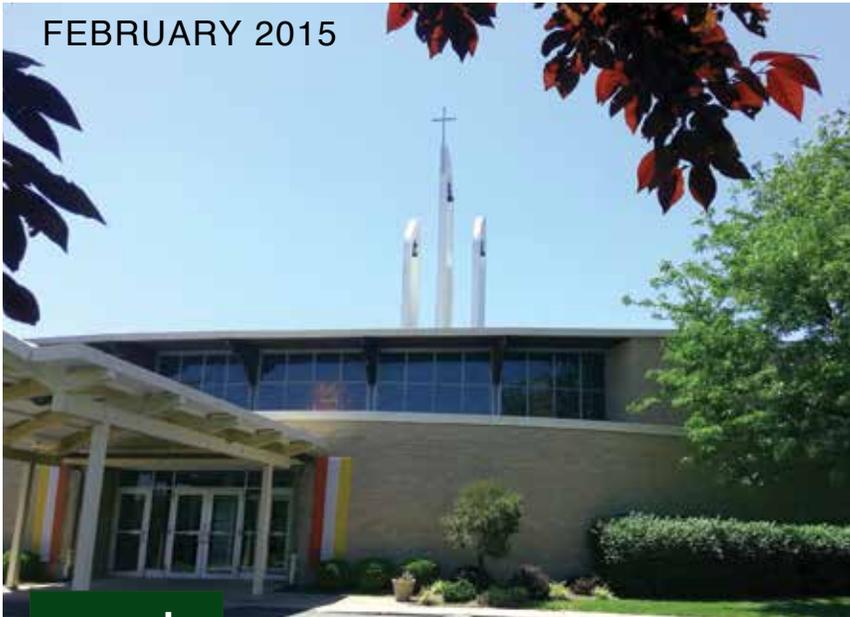


FEBRUARY 2015



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ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH

LIVING CHURCH

PARISH NEWSLETTER

“God Holds You Together” **Ed and Mary Beaudoin**

A blind date and a golfing injury brought Ed and Mary Beaudoin together – over 51 years later, they agreed that it is God who kept them together.

“When you have God in common, God holds you together,” Ed says. “The faith brings you closer to each other. We have always made a big effort to go to Mass and throughout our marriage, we might have missed Mass only four times because of situations when we actually couldn’t attend.”

In the 1950s, Mary went to St. Mary’s, an all-girls Catholic high school, and Ed went to Purcell, an all-boys Catholic high school. Mary and Ed remember attending Mass with their families, serving at parish festivals, and gathering for the “block Rosary” when they would say the Rosary with family and friends at someone’s home.

When they were sophomores in high school, mutual friends set them up on a blind date, but they didn’t start going steady until Ed was in college after a golfing incident.

“My brother and my dad had the golf clubs out, and I was in front of Dad when he swung a club, and it struck the left side



of my face,” Mary says. “I think Dad actually took it worse than I did! I was in the hospital, and Ed came to visit me.”

Two years later, Ed and Mary were married at St. Vincent Ferrer on Nov. 30, 1963, which was Ed’s family’s parish at the time. Some 20 years later, they were brought back to St. Vincent and joined the parish with their own family.

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LIVING LENT IN 2015

During the 40 days that Jesus spent fasting and praying in the desert, Satan was constantly tempting Him. He preyed on Jesus' humanity, trying desperately to get Him to test God. Of course, we all know that it didn't work. As Jesus is 100 percent God at the same time that He is 100 percent man, the devil was unable to take hold of Him.

Yet, the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert communicates an all-important truth to us. Jesus, the God-man, experienced everything we have and everything we ever will as human beings. Satan even tried to tempt Him, just as he tempts us every day. But because Jesus is God at the same time that He is human, He had no tendency to give in to Satan's attempts.

Even so, Christ fought Satan tooth and nail, putting him in his place: "Get away, Satan! It is written, 'The Lord, your God shall you worship, and Him alone shall you serve'" (Matthew 4:10). At that, the devil left Him.

