

Saint Francis Solanus



SEPTEMBER 2015

GETTING TO KNOW OUR SCHOOL'S OFFICE STAFF

When you watch a play, a movie or a performance of any kind, you might not notice all the goings-on behind the scenes. There are lighting engineers, sound producers, scriptwriters, prop movers, and a handful of others at work behind the curtains. Regardless of whether or not you see the behind-the-scenes work, these members of the production crew are just as essential as the players out on center stage. Without these hidden workers, the production wouldn't be the same.

Likewise, the office workers at St. Francis Solanus School are on hand each and every day to ensure that the school runs smoothly and efficiently. Kristin Eyler and Judy Patterson – with occasional assistance from librarian and kindergarten aide Dawn Peters – work to keep the moving parts of the school well oiled and synchronized.

"Each day is its own, depending what is scheduled," Kristin says. "The mornings are the busiest with getting everything set in motion for the day. I take the day step-by-step on what needs to be accomplished by certain times. But the office is a fun place to be. Judy and I have a good time working together and make each other laugh. We back each other up to get the jobs done, as well."



Kristin Eyler



Judy Patterson

Kristin and Judy take care of a number of important duties every day, multitasking with phone calls, reports and daily activities like lunch count, attendance and paying bills. They also answer the door, attend to sick or hurt children, schedule recess duty, collect lunch fees, order supplies, and send out mailings. In addition, they create a weekly newsletter that is sent out to the families to inform them about upcoming events and important

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The Importance of Family Prayer

“The family that prays together stays together.” This famous slogan was coined in 1947 by writer Al Scalpone, and has been frequently referenced ever since. The phrase pinpoints the true power of prayer, and the importance of making family prayer a consistent practice in our lives.

As Christian disciples, we are striving to follow Jesus – to grow in our love of Him and to serve Him through the use of our time, talent and treasure. If we desire to follow in His footsteps, we must first begin by getting to know Him. Spending time with the Lord in prayer forms a foundation on which we can build our lives as Christian disciples, much in the same way that spending time with a girlfriend or boyfriend forms the foundation of a strong relationship.

The Christian family is the first place where children learn to pray. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls the family unit “Ecclesia domestica,” or “the Domestic Church” (1656). Thus, parents have a responsibility to set an example by taking time for personal prayer every day, and making family prayer a regular practice. This not only sets an example for the children, but also provides them with a faith-filled foundation and brings them closer to the Lord – forming them as grateful stewards of their time.

There are many ways in which a family can pray together. One of the most important times for prayer is before meals, where we thank God for His blessings, and for the food on our family table. Families may also share in the formal prayers of the Church, or perhaps pray a Rosary together every night. We can also thank the Lord aloud, asking Him to answer our prayers and offering Him our daily petitions. One often-suggested method of family prayer is ACTS, where we offer Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Families may also go to their church and kneel together before the Blessed Sacrament, offering prayers in Christ’s presence.

These are just several of the many opportunities for families to pray together. Of course, prayer will be influenced by each family’s dynamics and personalities. But no matter how we pray, it is important that we make the time to do so. This will deepen the family’s relationship with the Lord, our commitment as His disciples will be stronger, and we may continually renew and foster our families’ bonds.



PRAYER OF PARENTS:

God, our Father, I thank you for the gift of my children and for the privilege and responsibility of being a parent, for this is my way of holiness.

May I regard each of my children as a sacred pledge of Your love and a beautiful sign of Your confidence in me.

Help me to pass on to my children our greatest treasures - faith in Your truths, hope in Your goodness, love in Your name for all.

I entrust my children to Your loving care.

Banish from our home any bitterness or lack of forgiveness.

Let us have time, deep concern, and a sense of sacrifice for one another.

Teach us never to be ashamed that we are, in name and in fact, a Catholic family striving to live in the way of Jesus, Who is head of our home.

Give us Your Holy Spirit to unite us throughout this life and let the circle of our family be unbroken in the Kingdom of Your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

A Letter From Our Pastor

September:

