

Youth Group grows in faith on mission trip



St. Clare Youth Group helped add more beauty to the grounds of Hoyleton Children's Home again this year on their mission trip. Besides helping out there, the youth had opportunities for faith sharing, prayer and fun all week. Thanks to our adult and college helpers who made this trip possible!

Parish offers a variety of ways to fuel your faith

St. Clare Parish offers a wide variety of adult faith formation opportunities for people in all stages of their faith journey and with all kinds of schedules. Some opportunities are one-time events, while others last for several weeks or even through next spring.

Of special note: There is a faith formation event for everyone that happens almost daily here. It's the Mass. Everything we do as Catholics has its source in the Mass and finds its fulfillment in the Mass, particularly the Eucharist. The Mass feeds and sustains us through Word and Sacrament while also being the fullest expression and realization of what we work and strive for everyday as disciples — the Kingdom of God on earth. Our faith formation opportunities are designed to help you participate in, appreciate more and better live out the Mass.

Works of Mercy Chats

- Clothing the Naked and Sheltering the Homeless, Oct. 1-2
 - Burying the Dead, Nov. 5-6
- Chats are after Saturday Mass and between Sunday Masses

The Works of Mercy Chats are short testimonies, given by our parishioners, to help us focus on how God is present in the works of mercy.

Tuesday Evening Bible Study: Life Eternal - 7-8:30 p.m. Sept. 27-Nov. 8, church library

This group offers six- or seven-week study sessions, so you can participate on a book-by-book basis with no long-term commitment. The deadline to register is Sept. 13 and the cost is \$20. Contact Sella Roman at sella.roman@gmail.com.

Cornerstone Bible Study - 9:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays, starting Sept.

14 in the Fellowship Hall.

The Cornerstone Study will focus on the Book of Exodus. To get started on this study, you need to attend the first day on Sept. 14. Contact Kathleen DuMontier (618-398-5122) or Kristy Turner (618-402-0885) for more information.

Voting With a Catholic Conscience: The Issues - 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 24, Fellowship Hall.

To prepare for the elections, this event will focus on the Church's teachings concerning particular issues so that we can better understand what is required for a just and peaceful society.

The Gospel of Matthew for the New Liturgical Year - 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 16, Fellowship Hall.

Matthew Flynn, Director of Adult Faith Formation, will lead a presentation and discussion on the Gospel of Matthew, from which we will be reading in the next liturgical year.

Work of Human Hands Sale adds new products

Shoppers will be able to find more things to buy than ever in this year's Work of Human Hands Sale. "Fair trade" goods, which were made by workers who are compensated and treated fairly, will fill the Fellowship Hall on the weekend of Nov. 12-13, and shopping will be open after all of the Masses.

In addition to working with Plow-sharing Crafts, our usual provider, to

get a greater variety and selection of goods, new ministry coordinator Jana Bechtoldt has been reaching out to other fair trade organizations in order to feature their goods, as well.

Blessing Baskets has already signed on. Blessing Baskets helps provide a wider market for artisans around the world so that they can get a just price for their goods instead of having to undersell competition in oversaturated

markets. Since they draw from various markets around the world, the baskets they sell come in a greater variety of sizes and styles than we have been able to offer before.

Come prepared to shop for Thanksgiving, Christmas or just general necessity, knowing that you are helping provide tangible benefits to the lives of workers and their families around the world while contributing to a more just economy.

Living Stewardship

One joins with many to make a difference

When is a church festival more than just a big party?

When is a book giveaway more than just a nice freebie?

When is a person in a pew more than just an individual at prayer?

Look at these things through the lens of stewardship and evangelization, and you'll have the answers. Then, have a chat with St. Clare parishioner Rita Zinn, and you'll further illuminate those answers with her own story of faith and stewardship that began decades ago in Breese, Illinois.

"My mom made banners and was involved with decorating at St. Dominic's, and I helped as a kid," she recalls. Mom Dorothy Zinn, now 90 years old, still lends a hand at their home parish and models the style of quiet, dedicated, hands-on stewardship that resonates with Rita.

In addition to her natural inclination to Art and Environment, Rita is a key member of our parish's Stewardship Ministry, Pastoral Council, parish partnership team and, most dear to her heart, the St. Clare Oktoberfest Committee.