We all find ourselves in similar situations. We live in a world wrought with sin, and, in his ever-so-cunning way, Satan makes the sinful look appealing. We must stand firm in our faith and tell Satan to "Get away," just as Jesus did. Only then will we truly experience the glory of the salvation Christ came to give. Lent offers us a particular time to fight Satan, taking courage in the resurrection that we are preparing to celebrate. It is a time that we spend focused on strengthening our relationships with the Lord. Armed with His power, which we receive in many different

ways, we can resist the temptations of the devil and accept the salvation Christ offers each one of us.

How can we do this? Get to know the Lord through prayer. Read the Scriptures often. St. Jerome tells us that ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ. So, we must be steeped in Scripture. Read it daily — chapter by chapter, or verse by verse. It is, after all, the Word of God! Draw close to the Blessed Mother. She knows her Son better than any of us, and she is eager to bring us to Him. Join her at the cross, where she witnessed her most precious Son die for each one of us. Pray the Rosary — individually and as a family. It is a powerful prayer through which, with Mary, we walk through Christ's life, His Death, and His resurrection. Unite with Christ Himself in His suffering.

At a minimum, the Church tells us to fast and abstain from meat throughout the Lenten season. Catholics who are 14 years of age and older must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday (which falls this year on Feb. 18), Good Friday (falling this year on April 3), as well as all of the Fridays throughout Lent. In addition, Catholics between the ages of 18 and 60 are required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting is defined as eating one meal and two smaller meals, which, together, do not equal the larger meal.

The idea behind these requirements is to help us focus on the spirit of the season. We are to be preparing ourselves, just as Christ did, for the great event that won for us salvation!



Growing in Our Faith During Lent

Dear Parishioners,

February 18 marks the beginning of Lent with a unique holy day – Ash Wednesday. While not a Holy Day of Obligation, we are offered a special opportunity on Ash Wednesday to take a step back from the daily grind to focus on an important element of our Christian lives.

As the ashes are placed on our foreheads in the sign of the Cross, we are told, “Remember you are dust and to dust you will return” or “Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.” This is a significant reality to keep in mind as we begin our journey through Lent. All of us are sinners and each is in need of seeking the Lord’s help and forgiveness. Our very breath is a gift from Him – without God’s mercy and grace, we can do nothing.

The way of Lent should be the life of the steward, one in which we acknowledge that all we have is from God and that our lives are meant to be lived as a gift of gratitude for all He is and does for us.

Many of us associate our Easter preparation as a time for self-denial and sacrifice. While those elements are important, they will do us little good if



we do not remember that the whole point of those actions is to improve our relationship with God and each other. Sometimes we get caught up in the complexity of Lent and lose sight of our calling as stewards to actively pursue depth in our relationship with the Lord while we live out our faith.

Lent is an important time for us to refocus and to recognize the magnitude of Christ’s victory over the grave. It is by overcoming sin and death on Easter Sunday that we are set free from the bondage that sin puts us in and rejoice that, “By his wounds, we are healed” (Is 53:5).

As we journey through Lent this year, let us pause to praise God for the gift of life that He has given us. Let us thank Him for the opportunities He presents to us each day to grow, to accept the challenges thrown our way and to choose Him. When we live out our lives in humble service to God and to one another, dying to the desires of the flesh, we think of ourselves less and give Him the glory that He so greatly deserves. May we join in the prayer of St. John the Baptist, “He must increase, I must decrease” (Jn 3:30).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. George Kunkel

All of us are sinners and each is in need of seeking the Lord’s help and forgiveness. Our very breath is a gift from Him – without God’s mercy and grace, we can do nothing.



LIVING CHURCH

“Support the Parish and Foster Fellowship” THE MEN’S CLUB AT ST. VINCENT FERRER

There’s a small army of men who gather together to string the lights for the parish festival each year. Unbeknownst to some, this same group enjoys camaraderie year-round as they serve the parish and host various events, from square dancing with their daughters to vineyard cookouts with their wives.

“If you need something built or some help around the parish, we’re here and ready to help,” says Dave Castellini, a St. Vincent Ferrer parishioner for over 20 years. “We’re a social group that tries to provide some benefit to the parish with the things that we do, and we can do more in the future!”

Since 1978, the Men’s Club at St. Vincent Ferrer has existed to bring men together for camaraderie and service. Dave first joined the group when the chairman of the booth he was working at the parish festival extended an invitation.

