

# Blessed SACRAMENT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Meeting a Need Within the Community *The St. Vincent de Paul Society*

NOVEMBER 2017

*Inside*

Lois Ruggiero was attending a Blessed Sacrament Ministry Fair several years ago when a certain ministry caught her eye. At that time, Lois was looking for a way to become involved in the parish that would fit into her busy schedule as a school administrator. That's when Lois came across the St. Vincent de Paul Society and was almost immediately captivated.

"I started to talk with the person who was the ministry leader at that time," Lois says. "She was so warm and welcoming, and I really liked the work they were doing. I've personally encountered numerous situations where people were struggling and in financial crisis, and I loved how this ministry really administers to those in need. It's really what got me involved in Blessed Sacrament, bringing me close to parishioners and later drawing me into other ministries."

Founded by its namesake St. Vincent de Paul, this international organization is dedicated to offering person-to-person service to those in need. Here at Blessed Sacrament, this is done in a wide variety of ways such as providing food, clothing, household needs, and even paying for things like rent and utilities. The ministry also serves as a referral to other organizations, making sure that each person has the support and help that they need.



*One of the things that Blessed Sacrament parishioner Lois Ruggiero loves most about the St. Vincent de Paul Society is that it is a real way to help those who are truly in need – a way to become the hands and feet of Christ to others.*

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## Meeting a Need Within the Community:

*The St. Vincent de Paul Society* continued from front cover

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“Our basic purpose is to give emergency relief to people who live within the boundaries of our parish,” Lois says. “They do not have to be parish members or even Catholic. We go out in twos and actually visit these people, assisting them with things like rent, utility payments, and food. We meet with them to provide that personal connection and to assess the level of need. Oftentimes, the need is greater than what we can do, but we refer them to the necessary persons and organizations to ensure they have help.”

Through its 24-hour help line, the St. Vincent de Paul Society makes itself continuously accessible to those in need. Oftentimes, the ministry cares for what Lois refers to as the “working poor” – those who work low-paying jobs, but are barely getting by. So, when something unexpected happens, like an accident or illness, they’re suddenly in dire need with no savings or benefits. During such times, what better place for individuals to turn than to Christ’s Church?

“This is a way to reach out to people who

are truly in need,” Lois says. “For some of these people, this might be the only contact they’ve ever had with a Catholic group. So, it becomes an indirect form of evangelization.”

Lois feels that this ministry uniquely embodies stewardship in that there are a wide variety of ways for members to serve. From financial contributions to actual offerings of time and talent, each member is able to decide the amount of time and specific way they are able to serve. And in the process, they have a joy of knowing that they are making a real difference, filling an ever-growing need in our community.

“Each member is able to give of his or her time, talent and financial resources in the way that he or she is able,” Lois says. “Part of every one of our meetings is what we call a secret collection, where we pass along an envelope and each member makes anonymous contributions. So, we are actually financially supporting the ministry in some way. Members are also able to spend their time making actual visits, answering calls on our help line, or making food.”

*Blessed Sacrament’s St. Vincent de Paul Society currently meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the school building. New members are always welcome. Parishioners can also support the ministry through their prayers and financial contributions. Money can be donated through the poor box located in the back of church or through periodic special collections. For more information, please contact Lois Ruggiero at 845-556-3047, and if you are a person in need, call our help line at 843-727-3943.*

## A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

### *November is a Time for Thanksgiving*

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Dear Parishioners,

November seems to automatically bring us to thoughts of thanksgiving and Thanksgiving – it is both a time of year when we tend to think in terms of gratitude to God, and a time when we also formally celebrate our American holiday. My memories of Thanksgiving are filled with food, of course, but they are also filled with thoughts of family and a sense of togetherness and a sense of my faith.

But this is also a significant month in the Church from a number of perspectives. Nov. 1 is a Holy Day, the Solemnity of All Saints. The next day is All Souls Day, a day devoted to all the saints in our lives – living, not living, known, and unknown.

Most of us have people in our lives who have had a profound impact on us – people we can consider our own personal saints. This month is a wonderful reminder to think of them, thank them, and thank God for making them a part of our lives.

