



From The Heart

Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Oberlin, Ohio

Sitting in the Seat of a Saint

Several years ago, knowing how I like to visit churches, my son took me to the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Detroit. It was a Saturday morning and, unlike our own cathedral, this one was locked, but a secretary let us in at the back door. She very graciously showed us through a hallway of offices and into the sacristy -- a beautiful, large room with Latin prayers printed high on the wooden walls. She then left us to tour the place on our own. What first caught my eye was the extra-large chair near the altar.

We decided it must be the cathedra where then-archbishop, Cardinal Maida, sat when he presided at Mass. I sat down in it and asked my son if he wanted a turn. Being a very proper sort of person, though, he declined ... but only temporarily. We then started our walk around the worship space, admiring the beautiful stained glass windows and other artwork. We happened on a room filled with reliquaries and curious religious items. Next to that was a lovely Blessed Sacrament chapel for personal devotion and weekday liturgies.

In a side aisle we came upon a tall chair that was upholstered in white. We were curious about that but saw no sign or other information explaining its significance. We moved on, investigating the interior architecture and woodwork. We finished our tour and returned to the secretary's office to thank her for the opportunity. She asked if we'd seen the white chair and explained that it had been specially made for the visit of Pope John Paul II. She then asked if we'd sat in it. No, we had not, so she encouraged us to go back and do that. We did, and now we can say we sat in the seat of a saint.

Carrol Wilhelm

FIELD TRIP!

Mark your calendars for this year's parish bus trip: Thursday, August 4th, leaving from our parking lot at 9 a.m. and returning at 5 p.m. Tentatively we have the following stops in mind: Our Lady of Lourdes National Shrine, the Maltz



Museum of Jewish Heritage, a synagogue, and St. Andrew Abbey. We'll also be stopping for lunch, of course! Cost will be announced in upcoming church bulletins, as will the finalized trip plan.

PARISH COUNCIL

Ever wonder what parish council does? People have asked, so here's a synopsis of a recent meeting. There's a formation prayer followed by approval of the previous month's minutes. Fr. Cole gives the pastor's report, then there's a review of old business and an invitation to bring forward new business.

Following that, there are brief reports from committees, commissions, education programs, and other organizations. Examples of some recent topics of discussion are our library (in the sacristy), the nurse program, the newsletter, a parish ministry fair [October 8-9], a bus trip [August 4], and the annual parish picnic [June 26].

Now that you know more about it, maybe you'll consider running for one of the open positions this fall!

A letter from Gwennie Gardiner who was received into the Catholic Church on Easter.

I only very generally remember the first time I prayed. I pushed my four-year-old self up on to the bed that sat a foot above me. I tucked myself in and laid facing a set of windows to my right. I ducked my head to fit my frame of vision beneath the windowsill, looked up into the stars, and I prayed. And while I wish I knew what exactly I prayed, I like to think I prayed for my faith. There was never a question in my mind that God existed; I just didn't have the resources at first to access Him in the ways in which I've come to believe I should. It took me 18 years and 10 months to attend Catholic Mass for the first time. I'd never been baptized, let alone confirmed. For much of my life, I'd been content with accepting my family's values as they were because I was taught to believe them without questioning what would happen to me after I died or who Jesus Christ actually was.

From the moment I started learning about Catholicism, I found it to be fascinating. Within a month, I read the Catechism and three books detailing what it meant to be Catholic. As I read, I learned more and more. It resonated with me; I wanted to know everything there was to know. But not all of the people around me understood that. Some took offense. I lost people I had previously considered to be my friends and I brought up deep, challenging, emotionally-tied thoughts for some of my family members. These moments, while challenging, allowed me to realize the true extent of my faith. One evening that I distinctly remember, everything clicked. Sitting alone reading Mark's gospel, I realized that everything made sense. I immediately started crying. I cried because I realized that He has loved me and He will always love me, I cried because looking back at times in my life, His plan was so clearly illuminated. I cried because I knew I was in the place I was for a reason and I realized the perfectly timed blessings He had given me along the way.

As Father Cole said in his Easter Vigil homily, it's only by the virtue of Catholics like you that I have heard the Good News. It's only by virtue of the example of what it means to be Catholic by my close friend Ben and godparents, Doris and Larry Wald, as well as the teachings of Father Cole that I've accepted Baptism and Confirmation. The "Our Father" prayer states, "...Forgive us our trespasses; As we forgive those who trespass against us." Unfortunately, I'm the first to say that I've had my fair share of times being the one to trespass against some of the people I love. None of us are perfect. But we can try to be. Faith in Jesus Christ is important because it allows us to understand the person we'd like to be. Further, faith is important because it can allow us to be that person. Jesus Christ gave us guidelines as to how we can be less sinful. But nowhere did he say it was our responsibility to determine who's a better person than someone else. We have a duty to ourselves and to God to be the best people and the best Catholics we can possibly be. After that, it's up to Him.

