

MAY 2015



THE TRUE MEANING OF THE WORD
"STEWARDSHIP"

PAGE 2

THE LOVE FOR GOD AND ONE
ANOTHER

PAGE 3

THE ST. VINCENT FERRER
BLOOD DRIVE

PAGE 4

CONFIRMATION AT
ST. VINCENT FERRER

PAGE 6

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM
BUILDING CONFIDENCE, LEADERSHIP
AT ST. VINCENT FERRER SCHOOL

PAGE 7

ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH

LIVING CHURCH

PARISH NEWSLETTER



"Christ Is the Center of Everything in Our Parish"

St. Vincent Ferrer Parish Pastoral Council



(Front row, from left) Jodi Kastner, Alice Schneider, Marianne Hird, Maria Cleveland, Eimee Donbar, Jamie Melish. (Back row, from left) Tim Carter, Tom Shoop, Susan Aloisio, Paul Thomas, Allen Arthur.

Whether a lifelong member of the St. Vincent Ferrer community or a recent convert to Catholicism, each person on the Parish Pastoral Council has something in common – newfound knowledge of the many parts that create our dynamic parish.

"Being on the council has kept me apprised of the goings on at a higher level than I had previously," says Marianne Hird, Council Recording Secretary and parishioner for over 22 years. "It is a good way to become aware of what's going on in the parish, to feel connected and to develop relationships as part of a group."

The Parish Pastoral Council is a "sounding board for the parish," as described by parishioner Maria Cleveland, who became the Chairperson of the council three years ago.

"Christ is the center of everything in our parish," says Maria, a fourth-grade teacher in the public school system. "I was really looking forward to being the chairperson of the council because of the new stewardship component at St. Vincent Ferrer. All our decisions need to be Christ-centered."

The council meets in the evening on the third Wednesday of most months. The group includes Father, six members at large and five members who represent respective commissions. Each year, two new members join the council as two members complete their terms.

"In a broad sense, the mission of the council is to recognize the needs of the different ministries and of the parishioners, and bring those forth for

discussion," Marianne says. "The council maintains the current affairs of the parish and identifies needs."

During meetings, the council listens to contributions from parishioners and to commission updates. They vote on utilizing financial resources for things ranging from the new boiler to emergency roof repairs.

"We're a somewhat small parish, but the school and athletics is important to families and certainly important to the children, so athletics is one ongoing discussion," Marianne says. "Another

continued on back cover



The True Meaning of the Word

“STEWARDSHIP”

According to the late stewardship pioneer Msgr. Thomas McGread, when a pastor speaks about money during his homily, 75 percent of the congregation immediately stops listening.

Let’s face it — most of us do not like to discuss money, and many of us feel that talking about money at the pulpit is bad form.

However, did you know that tithing is mentioned in the Old Testament 39 times, and in the New Testament 11 times? Tithing is biblically based, and it simply means to give a portion of our gifts back to God.

A further distinction is that *tithing* does not equal *stewardship*. Or, more fundamentally, giving money does not equal stewardship. Stewardship, which is also a biblical principle, really has nothing to do with money. As a matter of fact, 19 of the main parables of Christ relate directly to stewardship. And, in those parables when Christ speaks of stewardship, He *never* mentions raising money. Surprised?

Stewardship simply means being grateful for all of God’s blessings. Everything we have – each breath we take on earth, the tremendous talents we possess, and our ability to earn income to sustain ourselves – all stem from God. We come into the world with nothing and we leave with nothing.

Recognizing this and being grateful for our bountiful blessings is the first step of stewardship. Once these realizations fall into place, we are then eager to find a way to respond to God’s generosity and to embark upon a stewardship way of life.

And stewardship is just that, *a way of life*. It is not like a TV show to which you can tune in whenever the mood strikes, and shut off when you are no longer interested. It is truly a way of living.



Yet, the mere word “stewardship” has gotten a bad rap over the years — and not just by us lay people.

