The Visionary

ST. MARY MAGDALEN

JANUARY 2009
Volume XVI Issue 1

SCHOOL FOR DISCIPLESHIP - WINTER TERM

from Sr. Joyce

We continue to experience an interest in learning more about our faith and over the last year we have seen an increase in the numbers of folks who have come from other parishes to join us. This winter term, which starts early in January, there will be two classes; one beginning on Monday, Jan. 12, and one on Tuesday, Jan. 13, both at 7 pm. These winter classes will last five or six weeks.

Monday, Jan 12: **Things Catholic**- Sr. Joyce will lead this exploration of our Catholic beliefs which will include the afterlife, Sacramentals, devotionals and other areas of interest to the participants. (5 weeks)

Tuesday, Jan 13: **Ministry, Management and Leadership**- Sr. Maryetta will lead this class that will explore the roles of ministry and leadership in the Church. (6 weeks)

Call either sister with your questions. You can register by calling Sr. Joyce.

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME

from Sr. Joyce Hoile, O.S.F.

Most of us do not have to look far to find non-practicing Catholics and often, we do not know how to help them. You can make a tremendous difference in someone's life simply by reaching out to them and telling them that we miss them and would like them to return to our Church family.

All of the Catholic parishes in our region are presenting a six-week program for "Catholics Returning Home". The sessions will begin on Thursday, January 15, from 7 – 8:30pm at St. Agnes Parish in Fowlerville. For more information or to say you are coming call Sister Joyce 810-229-8624.

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BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

from Fr. Dave

The process of planning, design development, fund raising and actual building began almost five years ago. The length comes in part because we have worked hard to listen to as many folks as possible .

For more than three years now, our Construction Task Group has been hard at work attempting to turn the hopes and dreams of many parishioners into a reality. Three additions will add almost 30,000 sq. ft. to our present facilities. These will provide a new Blessed Sacrament Chapel open for prayer 24\7; additional offices to provide staff who now share offices with a space of their own. The largest addition will provide a new community room (social hall) and kitchen; a much larger youth room and activity room\gym, 16 formation rooms and a new chapel. All through this process, the CTG has been careful and even made difficult decisions to make sure that our project stays within our $8.8M budget.

The work is about 20% complete. The basic footprint of the building is obvious and work continues through the cold and snow to enclose the building by the end of January. Once that is done, work on the inside can continue at a much quicker pace.

The Construction Task Group continues to monitor the building progress. The "Owners' Group" meets every other week to review the progress of the work and make adjustments and the parish Finance Council monitors the construction budget. In the meantime, the CTG continues to design the interior of the church and chapels. Artists have been chosen to design the devotional and liturgical spaces. Early in the new year the CTG will meet with these artists to approve their designs so that they are ready for May. In May, we hope to show you these designs as a part of a weekend "walk through" of our new space.

from the PASTORAL COUNCIL

Our Pastoral Council will soon be updating our Facility and Grounds Usage Policy as a part of our planning for how we will use our new facilities. Here is a summary of that policy:

Our parish facilities and grounds may be used for any activities, events or meetings that are specifically related to St. Mary Magdalen Parish, its ministries or by groups that are sponsored by the parish (like Knights of Columbus, scouts, etc). None of our facilities or grounds will be rented out for private or public use.

We also would open our building and grounds to parishioner initiated activities that would be in keeping with our Vision Statement, activities and events sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Lansing and to non-profit community organizations based in Livingston County. (In some cases, a fee may be assessed to cover maintenance and/or utility costs.)

Activities occurring Monday-Thursday need to end by 10 pm; and on Friday-Sunday by 11 pm. By state law, smoking is not permitted in the building and smoking outside is permitted at least 25 feet away from the building and entrances. Alcohol in moderate and discretionary amounts is only permitted at parish sponsored events or when special insurance is purchased for non-parish events. Furnishings are not to be taken off-site. Use by organized athletic groups is not permitted without Pastoral Council approval. Skateboard and rollerblade activities are not permitted at any time, at any location.