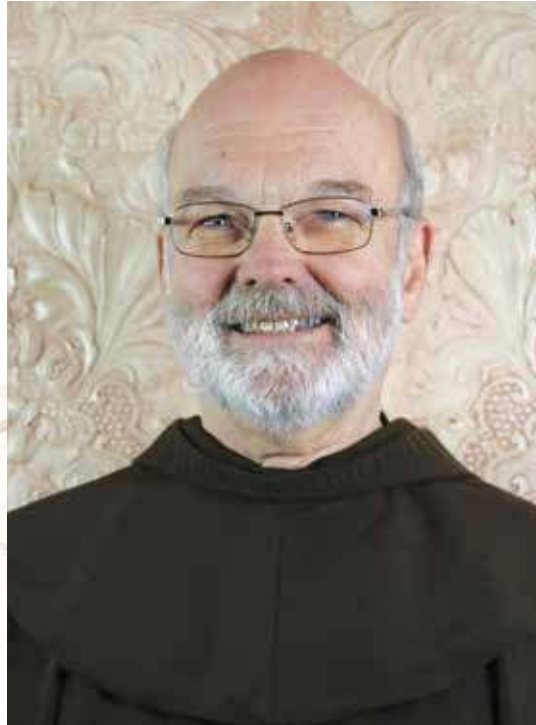
AN ONGOING OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Dear Parishioners,

In his letters, St. Paul often began by greeting his “brothers and sisters.” Every time I read one of these letters, it reminds me that you and I truly are sisters and brothers in the Body of Christ, the Church, but especially here in our own parish. We need to understand that we are indeed a family, and the way we see and treat one another is fundamental to the health and happiness of this family.

Our spiritual family doesn’t stop at the walls of our church, but rather, extends to include every man and woman created in God’s image and likeness. You may be familiar with the term “Catholic Social Teaching,” which is built on a commitment to the poor. These are the beliefs that guide Catholics on how to apply the faith to all aspects of life, and they lay the framework for the Church’s teachings on the dignity and sacredness of human life. Once we make a commitment to be disciples of Jesus and pursue stewardship as a way of life, the principles of Catholic Social Teaching become very easy to incorporate into our lives.

Catholic Social Teaching has been around since those first followers of Jesus tried to balance their new faith with the realities of living in a world of Roman oppression. Jesus reminded His disciples then, just as He reminds us now, that caring for and administering to the poor should be at the core of all we do. Recall when the Lord said in Matthew, “For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you gave me clothing; I was ill and you cared for me; I was in prison and you visited me.”



This is our foundation as we seek to embody mercy and justice to all men and women, and should be one of our major goals as a faith community. Many of our parish ministries provide for us an opportunity to do just as Jesus asked: to serve those most in need. As we move into the fall season, with Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas soon to follow, now is a good time for us to recommit ourselves to addressing the needs we see around us — both as a parish community and as individuals.

I am proud of our collective efforts in assisting and serving the poor, but I also know that we can do more. Many of us personally need to get involved in these efforts. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has a great love and regard for the poor and, like Jesus, he reminds us often of what we need to do. In a recent homily, Pope Francis said, “The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty.” Together, we can make a difference.

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

Woodward Family

If someone were to ask for a definition of stewardship, chances are the answer would include the words “time,” “talent” and “treasure.” Most people could even explain how stewardship is a way of life – one that impacts both the parish and the community. It all sounds simple, but when life gets busy with work, school, family obligations, and extracurricular activities, stewardship may not seem as simple anymore. But from parishioners Warren and Christy Woodward, we can learn how making faith a priority is a very good place to start in living life as a good steward.

When they were introduced by mutual friends at Quincy University and eventually started dating, Warren and Christy came into the relationship from strong faith backgrounds. Both of them credit their parents for teaching them their first lessons on faith, and even though they came from

different denominations – Warren was raised Missouri Synod Lutheran and Christy was raised Roman Catholic – they knew they wanted to share the same faith. So when they married, they made the Lutheran church their home and, for a while, that worked. But over time, Christy realized that she missed the Mass and longed for the faith of her childhood.

“I remember on Easter Sunday, I was set to profess my faith in the Lutheran church, and that morning I woke up and discovered that I had lost my voice,” Christy says. “I wasn’t ill, but for some reason I had no audible voice. I still went through with the service, but in looking back, I see that as the moment I started to turn around to walk back home. It wasn’t long after that I began attending Mass at St. Francis Solanus on Saturday night, and then going to the Lutheran service on Sunday.”

Several months later, however, Christy decided that she needed to fully return to her Catholic roots, and to support his wife Warren began attending Mass with her. In 2007, Warren and Christy made a Cursillo together, and a few years later – with the friendship and guidance from Fr. Tom Shaughnessy – Warren made his Profession of Faith and the couple had their marriage blessed in the Church.

And with faith an important part of who they are as a couple, Warren and Christy know that it is equally important in their role as parents to their daughters, Caroline,

15, and Jillian, 12. Like their parents before them, they see faith as a gift that is passed on through the generations – you teach the faith to your children, and in turn, they pass it on to their children. And on it goes.

