

Saint Francis Solanus



OCTOBER 2018

Find Unique Gifts and Help Your Parish Community During the Annual Holiday Bazaar

What do you do when the bustle of Thanksgiving is over, the turkey is but a delicious memory and you're wondering what unique gifts you can find for Christmas? The answer — make plans to come to the St. Francis Solanus Holiday Bazaar, set for 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, in the Parish Center.

"The best way to help us with the bazaar is to come," says Jennifer Arens, Holiday Bazaar Chair. "We want everyone to come and spread the word and support the vendors, the raffles and the cookie booth."

All the funds raised at the Holiday Bazaar will help support our parish.

There will be several raffles to choose from — the 50/50 cash raffle and the raffle for homemade quilts stitched by our St. Francis Quilters. The main raffle will be for two, \$100 cash prizes and multiple gift cards for local businesses. Jewelry donated by local businesses is also expected to be among prizes offered.

Other delights will be homemade crafts, vendors, the cookie walk, and homemade rolls and coffee in the morning hours, while soup and sandwiches will be served at lunchtime.

Any parishioner who would like to set up a booth to sell craft items or has a small business with products



to offer will get first dibs on space.

Other ways that parishioners can help would be with what Jennifer calls the "legwork" ahead of the event.

"We will need help getting the raffle prizes collected, or help serving food and selling tickets, which probably will be available Nov. 1," Jennifer says. "Everyone can help sell tickets, since the raffle winners don't have to be present to win. Usually tickets are ready the month before, and they can be picked up to sell at the rectory, or after Mass at the

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Questions and Answers about Our Annual Stewardship Renewal

*Commitment Weekend is October 20-21.
Don't forget to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!*

How do I use my Commitment Card?

Your commitment card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving. It is designed to be used by the whole family.

Time Section: Except for the ill and homebound, everyone should be able to check "Come to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days." Try to check at least a few other items. Daily prayer should be a priority for every person trying to grow closer to God.

Talent Section: You can either sign up for new ministries or re-commit to your current ministries. Be sure to write your first name next to the ministry! This is especially important if the card is being used by more than one person.

Treasure Section: Clearly print how much money you plan to give each week or month to our parish. Try to take a step toward giving five percent of your income to St. Francis Solanus.

Is your prayer life in need of a tune-up?

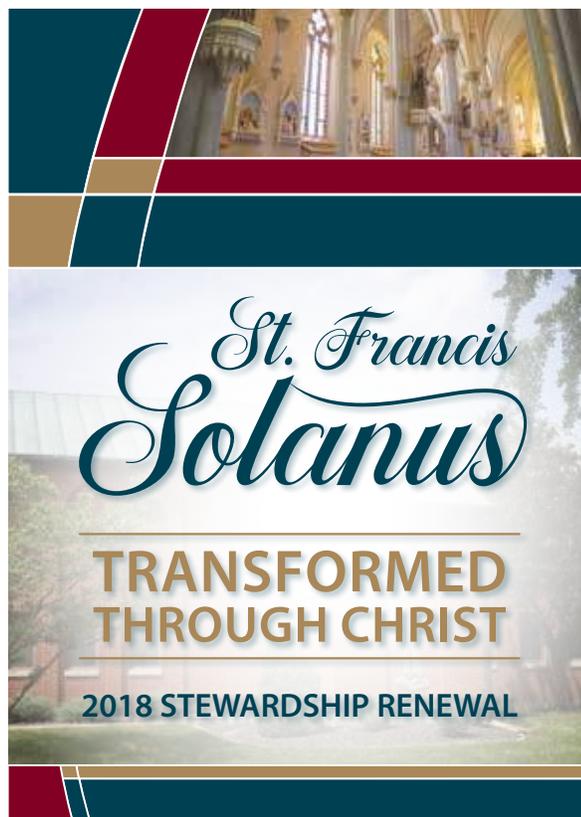
Everyone wants to spend more time in prayer, but it seems there is never enough time to do everything we want to do. This year, as you're discerning how you will offer your time to God, resolve to follow through with your commitments. Consider each moment you spend in prayer as nourishment for your soul. The spiritual health of our parish is only as strong as the sum of its parts (individual parishioners).

