



ASSUMPTION

of the
Blessed Virgin Mary
PARISH

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Welcome to Our New Parish Newsletter!

Welcome to the first issue of our new monthly parish newsletter!

As our parish community continues to grow and develop stewardship as a way of life, I recognize the need for increased communication. Through this newsletter, we hope to share stories that will help you to better understand who you are as a Catholic and what we are doing as members of Christ's family. In upcoming issues, we will focus on what's going on in the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary community, and how those activities and events are changing hearts and minds and helping parishioners grow closer to Christ and each other. Each article will ultimately focus on Christ at work within our community through the stewardship way of life.

My hope is that this newsletter will be a successful means for ongoing education and formation in your faith, and I pray it will be a vehicle through which you are informed and inspired to become more actively involved in the life of Christ and the mission of our parish, to follow Mary in her mission of bringing Christ to the world.

This fall, we are conducting our Annual Stewardship Renewal. The Renewal is the time each year when I ask you to discern anew the way you use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time I ask you to write down how you will become more devoted to Christ over the next year with your commitments of **time** (using your time on earth wisely; making time for personal prayer, family prayer, and quality time with friends and loved ones); **talent** (using God-given



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SPREADING GOD'S LOVE THROUGH STEWARDSHIP



Parishioner Kevin Call along with his two greatest blessings – his wife, Deb, and daughter, Allison

At times, stewardship might seem daunting – we think of those individuals who seem to be involved in every aspect of parish life and feel discouraged by our own small contributions. Yet, in reality, stewardship is less about the amount we are giving or doing, and more about cultivating our relationship with Christ. It's about receiving God's love and then discovering ways to return that love to others through our own gifts.

"It really all comes back to God's love," says parishioner Kevin Call. "Being involved in parish life has given me an opportunity to interact on different levels with so many different individuals, and I have really seen and experienced God's love through them."

A parishioner at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary since 1995, Kevin, at first glance might seem to have been involved in everything – from the Parish Council, serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, previously leading

the Athletic Association, to helping with the Youth Ministry program, Kevin has worn many hats over the years. Yet, Kevin would be the first to point out that he didn't join all of these ministries at once. Rather, it has been a gradual process that has paralleled in many ways his own personal spiritual journey.

Kevin is actually a convert, having been raised in a faith-filled Baptist family. Growing up, his parents were always actively involved in church life, and they emphasized the importance of faith. Kevin particularly remembers his father, who would wake up at 5 a.m. every morning in order to read Scripture and converse with the Lord. This left a deep impression on Kevin, modeling the relational aspect of faith.

Later in life, Kevin met his wife, Deb, a cradle Catholic and lifelong parishioner here at Assumption. Following the couple's marriage, Kevin began the RCIA process in order to unite

Parishioner *Kevin Call*

their family under one faith. This began a new phase of life for Kevin as he sought to actively enter into the faith he had chosen.

“Being involved in ministry was a way for me to keep my relationship active, working for Him and with Him,” Kevin says. “That active relationship is important to me because it makes me feel like I have an ongoing relationship with God – I’m not simply going to Him for my needs.”

Since his conversion 21 years ago, Kevin has played a pivotal role in our parish community. He’s been involved with the 24/Seven Men’s Group since its beginning. He also presently is active with the Christ Renews His Parish Continuation Committee, and serves regularly as a money counter. In the past, he also has designed and built sets for the annual high school musical. Yet, for him, this has all been about expressing his love for God and sharing the joy of Christ with others.

“I want to be radiating God’s love to others,” Kevin says. “If they see something that is really cool and joyful in me, it will make them desire that for themselves, hopefully pushing them to share that same joy and love for God with others. To me, that’s what discipleship is all about – experiencing God’s love and helping others do the same.”

In the process of serving, says Kevin, he and Deb have received countless blessings. Firstly, their commitment as a couple toward stewardship has blessed their marriage immeasurably by keeping them “grounded in faith” and helping them “hold one another accountable.”

“We encourage one another in the faith journey and are able to wholeheartedly enter into it together,” Kevin says.

The second great blessing of their involvement in parish life has been the fruits it has produced in their daughter, Allison, now a student at Rockhurst University in Kansas City. Kevin is proud to describe his daughter as an example of “discipleship at the highest level.”

“It was always our desire that Allison would grow up desiring that relationship with God,” Kevin says. “Now, I’m proud to say that in many ways she is deeper in her faith than I am.”

A further blessing of Kevin’s involvement has been the lasting friendships he has made. Most especially through the 24/Seven Men’s Group, Kevin has been given “lifetime friends” who hold him accountable when he’s “a little sideways” and continuously radiate Christ’s love to him.

Looking back on the journey, Kevin is thankful to have been able to do his part to help evangelize and spread God’s love. To him, that’s really what stewardship is all about, and he hopes to continue serving in whatever way he can, further enriching his relationship with God and helping others along the way.

“If we all do our part, all contribute in our own ways, together we can meet the needs of everyone,” he says. “To me, that’s what it’s all about.”

