

Saint Francis Solanus



FEBRUARY 2015

St. Francis Sports Association Developing Coaches and Players... Mind, Body and Soul

Although it was more than 30 years ago, Russ Gengenbacher often reminisces about his sixth-grade St. Francis baseball coach, Dick Mitchell. Russ remembers Dick out on the field at every game and practice without fail. As a current volunteer coach for the seventh-grade volleyball team, Russ has a newfound appreciation for just how much his coach did for him and the other players.

“When I feel like being lazy, I just think about Dick Mitchell, and I use him as an example,” Russ says. “I didn’t get into coaching until my kids started playing sports, but Dick was out there doing it strictly for others. That, to me, is someone I admire. It was a true demonstration of stewardship.”

Although a few of the seventh and eighth-grade teams are competitive, most St. Francis teams are organized by the Catholic Youth Organization, or CYO, a recreational league that welcomes all players regardless of skills. According to Russ, this is an irreplaceable opportunity for many children who otherwise might never play a sport.

“It’s very gratifying to make a good player great, but taking a girl who’s afraid of the ball and showing her that she can play is actually more rewarding,” Russ



The first place eighth-grade Catholic Youth Organization team with coach Linda Schreake

explains. “It’s exciting to watch a girl who cannot get a serve over 10 tries in a row, and then finally get it over

continued on page 5



HOW CAN WE MODEL THE FAITH FOR OUR CHILDREN?

The Church has made it clear that parents are primarily responsible for the spiritual and cognitive development of their children in matters of the faith. As the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, states, “Husbands and wives find their proper vocation in being witnesses of the faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children” (Chapter 4, Section 35). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* further emphasizes this vocation, by pointing out that the moral education and spiritual formation of children is not only the right, but the responsibility, of their parents: “The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable... Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children” (CCC 2221, 2223).

But how can we as parents create an environment in the home conducive to spiritual and moral development? As busy adults, how are we to disseminate the knowledge and understanding of the tenets of the faith to our children in the way that a trained and experienced catechist can? Furthermore, how do we strike a balance between teaching our children in the home and not interfering with the faith formation and sacramental preparation they are currently receiving through their parish school or religious education program?

The answer to all of these questions is stewardship.

Indeed, it is important that we reinforce the lessons that our

children learn in school and at religious education classes in the home by talking to them about the faith, reading Sacred Scripture with them, and spending time in family prayer. And there are several authoritative resources online that can help parents in this task, including Catholic Parents OnLine – www.catholicparents.org – which links parents to numerous websites and documents that can help them in talking to their children about the faith.

But the best way that we can teach our children is by serving as a living example to them of how to live as disciples of Christ. If we want our children to grow up as strong Catholics and to display a lifelong commitment to their faith, then it is important that we ourselves live a committed faith life. This includes an ongoing commitment to our own faith formation as adults and active participation

in the sacraments. It also includes the giving back of our time, talent and treasure in service of our community in thanksgiving for the gifts that God has given us.

Parenting can be a tough vocation, and children deal with many influences in their lives that exist in stark contrast to the values that their parents often hope to instill within them. Fortunately for parents, the stewardship way of life provides a simple and effective model for teaching our children in matters of the faith. By living as stewards of God’s gifts and reaping the spiritual rewards that accompany this lifestyle, we are tangibly showing our children that sharing of our gifts and talents leads to a life of happiness and spiritual fulfillment. In doing this, we give them a good opportunity to follow in our footsteps and make their faith a top priority for the rest of their lives.



A Letter From Our Pastor

Growing in Our Faith During Lent

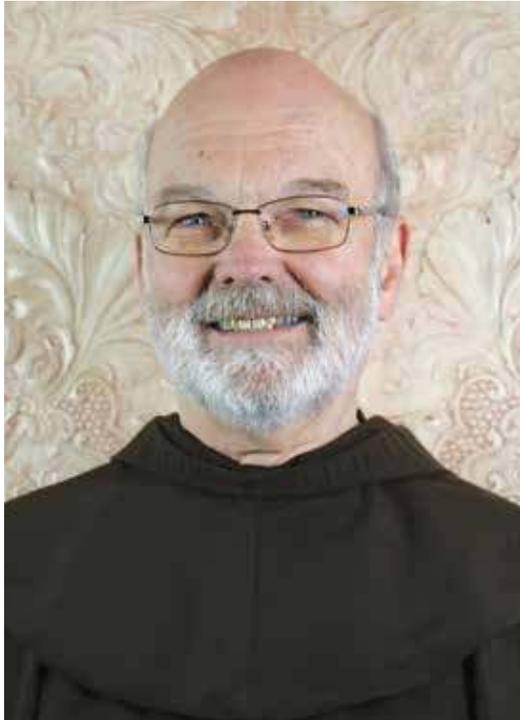
Dear Parishioners,

February 18 marks the beginning of Lent with a unique holy day – Ash Wednesday. While not a Holy Day of Obligation, we are offered a special opportunity on Ash Wednesday to take a step back from the daily grind to focus on an important element of our Christian lives.