Rita joined St. Clare Parish in 1998, about the same time former Mater Dei High School classmate Father Jim Deiters came to our town. True to her roots, she joined the fledgling Art and Environment ministry.

"I met a lot of new people early on, and that made it easy for me to get involved in the parish," she notes.

It was while she was helping at a parish youth event in the spring of 2001 that Father Jim approached her with an idea.

"He asked about me being involved with a new, 'small' fundraiser he was dreaming up," Rita says. That fundraiser, St. Clare's Oktoberfest, debuted the following September and has grown with every passing year. Rita holds the unofficial title "last one standing," as she is the only member of the festival's original founders who 16



Rita Zinn

years later is still at our parish and still serving on the Oktoberfest Committee.

After leading Oktoberfest's advertising and publicity efforts for 15 years, she has this year turned her focus to the very profitable basket raffle and silent auction, which she has also helped lead for much of the Fest's history.

"Oktoberfest is important because it allows us to evangelize to the entire community," she notes. "We encourage volunteers to be hospitable and welcoming, which can in turn lead new people to check out our church, and disengaged Catholics to 'come home.'"

Another long-term commitment Rita has made is an offshoot of her admiration for the work of Catholic author and speaker Matthew Kelly. She has been instrumental in efforts to bring Kelly and Dr. Allen Hunt, leaders of the Dynamic Catholic organization, to present talks at our parish. And she is quietly behind the scenes whenever a parish-wide giveaway of Catholic reading material occurs. For her, these books the parish hands out for free are powerful tools for evangeliza-

tion.

"I'm a cradle Catholic; it's what I've always been. But when I hear converts to Catholicism share their faith stories, it's so impressive. They come to realize the beauty of the Church and are so consumed by it, and by the importance they see in the Eucharist," she explains. "These books are a way to evangelize and educate not only people who are searching, but among our own members, as a way to reawaken and deepen their faith."

As a single adult, Rita resides in a small but crucial parish demographic. While some individuals hang back and are reluctant to commit to serving without the "safety net" of family members or peers with children of similar ages, Rita brings her time and talents to parish ministries knowing that relationships will naturally flow from involvement.

"Being a single person, getting involved in parish life has allowed me to meet lots of people and become friends with many," she explains. "It's when people from many different backgrounds come together that a thriving faith community is formed, and that, in turn, attracts others to join."

Her advice to anyone, single or married, considering a ministry is straightforward: "Just take that step and get involved, even if it's something simple, even if it's just an hour or two."

Ever the marketer, she adds with a smile, "It's not too late to help with this year's Oktoberfest!"

While she personally prefers not to be in the spotlight, Rita Zinn's works brighten our parish. And her deep, abiding devotion to the Catholic faith helps her see light even in the darkest times.

"People need to be strong in their faith with the way the world is today," she says. "It's what we need to draw on for hope for the future."

Stewardship (continued)

for our local soup kitchen, mow and maintain our expansive church grounds and gardens, clean the church, organize and chaperone youth events, make meals for families in distress and help with the Hospitality Committee's many events.

Watch your mail for the "Time & Talent Ministry Booklet," coming in early October. This helpful guide describes the many organizations and ministries St.

Clare offers. Take time to read through the booklet when it arrives, and encourage your family and friends to consider trying out a new ministry or two with you!

Then, fill out a commitment card for your family and return it at Mass on the weekend of Oct. 15-16. (Note that this year for the first time a separate liturgical ministries sign-up took place in the

spring and summer.)

St. Clare's ministries and organizations play a vital role in strengthening our parish and building God's kingdom here on earth. And with groups and activities for every interest and ability, getting involved at St. Clare is a great way to do what you love as you share your gifts with our parish and our God!

Welcome to our newcomers

By Karen Brutto

We welcome our newcomers to St. Clare of Assisi Parish:

Diane Gabel came to St. Clare from St. Mary Parish in Belleville. She has lived in St. Clair County for 25 years, but in Lebanon for four years. She is originally from Honolulu and also lived in Connecticut. She likes the beautiful church.

Jon and Mia Friederich came to St. Clare from St. Paul in Highland. They were led to St. Clare because of Father Jim, and they heard the parish was wonderful with young families. Jon is a police officer in Fairview Heights, and Mia is a campus recruiting coordinator with KPMG, LLP.