In 1992, when the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops were forming the Pastoral Letter on Stewardship, they originally didn’t want to title it *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*.

“Instead, they wanted to just call it *A Disciple’s Response*, with the reason being that they felt stewardship meant money,” said Msgr. McGread before his passing in April 2013. “I convinced them at the time that ‘stewardship’ is a biblical term and it is our job to explain what a steward is. Before the Pastoral Letter, most of us didn’t understand the spiritual dimension of stewardship.”

So, how do we go about sharing the spiritual dimensions of stewardship with fellow parishioners and lay leaders?

First of all, Msgr. McGread cited the importance of being hospitable and discovering the needs of parishioners. He felt that when parishioners were welcomed and their needs were met, they were fulfilled and felt a sense of belonging to their parish. This, in turn, creates ownership. Once parishioners felt like they were part of the parish, they wanted to respond by volunteering, and sharing their time, talent and treasure in order to help make it the best parish community possible.

And, when parishioners support their parish with all of their resources out of gratitude, the entire parish blossoms. Prayers increase, ministries grow, and yes, the offertory increases. These blessings are natural outcomes of living a stewardship way of life, and they are why it is important that we should always remember the true meaning of the word “stewardship.”

STEWARDSHIP

The Love for *God* and One Another

Dear Parishioners,

If we listen closely to the Mass readings throughout this month of May, we will recognize a common theme – love. Of course, every month and every day – and every minute, for that matter – is a time to show our love for one another. St. John begins many of the passages of his letters with the word “Beloved.”

We will hear in one of the readings, “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God.” If we would simply follow that one commandment to “Love one another,” we will carry out the stewardship of all of our gifts. Living as a steward is indeed living a life of love – for God, for the Church, for everyone in need, for our families, and for everyone with whom we come in contact.

Our Holy Father Pope Francis has spoken about this often during his papacy. At his very first Mass as pope, he said in his homily, “Everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it. Be protectors of God’s gifts.” There are two important parts to this statement: first, we need to recognize that all is a gift from God, everything we have and everything we are; second, we have a responsibility to use those gifts wisely in service to others.

Pope Francis has also emphasized this stewardship of service throughout his papacy. Speaking to young people in Brazil, he said, “Let us protect with love all that God has given us.” Not only does he point out how we are gifted, but he recognizes that our motivation for using and sharing those gifts should be love. Recently, at an audience with young people, he was even more specific: “Have you thought of how you can put your talents at the service of others?” he asked. “Do not bury your talents! Set your stakes on great ideals, the ideals that enlarge the heart, the ideals of service that make your talents fruitful.”

We all have been called to love – called by our Lord and Savior, by our saints, by our Pope, and by our spiritual leaders. Nevertheless, we also understand that loving in this way and being good stewards is never easy. Let us vow to work together to love and to carry out our lives in ways so many have challenged us to do.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. George Kunkel



*Let us vow to
work together to
love and to carry
out our lives in
ways so many
have challenged
us to do.*

The St. Vincent Ferrer Blood Drive

“Definitely Giving Back What God Has Given Us”

We might say that stewardship is in our blood at St. Vincent Ferrer – but we may not literally think of it that way! As we consider the best ways to be stewards of the resources we’ve been given, donating our very lifeblood can certainly factor into the mix. At least that’s the perspective of Tina Borchard, coordinator of the St. Vincent Ferrer Blood Drive.

“God does good for all of us in our lives,” Tina says. “There are so many people out there who need blood. If it wasn’t for people volunteering, giving their blood, somebody might not survive. That’s definitely giving back what God has given us.”

St. Vincent Ferrer hosts two blood drives each year, one in the fall and one in the spring. The blood drives are run by Hoxworth Blood Center, affiliated with the University of Cincinnati. The center has multiple sites throughout

the city, and uses a mobile donation unit for other locations like St. Vincent Ferrer Parish.

