | GRU                                |
| Annalaura Cranford  | Westminster High School | Furman University                  |
| Stephanie Munie     | Aquinas High School     | University of South Carolina       |
| Garrett Merz        | Aquinas High School     | Mercer                             |
| Erin Hodell         | Lakeside High School    | University of South Carolina       |
| Shannon Fair        | Aquinas High School     | Mississippi State                  |
| Baileigh Williamson | Aquinas High School     | Valdosta State                     |
| Phillip Tran        | Lakeside High School    | Clemson University                 |
| Olivia Ramage       | Aquinas High School     | University of Georgia              |
| Emerson Kelly       | Davidson Fine Arts      | GRU                                |
| Michael Perella     | Lakeside High School    | GRU                                |
| Paul E. Markwalter  | Westside High School    |                                    |
| Chance Crow         | Davidson Fine Arts      |                                    |
| Lindsey Mann        | Seton Home School       | USMC Boot Camp                     |
| Mary Kate Conner    | Aquinas High School     | Georgia College & State University |
| Mason Dodd          | Westside High School    | Lander University                  |
| Michael McCormick   | Aquinas High School     | GRU                                |
| Brittany Hayes      | Grovetown High School   | University of Georgia              |
| Jadesola Akinwuntan | Aquinas High School     | Duke University                    |
| Walker Turbyfill    | Greenbrier High School  | Georgia College & State University |
| Rainey Anne Bailey  | Lakeside High School    | Georgia Southern University        |

## 2015 College Graduates

| Name                      | College Attended             | Degree   |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Anna Bowles               | University of Georgia        | Psychology   |
| Melissa Angelo            | Florida Southern College     | Theatre Performance  |
| Carrie Murga              | GRU                          | Specialist in Education, Curriculum & Instruction                              |
| Morgan Rhodes             | University of Alabama        | Masters in Marketing   |
| Selamawit Tsequar         | GMC                          | Nursing  |
| Catherine Ellen Whyte     | GRU                          | BBA in Marketing/ Bachelor Of Business Administration                          |
| Christopher Singletary    | University of North GA       | BA in Modern Languages (2nd Lieutenant US Army)                                |
| Maggie Grady              | University of Georgia        | Masters of Accounting  |
| Ian Jesse                 | University of South Carolina | Masters in Higher Education - Student Affairs                                  |
| Mary Ellen Middleton Fain | University of Georgia        | Bachelor of Science Degree In Biology & Psychology Summa Cum Laude with Honors |
| Patrick Conner            | Georgia Tech                 | Computer Science   |
| Ethan LaPan               | Georgia Southern             | Bachelor of Arts   |

# We Provide the Gifts, God Performs the Miracles

*continued from front cover*

Isn't that what we as a parish are called to do? We make gifts of our time, our talent, and our treasure as good stewards – but nevertheless, it is God who takes those gifts and performs miracles with them. Our goal is to give what we have so that Christ might use it, multiplying it to feed, to heal and draw a multitude of people closer to Him.

The reality is that without the gifts, there can be no miracles, and without miracles, we are a hungry and broken people. Christ has come to renew, nourish, fulfill, and restore – and that, brothers and sisters, is what Christianity is all about.

God bless you,



Fr. Jerry

*It all started with one boy who was willing to share what little he had. Because the boy made the gift of his fishes and loaves, the Lord took it and multiplied it many times over, nourishing so many more people than what that little bit initially could.*

# Ad Placement



# Saint Mary

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*In Memory of Arline Kelly:*  
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Michael Rucker

*In Memory of Mary Battey:*  
Marquin C. Barrett  
Michael Rucker

*In Memory of Lillian Cullum:*  
Trey Burmester  
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*In Memory of Ted O'Connor:*  
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