As the ashes are placed on our foreheads in the sign of the Cross, we are told, “Remember you are dust and to dust you will return” or “Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.” This is a significant reality to keep in mind as we begin our journey through Lent. All of us are sinners and each is in need of seeking the Lord’s help and forgiveness. Our very breath is a gift from Him – without God’s mercy and grace, we can do nothing.

The way of Lent should be the life of the steward, one in which we acknowledge that all we have is from God and that our lives are meant to be lived as a gift of gratitude for all He is and does for us.

Many of us associate our Easter preparation as a time for self-denial and sacrifice. While those elements are important, they will do us little good if we do not remember that the whole point of those actions is to improve our relationship with God and each other. Sometimes we get caught up in the complexity of Lent and lose sight of our calling as stewards to actively pursue depth in our relationship with the Lord while we live out our faith.



Lent is an important time for us to refocus and to recognize the magnitude of Christ’s victory over the grave. It is by overcoming sin and death on Easter Sunday that we are set free from the bondage that sin puts us in and rejoice that, “By his wounds, we are healed” (Is 53:5).

As we journey through Lent this year, let us pause to praise God for the gift of life that He has given us. Let us thank Him for the opportunities He presents to us each day to grow, to accept the challenges thrown our way and to choose Him. When we live out our lives in humble service to God and to one another, dying to the desires of the flesh, we

think of ourselves less and give Him the glory that He so greatly deserves. May we join in the prayer of St. John the Baptist, “He must increase, I must decrease” (Jn 3:30).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Don, O.F.M." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Don Blaeser, O.F.M.
Pastor

As we journey through Lent this year, let us pause to praise God for the gift of life that He has given us.

Ministry of Hospitality Fosters a Sense



It can always be a bit daunting to be a new face in a new place, and for new parishioners, it's important to feel welcome. This goes for longtime parishioners as well – sometimes it takes people months, or even years, to make new friends at church!

Here at St. Francis Solanus, the 132 members of the Ushers Ministry work to make this introductory process as comfortable as possible. By serving at all five weekend Masses, as well as each Holy Day Mass, ushers go the extra mile to put people at ease, brighten their day, and create a comfortable and welcoming environment for all.

“The ushers, who are often the greeters, are one of the first people the parishioners and guests will see when entering the church,” says usher Kelvin Hufendick. “Making a good first impression will make people feel more comfortable and welcome.”

In addition to greeting parishioners before the start of Mass, ushers also open doors, seat people, take up the collection and assist those with special needs. Scheduling for ushers is done through an automated scheduling program that is handled through the parish office. After assignments are made, ushers can request changes to their assignments either online or by contacting the office.

Serving as an usher is an easy way to get involved in the life of the parish community. Through the ministry, ushers are able to grow in fellowship, spirit of service and faith.



“Ushers serve as ambassadors with a genuine concern for the people, to show Jesus to others by saying, ‘Welcome to them for coming, a friendly invitation, and inviting them to return.’”

Service of Community at St. Francis Solanus

"Ushers serve as ambassadors of hospitality by showing a genuine concern for the people of the church," says usher Dennis Holbrook. "We are able to show Jesus to others by saying a kind word, thanking them for coming, a friendly smile or handshake, and inviting them to return."

"When I first started out in this ministry, I was asked to help with the collection on several different occasions, and I felt really good about helping other people in the parish," Kelvin says. "We are servants, so when others see that we are sincere in our works, we grow as a family and as a ministry."

Throughout their years of involvement with the Ushers Ministry, Kelvin and Dennis have seen how a friendly face and kind greeting can go a long way. They encourage parishioners to take the time out of their week to help continue the success of this important ministry.

"This is one of the ministries that takes a lot of people to make it work," Dennis says. "This is the perfect ministry for you if you are not comfortable speaking or singing in front of people. By doing your part in this ministry, you are helping others, and that's what Jesus wants us to do."

All parishioners are invited to dedicate a small part of their week to serving the parish community as an usher. For more information, please contact the parish office at 217-222-2898.

*s of hospitality by showing a
ple of the church. We are able
ying a kind word, thanking
ly smile or handshake, and
– Dennis Holbrook, usher*



Nick and Jill *Sharing Our Talents,*

For Nick and Jill Steinkamp, music is a family affair that began when the couple met at Quincy University. Nick was majoring in communication and music production, and Jill was studying music education. He came from a marching and percussion background, while she came from a piano background. And in the 16 years they've been married, not only has music been a source of great joy in their lives, but it also has been the means for them to share their musical talents with family, friends, the community, and our parish.

Anyone who has attended a weekend Mass or has heard the Youth Choir perform knows that Nick and Jill are behind much of the music here at St. Francis Solanus – they both serve as musicians during weekend Masses, while Jill leads the Youth Choir, a group of vocalists and instrumentalists in grades six through 12 who are responsible for

the music during Mass on the fourth Sunday of each month. And their five children are following in their footsteps – Allison, 14, plays the clarinet; Jamie, 11, plays the trombone; Paul, 8, plays the piano; and Nick has hopes that either Isaac, 5, or Nathan, 1, will one day play the drums.