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– Kevin Call

Youth Connect With Th



Youth Ministry at Assumption is a chance for young people to grow in their faith and relationship with other Catholic young people.



Young people from Assumption traveled to Poland for World Youth Day last summer.

For Cathy Pescarino, our Director of Youth Ministry, it is important to foster excitement for the faith in our children, because the impact of – and love for – the faith will remain strong through adulthood.

“When things get hard for them, and they start to question their faith, they’ll remember that [church] was home, and they come back and they can find that again,” she says.

And in a world where many teenagers are struggling to find their place and discover who they are, we strive to journey alongside them here at Assumption. It is our hope that, through our youth ministry programs, we can provide an environment that welcomes our young people for who they are, while encouraging them to become all God wants them to be.

“We just assume they know they’re loved and created in God’s image and likeness, but they really don’t know those things or hear them enough,” Cathy says. “So [we hope] to make it relative to them and put it in their language and let them break [the faith] open in their own way. My hope is that they will all become those saints that God is calling them to be, and they’ll be able to experience the fullness of what God has in store for us.”

Our high school youth ministry program, Xtreme Teen, offers many ways to become involved, from weekly Wednesday night youth group and our annual musical, to trips, retreats, Bible studies, and service opportunities. Cathy hopes that these experiences will give our youth a solid foundation of faith.

“Once they experience that connection and Christ in them, that allows them to continue to bear that fruit, no matter where they go,” Cathy says. “Even if they stray away and decide church isn’t for them for a while, there’s something deeper that’s rooted in them, so they never lose that.”

We also welcome middle school students to become engaged in our new EDGE middle school ministry. Designed especially for young people in sixth through eighth grades, EDGE meets once a month on Friday nights. Social events will give students the opportunity to begin forming a community that will support them in their faith.

Our Home in the Church

The enthusiasm for this new program is high, and continues to build momentum.

“Those [middle school students] were so excited to have something like [youth group],” Cathy says of the kick-off events. “There was just an overwhelming sense of hunger, kids who want to explore that spiritual side.”

For many young people, having an opportunity to build friendships with others who share their faith can be significant in making the church feel like “home,” and in turn can help them take their faith to a deeper level.

“For them to be able to let down the walls and have kids they can connect with, who are their own age, it gives them the courage to be able to be themselves,” she says. “They build off each other’s energy and get excited because they see other people their age.”

Working with Cathy to serve our young people are the Core Teams, made up of older teenagers and adults who seek to support young people and provide models of faith in everyday life.

“The idea is that we can have real role models who can be interested in that mentor/mentee relationship – this is an adult who is invested in them,” Cathy says. “This is a way to allow them to have a place where they can come and know they’re going to be loved as soon as they walk in the door. But they’re also going to be expected to keep working at it, to show more of Christ’s light in themselves.”

Cathy encourages young people to consider becoming involved in the youth ministry program, either EDGE (for middle school) or Xtreme Teen (for high school).

“If you’re searching or you’re trying to find something more, give it a try and see if maybe this is something you’re being called to be a part of,” Cathy says. “We don’t necessarily have all the answers, but we do have a sense of peace and comfort and place where teens belong, and are wanted.

“Whoever they are and whatever baggage they show up with, we want to meet them where they are, and take the opportunity to help them figure out and help them on their journey,” she adds.



The cast of this year’s musical, Grease.

If you would like more information on the Youth Ministry program at Assumption, please contact:

Director of Youth Ministry

*Cathy Pescarino
at abvmyouth@gmail.com
or 636-240-3721, ext. 243.*

Middle school students are invited to join us for EDGE on Jan. 13 and the Holy Thursday 7 Churches Tour.

*And be sure to follow us on social media:
Facebook – Assumption Church Youth Group
Twitter – [ACYG Youth Ministry@acygyouth](mailto:ACYG_Youth_Ministry@acygyouth)
Instagram – [acyg.youthministry](https://www.instagram.com/acyg.youthministry)*

WHAT DOES STEWARDSHIP MEAN?

What comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship”?

Do you think of it as just another way to talk about money? Do you quickly dismiss it as a notion that has nothing to do with being Catholic?

Stewardship is actually a concept that is Scripturally based, and is absolutely vital to our life as Catholics. God tells us, in the very first book of the Old Testament, “Be fertile and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth” (Gen 1:28).

What does that mean to us today? It simply means that God is telling us, “This is yours, so take care of it.” One of the first things God tells us to do is to be good stewards of the gifts He has entrusted to us!

The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to stewardship. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions, or money. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!

As Catholics, we refer to the three facets of stewardship as “time, talent and treasure.” Although these are three concrete ways to express and measure stewardship, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us that stewardship is part of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call in every aspect of our lives.

The Scriptures and Church traditions teach us one important point that cannot be overstated — that stewardship is primarily based on our need to give in gratitude, not on the Church’s need to receive. Of course, both the Catholic Church and our particular parish will always need money. However, we are not asked to give simply to defray costs and fund charitable programs. We are instead asked to remember our *need* to gratefully return a portion of

our time, talent and treasure to God, recognizing all that He has given to us.