“The Men’s Club is a men’s social group that supports the parish as needed and provides fellowship among the male parishioners,” Dave says. “It started in the 1970s and while we’re mostly in our 50’s and older, we’re getting some new young recruits, and men are always welcome to bring their sons or their mentees.”

On the fourth Wednesday of each month, the group gets together in

the cafeteria at 7:30 p.m. for food and socializing before discussion and an activity.

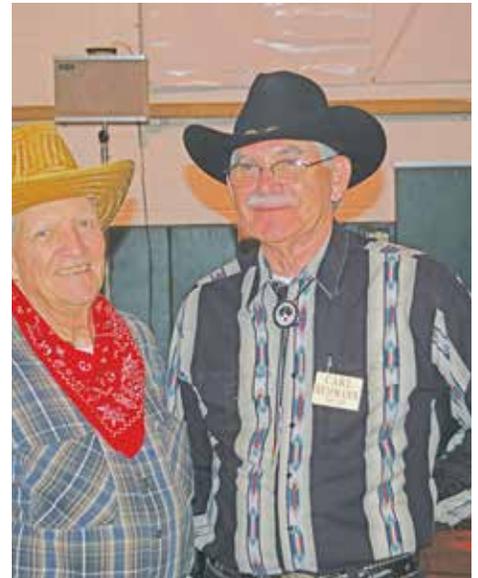
“We have beer and a meal together, and then have a general meeting where we talk about the various activities we are planning and having,” Dave says. “Occasionally we have guest speakers like the principal. Then we have some sort of activity like playing horseshoes in the summer or stringing lights for the festival.”

The club also hosts several events for the men and their families. In January, they organize the popular Father-Daughter Square Dance in the gym. Many children of St. Vincent Ferrer and the local community gather for the Easter Egg Hunt, hosted by the club on the Saturday before Easter at 10 a.m. In the fall, the group enjoys wine and a cookout with their spouses at the Husband and Wife Dinner outing at Valley Vineyards.

Their biggest annual fundraiser is the June Golf Outing, during which the group raises the majority of the funds that sustain them and their service projects throughout the year, including the Men’s Club scholarship for two eighth-grade students.

“The Golf Outing is very well-attended, and the funds go back to supporting the club,” Dave says. “Each year,

continued on next page



Members of the Men’s Club and their daughters gather for the Father-Daughter Square Dance



The Men’s Club and their friends and families celebrate Easter with an Easter Egg Hunt

THE MEN'S CLUB AT ST. VINCENT FERRER

continued from page 4



Members of the Men's Club and their daughters gather for the Father-Daughter Square Dance

we give a scholarship of about \$100 to the most exceptional boy and girl in the eighth-grade from the school. We're always doing something to support the parish and school whenever we're asked."

Come and enjoy camaraderie with a faith-based group of Catholic men as they serve St. Vincent Ferrer parish and school!

"Men seem to bond better in an all-male setting, though we're not opposed to women being involved in events,"

Dave says. "The group is a good support for the parish and fosters fellowship. It's fine if you can't make the monthly meetings. Come once a year or whenever you can!"

For more information about the Men's Club or to join the email chain, please contact Dave Castellini at dave.castellini@cincinnati-oh.gov or current Coordinator Phil Hying at 513-368-2523. All men who are 21 years old or older and are members or friends of St. Vincent Ferrer are welcome to join the Men's Club. Dues are only \$15 dollars a year.

"If you need something built or some help around the parish, we're here and ready to help. We're a social group that tries to provide some benefit to the parish with the things that we do, and we can do more in the future!" – Dave Castellini



LIVING CHURCH

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR RECENT STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