Our Thanksgiving holiday falls on Nov. 23, and is a time for families and gratitude.



Thanksgiving became official in the United States in 1863, and in his proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln made very clear Whom we needed to thank. “To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God,” Lincoln said. In other words, we all need to

thank Almighty God for our many blessings.

Finally, November also brings us to the end of one Church year and the beginning of a new one. The Feast of Christ the King on Nov. 26 officially begins the final week of our liturgical year, and the First Sunday of Advent is on Dec. 3. From the beginning of the month when we thank God for the example of the saints and the saintly people in our lives, to the end of the month when we thank God for everything we have and everything we are, November is a time to approach the Lord with a grateful heart. That is what stewardship truly is all about – about approaching God, about approaching each day, and about approaching all those with whom we come in contact, with hearts filled with gratitude and love.

In Jesus’ Sacred Heart,

*Father Joseph*

Very Rev. Joseph V. Romanoski, V.F.  
Pastor



# Blessed SACRAMENT

## Altar Servers **Grow in Faith While**



Are you looking for a way to involve your children in parish life, or to further open their eyes to the joy of the Mass? To do both, look no further – the Altar Server ministry is a great way for parish youth to serve God, serve others and grow in faith.

“Altar servers assist the priest and deacon – they are important for the smooth running of the liturgy,” says Tina Moore. “This ministry helps servers to grow in their faith by setting their schedules aside to assist our parish. There is prayer before Mass as a group. We have servers who altar serve through high school, and this helps keep them connected with their parish.”

“I was an altar server from fifth grade up until a week or two before I left for college,” says Anderson University freshman

and former altar server Nikki Foscolos. “I started serving because all my friends did, and I’m so glad I did. I used to wish they would come get me to serve because I loved it so much. I felt important and ‘higher up,’ but thinking back on it now, serving is a way of humbling yourself before God and saying, ‘Hey God, this is about You, not me.’”

Young men and women at Blessed Sacrament may begin altar serving at the start of fourth grade, and must have received their First Holy Communion. Currently, the parish has about 50 altar servers who serve in the positions of crucifer, candle bearers, and book bearers.

Servers are able to indicate their preference for which Mass time they’d like to serve, and a parent volunteer creates

the schedule. The servers are also given a list of names and contact information so that they can arrange a substitute if needed. Training/practice sessions are scheduled twice a year, with several options to attend in both the fall and the spring. New servers must attend two sessions before they are added to the schedule, and those who have been servers for two years or less must attend a session each year.

Since they experience the Mass in an “up close and personal” way, altar servers are able to grow in their understanding of the Mass and the miracle of the Eucharist.

“Serving keeps me more engaged,” says Harper Kissell, who has been serving for four years. “I can focus all my



# le Serving God and the Parish Community



“We are all on this faith journey together. I may be older, but we are all still walking the same path together. We are all called to be God’s hands and feet and serve Him, so what better way to serve Him that playing an active role in the Mass?” — Nikki Foscolos



attention on my prayers and what I am doing to participate in the Mass. I have learned the four main parts of the Mass, and what to do at each part.”

“I feel like I get more out of the Mass, and it’s easier to pay attention when I’m serving,” says Bella Kissell, who has been serving for six years. “When I am on the altar, I feel closer to God. I am more serious about my prayers when I am that close to Him.”

“Being an altar server has

helped me to better understand what is going on at Mass, and because of this I have a better understanding of my faith,” says Miranda Triplett, who has been serving for four years. “It’s cool to know why we do certain things and how every little detail is brought together, like ringing the bells to symbolize the Holy Spirit coming down to consecrate the Eucharist.”

Older servers are also able to help guide younger servers, fostering a sense of community

among the youth of our parish.

“I like that I can be a good role model for younger kids in the parish, and it’s good to know that you’re more a part of your church,” Miranda says.

“We are all on this faith journey together,” Nikki adds. “I may be older, but we are all still walking the same path together. We are all called to be God’s hands and feet and serve Him, so what better way to serve Him that playing an active role in the Mass?”