Gwennie



RECOMMENDED CATHOLIC READING

Surprised By Truth (3 volumes), Patrick Madrid. In each volume, converts share stories of how they found their spiritual home in the Catholic Church. Available at Catholic bookstores, Catholic.com, Amazon.com (new and used).

RETURN: How to Draw Your Child Back to the Church, Brandon Vogt. Addresses reasons Catholics give for leaving the Church and best ways for parents to respond. Available at brandonvogt.com.

Youcat, Cardinal Christoph Schonborn, ed. Also known as the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church. Written for high school-age people and young adults. Very readable. Photos. Great gift for the young people in your family to help them learn and understand what the Church believes and why. Available in bookstores, Catholic.com, Amazon.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are 244 Catholic colleges and universities in the United States.

The number 40 appears in the Bible over 140 times.

There are 194 Catholic dioceses in the United States (6 in Ohio).

CATHOLIC DESTINATIONS

The Jubilee Museum, 57 South Grubb Street in Columbus, is housed in a former Catholic school. It has wonderful collections of books, Catholic toys, statues, altars, photos, vestments, and works of art. Unfortunately, it is currently not handicap accessible. Be sure to call (614-600-0054) or check the website (jubileemuseum.org) for current hours before planning a trip there. A \$10/person donation is suggested but not required. German Village is nearby, in case you want to make a day of it!

The Museum of Divine Statues, 12905 Madison Avenue, Lakewood. The former St. Hedwig parish church houses rescued and restored religious statues (and a wonderful collection of nun dolls). Regular hours are noon until 4:00 on Sundays, and the cost of admission is \$10/person. There's a small gift shop on the premises as well. For more information, please call 216-228-9950.

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Check out our Web site, <http://www.mrpcinc.com>.”

Sacred Heart Parish First Communion Class of 2016



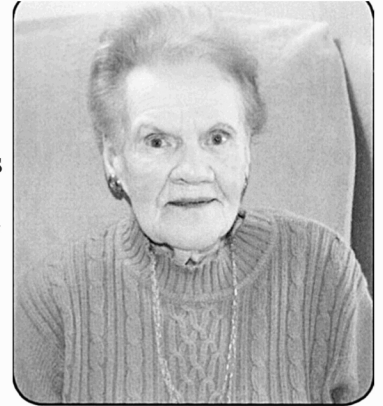
Back Row (left to right) : Audrey Smith, Michaela Streator, Breana McConeghy, Trent Merrell,
Brayden Fridenstine, Jayden Strayer

Front Row (left to right) : Amyrah Johnson, Lucia Pineda, Linus Mutnansky, Dane Vanderpool



England to Oberlin — a life journey

From a small town outside Bristol, England, to the small town of Oberlin, Ohio, Jean Kohut's life has been a wonderful adventure. Jean was a young woman living in Great Britain as WWII engulfed the country. Her school was closed; everyone was asked to sacrifice. Jean's family reached out to assist a young American soldier – Joe Kohut – who was stationed in her town, and their adventure began. Jean married Joe and traveled to America on the RMS Queen Mary to start her life in America. She embraced Oberlin and attended the original Sacred Heart Church on Pleasant Street. When the current church and its rectory were constructed, Jean and other members of the women's guild did housekeeping and office duties. Jean recollects the original intention was to have a small convent with sisters to teach at a planned school. Even today when Jean thinks of cleaning the rectory with its many bathrooms, she shakes her head. She can only imagine how pleasant the new rectory must be and much less a chore to clean. Jean says one thing that Sacred Heart has retained over the many years is its friendly parishioners. Jean is thankful for the lay ministry that brings communion to her home and the cable broadcast of Sunday Mass, which keeps her in touch with the parish, its friendly people, and the warm personality of Father Cole.



Why do we offer Mass for someone's intention?

An individual may ask a priest to offer a Mass for several reasons: for example, in thanksgiving, for the intention of another person (such as on a birthday or an anniversary), or, as is most common, for the repose of the soul of someone who has died. Please keep in mind that the tradition of offering Masses for others, particularly the dead, originated in the very early Church. Inscriptions found on tombs in Roman catacombs of the second century evidence this practice.

We find not only the origins of this custom dating to the early Church but we also clearly recognize its importance today. When we face the death of someone, even a person who is not Catholic, to have a Mass offered for the repose of his or her soul and to offer our prayers are more beneficial and comforting than any sympathy card or bouquet of flowers we can send. To have a Mass offered on the occasion of a birthday, anniversary or special need is appropriate and always appreciated.