Tom Jacobson and Peggy Sebastian recently relocated to the area from Highland. They were led to St. Clare through serving for a Franciscan-inspired health-care system and knowing Father Jim. Tom is a safety manager with the Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District. Peggy serves as the president and CEO of HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

Ryan and Dawn Blackwell and their daughter **Madison**, 12, came to St. Clare from St. Teresa Parish in Belleville. Dawn is a stay-at-home mom, and Ryan works in finance at Autocenters Nissan. Madison is a new student at St. Clare School.

Craig and Jnana Coffey and their sons, **Gavin**, 8, and **Talon**, 5, recently moved back to the area after being in Virginia for a year.

Ray and Jennifer Matherne and their daughter **Noelle**, 14, recently moved to the area from Joint Base MDL in their 13th move of Ray's 20 years in the Air Force. They were led to St. Clare through introductions from a Catholic homeschooling group. Ray is an Air Force officer, and Jennifer leads Noelle's education and commands the homefront. They want to thank everyone for the warm welcome they have received!

Tim and Hurley Thurston and their

children, **Cole**, 10, **Mya**, 9, and **Maximilian**, 1, recently moved to the area from Montgomery, AL. As members of a military family, they move often. They were led to St. Clare by recommendations from others. Tim is a military officer.

Joseph and Rita Mojzis came to St. Clare from Saints Peter and Paul Church in Alton. They were led to St. Clare by family members, who are parishioners. Joseph and Rita are both retired.

Erik and Megan Johnson
Christopher and Stephanie Borde-nave and their children, **Gianna**, 2, and **Logan**, 3 months

Shawn and Theresa Chaney and their children, **John**, 11, **Christopher**, 10, and **Elizabeth**, 8

Erik and Erin Anthony
Andrew and Giannina Torelli and their daughters, **Arianna** and **Bianca**
Jim and Sarah Speakes and their children, **Oscar**, 13, **Lucie**, 12, and **Emma**, 12

Scott and Pamela Wiederholt and their children, **Mason**, 13, **Henry**, 11, **Caleb**, 9, and **Simon**, 6

Eric and Joanne Trias and their children, **Kyler** and **Joshua**

Nick and Angie Leonelli and their children, **Dominick**, 16, **Christian**, 13, **Gianna**, 11, **Mateo**, 8, and **Andrew**, 6. They moved here from McGuire AFB, NJ, and are originally from Utah. They heard so many great things about our parish and are excited to be involved.

Joseph and Rita Mojzis
Matthew and Gayle Schulte and their children, **Hadley**, 6, and **Hayden**, 4

Michael and Alicia Ferguson and their children, **Katelyn**, 9, **Keira**, 8, and **Ava**, 4

Mary Jo Sexton-Tosh and her son, **Marshel**

Theresa and David Moore and their son, **Desmond**, 2

Christopher and Leah Dollahon and their children, **Trevor**, 6, and **Walter**, 7 months

cially compared to us.

Highlights of the trip will include great food, amazing hospitality and seeing and learning about different aspects of our sister parish and the people's lives. We will also be present for part of the novena (nine days) leading up to the Feast of Our Lord of Esquipulas and will be able to participate in their celebrations.

Participants will pay their own travel expenses. For more information, contact Matt Flynn at 632-3562 or matthewflynn5@gmail.com.

Seniors offer fun, food and fellowship

The St. Clare Seniors will offer several interesting programs and great food at their fall meetings.

The well-known Msgr. McGhee will be their guest speaker for the Sept. 12 meeting, which will feature pulled pork with all the side dishes.

Betsy Ross will be the topic for the Oct. 10 meeting, which will include appetizers and a sundae bar. A representative from Cedar Hurst in Shiloh will speak at the Nov. 14 meeting while the Seniors enjoy a Thanksgiving feast. She will explain the choices of living arrangements they have to offer.

The December meeting will offer a potluck dinner with fried chicken. Annual dues of \$6 per member will be due at this meeting. The group will play "pass the trash." Everyone should bring a \$5 gift.

Watch the bulletin for two possible day trips: Amish country and the Millstadt greenhouse to view the poinsettias.

