

Blessed SACRAMENT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Looking Towards the New School Year at Blessed Sacrament *Engaging the Mind, Challenging the Body, and Enlightening the Soul*

The new school year beginning Aug. 22 at Blessed Sacrament School promises to be one filled with the excitement of learning and growing, with the strong foundation of our Catholic faith always there, always leading our students to Christ. Whether in the classroom, or the game court, our students are assured that their experience at Blessed Sacrament will provide them with the best in Catholic education.

“We definitely have put a lot of effort bringing our Catholic faith into our classrooms in all we do,” Principal Katharine Murphy says. “Each class has a saint, and they do a service project about that saint. In the past year, we’ve begun teaching about Christian meditation. This has helped them to focus on our Lord and help them focus, getting centered on the presence of Jesus in their lives. This helps them get centered about what they do in the classroom so they can get to be the best person they can be – what Jesus wants us to be, to be the best person we can.”

Mrs. Murphy and the faculty are preparing for the new school year as our student body continues to grow. One of the immediate reflections of that growth is that the new school year will have a second K5 class added. Last year, second K3 and K4 classes were added to accommodate the continuing enrollment growth.

Before the new school year begins, students and parents will be

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Our students can participate in the Mass as servers and in other capacities.

AUGUST 2017

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welcomed Aug. 17 for “Get the Scoop,” when everyone will meet the teachers and bring in their school supplies.

A Back-to-School Bingo is set for Sept. 22 when the students and their parents can enjoy pizza and Bingo while the youngsters can interact with each other after the summer break.

Meanwhile, plans are under way for “A Southern Soiree” that returns Oct. 13 to raise money for the Annual Fund.

As the academic year gets underway, the school’s academic resource teacher will begin her second year of work, with the focus on K5 through seventh grade. She will be working either with individuals or with small groups. The school administration works with her to develop study teams in order to determine who needs her expertise.

“The kids have been very receptive,” Mrs. Murphy says.

In other developments, more classes are using iPads and using Google Classroom to facilitate learning.

Parents have stepped up to help develop athletics, particularly in volleyball, basketball and tennis.

“Mrs. Sherry Fitzpatrick coordinated the sports, and now we have two dads, Randy Teagarden and Trey Davis, who are taking on the task,” Mrs. Murphy says. “They are trying to help raise funds so any child who wants to play, can, and not worry about the cost of registrations and uniforms and equipment. Basketball is expensive, which includes covering court time, and they want to help offset the costs. We also have our Spirit Team, which is made up of students from first through fourth grades, who cheer the basketball teams. They’re coached by one of the moms. We have lots of activities that go on here.”



The smiles say it all!

The students also actively practice their faith in worship at Blessed Sacrament.

“We do attend Mass weekly as a school, and the children participate as readers and altar servers,” Mrs. Murphy says. “All grades from K3 to eighth attend. Parents are more than welcome to attend, and many do. Grandparents attend when their students do readings. You see more family members come so they can see their children read.”

This past year, Mrs. Moore also had the eighth-grade students write the Stations of the Cross and present the Living Stations at church and for the school on the Friday before the students were excused for Easter vacation.

“It was very poignant and stirring, with the fact that these children can, at the age of 13 and 14, explain what our Lord means to them,” Mrs. Murphy says. “The daytime and evening services were very well attended by the parish. They see the students, and each time they are taken back by their dramatic acting. You can hear a pin drop. No one laughs or talks. It is a very moving experience. They do an excellent job.”

*Enrollment is ongoing at Blessed Sacrament Catholic School. Parents who are
Interested in enrolling their children may contact the school office at 843-766-2128.*

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Summer Vacations Are Coming to an End... Now What?

Dear Parishioners,

The month of August really does seem to return us to reality, doesn't it? Summer is coming to an end – maybe not officially on the calendar, but in terms of our lives and the life of the Church, it does. The children may view it as the end of something appealing – the start of summer vacation seems like a long time ago – and their parents may be breathing sighs of relief. For those involved in parish ministries, it might be a time when we say, “Now, it's time to work.”