Is your level of parish involvement in need of a boost?

Sure, ministries give parishioners opportunities to serve others in the community, but they also benefit those in the ministry itself. Ask anyone who actively participates in a ministry at St. Francis Solanus, "Why do you enjoy serving in this way?" They'll probably say, "I get more out of the ministry than the people I serve." This year, as you're discerning how you will offer your talents to God, considering signing up for a ministry that may benefit you, like a Bible study, prayer group, or retreat. Or, contribute to an outreach ministry where your good deeds not only help others in the community, but also give you feelings of satisfaction and thankfulness.

Do you give a percentage of your income to the offertory?

It may be hard to see offertory giving as a way to "help yourself," but when we approach the subject from a spiritual viewpoint, it can lead to individual spiritual growth and an increase in faith. Even the most savvy business person worries about his or her personal finances from time to time. Adding a weekly offertory check to the list of monthly bills may seem crazy but, ultimately, sacrificial giving forces us to cut unnecessary spending, create a budget and have faith that God will help us make it through the month. All of these are good things for each of us, individually. After faithfully giving to the offertory for a few months, many Catholics find that it's not only possible to give a weekly offering, but that the fruits of their gift far outweigh the expense.



Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" in the mail that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your Commitment Card.

A Letter From Our Pastor

This Month and Beyond, Let Us Share the Faith in Word and Action

Dear Parishioners,

When reading through our newsletter, it is clear that we often discuss and reflect upon the topic of ministries — within our community and beyond — and how Christ shares His ministry with us.

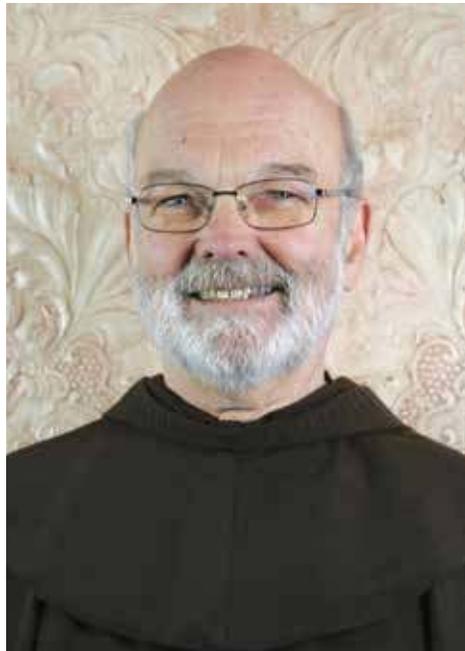
As a faith community that is committed to living out stewardship, we all share in Christ's ministry. And while we share our many gifts with God and His Church, we take the truths set forth in the readings from Scripture and apply them to present-day life. Of course, that's what you are supposed to do when you share your faith with your family, friends, neighbors and coworkers.

But what does it mean to "share our faith"? Well, it is exactly what parents — as the "domestic church" — are supposed to do with their children. Furthermore, lay people act as catechists when they teach religion classes in Catholic schools or help with religious education programs in their parishes.

"Sharing the faith" also encompasses serving and providing assistance to those in need, both within and beyond the parish community, or bringing the Eucharist to the ill or homebound who cannot regularly attend Mass. In these ways and more, lay people have many opportunities to participate directly in the ministry of the Church.

But as the Second Vatican Council reminded us, "An apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one's way of life; a true apostle looks for opportunities to announce Christ by words addressed either to non-believers with a view to leading them to faith, or to the faithful with a view to instructing, strengthening, and encouraging them to a more fervent life" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 6).

