

St. Cecilia's Vocations Committee Activities Celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life



As the Catholic Church continues its observation of the Year of Consecrated Life as exhorted by Pope Francis, the St. Cecilia Vocations Committee provides our local Parish with resources and opportunities to help families learn about the consecrated life of religious men and women. These activities, which are spotlighted on the committee's church webpage, focus on sharing experiences of prayer, service and community life with those living a consecrated life.

Prayer. We celebrated **World Day for Consecrated Life** on February 7th and 8th by inviting parishioners to pray for the Year of Consecrated life at each Mass that weekend. Prayer cards were placed in the Breaking Bread books by the St. Cecilia School 7th grade class. We also asked parishioners to continue to pray throughout the Year of Consecrated Life. In addition, Fr. Cary devoted his Pastor's Corner that weekend to those who live the consecrated life: *"Their unique witness to the call of discipleship is a strong testimony that a "fulltime" life dedicated to the service of the Church and of God is a life marked with joy."*



On Good Shepherd Sunday, April 26, the parish joined with the universal church to ask for God's blessings in celebration of the **World Day of Prayer for Vocations**. Vocations Committee member Scott Petersen composed a special prayer for this day, which was then led by committee members at each of the weekend Masses. Scott's prayer asked parishioners to *"pray for ourselves and each other to be open to the presence of God in discerning the track or path that God in His wisdom and love has laid down for each of us."*

Service. On March 6, the Vocations Committee was privileged to provide a **Soup Supper** during Lent. Committee members prepared a hearty meal of tomato soup, clam chowder and grilled cheese sandwiches for approximately 75 to 85 people. No one went away hungry.



Community Life. The highlight of this year was the wonderful opportunity for St. Cecilia to be one of only two local parishes to host the new play, *Thérèse: The Story of a Soul*. Written and produced by Saint Luke Productions, this drama was a face-to-face encounter with St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the most beloved saint of modern times. This performance was an honest, loving portrait of a real girl who struggled with anxieties, but overcame those obstacles by trusting in God. Thérèse's spirituality speaks powerfully to our busy culture with the encouraging message that *anyone can become a saint*.



To promote vocations to the religious life, each month the Vocations Committee is featuring one or two **religious orders** in the St. Cecilia bulletin, with an extended profile of those orders on the committee's church webpage. In April, several representatives of the two featured orders – Sisters of St. Mary of Oregon and Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Sorrows – worshipped with St. Cecilia at the Sunday morning Masses, where they were welcomed and recognized by the presiding priest. Afterwards, the nuns joined parishioners for breakfast at the Knights Café, where they fellowshiped with parishioners and answered questions about their vocation. The committee will host another group of religious orders at a Mass in November.



The **Family Prayer Program** encourages families to pray and promote vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life. Each month, families from different church ministries take one of the seven icons and dedicate time each day to pray for vocations, using the Vocations Prayer Book. The Second Vatican Council highlights the responsibility of the laity to pray for and support vocations. These icons are a tangible reminder of that special intention. This year, the following groups have taken the icons: Moms' Fellowship, St. Gerard Guild, Teams of Our Lady, Men's Club, Medjugorje Pilgrims, Young Adults and the Vocations Committee.

As we continue to observe this Year of Consecrated Life, let this be your prayer:

O God, throughout the ages you have called women and men to pursue lives of perfect charity through the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. During this Year of Consecrated Life, we give you thanks for these courageous witnesses of Faith and models of inspiration. Their pursuit of holy lives teaches us to make a more perfect offering of ourselves to you. Continue to enrich your Church by calling forth sons and daughters who, having found the pearl of great price, treasure the Kingdom of Heaven above all things. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