Perhaps this is a time when we get back into the routine of things. However, we all know the truth – that faith and the Church are not seasonal. For that matter, stewardship is not seasonal, and it's not something that is done a few times a year. Rather, stewardship is something we should be thinking about each and every day.

There are many definitions of stewardship, but at its very basis, it means using the gifts God has given us to do the things God asks – calls, expects – us to do. Stewardship is discipleship. We may tend to think of stewardship as a question: “What is mine and what is God's?” The truth is that all that we have and all that we are belongs to and comes from God – absolutely everything!

We may hear that stewardship is using and sharing our time, our talent, and our treasure. In terms of time, the secret is not learning how to use it or how to get more of it – the secret is knowing how best to use it. Talent and treasure are given to each of us in different amounts. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that we have to trust God before we really share those things. Relying on God and living a God-centered life



are fundamental to a relationship with Him – and, for that matter, with one another. Being contented is not the fulfillment of what you may want. Rather, it is the realization of what you already have.

So, we are back to the reality of this time of year. You may have heard the statement that stewardship people are grateful people. Perhaps this is a time to be grateful for the summer that

has passed. But it is a time for us to recommit ourselves to doing better, especially as we enter a time of year that provides a return to routine. Importantly, it is also a time filled with celebrations, thanksgiving, hope, and maybe even better stewardship on each of our parts.

Before I close, there is one particular opportunity for stewardship I would like to note – our upcoming Parish Stewardship Retreat, to be held Sept. 8-9 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, with no cost to attend. Deacon Don McArdle will lead our retreat, which will focus on stewardship and discipleship. I encourage all members of our Blessed Sacrament parish community to attend the retreat, so that we may all continue to grow as a stewardship people. To learn more about the upcoming retreat, please see the informational feature included in this month's newsletter.

In Jesus' Sacred Heart,

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

For the Kissells, Stewards

For the Kissell family, stewardship isn't about a monthly check, or even about the number hours given in service through ministry. Rather, it's become a way of life – a way of concretely answering the Christian call to discipleship.

“For me, stewardship isn't simply about serving or money,” Amy Kissell says. “It's about being an active participant in my faith and providing opportunities for my children to learn more about their Catholic faith.”

Born and raised here at Blessed Sacrament, the school and parish have played an active part in every major event of Amy's life. It's where she attended school as a young grammar and middle school student. It's the church she and her husband, Jason, have attended together since their marriage nearly 17 years ago. It's where their children have received their first sacraments

and learned what it means to be Catholic. And finally, it's the parish where Jason officially entered the Catholic Church this past Easter.

“I had essentially been practicing Catholicism for 16 years with Amy, but I had never taken that final step to become Catholic,” Jason says. “I started to realize over time, though, that something just wasn't there. I was physically at church going through the motions, but I wasn't truly getting out of it because I hadn't fully embraced Catholicism. Receiving Holy Communion that first time was really the finishing piece of the puzzle for me.”

The proud parents of their two children – Bella, sophomore, and Harper, eighth grade – Jason and Amy have worked hard throughout their parenthood to model service to their children. They're always the first to volunteer at school functions or to assist with athletics. Amy, for example, coached the school's volleyball team for five years, while Jason frequently uses his talent for building to benefit church and parish fundraisers. And in the process, they've consistently shown their children what it means to give back and to truly be part of a community.

“Honestly, I don't think my kids know any different,” Amy says. “They don't know anything other than going to church every Sunday and volunteering their time. It's just part of who they are. They watch their dad, who is a construction worker and who works often times in 98 degree heat – and yet, when he gets home, he still goes and wants to give of his time in service.”

