

Dear St. Charles Parishioner:

Jacki Carrino became our rectory cook in January of 1989. For more than thirty years she took wonderful care of us priests. She put up with a variety of personalities and she did that with patience, kindness, and dedication. In addition to the thirty-one priests who were assigned to minister here during that time, she also tended to our parish seminarians as well as to the deacons and interns sent to our parish by St Mary Seminary. Along with her rectory kitchen responsibilities, Jacki also, at various times, coordinated the Carnival Kitchen, directed the Ladies Guild Salad Luncheon, and shared her culinary talents wherever and whenever needed. She was a best friend to our dogs, Barkley and Duffy, and she delighted in spoiling them! No one ever said an unkind word about her.

Midway through her years with us, Jacki met a fine man from the parish. They agreed to marry and, on her wedding day, she asked me to walk her down the aisle and “give her away.” That I did. I then joined the eighteen priests in the sanctuary who, because of their affection for her, “came back” to concelebrate the wedding Mass on Jacki’s special day. Sister Patrick Marie served as the maid of honor! From then on she was Jacki Szopo. That is a celebration I will long remember.

Since March, Jacki has been “staying in place” and we have tried to get by without her. Last week Jacki told me that it was time for her to retire. She wants to spend more time with her husband, John. I am not ashamed to tell you that it was a tearful conversation for the both of us.

I speak for a long line of St Charles priests in thanking Jacki Szopo for her thirty-plus years of faithful service to us and to our parish. May her retirement years be many and blessed.

*Wrapping Up the Fire in Church:* We all remember the January 2019 fire in our church. It took five months of cleaning/restoration and \$400,000 in insurance money to set things right. Thanks to the safety/surveillance system installed immediately after the fire, we were able to identify the perpetrator when he “visited” our church again some months later. He was caught and he confessed. The Cuyahoga County Prosecutor’s Office contacted me this week; our neighborhood arsonist (who is not a parishioner) was found mentally incompetent and sentenced to eleven years of supervision and immediate confinement for mental treatment. Mercifully, no one was hurt in the fire and we bear no grudge, but we are glad to know the poor guy is getting some needed professional help.

*Seller's Appreciation Raffle Number Five, July 26 Winner: David Grdosic*

There are three more Sunday \$500 Appreciation Raffles: August 2, 9, and 16 for Sellers of a sheet of our Summer “Two Step” Raffle tickets. Total ticket returns on Monday July 27 amounted to \$101,455. To keep the “flavor” of the Carnival, we will also award some additional “Seller’s Appreciation” prizes: we have laid in a supply of salamis and carnival ice cream. Just to “sweeten the pot,” we will raffle off those traditional Carnival prizes on Sunday, August 16!

For several weeks I have mentioned a Spectacular Mystery Prize Drawing for sellers of one sheet each of white, blue, ivory, and pink tickets. I have received lots of questions, calls, cards, notes, texts, and e-mails asking “exactly what” that Prize might be! Here’s the answer: sell four sheets of tickets and you have a chance to win a Bar Cart full of Irish Whiskeys and drinks: Paddy’s, Tullamore Dew, Jameson’s, Power’s, Bushmill’s, Irish Mist, Bailey’s Irish Cream, Guinness, Murphy’s Stout, etc. (I can’t go to Ireland this summer, so I thought I would bring Ireland here to you!) And there’s a second prize as well: two Bar Carts filled with various wines - red, white, dry, and sweet. The whiskey cart and wine carts are my gifts to thank you for your tremendous and much-appreciated support for our “Two Step” Summer Raffle.

Want a few more chances on the Seller’s Appreciation or the “Bar Cart” prizes? Just stop by the Parish Office Monday through Saturday 8:00am to 5:00pm or Sunday 8:00am to 1:00pm and pick up a few more sheets of tickets. Returns happily received at the Parish Office, in the mail, or in the Offertory. Please make all returns by Sunday, August 16, at 2:00pm.

The Offertory for July 26 was \$22,282.24. Your continued generosity to St Charles Parish, in every area, is gratefully acknowledged.