Any suggestions or concerns about changing this policy should be addressed to a Council member.

The Members of the Pastoral Council

Jan Baldinger
Kathy Carney
Mike Lamberjack
Debbie Dehanke, Secretary
Karen Luck
Sandy Oliver
Rob Lintzenich
Sr. Maryetta Churches, OP
Gretchen Buslepp
Mark Wright
Nancy Nychypor
Fr. David F. Howell
Tom Callaghan
Ken Kuna
Mary Beth Rupp

from the FINANCE COUNCIL

July 2008 - June 2009

As of November 30, 2008

REVENUE SOURCES	Nov 30	Year to Date	Projected Budget
Sunday Stewardship	109,354	454,474	1,183,900
Religious Formation/Donations	11,612	37,925	89,600
TOTAL	**120,966**	**492,399**	**1,273,500**

BUILDING FUND: $ 823,624

EXPENDITURES	Nov 30	Year to Date	Projected Budget
Programs & Staffing	63,519	312,104	860,100
Building Operations	11,603	58,678	164,400
Building Pledge	20,834	104,170	250,000
TOTAL	**95,956**	**474,952**	**1,274,500**
BALANCE (plus/minus	**+25,010**	**+17,447**	

BUILDING EXPENSE NOV '08: $ 629,655

The Members of the Finance Council

Chris Cousins
Sharon Rossiter
Karen Carter
Chair, Bruce Heatley
Dick Demmings
Ken Kuna
Ben Lindamood
Bookkeeper, Dave Wisniewski
Sandra Howe
Duke Davis
Dan Grattan
Fr. David Howell
Deb Guidos
Bob Reske
Erin Wolfe

from the STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

The Stewardship Council mission is: *As grateful servants of God's Love, we seek to help our parish community discover their gifts from God that we share with one another for the common good.*

The council did not meet in December.

Members of the Stewardship Council

Brigitte Burke
Mary Beth Rupp
Rick Phillips
Lisa Schifko
Jim Chevalier
Ann Fraser
Devon Wolfe
(Chair) Sharon Wagner
Barb Colley
Joe Martinez
Caryn Schmidt
Sr. Maryetta Churches, OP
Eric Feiler
Sonia Petrous
Sharon Rossiter
Fr. David F. Howell

RELIGIOUS FORMATION *from Mary Mahar*

CHASTITY PROGRAM A Chastity Program for our youth and their parents in grades 6-8 will be presented on Monday, January 12, 7-8:30 pm. Actually there will be two separate presentations. Our youth will be in the social hall with speakers from the Diocese having age-appropriate presentations and activities to learn more about our Catholic beliefs and how to deal with the conflicts of our culture today. Parents, meanwhile, will be in the church with other speakers who will talk about Human Sexuality and the Catholic Faith. Join us with Sally Amman, Director of Catholic Schools and Curriculum for the Diocese of Lansing, as we help you to find the answers and guide you with information on this important subject.

January is a hard time of year for our formation classes. With winter in full swing and the darkness of the days by the time our youth get home from school, most families just want to hibernate! We have a lot going on and many activities planned to help make your classes bright! We'll be talking about vocations with a special speaker, and all are welcome to attend in Church during our 4:30 and 6:30 sessions on January 7/8th. We are also getting ready to celebrate Rites, jump start the class lessons, and much more! Look on the "Watch this Space" section in the gathering area and in the Social Hall to see work hanging showing some of the activities our classes have been up to.