To see the fruits of Jason and Amy's loving service, one need only look at their exceptional daughter and son. Bella, an alumna of Blessed Sacrament school, is described by her parents as having a “giving spirit and a servant's heart.” She remains an active member of the school's retreat team, helping to put on middle school retreats several times a year. Bella also volunteers sixteen hours a month at Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site, giving four hours of her time in service each week. She manages to do all of this while maintaining high academic



The Kissell family – (from left) Bella, Amy, Harper, and Jason.

Ship is a Family Way of Life

standards and being a competitive swimmer.

And though radically different than his older sister, Harper by no means stands in her shadow when it comes to service. This can be seen most clearly through his upcoming Eagle Scout project – a Rosary Garden for the Blessed Sacrament community. Born out of a discussion between Harper and our pastor, Fr. Joseph Romanoski, the Rosary Garden is meant to be a long-term space where parishioners can literally walk and meditate on the mysteries of the Rosary.

“It’s meant to be a hands-on place where you physically walk the Rosary as opposed to counting the beads on your hand,” Jason says. “It’s a pathway in a garden where the stepping stones become the actual beads. It all started when Fr. Joseph told Harper that he wanted him to do some sort of a meditation or reflecting garden – a place where people could sit and meditate.”

As the idea grew into action, Harper put countless hours into researching and planning out the garden. He had to present the idea and get approval from Fr. Joseph, Principal Katharine Murphy, and the Boy Scout troop. Then, Harper began the process of raising funds for the garden, which will require approximately \$1,900 without landscaping. What makes Harper’s project so special is that it has been completely his own initiative. And once completed, it will become a permanent addition to our faith community.

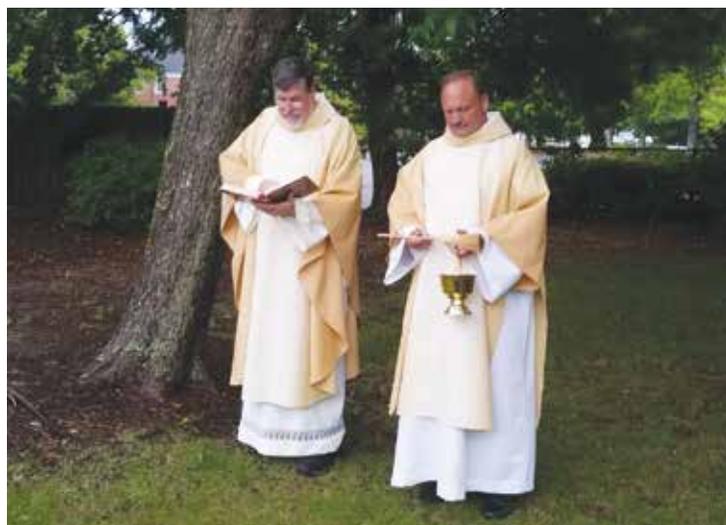
“It’s really going to be a project that will give back to the Blessed Sacrament community potentially for decades to come,” Jason says. “It’s a permanent addition to the church facilities and grounds.”

“The more money that we make, the better the garden is going to be,” Amy says. “We would like to put in landscape, so anything above and beyond the cost of the actual materials will go toward beautifying the landscape around the garden.”

Jason and Amy couldn’t be prouder of their two children, and are immensely grateful for the role that the Blessed Sacrament community has played in helping to form them.



For Jason and Amy Kissell, volunteering at both the school and parish is all about living out their discipleship calling and modeling good stewardship to their children.



The Rosary Garden’s dedication before ground was broken for construction.

Harper’s Rosary Garden is scheduled to be completed this August and funds are still being accepted to go toward the project’s landscaping. Any checks donated should be written out to Troop 79 and can be sent to the Kissells’ family address – 9 Eliza Court, Charleston, S.C. 29407.



JOIN US FOR OUR

PARISH STEWARDSHIP RETREAT



Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

All are invited to participate in a Spiritual Retreat focused on stewardship and discipleship, led by Deacon Don McArdle, a recognized authority and national speaker on stewardship.