In other words, we must proclaim our Christian faith through our actions and how we live our lives



— and *also* be prepared to share it in words if we are given the opportunity. With this in mind, we may each want to make a commitment of time to study the Scriptures and the Church's teachings so that we may be better prepared to share the faith!

Of course, the month of October draws us a little closer to the end of the year — thus, we are soon approaching the celebration of Thanksgiving, and the Advent and Christmas seasons. In the next few months, we will each have so many opportunities to share our faith through words and actions. I ask you to prayerfully consider how you will take advantage of these opportunities, living as stewards carrying out His ministry every day, for

the rest of this year and beyond.

May God grant you the grace to share richly as a disciple of Christ!

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

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Stewardship Committee Encouraged in Our Parish



The St. Francis Solanus Stewardship Committee — (front, from left) Jane Haas, Betty Kaufmann, Jayne Huseman, and Linda Rull; (back, from left) Caitlin Kendrick, Marcia Steinkamp, Mike Holbrook, John Venegoni, Nancy Venegoni, John Lammers, Jayne Lammers, and Fr. Don Blaeser, O.F.M.

“Stewardship is an expression of discipleship, with the power to change how we understand and live out our lives. Disciples who practice stewardship recognize God as the origin of life, the giver of freedom, the source of all they have and are and will be.”

These words — from the introduction to *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, the 1992 U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on stewardship — serve as a wonderful description of why stewardship is such an important part of living as an intentional disciple of Christ Jesus. About five years ago, our parish decided to increase our dedication to stewardship here at St. Francis Solanus by forming a Stewardship Committee. This group of a dozen parishioners seeks to help the church reach out to parishioners and introduce them to what it means to lead a life of active stewardship.

Marcia Steinkamp, who serves as Co-Chair of our Stewardship Committee alongside Linda Rull, explains the purpose behind this group.

“The mission of the Stewardship Committee is to facilitate the growth of the Four Pillars of stewardship within our parish family — Hospitality, Prayer, Formation and Service,” Marcia says. “We had a parish retreat at the end of September, our parish stewardship renewal is in mid-October, and in the future, we’ll continue to promote ministries that will benefit our parishioners and their growth as stewards.”

The parish retreat held on Sept. 29 was open not only to ministry leaders, but to all interested parishioners. School parents in particular were highly encouraged to be a part of this special day. The topic of the retreat was prayer, which is a fundamental aspect of stewardship as a way of life.

“That relationship with the Lord by prayer carries the discipleship out,” Marcia says. “It allows us to share the love.”

Over the last few years, the Stewardship Committee has helped raise awareness about the many facets of

Pages Expressions of Discipleship in Community

stewardship. While sharing of one's treasure is certainly a part of this active discipleship, time and talent are equally important. As parishioners become more generous with their time and talent, St. Francis Solanus has seen an increase in the number and size of its ministries.

Marcia is enthusiastic about the changes that have taken place in our parish since the Stewardship Committee first became an official entity in 2014.

"There are a number of our ministries that have truly bloomed," Marcia says. "And with that comes fellowship. All the people who work in the Food Pantry together, all those who do the Funeral Ministry — all the ministries are really developing connections and relationships among parishioners. Based on that, I think we've become a more caring parish."

Committee Co-Chair Linda Rull has also seen the many benefits of this spiritual growth in our parish.

"The ministries are much more organized," she says. "Before, people might have been operating on their own and as individuals, but now they are bringing others and encouraging them. So it's become more of a group setting in the parish."

Throughout the year — and most especially during this special time of Stewardship Renewal — the Stewardship Committee strives above all to provide parishioners with the opportunity to tap into their own interests and passions to find ways to live out their discipleship.

"We all have talents and abilities to give," Linda says. "I honestly think that when you're able to help identify and encourage, and you're able to have people feel good about themselves, they realize they could step up to the plate. When someone becomes active in ministries and other parish opportunities, that person becomes enriched in the faith."

Of course, many people at St. Francis Solanus have long been living an active faith life. With a focus on stewardship, however, the parish hopes to bring our parishioners to an even closer walk with Christ.