GOING FOR THE GOLD

Sophia Pohorence is a parishioner at Sacred Heart, a junior at Firelands High School, and a Girl Scout Ambassador who's working on the highest achievement for a Senior Girl Scout: the Gold Award. As with the Eagle Scout Award in Boy Scouts, the Gold Award requires a girl to show her leadership skills, particularly in completing a major project.

Sophia is a survivor of TTTS (Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome), a complication of unequal blood supply which sometimes result in death. Because of this unequal blood supply, Sophia's birth weight was only 3 pounds, while her twin, Grace, came into the world at 7 pounds.

For her project, Sophia hoped to have at least 50 sets of handmade blankets for TTTS babies. To that end, she enlisted the help of Firelands High School students, family members, and others, including our own prayer shawl ministry.

With all this help, Sophia achieved her goal, and one spring Saturday, she was able to have all the sets in one place – our education building – and Fr. Cole came to discuss the project with her and to bless all those little blankets.

We wish Sophia our best as she continues to work toward her Gold Award.

Mark your calendar for faith, fellowship, and food! Sacred Heart's annual outdoor Mass and parish picnic will be Sunday, June 26. permitting, the 10:00 A.M.

Mass will be held outside, in front of the church. Folding chairs will be set up on the lawn, but parishioners may bring their own lawn chairs if desired. Following Mass, parishioners are invited to the education building to enjoy the picnic. There will be hot dogs, hamburgers, and a variety of salads and side dishes. Parishioners are asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share, if possible.

The picnic is always held the last Sunday of June to coincide with the feast of the Sacred Heart. It is a great opportunity to visit with and get to know your fellow parishioners. Once again, the Kubickis will set up their equipment to cook the hamburgers and hot dogs. McDonald's will be donating the hamburgers, as they have in the past. Beverages, disposable plates, and silverware will be provided. If the weather is nice and the ground is dry, parishioners may bring blankets to sit outside on the lawn, if they wish. Hope to see you there!

One of the requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout is to lead and complete a service project. The project is something that will benefit the community. When I first started looking for a project I asked Father Cole if there was anything I could do to help the church. We had a meeting and he told me about the playground that the church owned. The playground was going to be donated and moved next door to the new Family Promise building. I then got in contact with Lois Pozega, the director of Family Promise of Lorain County, and started to do the planning so I could present the idea. Before a project can get approved it has to be presented to the leaders of the Troop and they have to approve the project. When I started planning I noticed that the playground couldn't be just moved. It need some serious work for kids to play safely on it. About half of the wood needed to be replaced and the whole thing needed to be stained. It also needed a mulched in area for the playground to sit on. After all the planning I got the project approved and started working. First I disassembled the playground and moved it to my grand-parent's house in Amherst. I replaced the all the rotten wood and started to put stain on the wood. After everything was replaced and had two coats of stain I started to build the framing for the mulched in area which is 32 X 24 feet. The playground was then moved to where it is now. To complete the project seven and a half yards of woodchips were added to the space. The whole project took a total of 178.5 man hours. All the supplies and materials were donated. The project was completed in August of 2015.

Troop 427's 95th Eagle Scout

Michael Todhunter

Familiar faces, quiet contributions. As we look around church, we often recognize familiar faces, people we see every week but may not get to know beyond a passing nod and a smile. Many of those same people quietly contribute to the life and the faith community of our parish. Such is the case with the Ockenga family: Dave, Mary Jo, and Dave's mother, Rose.

Dave is a retired veterinarian who now does woodworking as a hobby. Look toward the front of the church and you will see examples of his beautiful work. Dave built the ambry – the container for holy oils – that hangs on the wall near the baptismal font. Dave's handiwork can also be seen in the ambo (pulpit) and the baptismal font. Dave incorporated the posts that used to be in front of the tabernacle into the bases of both the pulpit and the baptismal font. He created most of the font from a small altar that had previously been used for weekday Masses. Mary Jo says that Dave's skill in woodworking is probably a natural extension of the surgical skills he practiced for so many years. Mary Jo says that Dave does the woodworking just for pleasure and often gives away what he makes. Most of the wood Dave uses is harvested from their property, and the wood is dried in the solar kiln Dave and his son-in-law built. In addition to the woodworking, Dave and a friend also do some truck farming, with about five acres currently planted in produce.

Mary Jo serves as a lector and is a trained volunteer for the IHN program. She also helps out with coffee sales during the coffee hours. Mary Jo has a master's degree in journalism and animal science. She was the office manager for their veterinary practice and is also a licensed vet technician. Mary Jo says that her faith is so much a part of their everyday lives, especially when dealing with the public. She believes that it has helped her be attuned to what others may be going through and was very important in dealing compassionately with patients in the vet business. Mary Jo describes herself as the grief counselor when they had the vet business, giving emotional support to those who had to make difficult decisions regarding their pets. Mary Jo now works part-time in an orthodontist's office. Dave and Mary Jo have two grown children, a daughter, Sarah, and a son, Luke.