“When we play during Mass, we have our little ones with us,” Nick says. “And sometimes it’s a challenge to play when our little guy keeps trying to grab the drumsticks because he wants to play along!”

As important as music is to their family, it is faith that keeps them grounded and provides them a solid foundation for the way they live their lives. While Nick was raised Catholic and has been a lifelong member of the parish, Jill was raised Methodist, and yet they have found a way to keep their respective religions, and with honesty, openness and respect, make the fact that they are an ecumenical

family work for them.

In addition to sharing their musical talents, and despite having full time jobs – Nick is an account manager at MS Communications and Jill teaches music in the Quincy Public Schools – their entire family has found other ways to give back both in the parish and in the community. Nick is a Communion Minister and a Boy Scout den leader, Jill is a Girl Scout Troop leader, and both are involved in the Great River Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) Program. Involvement is important to them, and they believe that we have many gifts but one spirit – that we all have gifts that God has given us, each of us according to our ability. Furthermore, Jill points out that everyone has something to contribute, not matter how big or how small. In fact, many times it’s the small things – like a welcoming smile – that make the biggest impact. The key is to find something simple you like to do and figure out a way to apply it to parish



Youth musicians for the 11 a.m. Sunday Mass

Steinkamp Big and Small



The Steinkamp family – Nick, Jill, Allison, Jamie, Paul, Isaac, and Nathan

life. Amazingly, the more we give, the more we feel God's grace working in our lives.

"When we hear our 5-year-old sing songs he heard at Mass, or our daughters who listen to WGCA Christian Radio and then come home with a list of songs they want to introduce to Youth Choir, we know that our service of music has not only touched the lives of our Church family, but it has strengthened the faith of our family," Jill says. "Being involved and living stewardship teaches our children what it means to serve."

In the end, living a life of stewardship means acknowledging that God knows us better than we know ourselves, and that he can recognize an untapped talent within us – one that can be used to serve him and the Church – and bring that talent to the forefront as he invites us to a life of stewardship in all that we think, say and do. Nick says that while music is definitely one way

they share their talents, it's not the only way, and he is open to the idea of other ways God is calling him to serve.

"My work as coordinator for the TEC program in our area really offered some spiritual lessons," Nick says. "Initially it wasn't something I thought I would be comfortable doing – I didn't think I could lead, and so I really wanted to say 'no.' But when God puts something on your heart, and even though you don't want to acknowledge it, in the end you have to figure out how to turn that 'no' into a 'yes.' We have some friends who like to say that God doesn't call the qualified, but He qualifies the call. So it's important not to focus on what you perceive as your lack of ability, but instead be open to what God has planned for you."

"When God puts something on your heart, and even though you don't want to acknowledge it, in the end you have to figure out how to turn that 'no' into a 'yes.' We have some friends who like to say that God doesn't call the qualified, but He qualifies the call. So it's important not to focus on what you perceive as your lack of ability, but instead be open to what God has planned for you."

– Nick Steinkamp



The St. Francis Girl Scouts building a garden at Washington School

St. Francis Solanus

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

1721 College Avenue
Quincy, IL 62301
(217) 222-2898
stfrancissolanus.com

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
MAILED FROM
ZIP CODE 58040
PERMIT NO. 3

St. Francis Sports Association *continued from front cover*

– just that look of satisfaction on her face is absolutely rewarding. As a coach who is competitive, I count that as a win. That was a winning moment. That’s just as important as putting up the most points on the scoreboard.”

Participating in sports is more than improving skills – it develops the player’s mind, body and soul. This is a very practical way to give glory to God for the gifts and abilities He has given.

“It’s one more way for children to utilize the talents and the treasures that God has given them,” Russ explains. “They develop friendships and work together as a team with an attitude of caring for others. It’s an opportunity to draw strength and discipline from God to become better at something.”

Mark Horman, Sports Coordinator for St. Francis, schedules practices and assigns coaches to teams, which

accept children from third through eighth grade.

“We try to get kids that are not in the school, but in the parish involved,” Mark says. “It’s a good opportunity for children to meet each other, and it teaches kids many things that they can’t learn in a classroom.”

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Mark Horman at mark.horman@att.net. He is always looking for people who would like to coach or volunteer in other capacities.

“Coaching has been a journey for me,” Russ shares. “It has taught me humility and patience. When you’re physically able to help people, that’s a gift that God has given you. We have to acknowledge and thank God for the ability to do the things we can do. If it’s a pleasure for you, that’s just an added bonus.”

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 6:30, 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 a.m.

Weekday Mass: M, T, W, Th, F, 6:30 a.m. | M, T, W, Th, F, S, 8:00 a.m. | W, F, 8:35 a.m. during school year

Confessions: Saturdays 8:30 a.m., 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil 5:30 p.m.; Holy Day: 6:30 a.m.; 8:35 a.m. on school days; 8:00 a.m. during summer; 5:30 p.m.