“Being a steward of so much requires us to think about how we are using **all** we have been given, to grow in gratitude for these abundant blessings, and to challenge ourselves to stretch beyond what is comfortable, to sacrifice,” says Jeannette Hamann, Lay Pastoral Associate. “The Gospels tell us that **that is** the way Jesus lived His life. When we share our presence, our prayers, our gifts, and our service, we continue Christ’s mission, transforming the world one person at a time. **We are responsible for our parish** – stewardship’s focus is not only on money, but it truly **invites us to go deeper in faith**. We should take ownership of our parish, as we embrace and live the Gospel.”

It is important to remember that stewardship is a way of life, and not a program. True Catholic stewardship involves an ongoing call to live as followers of Christ. It takes time to find and define personal goals. You can begin by examining your personal commitments to the parish. How do you live your faith in your daily life with your family and friends? How much time do you spend in daily prayer, going to Mass or being involved in parish ministries and activities? What percentage of your income should you give back to God every week? What talents do you have that could be used to strengthen our parish family?

The coming months will see us increasing and intensifying our education and communication on stewardship. We will be developing a better understanding of how stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call to discipleship. And with God’s help, changes will occur in each of our hearts as we devote ourselves to a stewardship renewal within our parish. Examine how you are currently responding to God’s call to stewardship. God longs for a closer relationship with you; He wants to say to you, “well done, my good and faithful servant.”

“BEING THE WARM AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY WE ARE CALLED TO BE”

Our Assumption Parish Fall Festival

For many years, one of the highlights each fall for our parishioners, families and others in the area has been our Fall Festival. This year, the festival was held on Saturday, Oct. 15, and Sunday, Oct. 16. The parish Co-Chairs for this event were Aimee and Joe Huff.

“Our annual Fall Festival is very much a reflection of what our parish community is – people coming together in community, people working together in community, and being the warm and welcoming community we are called to be,” Aimee says.

As Jesus teaches in Matthew 25:40, whenever we welcome one of the least of our brothers and sisters, we welcome Christ Himself. Parishioners of a stewardship parish seek to see the face of Christ in one another. We must seek out and welcome new members to the parish family. A stewardship parish is a welcoming parish.

Thus, our parish community is working very hard to be a stewardship parish, and to have the people of our parish embrace stewardship as a way of life. With Jesus Christ as the foundation and capstone of our faith, we build Four Pillars of Stewardship – Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service.

To Aimee, the Fall Festival was a perfect example of parish hospitality.

“We do not even know how many people from the community and from other churches come to our parish for this festival,” she says. “We do know that our people smile and welcome them



and, quite frankly, work very hard to make sure that they have a good time and that they get a sense of what a great community we have. In that sense, you might say this is evangelization, also. In fact, our own people have a wonderful time doing this and participating in it.”

The Festival kicked off on Saturday afternoon, Oct. 15, at 1 p.m. and continued that day until 11 p.m. There were both traditional and haunted hayrides, crafts, carnival rides, tasty food, inflatables for the little ones, games of chance, Bingo, a wine and beer garden for the adults, barrel rides, and live music. The music was provided by Manda, El Scorcho, and Shangri-La. The food specialty on Saturday was the traditional Pork Steak Dinner, which is always popular.

On Sunday, Oct. 16, festivities began at 11 a.m. and continued until 6 p.m. The offerings were much the same as on Saturday, but the special

dinner on Sunday was our Turkey and Sausage Dinner.

“The reason the festival was so successful was because of the willingness of our parishioners to get involved, the literally hundreds of volunteers we had,” Aimee says. “At one time, our festival was only one day, but now it is two days in length. It is all about fellowship and having fun. We estimate that more than 2,000 people attended the festival this year. The money we made supports the parish in many ways, but the important thing is that it brings us all closer together. This is a great parish, and the success of the festival is indicative of that.”

Thanks to Aimee and Joe for their leadership and their willingness to share of their time and talents in this way, and thank you especially to the people of our great parish community for how they come together to make this a wonderful weekend each and every year!

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gifts to strengthen the Church through service to parish ministries and other activities), and **treasure** (the wise and just management of your financial resources; giving a proportionate amount of your income to the parish). If you have not brought your commitment card to church, please do so soon. We need you.

As we strive to develop stewardship as a way of life at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, your support and involvement is necessary to sustain the life of our parish. **You have a place here.** You have a role to fill in the life of the parish as we live our lives as disciples of Christ. May the Holy Spirit renew and refresh you as we work together to build our parish family through the use of our time, talent, and treasure.

In closing, I commit myself and encourage you

to open your heart a little wider to the powerful love of Jesus. Let us meet Him here in the love of others and especially in the Eucharist. In Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, let us experience His embrace. If you need help either to get started on your journey or to go deeper, call me or any member of our pastoral team. We want to connect with you! The more you seek Him, the easier He is to find. Come.

Per Matrem Ad Filium,
(Through the Mother to the Son)



Fr. Mitch Doyen,
Pastor

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LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. (MH), Vigil Mass 5:00 p.m. | **Sunday:** 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., Noon

Daily Mass: Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m.

Confessions: Saturday: 4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.