*If you would like more information about the Altar Server Ministry, please contact Deacon James and Tina Moore at 843-556-0801 or [tmoore@scbss.org](mailto:tmoore@scbss.org).*

# Blessed SACRAMENT

## The Eucharist and Stewardship as a Way of Life

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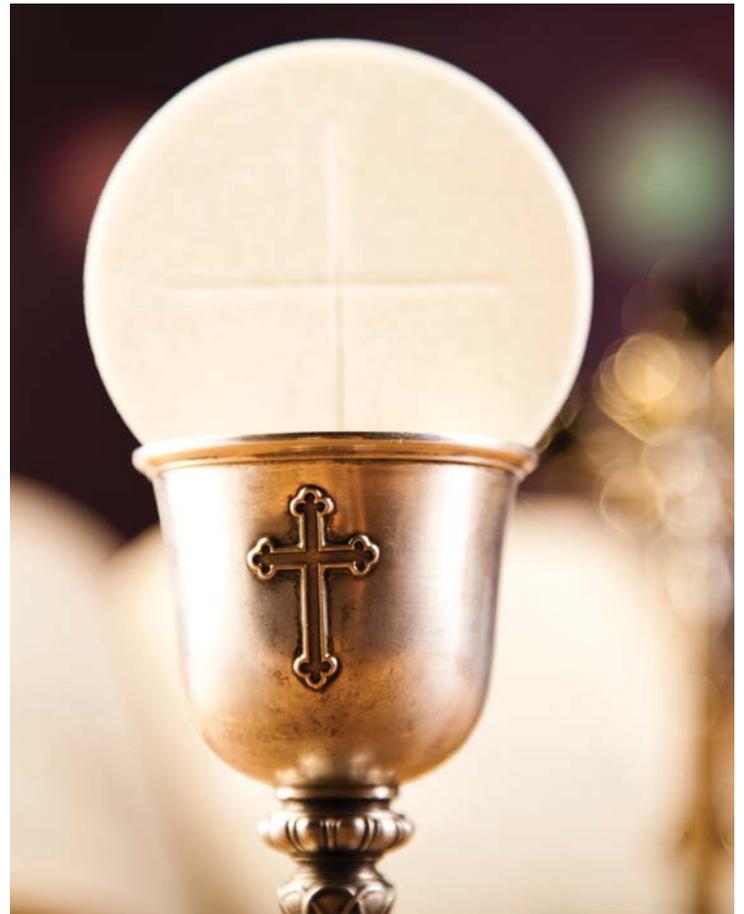
More than 20 years ago, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a pastoral letter titled *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*. This document was an invitation to follow Christ Who gave of Himself for us. Each of us is called to serve our neighbors and to be stewards of God's creation and of all that has been entrusted to us. However, to truly understand stewardship, we must look to the Holy Eucharist. The Holy Eucharist is the total gift of our loving Savior to us. Stewardship is our response to that gift.

Even the word "Eucharist" implies stewardship. The word "Eucharist" finds its roots in the Latin word *eucharistia*, which in turn came from the Greek word *eukaristos*, which meant, quite simply, "gratitude" or "thanksgiving." How fitting that we, who are called to be a stewardship people, celebrate at the focal point of every Mass an act of thanksgiving and gratitude — namely, the reception of Jesus' gift to us — the Eucharist.

In their pastoral letter on stewardship, the bishops speak of the Eucharist in this way: "The Eucharist is the great sign and agent of this expansive communion of charity... we enjoy a unique union with Christ and, in Him, with one another. Here His love — indeed, His very Self — flows into us as disciples and, through us and our practice of stewardship to the entire human race."

When we receive Christ's Body in the Holy Eucharist, we hear the minister say, "The Body of Christ." To this, we respond, "Amen" — which means in Hebrew, "Yes; it is so." This is the essence of stewardship. We should enter the Church for Mass out of "gratitude." We recognize the presence of the Lord in Holy Communion, and then we truly receive the Lord. What is left for us to do is the fulfillment of stewardship — that is, sharing what we have received in love of God and neighbor. Our entire experience speaks to stewardship — we are grateful; we recognize the real presence of the Lord; we receive the Lord; and then we share what we have received.

