



ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CATHOLIC CHURCH

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



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A PLACE FOR THE LITTLE ONES: CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

It's OK to admit it. If you're a parent, there's probably been at least a Sunday or two when you've dreaded going to Mass. Maybe it's after a particularly difficult liturgy with an ornery preschooler, or maybe it happens when you start to doubt that your 6-year-old is getting anything out of the Mass each week. But, sooner or later, if you have children, it will probably happen to you.

It can be a challenging task to keep young children engaged, or even just limit the fidgeting, for an hour in the pew.

Here at St. Charles Borromeo, we want



Sunday Mass to be an opportunity for all our parishioners to pray and grow closer to God and their parish community. And we're aware that, for many young children, trying to sit still for an hour may not be the best way to do that.

With this in mind, our young parishioners are invited to join us for Children's Liturgy of the Word, each Sunday at the 10 a.m. Mass. Children's Liturgy of the Word is designed to give young children — generally ages 3-7 — an opportunity to listen to the Mass readings and learn about them at a level they understand.

"I love to see their faces, learning about Jesus in His Word and the Gospel — it's a breath of fresh air," says Deb Shishman, a kindergarten teacher at St. Charles Borromeo School, who coordinates Children's Liturgy of the Word. "Their eyes light up and they're so excited. It's really neat."

Each week, catechists lead the children in age-appropriate reflections, prayers and activities, all designed to help them understand

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TIME: THE FOUNDATION OF STEWARDSHIP

When we talk about stewardship of time, we are referring to prayer time. Prayer is of the utmost importance in a disciple's life, and it serves as the fertile ground from which the gifts of talent and treasure blossom.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has told us that stewardship is part of discipleship and is a way of responding to God's call in every aspect of our lives. We refer to the three facets of stewardship as "Time, Talent and Treasure," and when we consider the importance of these three Ts of stewardship, the "time" component comes first by design.

When we talk about stewardship of time, we are referring to prayer time. Prayer is of the utmost importance in a disciple's life, and it serves as the fertile ground from which the gifts of talent and treasure blossom. Only by spending time in prayer each day and receiving the sacraments are we able to consistently and generously donate our talent and treasure to the Church.

When looking for examples of how to live our lives as disciples of Christ and as stewards of God's gifts, we can always turn to the great saints of our Church to guide us. And when it comes to the Stewardship of Time, the life of St. Damien is just one example of how prayer, or "Time," is the foundation for our lives of stewardship.

Shortly after being ordained a priest, St. Damien volunteered to serve a colony of lepers isolated on the island of Molokai, Hawaii. From May 1873 until his death in 1889 (at the age of 49) St. Damien worked to restore within the lepers a sense of personal worth and dignity.

Although for some time St. Damien

took the necessary precautions to ensure that he did not contract leprosy, he knew that physical touch was necessary to communicate his love and concern to those afflicted with the disease. He embraced the lepers, dined with them, cared for them, and anointed them in the sacraments. With great humility and sacrifice, St. Damien offered his own life in order to save the lives of others.

From where did St. Damien draw his strength? What was the source of his inspiration? "Were it not for the constant presence of our divine Master in our humble chapel, I would not have found it possible to persevere in sharing the lot of the lepers in Molokai," St. Damien wrote. "The Eucharist is the bread that gives strength... It is at once the most eloquent proof of His love and the most powerful means of fostering His love in us. He gives Himself every day so that our hearts as burning coals may set afire the hearts of the faithful."

St. Damien found his strength in the Mass, the greatest prayer of the Church. Prayer was the impetus behind the generosity of this faithful servant of God, and is the fuel that ignites every heart to flame in love. Without prayer, without the grace

that flows from the sacraments, we are incapable of leading lives of service and responding to God's call!

How much time do you dedicate to prayer each day? One hour? Fifteen minutes? None at all? Before you consider joining a parish ministry or volunteering your talents in service, and before you discern your gifts of treasure to the Church, be sure that prayer is your foundation. Identify a prayer schedule that is manageable. This may entail arising 20 minutes early each day to offer your work to the Lord, or attending daily Mass once a week. Every prayer commitment is unique and personal. Yet, no matter what, this time offering, this dedication to prayer, is the key to serving the Lord with faithfulness, generosity and joy.



