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ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH

# LIVING CHURCH

PARISH NEWSLETTER

## *A Wonderful Opportunity for Fun, Fellowship and Stewardship* **Our Parish Fall Festival**

As we become more familiar with living the stewardship way of life, we learn to recognize – or discern – when we are being called to action, to live out our stewardship commitment. Do we understand when we are being called to use our time and talents – and do we answer that call? This was definitely the case when Fr. George asked Jodi Kastner and Jenny Powers to head up the SVF Fall Festival last year.

"We're working to better understand what it means to be a steward," Jodi says. "One thing we've learned is that we need to share of our time and our talent. But, we can't do it alone. For the festival to flourish, we really need everyone's participation and involvement. We hope to have 100 percent participation from our parish and school communities. We need everyone's gifts to make this event a success."



*Jodi Kastner and Jenny Powers (l-r)*

Jodi and Jenny both have strong connections to our parish. Jodi entered the parish through the RCIA program nine years ago. Her husband, Kurt, is a graduate of St. Vincent Ferrer School; her oldest son, Sam, graduated from the school this year, and her younger son, Joe, is a seventh grader. Jenny has belonged to the parish since she was born. She is an alumna of St. Vincent Ferrer School, as are her two

oldest children, Molly and Emily. Her son is a sixth grader at the school.

The Fall Festival is scheduled for the weekend of Sept. 25, 26 and 27.

"This year's festival will be bigger and better in every way," Jenny says. "We have analyzed last year's festival and made

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## STEWARDSHIP'S "SUPREME TEACHER"

### *Following Christ's Example*

Former President and Five-Star General Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, "You don't lead by hitting people over the head – that's assault, not leadership." President Eisenhower's words are both blunt and humorous, but he makes a great point. Almost any successful endeavor in life requires the benefit of strong leadership. And a truly effective leader does not lead by simply telling others what to do, but by providing a strong example of how to carry oneself on a daily basis.

This is no different for us in our lives as Catholic Christians. As individuals who face a myriad of difficult choices every day, we require a leader who, through word and example, can show us the path to living according to God's will. For us, Jesus is the supreme teacher of every aspect of Christian life, and His life as documented in the Gospels is a model that we should strive to imitate in living as good Christians. And as we have learned, stewardship – the sharing of the gifts that God has given to us – is a big part of Christian life, and one for which Jesus left many examples of successful living.

Jesus' nature of selfless service, documented many times throughout the New Testament and culminating with His death for our sins, is an underlying aspect of living the stewardship way of life. As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops points out in its pastoral document *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, "In Jesus' teaching and life self-emptying is fundamental. Now, it might seem that self-emptying has little to do with stewardship, but in Jesus' case that is not so. His self-emptying is not sterile self-denial for its own sake; rather, in setting aside self, he is filled with the Father's will, and he is fulfilled in just this way" (19).

Jesus points out to Peter in Mark's Gospel that this "self-emptying" requires sacrifice, but ultimately leads to "eternal life in the age to come" (Mk 10:30). But the Christian steward's ultimate reward is not his or her only benefit from living the stewardship way of life. By sharing of our time, talent and treasure, and living in imitation of Christ, we can relate more closely to Him in sharing, in a small way, in His sacrifice. "To be a Christian disciple is a rewarding way of life, a way of companionship with Jesus, and the practice of stewardship as a part of it is itself a source of deep joy. Those who live this way are happy people who have found the meaning and purpose of living" (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, 21).

The next time you are frustrated or unsure of how to best respond to God's gifts in stewardship, take a moment to open up the Bible. Jesus may not "hit us over the head" in His leadership, but He does provide numerous examples through His actions and teachings of how to live as one of His disciples.

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A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

## AUGUST: *The Gift of Time*

Dear Parishioners,

As August dawns upon us, I'm shocked by the simple reality that summer is just about over! Yes, some of us are trying to squeeze in that one last vacation or sit outside for just a few more minutes. But for the most part, we've started to transition back into the swing of fall.

How has this happened? Wasn't it just yesterday that the kids were being let out of school and the sun decided to show its beautiful face again?

I once heard from a psychologist that time seems to pass more quickly as we get older because we're experiencing fewer "firsts." When we're continually experiencing new things, time tends to stand still

while we're living them. After we've repeated those events numerous times, they don't faze us much any more – and before we know it, months have passed, seasons have changed, and it's time to start the annual cycle again.