First Eucharist families are reminded to be working on your child's chalice which will be presented to Fr. Dave at the *Rite of Enrollment on Saturday, Jan. 10, at the 4:30 Liturgy*. Plan to stay for the K of C Coney Night after Mass! **Order of Penitent (4th Grade)** families are reminded to be working on your child's cross which will be presented to Fr. Dave at the *Rite of Enrollment for Order of Penitent on Sunday, Jan. 11, at the 9am Liturgy*. It is our hope to continue to have the cloth from each of the First Eucharist Liturgies present at Order of Penitent and then at Confirmation. It is our way of reliving the faith journey of our children and their families here at St. Mary Magdalen! After these Liturgies, we will be passing out prayer partner cards with the names of our youth in formation for these Sacraments. We ask that you keep them all in your prayers as they go through preparation. **Confirmation youth** will be celebrating the *Rite of Acceptance at the 11 am Liturgy on Jan. 11* as well, to show they are ready to begin more involved study for this important Sacrament. **There is a Confirmation parent and candidate meeting immediately following the 11am Liturgy with lunch provided by our Knights of Columbus!**

January Dates to Remember:

4- Classes resume from break!
10- Rite of Enrollment for First Eucharist, Chalices given to Fr. Dave 4:30 Liturgy
11- Rite of Enrollment for Order of Penitent, Crosses given to Fr. Dave 9am Liturgy
Rite of Acceptance for Confirmation, 11am Liturgy, Parent/Cand. meeting immediately following, *lunch provided!*
19- Formation Team meeting 7:00 pm
25-29– No Formation Classes
28 -Evening of Reflection for all Catechist/Aides/CLW Leaders in Social Hall

MAGDALEN'S LITTLE PEOPLE

from Kathie Anderer

Greetings from Preschool!! Our Christmas Program is behind us, another sweet memory to put into our memory bank. The children looked so cute dressed in their costumes and they did such a nice job singing their Christmas songs for their family and friends. Our collection from the program went into the Alms Box to help people in the area who are in need this year.

We will be on Christmas break from December 19th through January 5th. When we return we will be busy working on evaluations and getting ready for our BIG event of the year… VIP Night. The children get to invite one special person to come to "Night School" with them. It is one of the highlights of the school year. We are looking forward to a fun evening.

We still have room available if anyone needs a preschool. We are having a great time here at St. Mary Magdalen and would love to share the experience with you. Give us a call.

We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and everyone was blessed with joy, happiness, and many wonderful memories with family and friends. All of us wish you a wonderful New Year!

COUNCIL COMMENDATIONS

The Council would like to commend the Art and Environment Team for all that they do in our worship space to make us more aware of the meaning of all the different liturgical seasons. We are especially grateful for your efforts this Advent and Christmas season.

The Council would like to commend Erin Wolfe and all her helpers for all their work with the children to bring the message of the Nativity of Christ so alive for our parish community.

TEEN NEWS

from Margaret Callaghan

Happy New Year! With the start of a new year there is hope and a renewed sense of a fresh start. When you make your plans for the upcoming twelve months, pray first about your goals and plans. Ask God to help guide your desires when looking ahead. If your plans include personal goals, family goals or work goals, pray first and listen with a quiet heart. If you are struggling and worried about the months ahead, ask God for courage to start the year and strength to get through the troubled times. He knows our every need and gives us strength to handle challenges. Have faith and stay strong in prayer. The New Year awaits with surprises for us all!

January brings the bitter cold of winter and sometimes things just seem so bleak. I encourage you to do what we do at youth group every year during this month. We quiet ourselves and reflect. We look back at last year and the things we accomplished. How was God a part of my life? Then we look forward and think about what the year might hold. How will I make God a true part of my life on a daily basis? We then write a letter to ourselves, seal it, address it, and then hand it over. In December it is mailed home to be read and reviewed. It is a great tradition we have started and everyone looks for the letter to come right before the holiday. Make this a part of your family tradition every year. Share your thoughts and reflections with each other and pray with one another for a blessed year.

In November of this year we are participating in the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) that will take us to Kansas City, MO. The conference gathers thousands of teens and adults from across the nation to worship, praise, learn and celebrate the love of God all together for 3 days! There will be an informational meeting on Tuesday January 27 at 7 pm. You can check out the conference web site at www.nfcym.org to see the promotional video and to view past conference fun. You can also contact me at

margaretcallaghan766@msn.com.