Dave's mother, Rose, loves to bake and sends cookies when needed for the seminarians and for the children at the detention home. Rose is also the "Grandma" for an elementary class at Western Reserve and sends in cookies periodically for them. Rose is second-generation Polish, and Dave, Mary Jo, and Rose have traveled to Poland twice, visiting the area where Rose's family was from originally.

Dave grew up in Bedford, an eastern suburb of Cleveland, while Mary Jo grew up on a dairy farm. Mary Jo recounted the story of how Dave's parents bought them a pregnant Holstein as a wedding gift, in honor of Mary Jo's dairy background. Helga the Holstein was with them for 10 years.

The Ockengas have been members of Sacred Heart parish for about 23 years. Mary Jo says that they were looking for a parish that has an outward focus, and she believes that describes Sacred Heart. She says that being in this parish has made her more aware of trying to live the service life and there is so much one can do service-wise in the parish. She likes that about this parish – that and the people. Mary Jo says the people of Sacred Heart were very friendly and made it easy to get involved. Mary Jo believes that Sacred Heart is a good example of Catholic living. She says that whenever they've been traveling and come back to Sacred Heart, there is a very strong sense of being home. What a wonderful compliment!

By Kathy Gulish



When was the last time you had your blood pressure or your blood glucose checked? If it's been awhile, Sacred Heart's recently-formed parish nursing program may be able to help.

Developed in conjunction with Mercy Regional Medical Center's Health Ministry/Parish Nursing Program, we are now able to offer periodic blood pressure checks and blood glucose screenings.

Last year, the idea of a parish nursing program was proposed to parish council. Sharon Wyckoff, an RN from Mercy, was invited to speak to council at the January 2016 meeting. She shared the background and philosophy behind Mercy's program and explained how it might work in our parish, emphasizing that each church determines what it wants from the program and what services it would like to offer. Parish council gave its stamp of approval, and Doris Jankovits, an RN from the parish, agreed to supervise the program. Annette McCarty, another parish RN, offered to take charge when Doris couldn't be present.

Mercy facilitates the training of volunteers – we have nine! -- who are then able to perform the screenings. At least one RN must be present at each event to advise parishioners on issues (such as abnormal readings) that arise as a result of the screenings.

Our parish nursing program kicked off the weekend of April 9 and 10, with blood pressure checks and blood glucose screenings in the education building after each Mass. Twenty-four parishioners took advantage of this confidential service. Future screenings are planned for the second weekend of each month, but please watch the bulletin for possible changes in the schedule.

Parishioners who wish to take advantage of the service will have to sign a release form. A record of results will be kept on file by Mercy, and if there is an abnormal reading, a letter will be sent to that person as well as to his/her physician. If a parishioner does not have a family doctor, Mercy can assist with connecting to one of their physicians.

This is a good deal, very informative and it's FREE!

If you have not been receiving the free bimonthly **NORTHEAST OHIO CATHOLIC** magazine, please fill out the form below and drop it in the collection basket. Thank you!

Name _____

Address _____

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY Team Pictures. Story on the next page.



Pp



Spring 2016 Issue

Sacred Heart Parish
410 West Lorain St,
Oberlin, OH 44074-1002

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Some ten years ago, a prayer shawl ministry was started at Sacred Heart. From the beginning, it was an ecumenical endeavor, welcoming knitters and crocheters (to date, all women) from Catholic parishes as well as Protestant churches; some members have no church affiliation at all. The common connection for us is this: we all believe strongly in the power of prayer, and we're not afraid to use that power. In the many, many hours it takes to fashion a shawl, we are praying for the person (usually unknown to us but not to God) who'll receive it. When a shawl is finished, it is blessed by Fr. Cole and put away until someone requests it.

Prayer shawls are given as gifts for old or young who are grieving, celebrating, going through chemotherapy, or just trying to get through the struggles of daily living. Any reason is a good enough reason to give one to a family member, neighbor, or friend. They are presented in gift bags, and each is accompanied by a card that explains something about the ministry, lets them know the shawl was blessed, and offers our continued prayers. For good measure, we include a verse or two from holy scripture.

The group meets from 10:30 a.m. until noon the second Saturday of each month, September through May. If you're experienced in knitting or crocheting, you are very welcome to join us; if you're not experienced, but you'd like to learn, you are also welcome. Yarn, needles, and hooks can all be provided. Watch in the bulletin for meeting notices. If you'd like to request a shawl, please call [440-371-8356](tel:440-371-8356). One note: we don't mail shawls, but we can deliver them for you in this area if you like.