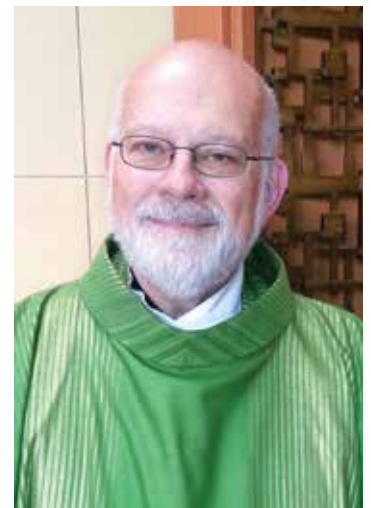
Yet, we should not allow our time to be something that simply evades our grasp, trickling through our fingers. After all, time itself – every moment on this earth – is a gift from God. We each have 24 hours today and seven days this week to use however we please. Not one of us gets more time than another.

At the end of this summer, there is cause to look back and see how we chose to use our time these last few

months. Did we set aside time to pray? Have we allowed for time to serve others? Did we devote time each day to serve God?

When we assess the use of our time, we must make a spiritual examination – "Have I been a good steward of the time given to me?" Maybe now is a good time to make some changes in our lives and get more involved. There is no better time than right now to seek out ways to serve God, our parish, and those around us. This is what it means to be a good steward!

As the lazy days of summer give way to the busyness of fall, remember to keep God in your hearts, in your minds, and on your tongue as we



continue our stewardship journey as a parish family. Please pray for me as I pray for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. George Kunkel

# “THE CHURCH IS MORE THAN OUR LOCAL PARISH”

## *A Look Back on the One Faith, One Hope, One Love Archdiocesan Campaign*

In his letter to the people of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Archbishop Dennis Schnurr made particular note that the responsibilities of stewardship extend right back to the very beginnings of our Church.

“St. Peter, our first Pope, took care to impress upon us that we are charged individually, as well as collectively, with the responsibility of stewardship,” Archbishop Schnurr wrote. “In 1 Peter, Chapter 4, he teaches ‘As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace.’”

The response of the people of St. Vincent Ferrer to the *One Faith, One Hope, One Love* archdiocesan campaign has been a great example of stewardship – in fact, it has been remarkable. The campaign is being conducted throughout the entire Archdiocese in phases. The timing of our SVF campaign was last fall. Although our goal was \$1 million, SVF families generously pledged more than \$1.55 million. With 177 families participating, the average gift was \$8,794. Although this is an archdiocesan campaign, it has great benefits for our parish. The way the campaign is designed, the parish receives 20 percent of the goal if it is reached. For SVF, that is \$200,000. In addition, if the parish goes over the goal, it receives 60 percent of everything beyond the goal – which, based upon our results, is \$333,600. Thus, over the life of the campaign, St. Vincent Ferrer will receive more than \$500,000.

Fr. George Kunkel, when he was first made aware of the campaign,

says he immediately felt enthusiastic about it.

“Here in the archdiocese, we have a long tradition of working together to build the Church and everything that goes with that,” he says. “We are trying to help our people understand what stewardship is and how we can live that out, both as individuals and as a parish. The *One Faith, One Hope, One Love* campaign seemed to me to be an opportunity to take our stewardship to another level, to impress upon everyone that we are stewards of the Church – the whole Church, not just our St. Vincent Ferrer Parish. Furthermore, I have an understanding of the history here. The archdiocese has not conducted a campaign like this in more than 50 years, the last one being under Archbishop Karl Alter in the mid-1950s.”

Of course, Father immediately realized that he would need lots of help to accomplish the goal set for

the parish. He therefore organized an Executive Committee from among the lay people of the parish to plan and carry out the campaign. He tapped Sandie and Bob Wubbolding to serve as Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee, to which both agreed.

“First of all we love this parish,” Bob says. “It is small enough so that we know most of the people, but it is large enough to really be an active and vibrant community.”

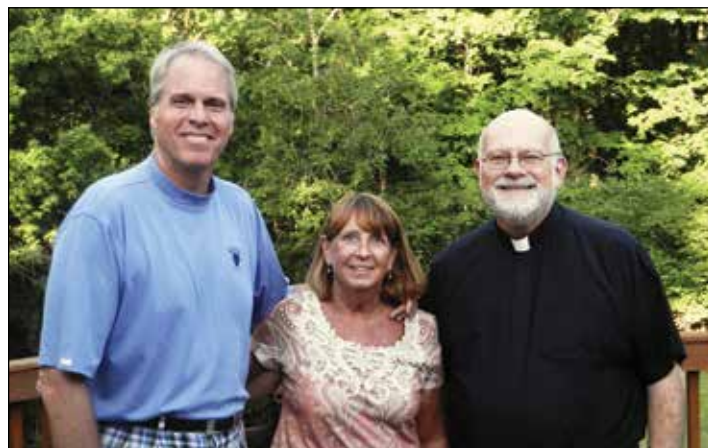
“We are close-knit here,” Sandie adds. “As Fr. George presented this to us, it seemed like it was something that would give us that strong sense of family, something which would provide us with a chance to be a team, a chance to share, something which would bind us together.”