Christ's gift to us through the Eucharist is an invitation to us. We are called to give beyond what is convenient or what may be comfortable. We are called to forgive even when forgiveness may not be



deserved; we are called to love even when that love is not returned. We are called to love as God loves us.

The Eucharist is stewardship celebrated. The Mass is more than a ritual. It is an actual encounter with God, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We need to respond to the Eucharist with our complete selves. What we experience in the Eucharist should, in turn, translate into our daily lives. We are committed to the Church, which is Christ's body. We show our love for His body by acts of charity and generosity. We spend time in prayer, expressing our gratitude and our love.

God's greatest gift to us is Christ's great love for us — this was shown when He was crucified on the Cross to pay the penalty for our sins and to give us eternal life. God's love for us is without limit, and He offers Himself to us in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Stewardship is how we respond to that gift.

# INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

## *Saying Rosaries in Times of Need*

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*“He says, ‘Where two or more are gathered in my name, there am I with them.’ The purpose of this ministry is because God does answer when you get a lot of people praying for you.” — Martha Fox*

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Anyone who has experienced the power of prayer can attest to the fact that there’s nothing in this world quite like it. Whether it’s something as big as cancer finally responding to treatment, or something as simple as suddenly feeling calm about a decision that must be made, reaching out for God’s help is often the best thing we can do in any situation.

Members of the Blessed Sacrament community have a special way to tap into that spiritual resource by lifting up those in our parish

and beyond through the Intercessory Prayer Group. The process is simple – when coordinator Martha Fox receives a prayer request, she includes this in a weekly email asking other group members to pray the Rosary each Wednesday. With these special intentions in mind as they pray, group members stay connected to the often unspoken spiritual needs of our parish.

“He says, ‘Where two or more are gathered in my name, there am I with them,’” Martha says. “The purpose of this ministry is because God does answer when you get a lot of people praying for you.”

Martha recently saw her own prayers answered in a powerful way when her grandson decided to make a change to his life, despite serving a 14-year prison sentence. While serving time in solitary confinement, Martha’s grandson decided to recommit his life to Jesus and start going to Mass again.

“He sent a letter saying he was thinking about things and said he wants to be a better man, and realized how far away he had moved away from God,” she says. “I know it’s because God wanted him to hit bottom, and I think the Holy Spirit

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*To take part in the Intercessory Prayer Group, anyone – even those who are not Blessed Sacrament members – is welcome to call or text Martha at 843-452-7182 or send her an email at [Marthafox1963@yahoo.com](mailto:Marthafox1963@yahoo.com). For those who do not have access to email, Martha says she can provide them with a phone call instead.*

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## Intercessory Prayer Group

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was with him that day. I didn't pray for any of that because my main prayer was for him to be released from prison, but the Holy Spirit takes control of a situation, and I think that's what happened."

Though Martha has shared her grandson's situation with the Intercessory Prayer Group, she says those within the group are free to ask for prayer under the condition of anonymity.

"If they don't want to be known, we just say 'a member of the parish' or 'a family member' is the term I use," she says. "Some people do want to be

prayed for by name to make others in the parish aware of the situation."

For those who might be interested in joining the group to pray for others, Martha says it's a simple commitment that requires no more effort than checking an email and taking the time to pray the Rosary. For those in need of prayer, the group can be a powerful resource that reminds us that we're never alone in our time of need.

"I believe in the power of prayer," Martha says. "We need it and I believe in it."

### LITURGY SCHEDULE

**Saturday Vigil:** 5 p.m. | **Sunday:** 9 & 11 a.m., 1:30 p.m. (En Español) & 5 p.m. (LifeTeen)

**Daily Mass:** Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m.

**Confessions:** Saturday: 3:30 p.m. & after 5 p.m. Mass, Sunday: 1 p.m.

### PERPETUAL ADORATION

**24 hours a day, 7 days a week**