We are skiing this year the weekend of January 23-25. Watch weekly in the bulletin for details.

Youth

Journey 2008 - 2009

Journey 2008 - 2009

EDGE NEWS

[for 6 - 8 graders]

What a blessing our younger youth are to the community. Last month we collected hats, scarfs, mittens and socks to donate to the less fortunate. We prayed over them for those who would receive them. The middle school students were pleased to know they were helping out those in need during these cold, tough months of winter. Thank you.

Our first meeting back this speakeyear is Monday, January 12, from 7-8:30pm. We will welcome speakers who will join us for the evening. For this particular meeting we encourage parents to stay for an adult presentation on human sexuality and the Catholic faith. We will begin the evening with common prayer in the worship space then separate so the youth can participate in age appropriate activities.

THE OTHER BENCH

from Jim Chevalier

We all want plain, simple, direct answers from God. What is the right decision for us? Should I marry this person? Should I look for another job? Should I go back to school? Do I have a vocation to serve God as a religious? How can I deal with this difficult person? Should I have another brownie? We would like direct answers; we don't get direct answers.

Since God does not speak to us directly with a loud booming voice, we find ourselves struggling daily to find the right thing to do. And, just as Jesus was vague in his answer to the crowd – demanding that they search their own souls for the answer to their question – so God sometimes lets us flounder in indecision allowing us to make our own mistakes. He wants us to ask the deeper questions; he wants us to have the spiritual maturity to hear the deeper answers. He wants us to reflect, to research if necessary, but most of all to pray.

We are not born into this earthly life with a blueprint and an owner's manual. None of us knows with certainty when or how our lives will end. But between birth and death we have a responsibility to ourselves and to God, to take our lives and each of our decisions seriously, to inform our minds and our hearts as best we can, and never to imagine that what we do doesn't make any difference. Everything we do, no matter how important or how trivial, cannot be overstated, whether it's making sure we believe in God's love, or reaching for that second brownie. Everything we do is important to God.

THE DEACONS BENCH

from Dave Scharf

The film, *Pay It Forward,* (based on the novel by Catherine Ryan Hyde) has the same premise that underlies the source of the joy and happiness just celebrated at Christmas. The film tells the story of a seventh grade teacher and his eleven-year-old student. On the first day of class, the teacher puts this challenge on the blackboard: *"Think of something new that will change the world, and then act on what you have thought*." The idea captivates the boy, who lives with his single-parent, alcoholic mother. The boy attempts to put this idea into practice by helping people, who will, in turn, "pay it forward" by helping others.

The boy draws a circle in his homework book and puts his name in the middle. From that circle, he extends three lines, at the end of which are three more circles. In the first circle he writes his mother's name. He will try to get her to give up her alcohol. In the second circle he writes the name of a classmate who is being bullied by the larger boys in school. He will make it his duty to defend this fellow. In the third circle, he writes the name of his teacher, whom he will try to persuade to fall in love with his mother. These are huge challenges for the boy.

The film then shows the steep obstacles he faces in his attempt to improve his world. In the end, *Pay It Forward* inspires us to imagine the possibilities of making the world a better place, transforming one person at a time by a series of "random acts of kindness" and love.

The movie teaches us that when someone does a good deed for us, we should "pay it forward" by making "an act of faith in the goodness of people." The net result is lasting peace and joy. The people asked John the Baptizer, *"What should we do?"* He told them to act with justice, charity and honesty, letting their lives reflect their transformation.

For us, that transformation was entered into during Advent and Christmas. My question for you is "What three circles would you draw on your homework?" and "can we pay the Spirit of Christmas forward for the whole year?"

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

from Ron Weingartz

The first reason for the Knights of Columbus is charity. One of the most visible fundraisers is the Tootsie Roll Drive which is on Palm Sunday weekend. The Knights blanket the community selling tootsie rolls to help the mentally impaired by providing financial support to agencies in our community.