“They need 400 donors a day to keep blood supply at demand,” Tina says. “It’s very important to the community for us to do this.”

This is Tina’s first year as the event chair. One year ago, she needed seven pints of blood in an emergency operation. For Tina, donating blood is a way to give back.

Other donors are motivated by similar generosity. Pat Ruggerio has donated blood for the past 30 years, last year inviting his daughter, Lisa, to donate for the first time.

“It’s for a good cause,” Pat says. “People need blood for surgeries and it’s very important. In the future, someday I might need blood from a donor.”

continued on next page



Lisa Ruggerio donated



Fred Newbill is a 50-year Blood Drive veteran.

“God does good for all of us in our lives. There are so many people out there who need blood. If it wasn’t for people volunteering, giving their blood, somebody might not survive. That’s definitely giving back what God has given us.” – Tina Borchard, Blood Drive Coordinator

continued from page 4



Donating blood is a family affair for Pat Ruggerio and his daughter, Lisa.

Fred Newbill first got involved in donating blood 50 years ago.

“The wife of a business friend of mine needed blood transfusions,” he says. “At the time, any blood they gave a patient needed to be replaced, so he asked around to see if any of us could give blood. She needed it two or three times. By that time, I was sort of in the habit.”

Fred has donated regularly ever since, recently receiving recognition from Hoxworth for his history of donation. His grand total reaches over five gallons. At 86 years old, Fred shows no signs of stopping.

“You feel like you’re doing something for the community,” he says.

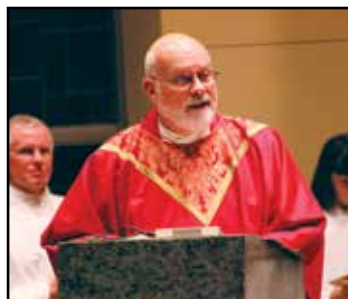
This year’s spring blood drive is on May 30, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., minus a midday lunch break. A mobile donation unit will be set up in the SVF parking lot, able to accommodate two donors every 15 minutes. While most donors are parishioners or parents of children at St. Vincent Ferrer School, anyone over the age of 17 can sign up to donate. The donation time takes approximately one hour, from start to finish. More information can be found in the parish bulletin or online at www.hoxworth.org (including additional donation criteria). New for 2015, donors can select a donation time on this website. If you are interested in signing up to donate, please contact Coordinator Tina Borchard at 513-490-0639.



LIVING CHURCH

CONFIRMATION AT ST. VINCENT FERRER

We congratulate all of our students who made their Confirmation this year at St. Vincent Ferrer!



Artist in Residence Program Building Confidence, Leadership at St. Vincent Ferrer School



Second-graders get into the “swing” of things while learning choreography with Valerie Salstrom of Get Hep Swing, Ltd.



This photo from the 2012 program features found objects sculpted and painted by artist Deb Brod.



Musician Hal Walker sings with kindergartners

It's been said that the ability to create is a gift from God. From writing a heartfelt poem to dancing like no one's watching, using our bodies and minds to make something new gives us a connection to our Creator that at times feels nothing short of miraculous. For this reason and so many more, St. Vincent Ferrer School is pleased to be in the midst of its annual Artist in Residence Program.

Since the 2001-02 school year, St. Vincent Ferrer School has enjoyed playing host to an artist for two weeks each spring. As kindergarten teacher Mikki Dunkley explains, the experience is a chance for students to embrace different facets of the arts that aren't covered by the traditional curriculum.

“When we bring an artist in for two weeks, the kids are completely immersed in the arts,” she says. “These artists specialize in an area that we do not offer instruction in. For example, we did a theatre residency that featured one deaf artist and one artist who was fluent in American Sign Language. So while our students were learning the art of theatre, they were also learning the art of sign language.”

Past residencies have included visual artists, poets, and a songwriter who also specialized in a West African instrument called the banakula.