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— STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR LINDA RULL

"I think that our parish is embracing stewardship, and they realize they've been doing it all along, but this is just naming it," Marcia says. "It's not like we're reinventing the wheel — we've always done this. But with that being said, we also realize there is always room for more growth and a deeper commitment to stewardship by each person."

Thanks to the important work of our Stewardship Committee, more and more parishioners are realizing that making stewardship a way of life is simply a natural part of growing in discipleship.

"I honestly think if you truly accept wanting or trying to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, you have to do this," Linda says. "When you look at Christ's life, He went out and tried to bring in more people, and He sought out the sick and needy and poor. So if that's what we believe as Catholics, then I just don't think we have a choice not to do that. If you can accept that responsibility, that is a reward in itself."

We hope all parishioners will look for new and exciting ways to share their time, talent and treasure with the parish during this year's Stewardship Renewal. Anyone who would like to be a part of our Stewardship Committee is encouraged to indicate their interest on the Stewardship Renewal cards. Let's all strive to become more intentional disciples of Christ together!

Our 2017-2018 Fiscal Year Financial Report

A Note From Fr. Don Blaeser, O.F.M.

I'm happy to offer you our Financial Report for the 2017-2018 fiscal year together with a few comments about it.

First and foremost is the wonderful news, which you probably know — that our debt on the Parish Center is completely paid off. This was due to the generosity of parishioners who contributed over \$211,000 through the pink envelopes in the Sunday collections over the past two years, in addition to your original pledges. Besides that, over \$1.1 million was received by the parish from bequests and memorials these past two years, and we would not have a balanced budget without this. Our Finance Council had made debt retirement its top priority since the Parish Center was built, so now, through your generosity and also that of some parishioners who are now deceased, it has been accomplished.

We also find that regular contributions have been up in the past year, which is clearly due to our practice of stewardship as a way of life. Our overall expenses have been reduced, resulting in total expenses for the year being slightly less than last year. Both factors contributed to a very satisfying fiscal year.

We were blest in the past year with a very manageable assessment for the Annual Catholic Services Appeal

(ACSA), but now our assessment for the coming year will be \$94,536, which is a good deal higher than last year.

Obviously, we have ongoing maintenance and repair issues. You also know from what I wrote in parish bulletins that we have three major improvements afoot — the repair and repainting of our church doors, at \$3,500; providing restrooms in the basement of the Parish Center, at \$27,500; and the repair of curbs and sidewalks, at \$30,000 to \$35,000. The first two should be covered almost entirely by pledges.

However, there are no pledges for the last item, and it is not in the budget for this year. And yet we think it is really important to get this work done. So, we would greatly appreciate your help in paying for repair of the curbs and sidewalks. Since some of you have been contributing to the Parish Center, would you consider steering those dollars toward the curb and sidewalk repairs?

And of course, there are always other projects under consideration. I might mention that I have been dreaming of fixing, upgrading or putting in an entirely new sound system in the church. What do you think?

All that being said, I want to say thanks to everyone who has been practicing stewardship as a way of life. You're helping to make St. Francis Parish thrive and grow. God bless you all.

St. Francis Solanus Comparative Parish Financial Report

07/2017 to 06/2018 07/2016 to 06/2017

RECEIPTS

Church Support	\$ 1,160,848	\$ 1,076,747	Increased 7.8% over last Year
Bequests, Memorials, Trusts	656,905	583,130	Increased 13% over last year
Fundraisers & Church Activities	33,244	26,851	Picnic & others
All School Income	946,833	1,001,508	5.46% decrease over prior year
Investments Income	12,658	12,348	2.5% Increase
Church Support Debt Retirement	93,600	118,069	21.3% decrease
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 2,904,088	\$ 2,818,653	3% Increase in income