STEWARDSHIP POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS AT

Christmas

Dear Parishioners,

When I think of December, the first thing that comes to mind is Christmas. While that may seem to be the obvious topic, there really are a number of other possibilities. I could think of *Advent*, a season of preparation. I could think of the *Immaculate Conception*, as we celebrate God's gift to the world in Mary. I could think of *Our Lady of Guadalupe*, whose popularity has spread far beyond the Hispanic community. Of course, December also holds the first day of *winter*. And because December marks the end of the civil year, I might be developing my resolutions for the New Year!

But instead, I think about Christmas. It is when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Babe in the manger in Bethlehem, who is the eternal Son of God made man.

The basic truth of Christmas — celebrating the birth of

Jesus the Messiah, God Incarnate — is plenty of reason for us all to rejoice and worship. But we've piled such an additional load onto our Christmas observance that worship may be lost in the shuffle.

Think about what weight Christmas has to bear. We have to put up the decorations, or make travel plans to visit relatives. There is also the Christmas dinner to plan and cook. And then, we still have Christmas presents to buy. No wonder the Christ Mass becomes an afterthought!

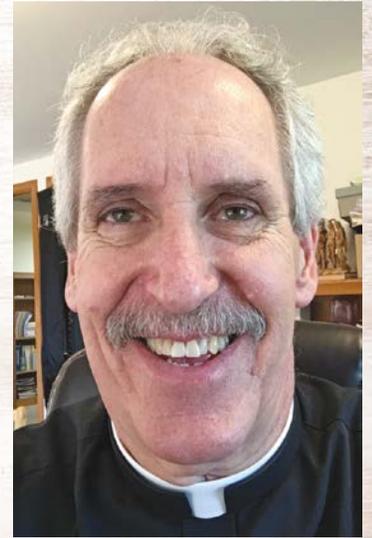
Yet, we still have a wonderful opportunity this season to combine our Christmas activities with our stewardship commitments. Treasure, although challenging, is the simplest. Shouldn't the most expensive Christmas present we give be the one to Jesus, Whose birthday we're celebrating? Risen and glorified, He needs nothing we have. But His Body,

the Church, continues Jesus' mission on earth and always needs additional resources.

Time and Talent may be a little more complicated, but can't we spend a little more of our time in worship and prayer? Maybe you can attend Mass each day of the Christmas Octave. Have your family gather for prayers together in the morning or at dinner, in preparation for Christmas Day and through the season.

And there are so many opportunities to share our Talent! Sing in the choir for the Christmas Masses. Help decorate the Church. Cook or bake for someone who is shut-in. Invite someone who will be alone to share Christmas dinner with your family. Offer to work in a soup kitchen. The possibilities are endless.

With a little planning, we can make this hectic time one of real blessing both for ourselves and others. Pray for



me that I can keep Christmas properly, and I'll pray for you. And by the way, have a merry Christmas!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom'.

Fr. Thomas Kovatch
Pastor



Liturgical Music: A PERFECT

Having begun listening to beloved sacred compositions such as Handel’s *Messiah* and Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* before he could even walk, St. Charles Borromeo Music Director Ed Langham describes liturgical music as pivotal in his spiritual journey. He first joined the church choir when he was in third grade, majored in music in college, and met his wife for the first time while cantoring at Mass. Throughout Ed’s life, music has helped make the liturgy come alive, drawing him in more deeply into the sacred mysteries of our faith.

“Liturgical ministry is an opportunity for the faithful to become the ‘living

stones’ that Peter and Paul talk about in the New Testament,” Ed says. “It brings forth blessings that we cannot fully comprehend in this life.”

Though this is true in every liturgical season, music’s important role is perhaps most obvious during Advent and Christmas. Hymns like “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” and “Silent Night” evoke fond memories and set the mood for the season in an almost tangible way. So much so, Ed says, that sometimes the difficulty is in waiting so that our anticipation during Advent can properly build during the days leading to Christmas Eve.

“Many people love these melodies so much that they want to sing them during Advent,” Ed says. “And though that’s fine while shopping or listening to the radio — the Church wants us to wait and long for the Incarnation as the ‘people that walked in darkness.’ Jumping to these favorites too soon short-circuits the spiritual journey of the Advent season.”

This is why great care is taken by Ed and his fellow musicians regarding the selection of liturgical music. Ministers spend time reading and reflecting upon the Sunday readings, working to find familiar songs which both complement and further convey the Gospel message.