“It's always a very unique experience,” Mrs. Dunkley explains. “We try to rotate the different arts disciplines so we can keep it fresh and exciting for the kids.”

This year's program will be a theatrical residency presenting historical events through theatre. The artist, Mike Follin, is a historical storyteller with the Ohio Historical Society.

Each residency starts with a kick-off event that allows the students to get a taste for the artist's medium through a special performance. After that, the fourth and eighth-graders meet with the artist for one hour each day to help research and craft a script to be presented the following week. Every other class has a chance to meet with the artist multiple times and will rehearse pre-written scripts to be performed alongside the fourth and eighth-graders.

“All of our artists have always been wonderful about making the process about the kids,” Mrs. Dunkley says. “The kids are really a part of that creative process. We have a lot of input on what the project is going to be and what it's going to look like, but it's a great chance for the kids to develop their leadership skills as well.”

Mrs. Dunkley says last year's swing dance residency through Get Hep Swing, Ltd., was a great example of what the program can do to broaden a student's horizons.

“Most kids, from the ages of 5 to 14, have had little to no experience with swing dance,” she says. “By the end, everybody had learned a choreographed dance. It didn't just teach about the arts – their confidence grew by leaps and bounds, because it really gave them the chance to try something new. I've found that with all of our residencies, there have always been a couple of kids who have wanted to learn more and have gone to explore it further.”

The program is made possible by a grant from the Ohio Arts Council and generous help from the SVF Parent Teacher Organization and corporate sponsors.

“This is such a blessing to our school,” Mrs. Dunkley says. “It is only possible due to the generosity of the arts council and the PTO. We also have corporate sponsorship through Crown Plaza Cincinnati Blue Ash, who donates the stay for artist. Also, HoneyBaked Ham Company donates lunch for him every day. We couldn't do it without that kind of support.”

Mrs. Dunkley adds that parishioners are encouraged to attend the student performances at the conclusion of the program, and to invite other members of the community as well. The first performance will be held at the school on May 7 at 7 p.m. A second performance will be held the morning of May 8 at approximately 8:30 a.m.

For more information, please call the school office at 513-791-6320.



ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH

LIVING CHURCH

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Cincinnati, OH
Permit No. 138

7754 Montgomery Road
Cincinnati, OH 45236
513-791-9030
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.

St. Vincent Ferrer Parish Pastoral Council *continued from front cover*

topic discussed recently has been the Stewardship Commission and its long-term function in the parish.”

The council includes new parishioners and old parishioners, “cradle Catholics” and converts and members with and without children in the school. The members submit a photo and a biographical sketch to share with the parish before being elected to the council.

“I had volunteered in many aspects of the parish before, but being on the council is a totally different experience,” Maria says. “It is a way to get to know other people and all the goings on in the parish. The Building and Finance Commission was the biggest area that I learned of since joining.”

To keep all decisions Christ-centered, the Parish Pastoral Council implemented a new component to their meetings beginning this spring. Before each meeting, the group spends an intentional time in prayer, reflection and discussion. At one gathering they reflected on a quote from the Lenten message of Pope Francis.

“Everything is about what is best for the church,” Maria says. “Pope Francis wrote, ‘Lent is a favorable time for letting Christ serve us so that we in turn may become more like Him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments.’ We read a longer quote and had a good discussion.”

Both Maria and Marianne have enjoyed learning more about the St. Vincent Ferrer community and acting as its stewards on the Parish Pastoral Council. All parishioners are welcome to consider becoming a part of the council and bolstering its mission in supporting our parish now and into the future.

“I admire the people who are on the council and their dedication of time and concern for the parish,” Marianne says. “They have taken up the cause and their hearts are committed to the parish. We are becoming refocused as a stewardship community as we dedicate ourselves to maintaining the parish and helping it flourish and thrive.”

If you have questions about or contributions for the Parish Pastoral Council, please contact Maria Cleveland at 513-500-6650 or via email at mclevelandrocks@msn.com.