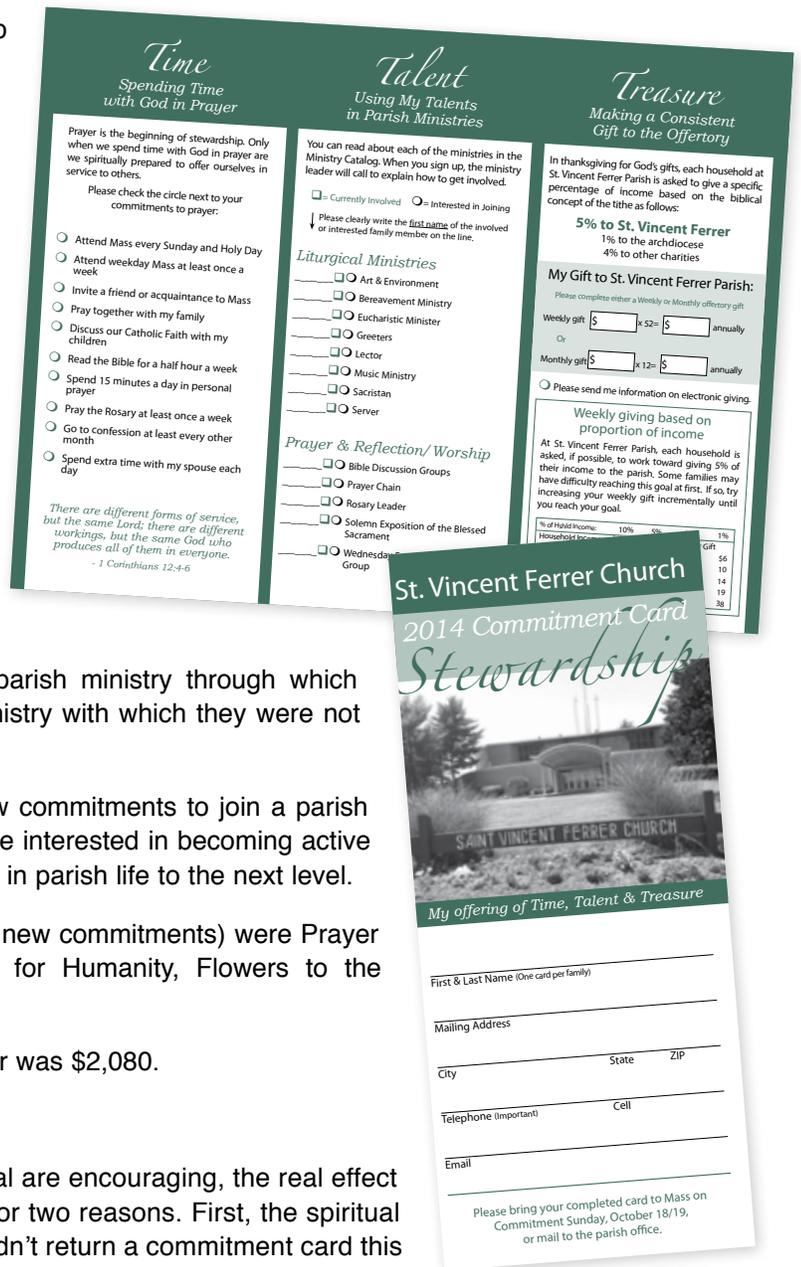
Our parish conducted its Annual Stewardship Renewal in October through December 2014.

The results are very encouraging, and show signs of growth within our parish community. Over 200 households participated in the Stewardship Renewal by turning in a commitment card. What a wonderful sign that our parish is growing to embrace stewardship as a way of life!

Just a few of the outstanding results from the 2014 Stewardship Renewal include:

- All together, our parish families made almost 800 commitments to spend time in prayer, such as praying the Rosary, reading from the Bible, praying with family members and attending Eucharistic Adoration.
- Participating households made more than 800 "Talent" commitments, either recommitting to a parish ministry through which they were already serving, or signing up for a ministry with which they were not previously involved.
- Of the many "Talent" commitments, 150 were new commitments to join a parish ministry – this is a strong sign that parishioners are interested in becoming active members of the parish, or taking their participation in parish life to the next level.
- The five most popular ministry commitments (with new commitments) were Prayer Chain, Christmas/Thanksgiving Turkeys, Habitat for Humanity, Flowers to the Homebound, and the Meatball Ministry.
- The average annual offertory commitment this year was \$2,080.

While the statistics from the 2014 Stewardship Renewal are encouraging, the real effect of emphasizing stewardship can never be quantified, for two reasons. First, the spiritual benefits are inestimable. Second, even families who didn't return a commitment card this year are nonetheless impacted by the stewardship message and become more generous with their time, talent and treasure. Thanks to all parishioners who support St. Vincent Ferrer in making our parish a vibrant, faith-filled community!