“We hope to reinforce the Advent message of the Scriptures — longing for the coming of Jesus,” Ed says. “Then, at Christmas, the joy of Mary and Joseph, the exultation of the angels, the wonder of the shepherds and wise men, even the jealous rage of Herod at the beginning of Jesus’ salvation journey comes forth. We want to rekindle parishioners’ hope in Jesus’ loving presence in our hearts and in our world.”

Though this undoubtedly requires time and effort from our music ministers — particularly during the holidays when many of our college-age musicians are away — it is a true blessing for those



A small ad hoc orchestra joined the Adult Choir on Sunday Nov. 4, in honor of the feast of St. Charles Borromeo.

“I try to remind our music ministers how fortunate we are to be able to give back to the Lord the gifts which He has given us. Our ministry is to help lead worship, help gather the prayer of the Assembly, and to bring hearts closer to God. And when our intention is praise, the Holy Spirit takes care of the rest.” — Ed Langham

GIFT FOR THE CHRIST CHILD

able to serve, as they present their own personal talents as a gift for the Christ Child, transforming themselves and their fellow parishioners into more active participants in the liturgy.

“I try to remind our music ministers how fortunate we are to be able to give back to the Lord the gifts which He has given us,” Ed says. “Our ministry is to help lead worship, help gather the prayer of the Assembly, and to bring hearts closer to God. And when our intention is praise, the Holy Spirit takes care of the rest.”



Members of the Angel Choir helping to lead worship for Christmas Mass.

If you have a love or talent for music, why not consider giving it back to the Lord this Christmas season? Our parish Children's Choir is open to singers between fourth and eighth grades, while high school and college-age students are welcome to join the Adult Choir. And we would be lost without our dedicated senior members, many of whom have sung for more than 25 years. For more information about St. Charles Borromeo's Music Ministry, please contact Ed Langham at 812-331-6733 or on any Sunday after Mass.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

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and apply Scripture in their lives, while gaining a positive experience of Mass.

“The kids get to learn more about Jesus and they get to actually understand it, because we break it down in their language,” Deb says. “At Mass, sometimes the words are above them. Here, the catechists are speaking to the children, at their level, and they're able to relate it to their life.”

“I hope that they take a little bit of something from the Gospel and think about it and act on it,” she adds. “They're listening and they're talking. It's like with a Bible study, you learn and you talk, and then you process and share. It's structured, but there's movement. They get to be themselves.”

Deb has noticed an increase in families attending the 10 a.m. Sunday Mass since beginning Children's Liturgy of the Word.

“It's getting kids excited about coming to Mass,” Deb says. “And when the kids are excited, the parents are excited. It's just

really been a positive thing.”

Deb encourages parents who may be hesitant about having their child attend Children's Liturgy of the Word to attend with their child, to see what it's all about.

“Come down with your child, sit with your child, see what it's about, and if your child is hesitant just try slowly,” Deb says. “It's nice [when they go] because the parents can just listen, and really listen, to the readings and the homily.”

Deb hopes that Children's Liturgy of the Word will be a positive experience that gives children a foundation in loving both Jesus and the Mass.

“I hope that they'll have that love of Jesus — they'll want to have Jesus as part of their life,” Deb says. “I hope they'll want to go to church and have that desire to have Him walk with them and know they're not alone — there's always Someone there with you.”

If you would like more information on Children's Liturgy of the Word, or to become involved as a catechist, please contact Deb Shishman at 574-596-4800 or dshishman@stcharlesbloomington.org.



MASS REVERENCE AND ETIQUETTE

For many of us, when we are invited to a wedding, one of our first considerations is “what am I going to wear?” We wouldn’t think of showing up at a formal event in our workout clothes. How many of us search for just the right outfit to wear to our annual office party or on a date? Compare that to how much thought we put into what we wear to Mass on Sunday.

How we dress for an occasion indicates the importance that we place upon that particular celebration. At Mass, we encounter God through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Dressing appropriately for Mass is one way that we show respect both for God and for our faith family. And this respect is important at

all Masses – no matter what time of day or night.

Think about what you are teaching your children when you all wear your “Sunday clothes” to Mass. You are reminding them that Mass is a special celebration. After all, we are going to Jesus’ house.

Some people may quickly point out that Mass shouldn’t be a fashion show – a place to show off your finery – and they are right! We also know that some parishioners come to Mass on their way home from work, and they certainly should not feel embarrassed about arriving at Mass in their work clothes. And no one should ever stay away from Mass because of simplicity of clothing.