Our council is very active in parish and community activities. The Knights are a "can-do" organization ready to help when called upon. We sponsor pancake breakfasts, spaghetti dinners, a parish golf outing, reverse raffle, Vegas night, car show for Hospice, youth free throw contest and soccer challenge. We also provide support and assistance to many groups, ministries and to the parish staff within our community.

Many men have considered joining the Knights and feel they do not have time. While we seek active, involved members, we also realize the time demands of family, work and parish. Join, get involved with a couple events and attend as many meetings as possible.

You will find the time spent rewarding and the friendships developed with fellow Knights will last a lifetime. To find out more about the Knights of Columbus ask any Knight or call me at 810-220-1678.

FROM THE WELLNESS MINISTRY TEAM

Do you suffer from the winter doldrums? You may have Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD. Prolonged darkness of the winter months depletes serotonin, which regulates moods. Some of the symptoms are: increase in appetite and weight gain, a drop in energy level, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, and irritability. Light therapy is very affective. The use of a full-spectrum light for 20 minutes a day can greatly improve ones moods. The light must hit your retinas to be effective. These are sometimes referred to as Ott Lights, and can be found at JoAnn Fabrics and other sources.

OF FAITH AND SERVICE from Sr. Joyce Hoile, OSF

50 + PLANNING MEETING Your Voice Counts!

On Monday, January 12 join us at 12 noon for a soup and apple pie lunch and short planning meeting. A repeat lunch and meeting will be that same evening. Both will be held in the parish library. If you are unable to come, please give your information to someone who will be there. This information gathering of what various age groups would like from the Parish can include inward nourishment, outward involvement, and how best it can be accomplished. Our lives are to reflect the Glory of God. Please call me at the office to confirm your place. Thank you.

STUDYING THE GOSPEL OF MARK

We are in Ordinary Time of the Church Year during which the Gospel of Mark is read at our Sunday Liturgies. Let's take a closer look at Mark and his message. The class will run for 5 Sunday Evenings (January 18 – February 15) from 7 – 8:30 pm at Sr. Joyce's.

SENIOR LUNCH BUNCH

On Wednesday, January 28, we will meet for Desserts for God's Kitchen.

ADULT CONFIRMATION

Each year the County parishes combine to offer a six week preparation period for those who have not yet been confirmed in the Catholic faith. A participant is any adult Catholic (18 years or older) who has and receives Eucharist (Communion) and is older than the age offered for Confirmation in one's parish.

Confirmation will be conferred on Pentecost Sunday, May 31. The classes will be held once a week beginning the third week of April. Please call Sister Joyce if interested.

THANKS & PRAISE from Sr. Maryetta Churches, OP

We give thanks and praise to the Saint Mary Magdalen Parishioners who took 730 tags off the Advent Giving Tree and all who adopted families during this season. Your generosity is wonderful!

We especially thank Dianne Sweeter for facilitating the Advent Giving Tree. She set it up and organized the distribution of gifts once they were returned. Your leadership is greatly appreciated. Great job, Dianne!

ON THE JOURNEY… *from Diane Kubus*

Every Sunday, our Eucharistic assembly is made of many people. Most are folks who were Baptized and raised as Catholics; some became Catholic later in life and some were Baptized in another denomination, but regularly join us for worship. Many of these folks have been active in our community and have grown with us in many ways on our journey of faith.

This month, we would like to extend an invitation to those who are part of that third group. Most of these folks usually come out of faith traditions where they had been very active. They also have been active in the Catholic community for a long time and do not need the longer process that unbaptized and unchurched people might need. We will soon begin a shorter (10 week) process for these folks.

The process will be adapted to the needs of the participants. The process will answer any questions that participants may have and offer them additional information about Catholic teaching including the Sacraments, and the sacramental life of the community. The goal is to enlighten our faith, direct our hearts toward God, and inspire and nurture our life in Christ by deepening our relationship with Him.