The Retreat will be held September 8 and 9, 2017 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, 901 Orange Grove Road, Charleston, SC. Each session will begin in the Chapel at the Diocesan Pastoral Center and there is no cost to attend. Come for one day or both!

2017 PARISH RETREAT AGENDA

- September 8** Dinner, Introduction and First session begin at 6:00 p.m.
Night Prayer followed by gathering and fellowship at 8:30 p.m.
- September 9** Mass at 8:30 a.m.
Second, Third and Fourth sessions (breakfast & lunch included)
Commissioning and Closing at 3 p.m.

For More Information or to RSVP, Contact the Parish Office at (843) 556-0801 by September 5th. Come for one day or both!



RETREAT LEADER

Deacon Don McArdle, CEO, Catholic Stewardship Consultants

Deacon Don McArdle and his wife Pat have been married for 48 years; they have 9 children and 26 grandchildren, and are members of St. Mary on the Hill, a Total Stewardship parish in Augusta, GA. Deacon Don has been a CPA since 1970 and has served as a Deacon in the Diocese of Savannah since 1979. For the past 22 years, he has worked closely with parishes from across the country on all aspects of developing stewardship as a way of life. He is the author of the book, *Grateful and Giving: How Msgr. Thomas McGread's Stewardship Message Has Impacted Catholic Parishes Throughout the Country.*

Blessed Sacrament's Ladies Guild

"Let's Stand Strong Together"

Mary Lenda had recently moved from New York to Charleston and knew no one in the area except for her daughter. She wanted to feel connected. She wanted to give to others.

"Though my church in New York hadn't been very active, I saw that there was so much to do through Blessed Sacrament," Mary says. "I went to a stewardship fair and signed up for a few things. I asked the Lord what He wanted me to do and how I could best serve."

Today, Mary is the President of Blessed Sacrament's Ladies Guild, a Catholic women's group in the parish that provides opportunities and the means for women to know Christ together through faith, love and serving others.

"We're part of a larger group that supports women and gets them serving the Lord," says Mary. "The guild is part of the Charleston Deanery that comes under the South Carolina Conference of Catholic Women, which is under the national and the international council."

The guild serves the parish and the larger community in a variety of ways. Their well-known Pie Sale takes place every fall, and their next Craft Fair will be held Oct. 17 in the Church Hall. They are currently looking for crafters, and the fair will also have a flea market, so people can bring items to sell.

"The proceeds from the Craft Fair go to support our projects and the endeavors of the South Carolina Conference of Catholic Women," Mary says. "With the money that we raise, we will provide the *Living Faith* booklets that are in the back of the church for parishioners."

The guild also goes outside the parish to serve the larger community through projects like the Without Walls Ministry. This ministry hosts the annual Christmas at the Citadel event, affectionately known as the "birthday party for Jesus." At the event on Christmas Day, thousands are fed, gifts are given, and festivities are enjoyed by all.

"I think God wants us to serve others, and I'd like to see the Catholic Church do more of that," Mary says. "I'd like to see us go outside the

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Members of the Ladies Guild filling Easter baskets for our brothers and sisters in need in Charleston



Members of the South Carolina Council of Catholic Women's Conference (from left): Mary Lenda, Cindy Hyska, Maria Stevens and Janet Oehmig

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church walls to do more in our communities.”

The Ladies Guild meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from September through May, in the parish hall at 6:30 p.m. The guild's regular business meetings include food and fellowship.

“We welcome women of all ages with open arms,” Mary says. “If you want to come and not be a member, that's fine too.”

For Mary, the Ladies Guild offers her an opportunity to be with and to serve alongside women who share her values. The guild has helped her to be a better Christian and a better Catholic.

“We're like-minded women who support each other,” Mary says. “If you want your faith to grow and not become stagnant, you need to involve yourself with the community and support each other. Let's stand strong together.”

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If you would like more information about Blessed Sacrament's Ladies Guild, contact Mary Lenda at 716-753-0744 or mlenda@hotmail.com.

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