But one rule should apply in all instances – our attire at Mass should

always be modest. Our clothing should never distract others from what we are gathered together to celebrate – the life, death and resurrection of our Lord.

The celebration of Mass is always a holy occasion and thus should be treated in the most holy manner – in body, mind and spirit.



ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES

- December 5 St. Paul & St. Charles 4:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- December 6 St. Vincent & St. Mary 7:00 p.m.
- December 12 St. Agnes (Nashville) 7:00 p.m.
- December 13 St. Martin (Martinsville) 7:00 p.m.
- December 19 St. Jude (Spencer) 6:00 p.m.
- December 20 St. John the Apostle 6:00 p.m.



Also Remember These Dates:

Immaculate Conception
Holy Day of Obligation

December 7 — 5:30 p.m. Vigil Mass
December 8 — 8:30 a.m.

Christmas and New Year’s Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve

Dec. 24 — 4 p.m., 7 p.m. and Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

Dec. 25 — 10 a.m.

**Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God -
*Holy Day of Obligation***

Tuesday, Jan. 1 — 10 a.m.

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF PRAYER WITH THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

When we pray, we can either choose to be intercessors or petitioners. A petitioner asks for God's help in a certain situation, but an intercessor stands in the gap between the Lord and those who need Him, taking on the pain of a situation to comfort the one being prayed over.

"There are different kinds of intercessory prayer," says Lisa Grabski, who co-leads the Intercessory Prayer Group. "We pray to the saints or our Holy Mother, but then there's the deep part of intercessory prayer where we forget about ourselves and our problems and we pray for one another, for others who come to us, people we see in need of prayer. This group is one where they forget about themselves and pray for others."

The Intercessory Prayer Group has had a long history at St. Charles Borromeo. As Lisa explains, the group began in the 1970s when members of the parish's Altar Society would gather to pray together before cleaning and taking care of the church's altar. A few years later, as the Church's charismatic movement was first gaining steam, the group was invited to assist a visiting priest with charismatic Masses a few times per year.

"When the charismatic movement started, more and more people became hungry for prayer," Lisa says. "This



priest chose about five people to assist him because the Holy Spirit would come into the people at Mass and some would pass out. They were led to ask, 'What do you want us to pray for?' And then they would assist the priest in praying over those people who had been overcome by

the Holy Spirit."

Since then, and all these years later, the group meets each Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. in the church. Prayer requests from the past 30-plus years are kept inside a green binder on a pedestal in the alcove of Our Holy Mother. Once the group

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"We've seen marriages healed, destitute travelers who had lost their faith. People who are shy and have never prayed out loud have overcome shyness and have become strong in their faith to go on to help others. People have been healed from a lifetime of hurts and are able to receive, through these prayers, forgiveness in their hearts towards others who have hurt them." — Lisa Grabski



ST. CHARLES
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CATHOLIC CHURCH



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MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKEND:

Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m.
Saturday: 8:30 a.m., 4:00 p.m. Sunday Vigil

WEEKDAYS:

Monday: 8:30 a.m.
Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. (middle school attends)
Friday: 8:30 a.m. (elementary school attends)
Tuesday, Thursday: 5:30 p.m.
**Confessions are offered 30 minutes prior to every Mass*

THE INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

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prays through several prayers — including the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, the Rosary, and the Divine Mercy — members each spend time with the green book to lift up the names inside.

“Our final prayer is spent holding the green book, as our hands touch the book, we ask the Holy Spirit, our Lord Jesus, our Holy Mother, the saints, to all intercede and have these prayers answered,” Lisa says. “Those who are present, still pray for all those who have written in the book.”

Lisa says the group has seen prayers answered in powerful ways, comforted people with no one else to pray for

them, and had visits from people who were not parish members but felt led by the Holy Spirit to stop into the parish on a Wednesday afternoon.

“They will see the group and they’ll hear our prayers and they’ll come to ask to join in and they’ll just be desperate for prayer,” she says. “We’ve seen marriages healed, destitute travelers who had lost their faith. People who are shy and have never prayed out loud have overcome shyness and have become strong in their faith to go on to help others. People have been healed from a lifetime of hurts and are able to receive, through these prayers, forgiveness in their hearts towards others who have hurt them.”

The group recently grew to include 12 members, but it always open to more. For more information, please contact Lisa Grabski at 812-345-4717 or lisag@earthlink.net.