Extending Gratitude for Many Years of Faithful Service

Giving Thanks to Jack and Barbara Pflum for the Turkey and Meatball Ministry

“Thanks for 28 years of service to our community. Now it is time to relax!”

That is the message that St. Vincent Ferrer parishioners are sending to two devoted volunteers. Jack and Barbara Pflum are retiring from leadership of the Turkey and Meatball Ministry that they began years ago. A joint ministry with parishioners of St. John the Evangelist in West Chester, the Turkey and Meatball Ministry has been quietly serving the poor since 1986.

Jack and Barbara started working with the St. Francis Soup Kitchen many years ago when their daughter, a participant in the community outreach program at Ursuline Academy, needed a chaperone. Barbara started making homemade meatballs for their lunch service, and found friends at St. Vincent Ferrer to help. When the holidays came, St. Francis did not have enough volunteers or the oven capacity to roast enough birds to feed the many hungry patrons. That’s when Barbara had an idea.

She called her meatball team at SVF – they would each bake a turkey at home, debone it, freeze it in plastic bags, and make some gravy for freezing! The SVF Turkey Ministry was born.

Sometime later, the ministry moved to Our Daily Bread, then a new soup kitchen near Findlay Market in Over-the-Rhine. A friend from St. John Parish in West Chester offered to help the growing ministry, and brought along friends from her parish. St. John also contributed by housing a big storage freezer. The other freezer was in the Pflum family’s garage, where team members dropped off cooked turkey and meatballs 24/7!

Barbara coordinated the cooking activities of many volunteers while Jack was busy with the logistics – keeping a database of volunteers and donors, accounting for donations

of cash and groceries, and making twice-weekly food deliveries to Our Daily Bread.

This past year, Jack and Barbara’s team included 200 cooks – 130 at St. Vincent Ferrer and 70 at St. John. They provided home-cooked turkey for about 1,600 meals between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Twenty-five SVF parishioners also provided meatballs throughout the year.

How does this ministry serve our community? Kathy Schickel, Director of Operations of Our Daily Bread, was the guest speaker at a “Turkey Town Hall” in Hamilton Hall on Jan. 6. She described how difficult it is for a soup kitchen to prepare a turkey meal. Not only does it take hours of baking, but the deboning is a time-consuming process that must be done by hand. There are typically not enough ovens or volunteers to do this labor-intensive work. When they have frozen turkey and ready-made gravy packets, preparation is much easier. They thaw the packages, reheat them to serving temperature, and serve.

“And not many people know how to make good gravy!” quipped Jack.

The Parish Life Commission of our Parish Pastoral Council is now working with interested parties to plan for the future, as Barbara and Jack hand over the Turkey and Meatball leadership. Everyone acknowledges that the Pflums will never be replaced. The hope is that their grace will be passed on to those who might try to imitate their witness.

We are grateful for your dedicated service. Enjoy your rest, Barbara and Jack!





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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.

“God Holds You Together” continued from front cover

“When we were married at St. Vincent Ferrer, the offices and church and everything were still in the old airplane hangar,” Ed says. “About 30 years ago, when we were living equally distant from three different parishes, we chose to join St. Vincent Ferrer Parish. Many of our old friends are here, and it is quite a friendly parish!”

As members of the parish family, Ed and Mary believe that being involved is part of giving back of what they have been blessed with. During the summer, Ed volunteers to cut the grass one day a week on the parish campus. Mary has been a member of SVF’s choir for over 30 years.

“I was in the funeral choir at St. Gertrude and enjoy singing in St. Vincent Ferrer’s choir,” Mary says. “Ed has also been in the choir for the past four years.”

Mary and Ed were blessed with six children – Edward, Barbara, Douglas, Kathleen, Michelle and Gregory – and 11 grandchildren, all of whom live in the southeast Ohio area. They have also been blessed with over 51 years of marriage.

“As far as advice to young couples, your wife is usually right all the time!” says Ed, with a laugh. “Also, try to talk to

each other and settle problems as soon as you can. When you have the faith, you always go back to God and pray.”

During the month of February, as we celebrate the Feast of St. Valentine, we also celebrate all the couples of the parish who, like Ed and Mary, are models of growing closer together through Christ!