“As a family, we have our traditions, our vacations, and our birthday dinners,” Christy says. “But as parents, we are responsible for teaching the faith. It is the most important legacy we can give our children.”

And when you begin with faith, stewardship is the means to put that faith into action, both in the parish and out in the community. Over the years, Christy has taught PSR, volunteered with Vacation Bible School, and participated in Catholics Returning Home and Why Catholic. In addition, their daughters have been involved with PSR and Vacation Bible School.

Of course, life gets busy. Warren works as an IT Consultant with International Eye Care, while Christy was recently promoted to Program Coordinator of the Adult Health Corps Volunteers at Blessing Hospital. Caroline is a sophomore, Jillian is in the seventh grade, and



Parishioner Christy Woodward is Program Coordinator of the Adult Health Corps Volunteers at Blessing Hospital.

“Volunteering is the gift of your time. Instead, the gift of your time is a tendency to want to share our lives. We are blessed.”

Warren Woodward with his daughters at the Bridge the Gap to Health Race for Quincy Catholic Charities MedAssist program.



Christy is almost finished with a degree in Human Services. So, of course, there is not a lot of spare time. But Christy, whose job allows her to work with volunteers every day, believes that if faith is the most important legacy we can give our children, volunteering would be a close second.

“Volunteering is the ultimate act of service,” Christy says. “It’s not done for monetary reward. Instead, the gift of your time is a purely selfless act. Sometimes it is hard, and we have a tendency to want to do it all. But if we discern the ways we can give of our time and share our talents, then it all comes together. And in the end, we are blessed with much more than we gave.”

Ultimately, the opportunity to live a life of stewardship is to do what we can, when we can, and however we can. In other words, stewardship can present itself in different ways and at different times. With God’s grace, we can learn to recognize those opportunities to serve. In spite of all the distractions life offers, making a conscious decision to put God front and center can make all the

difference in the world. It’s a decision that Warren and Christy made a long time ago, and that is a very good place to start for anyone trying to live a life of stewardship.

“In our family, the Stewardship Prayer has a deep meaning to us and reminds us who we want to be in our faith community,” Christy says. “The very first line says it all – ‘Loving God, I come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all that I am and all that I have is a gift from you.’”



Warren and Christy Woodward’s daughters – (from left) Jillian, 12, will be in the seventh grade at Quincy Junior High, while Caroline, 15, is a rising sophomore at Quincy Senior High School.

the ultimate act of service. It’s not done for monetary reward. Your time is a purely selfless act. Sometimes it is hard, and we have a tendency to want to do it all. But if we discern the ways we can give of our time and share our talents, then it all comes together. And in the end, we are blessed with much more than we gave.” – Christy Woodward

“Love Is Our Mission: The Family Fully Alive”

The United States Welcomes Pope Francis

Pope Francis has traveled to Israel, Brazil and Turkey, among other countries throughout the past 30 months of his papacy. Last fall, in an address to the Colloquium on the Complementarity of Man and Woman, our Holy Father announced he would travel to the United States for the 2015 World Meeting of Families.

This papal visit will be a historic event for the United States. Many expect Pope Francis to speak about immigration and our responsibility as stewards of creation along with other current topics of interest.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, Sept. 22, the pontiff will travel from Cuba to the United States. The following day, the leader of our Church and the leader of our country will convene at the White House. President Obama has called Pope Francis “transformative,” publicly thanking the pontiff for his moral example and his instrumental role in furthering relations between the United States and Cuba.

After midday prayer on Sept. 23 with bishops at St. Matthew’s Cathedral, Pope Francis will canonize Blessed Junipero Serra, the Spanish Franciscan instrumental in establishing the California missions, at a Mass in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

In keeping with his reputation for the unprecedented, Pope Francis will then speak to a joint session of the United States Congress on the morning of Sept. 24, thus becoming the first pope to address Congress.

Afterwards, Pope Francis will visit St. Patrick in the City and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington before departing for New York City and arriving to participate in Vespers at St. Patrick’s Cathedral.

On Sept. 25, Pope Francis will become the fourth leader of the Catholic Church to visit the United Nations and speak to the United Nations General Assembly.

From the United Nations, Pope Francis will travel to the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center site. There, he will lead an interfaith service for peace.

Despite his limited days on American soil, Pope Francis designated time to visit Our Lady Queen of Angels School in East Harlem. The pope will be received by a largely immigrant student population at this Partnership School, which is one of a six-school organization devoted to urban Catholic education in the communities of South Bronx and Harlem.