Anyone over 55 is invited to join the Seniors group, which usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of the month in the Fellowship Hall for evenings of great food, lots of laughs and a variety of entertainment and guest speakers. Everyone should invite a friend or two; seniors do not need to be parishioners to attend. The seniors group is strictly social; no work or fundraising is involved.

For more information, contact Judy Bugger at 632-4074.

Weddings

We celebrate the Holy Matrimony of **Nicholai Sarpy and Abby Belongy**, **Brenton Ruopp and Alyssa Trelow**, **Daniel Seiffert and Halie Holcomb**, **Ken Kenney and Barbara Kovach**, and **Michael Murphy and Ellyn Sjoquist**.

In Memoriam

We extend our prayerful sympathy to the family and friends of deceased parishioners **Margaret Pappaspanos**, **Elizabeth Feder**, **Virginia Leninsky**, **Robert Kemp**, **Eleanor Dekum** and **Rosalinda Mariles**.

Parish team to visit Guatemala

Members of our parish with a keen interest in experiencing the people and culture of our sister parish are invited to visit the parish in Guatemala with Father Jim and Matt Flynn, Director of Adult Faith Formation, Jan. 2-9.

Our parish team will get to know our brothers and sisters in the Guatemalan parish of Our Lord of Esquipulas. Past trip participants have commented on how transformational the trip has been, opening their eyes to a different culture and the profound faith of simple people who suffer much and have very little, espe-

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Come hear, see our talented 'Kids Helping Kids'

"Kids Helping Kids" (translated "Ninos Ayudando a Ninos") is an upcoming concert to benefit students in our Guatemalan sister parish, Our Lord of Esquipulas. The concert will be offered from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 16 at St. Clare, and you can help by performing or attending.

"Kids Helping Kids" is simple but says a lot.

"Our students are able to help change the lives of students, and their families, in Guatemala," says Margarita Crupe, the lead organizer. "We are giving them the opportunity to get an education that they cannot get otherwise. We are also giving hope for a brighter future for the students and their families."

Our parish established the Santa Clara Scholarship Fund ("Santa Clara" is St. Clare in Spanish) in 2006 to help students in our sister parish attend school past sixth

grade, the highest level of free education in Guatemala. Due to their poverty, most families in our sister parish cannot pay for school. With our help, 35 students have graduated high school, all achieving high marks; eight were at the top of their class. Some have gone on to college, and many help support their families and pay their siblings' tuition.

Every year, the students write us about how this gift has changed their lives. Full of love and gratitude, they send us prayers and blessings. This year, through your generosity, the Guatemala Committee is hoping to increase the number of scholarship recipients from 12 to 14.

That is where "Kids Helping Kids" comes in. Children donate their talents, and adults contribute the price of admission. It requires participation from all

our parishioners and helps build our solidarity with parishioners from Our Lord of Esquipulas.

"We often think of our brothers and sisters as the people in our immediate family," says Margarita. "But if we think and act like Christ, we have to include our brothers and sisters around the world and in our sister parish of Our Lord of Esquipulas."

Contact Margarita (duchessdepaz@gmail.com) to register to perform by Sept. 14. All ages are welcome to perform.

Admission to the concert is \$5 per person or \$20 per family (1-2 adults, plus children). Donations are welcome, even if you cannot attend.

Following the concert, there will be a reception in the Fellowship Hall with light refreshments and a 50/50 raffle.

Try on XLT for another way to pray at Adoration

If you need a little extra help with your Eucharistic Adoration prayer time, and contemporary music helps you pray, come try XLT on for size. St. Clare will begin offering XLT, which stands for Exalt, from 5 to 5:45 p.m. during our monthly, 24-hour Adoration time.

This time will feature live, contemporary Catholic and Christian music, guided

prayer and quiet prayer to help us praise and worship Jesus Christ, who has a real presence in the Eucharist. It is targeted to youth and young adults, but all ages are welcome.

Our first XLT will be on Sunday, Oct. 2. Adoration typically is open from right after 10:30 a.m. Mass on the first Sunday of the month until 11:45 a.m. on

Monday.

St. Clare youth and adults have experienced XLT at the last three National Catholic Youth Conferences and requested we try it at St. Clare. They found it to be a very powerful worship experience, which helped many of them develop a closer connection to Jesus and a deeper prayer life.