Fr. George, Bob and Sandie all agree that as they gathered the Executive Committee, it became clear that it would be the people who would make the campaign successful.

*continued on next page*



*Campaign Executive Committee Members. Standing: Terry Callan, Jane Callan, Susan Grote, Fr. George Kunkel, Karen Schaefer. Seated: Diana Jaeger, Mary Kay Lynch, George Bryce, Christine Homan*



Bob and Sandie Wubbolding, Co-Chairs of the Executive Committee

Executive Committee Members Bill and Sally Mountel with Fr. George

Another key member of that committee was Mary Kay Lynch, a parishioner here for the past 18 years.

“From my earliest days here, I felt welcomed and needed,” she says. “God has been so good to me and has given me so much. I think I have a responsibility to pass on to others some of what has been gifted to me. The fact that Fr. George asked me, of course, was important, but it was as if a little voice inside of me said, ‘You can do that.’ Stewardship is a part of my daily life, and this campaign was a reminder to me that we are not just part of St. Vincent Ferrer – we are part of the whole archdiocese.”

Fr. George and the leadership and the Executive Committee declare that the purposes of the campaign also had a great influence on them. The campaign was intended to provide additional support in five areas:

1. That which has already been outlined for the parishes.
2. Enhancing and supporting Catholic education.
3. Supporting vocations, helping priests-to pursue and complete their vocations.

4. Providing funding for the retired priests, as the current support endowment is not adequate.

5. Offering additional assistance to Catholic Charities, which helps so many people in need.

“As we carried out the campaign here, we were astounded at the people’s responses,” Bob says. “And it was not just those who made gifts. We need to thank and give credit to all the people who worked on the campaign, more than we can mention here.”

“I need to thank – we all need to thank – everyone who worked to make this campaign a success,” Mary Kay

adds. “Thanks to all the people for their participation and their pledges.”

“I want to recognize Susan Grote in particular,” Fr. George says. “She served as the ‘administrative assistant,’ preparing weekly reports, writing ‘thank yous,’ and so much more. She was a thorough and tireless worker.

“People who have supported this campaign see the bigger picture – the fact that the Church is more than our local parish, the fact that stewardship means being a part of the whole Church,” he concludes. “Even though I am a priest, an experience like this deepens my own faith, and tells me that God is good, very good.”

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– Fr. George Kunkel



# LIVING CHURCH

## WELCOMING NEW STAFF *and* BIDDING FAREWELL *to Members of our St. Vincent Ferrer Family*

*This month, we welcome a number of new members to our parish and school staff, as we bid a fond and grateful farewell to several who have dutifully and faithfully served our St. Vincent Ferrer community.*



*Lucy Frey, our new First-Grade Teacher*



*Kimberly Roy, our new Principal*



*Kathy McDonald, our new Bookkeeper in the parish office*



*Julie Kneple, our new Art Teacher*



*Josette Hudek, New Faith Formation Assistant*



*Retirees and staff leaving our school – Marc Greenberg (retiring Business Manager), Mark Henderson (outgoing Principal), Linda Schmits (retiring Religious Ed. Secretary), Lesley Downs (outgoing Aide), Samantha DiMario (outgoing First-Grade Teacher), Allison Green (outgoing Art Teacher)*



*Fr. George Kunkel, Beth Himes (director of Faith Formation), Peter Mallow, and his sponsor Matthew Rensing*

CONGRATULATIONS  
*to new Catholic*  
PETER MALLOW,  
*who was confirmed at the*  
2015 Easter Vigil

# A Look at Religious Education and Formation Here at SVF

By *BETH HIMES*

It is a steamy 90-degree summer morning. What are your children doing? Practicing for the swim team? Working out with a high school soccer coach? Playing in air conditioning?

For some St. Vincent Ferrer parish children, hot summer mornings are a time to focus in on God and to learn about the Catholic faith. These children attend the Summer Parish Religious Education Program (SPREP), one of the faith formation options offered to families in our parish.

Comprehensive faith formation in the Catholic tradition is designed to engage parishioners at every stage of their lives in religious education and faith experiences, which teach the Gospel message and embrace people into the life of the Church.

Some faith formation at SVF involves formal structures, especially for children. SPREP is a two-week, 40-hour school of religion for students in grades one through eight. It takes place on the campus of our sister parish, All Saints, during June. Between six and 20 SVF children have registered for SPREP in recent summers.

The Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) enrolls a much larger group of students in grades kindergarten through eight. It meets in our school building on Sunday mornings, 9:30 to 10:45, from mid-September through April. PREP is a real family environment, with parents serving as volunteer catechists. After PREP, many families attend 11 a.m. Mass together.

John and Diane Sichel have made Sunday mornings a whole family event. Diane is a catechist for PREP and John is an usher at Mass. Their six children are all involved with PREP. Their oldest, Adam, was a teen helper in

the second-grade classroom this past year, while their younger five were each enrolled in PREP.

"I have been a catechist for three years," Diane tells us. "I decided to become a catechist because it is an opportunity for me to give back to my parish community and to develop the youth of our parish. It is an opportunity for our family to be involved in the parish community together. We ride to and from PREP together, and my older children help with any classroom pre-work."

Two of the Sichel children were also in sacramental preparation groups this past year. "St. Vincent Ferrer Parish makes the sacramental preparations special, whether it is creating a banner for the First Eucharist or attending the Confirmation retreat," according to Diane.

Sacramental preparation is an integral part of comprehensive faith formation, and always has a family element. Couples attend group and private sessions before marriage. Moms and dads learn about Baptism before their baby receives the sacrament. Kids and parents attend "First Eucharist" and "First Reconciliation" preparation. Families are consulted before the Sacrament of the Sick is administered.

Sometimes, the educational aspect of the sacrament is presented by Fr. George or a member of the parish staff. More often, though, generous parish volunteers do the actual teaching. PREP catechist Judy McHone (Johnson) has been preparing SVF children for their First Eucharist for over 20 years. This past year, she had the pleasure of preparing her own granddaughter, Molly, for the sacrament. Smiles were evident all over the church as the proud

grandma offered the Precious Blood to Molly on First Communion Day, April 26.

Judy and Diane are just two of the many volunteers whose efforts are both appreciated and needed at St. Vincent Ferrer Parish. And more volunteers are always needed, especially as parent catechists "graduate" to the next part of their lives, along with their eighth-grade children.

Two or three new volunteer catechists are needed every year, as well as new volunteers to supervise non-classroom formation activities like the Living Way of the Cross and the Advent wreath-making event. Adult formation programs, such as the Parish Mission and the speaker series, also need both leaders and helpers.

Just as our SPREP children focus in on God during the hot summer months, everyone should spend a few summer moments giving thanks to God for our generous faith formation volunteers, and considering whether their example is a calling from God to more active participation.





ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH

# LIVING CHURCH

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Permit No. 138

7754 Montgomery Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45236  
513-791-9030  
[www.svfchurch.org](http://www.svfchurch.org)

## MASSES

SATURDAY VIGIL: 5:00 P.M.

SUNDAY: 9:00 A.M. AND 11:00 A.M.

## CHAPEL (PARISH CENTER):

MON-FRI: 8:30 A.M.

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

SATURDAY: 3:30-4:30 P.M.

## Our Parish Fall Festival *continued from front cover*

changes and adjustments where necessary. We expanded our planning and organization committee. Travis Everly heads up our entertainment. The Websters will entertain on Friday night from 8-11. The Danny Frazier Band is scheduled for Saturday night, 8 to 11. Ooh La-La and the Greasers Unplugged will perform on Sunday evening, 6 to 9. Grand Raffle tickets are already on sale with a grand prize of \$10,000. There will be the Bid'N'Buy booth, as well as a basket raffle."

And as Jodi notes, now is the time to become involved and to help make this year's festival a success!

"We are still in need of three chair people to run various booths," she says. "This festival is foundational to our parish and school. It is our hope to exceed every festival which has gone before in terms of attendance and income, but we cannot

do that without heavy participation from everyone in the parish. As I said, stewardship is giving of your time and talent. Here at St. Vincent Ferrer, we need everyone to be involved. You can give time to volunteer, be a patron and financially support the festival, or give of your talent in a variety of ways. Quite simply, **we need you**. We would love to have more parishioners who feel that they may not be able to contribute to give us a phone call, as there are so many levels one can give, from making copies, selling tickets, working a booth, or a shift of one or two hours somewhere."

So take a moment and reflect – are you being called to live out the stewardship way of life? Do you have time, talent or treasure to contribute to this year's SVF Fall Festival? If so, please consider answering that call!

*For more information, or to find ways to contribute and participate in this year's Fall Festival, please call Jodi Kastner at 513-470-3135, Jenny Powers at 513-236-7159, or Maria Cleveland at 513-500-6650. There will be updates in the bulletin and on the festival portion of the parish website at [www.svfchurch.org](http://www.svfchurch.org) – click on "COMING EVENTS" and then "Festival."*