The celebration of Mass at Madison Square Garden concludes this last full day in New York City.

After arriving in Philadelphia on Sept. 26, Pope Francis will celebrate Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, and then speak at Independence Hall on immigration and religious freedom.

In the evening, the pope will at last arrive at the World Meeting of Families 2015, the theme of which, chosen by Pope Francis, is “Love Is Our Mission: the Family Fully Alive.” That evening, he will be the guest of honor at the Festival of Families.

On Sept. 27, the pope will convene with bishops at St. Martin’s Chapel at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary before visiting the Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility, where he will meet with select prisoners and their families.

In the afternoon, Pope Francis returns to the World Meeting of Families to celebrate the concluding Mass at Benjamin Franklin Parkway before departing in the evening for Rome.

As we prepare for the Holy Year of Mercy, Pope Francis’ actions exemplify for us the Corporal Works of Mercy. Let us remember our call as Christians to reach out to our brothers and sisters in Christ.





HELPING HANDS MINISTRY

Reaching Out to Parishioners in Need

There's a popular song that says "no one can fill those of your needs that you won't let show." The thought behind this phrase is that to let others be a friend to you, you can't be afraid to say when you need a hand.

For parishioners at St. Francis, those hands belong to the volunteers behind the Helping Hands Ministry. Led by Martin "Mak" Makarewicz, this group steps up to help parishioners within their own homes by doing light yard work and small handyman-type tasks. As Mak explains, the benefits of this ministry often go beyond just the work involved.

"It's a ministry of men primarily sponsored by the Holy Name Society," Mak says. "Our objective is to help with very light yard work, if they need boxes put away in the attic, raking leaves, putting away Christmas decorations, or taking a small air conditioner out of a window. Jobs should last about an hour or so."

Mak says the majority of parishioners who utilize this free service are elderly, but that help is available to any parishioner who asks for it. And because Helping Hands truly is a ministry, those who volunteer are happy to pray or read Scripture with their fellow parishioners on request.

"Mainly, a lot of our parishioners are lonely and this gives them the time to interact with fellow parishioners," Mak explains. "As a part of stewardship at St. Francis, this is a way we can give to our fellow parishioners. Our parish is more than just about going to church on Sundays. This is what makes St. Francis a special parish – that people are willing to help out and do things outside of the theological boundaries."

Mak says the idea for Helping Hands grew out of his wife Maureen's involvement with Meals on Wheels. Mak would occasionally volunteer with her, and many of the people that received meals from the program were also parishioners. Being in these parishioners' homes opened Mak's eyes to an often unspoken need.

"You could see things that could be done around the house that they were physically limited from doing," he says. "There are so many lonely, single or elderly people in our parish, and it's just a helping hand to help out with some minor chores, and just to visit and pray with them."

For those who choose to help out, answering that need can be a blessing as well.

"It gives you a lot of satisfaction," Mak says. "You get to bring sunshine to some people's lives."

Parishioners who would like to have Helping Hands come to their home should contact the parish rectory at 217-222-2898. Please note that jobs should be able to be completed within an hour and should not involve climbing a ladder. Those who are interested in learning more about Helping Hands or volunteering should contact Martin "Mak" Makarewicz directly at 217-224-8668.

St. Francis Solanus

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

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SCHOOL'S OFFICE STAFF

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goings-on at St. Francis. They are also in charge of keeping student information and health records on file and up to date for state and diocesan reports. Finally, they make sure the proper communication is given to each classroom about various activities that will occur throughout the year and lend a helping hand to the principal.

Judy has been secretary in the St. Francis Solanus school office since 2000. She has been married for 42 years to her husband, Robert, and has two children and four grandchildren.

"I see my work as a form of service by taking care of and interacting with parents and students in a Christian manner," Judy says. "I love children and working in a Christian environment. It's rewarding to watch the children grow up in their faith throughout the years."

When Judy is not busy with secretary work, she

spends her time with Robert, traveling and spending time with their grandchildren.

Kristin is a newer member of the office, having been hired in the fall of 2013. She is also married and has three children.

"As a past student, it has been a great opportunity to see the school at a different angle and see that the Christian values I grew up with at St. Francis are still prominent," Kristin says. "The past two years have been fun getting to know the students and being able to help them with whatever they need. I enjoy working with Judy, she has as wonderful heart and personality."

Our school secretaries, along with other office workers, are always ready to lend a helping hand, a bandage, or simply a listening ear! We thank them for their dutiful service to our school community!

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.