Those who have participated in this process in the past have gained a much deeper understanding of their faith and the Church as well as a stronger connection and sense of belonging to the community. It has been an exciting and fulfilling experience for all who have participated. For those who decide that this year is the right time for them to enter into this process, we will embark on a journey that will never be forgotten and one that will continue to be lived out over a lifetime.

I would ask all of you to please pray for those who will participate and for their catechists as we journey toward Easter. May we all know God's blessings on our journey of faith!

CHARITY & JUSTICE by Lisa Klein

A huge THANK YOU to all who donated gifts and gift cards to the Advent Giving Tree! In these difficult economic times, people still found ways to provide a brighter Christmas for so many. Through your generosity, St. Mary Magdalen served LACASA, Maxey Boys Training School, St. Agnes in Flint, St. Anne's and Mary Lou Brown Mission in Detroit, Pregnancy Help Clinic, and the Salvation Army. May God bless all of you for your kindness and generosity!

As human beings, we struggle with the phenomenon of people in need, sometimes great need. Understanding poverty requires a deeper understanding of our own lives as well as the lives of those who have need. At our January and February meetings, we will spend a few minutes discussing excerpts from a book entitled "What Every Church Member Should Know About Poverty." Join us on Tues., January 13th at 7:30 p.m. For more information, please contact Lisa Klein at 810-844-0074 or Deacon Dave at the Parish office.

NEW TO OUR PARISH

WELCOME!

IN DECEMBER

Jeton & Agnes Berisha
Adrian, Adriana

Thomas & Mary Anne Dever

Steve & Lynn Glasser
Chase, Gray

Iain & Elizabeth Gordon
Cameron, Connor

Gregory & Nicolette Hoffman
Charles, Marcella

Paul & Beata Sadowski
Weronika, Nadia
Anna & Stan Sadowski

The addresses and phone numbers of new members have been omitted in compliance with internet privacy law.

SAINT MARY MAGDALEN PARISH

2201 South Old US 23 Highway
Brighton, Michigan 48114-7609
(810) 229 - 8624
www.saintmarymagdalen.org

MARKING THE CALENDAR

January 4 (Sunday) FEAST of the EPIPHANY

The Holy Eucharist is clear and convincing witness to Jesus' promise: "I am with you always until the end of time!"

After the 11 am Liturgy, the Eucharist will be brought to Holy Cross Chapel and remain there until 4 pm, when we will return the Eucharist to the church for Evening Prayer.

Throughout the afternoon, everyone, especially our Ministers of Prayer and our Eucharistic Ministers, are encouraged to come and spend some time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

January 10 (Saturday) CONEY NIGHT

Let the men cook tonight! Our Knights of Columbus will prepare a coney dog dinner - at a reasonable price. Come share a meal with the family! Dinner will be served from 5 to 6:30 pm.

January 12 & 13 (Mon\Tues) SCHOOL FOR DISCIPLESHIP (WINTER SESSION BEGINS)

The Theology tract is **Things Catholic,** on Mondays beginning January 12. The other class on Tuesdays will also be part of the theology tract. It is **Ministry, Management and Leadership** with Sr. Maryetta beginning January 13. Both classes will be from 7-9 pm.

January 24 (Saturday) EUCHRE CARD PARTY

Need a break from winter doldrums? The Community Life Committee invites you to our annual card party, Saturday, Jan. 24 starting at 7 pm in the social hall. Come and bring other card-playing folks.

January 25 (Sunday) PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The Knight will be fixing breakfast: pancakes, sausage, bacon and eggs – all for a low, family friendly price. From 9:30 until 1 pm – come share breakfast with your family and fellow parishioners!

THE PASTORAL STAFF

PASTOR
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PASTORAL MINISTER
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YOUTH MINISTRY
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PASTORAL MUSICIAN
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