EXPENDITURES

Wages, Benefits, Payroll Taxes	\$ 1,665,060	\$ 1,637,071	1.7% increase
Contractual Services	\$ 102,656	\$ 111,303	7.8% Decrease
Utilities	69,287	75,708	8.5% decrease
Insurance - Property & Liability	37,457	37,432	Same
Repairs, Maintenance, Supplies, Equipment	209,555	164,863	55% Increase
Hospitality, Faith Education, Fees	29,436	20,179	41% Increase
Other	76,017	163,656	54% Decrease
Interest On Debt	34,377	30,158	14% Increase
Debt Retirement	562,441	578,537	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 2,786,286	\$ 2,818,907	1% Decrease

SURPLUS (DEFICIT)

	\$ 117,802	\$ (254)	
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CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Capital Improvements Church	\$ -	\$ (16,464)	
Capital Improvements School - Restrooms	(51,248)	(64,567)	

TOTAL SURPLUS

	\$ 66,554	\$ (81,285)	
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THE ROSARY MAKERS

Sharing the Love of the Blessed Mother

From experience, Phil and Sherry Kemner have found that there is a tremendous amount of peace and power behind all of those little beads that make up a rosary.

"We have seen the Rosary do wonderful things, so many times," Sherry says. "We can always go to the Blessed Mother when we need something. The Rosary kindles our love for her, because she is the Mother of God. She is the most perfect intercessor we have and there is no more powerful advocate than her."

One could say that these little beads are like arrows in the hands of God's warriors. When we pray the Rosary, our prayers ascend to the Immaculate Heart of Our Lady, who hears the pleas of God's children with compassion and love.

"Whenever we have needed something for our Rosary Makers Ministry, we prayed to the Blessed Mother, and our prayers were answered!" Sherry says. "Phil and I both pray at least two or three rosaries a day, and when we pray them, we ask Mary to help us love her Son more."

In fact, Phil and Sherry have been so inspired by the beautiful prayer of the Rosary that they feel led to make rosaries for others through the Rosary Makers Ministry.

"It is such a powerful prayer that Phil and I want to share it with others, so that is why we do this ministry," Sherry says. "The Rosary encapsulates every part of Mary's life, as well as Jesus' life."

In addition to Phil and Sherry, a few other faithful volunteers help with the ministry as well. Each volunteer makes however many rosaries as they are



able, in their own homes when it is convenient for them. They make several different kinds of rosaries, using various materials that they have purchased themselves, or that have been donated to the ministry. Some of the rosaries they make are put in baskets at our parish for people to use as needed. Phil enjoys making special rosaries for First Communicants, hospital patients or people in the missions.

"It is wonderful that people understand there is such a need in Quincy for people like us to make rosaries," Sherry says. "Devotion to the Rosary is still very strong in third world countries as well, but they often have a hard time getting a hold of rosaries, so that is why we like to donate them to the missions."

As ministry members make the rosaries, they try to contemplate the mysteries of Christ's life, and intercede for others.

"When I first started making the rosaries, I used to pray a full Rosary on every rosary I was making," Sherry says. "However, I soon found out that I couldn't keep it up! I do like to listen to a CD of the Rosary and pray along with it, though. It helps me reflect on the mysteries in a new way. You should try not to become so accustomed to praying the Rosary that it becomes just a routine."

For the most part, they cover the expenses for the materials to make the rosaries themselves or accept donations of materials. Recently, Betty Schneider generously donated a couple hundred rosaries to the Rosary Makers Ministry so that they could distribute them to the missions.

Traditionally, the Church honors the Holy Rosary in a particular way during the month of October. All are encouraged to draw near to the Blessed Mother's heart, and receive all of the graces she wants to give to those who pray her Rosary with sincere devotion. For more information, please contact Phil Kemner at 217-224-4911.

St. Francis Solanus

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

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Holiday Bazaar *continued from front cover*

back of the church. The school kids will be bringing home tickets. In addition, I can use help from someone good with graphics. And we can also use help the day of, or with set up.”

Whether you attend the Holiday Bazaar or volunteer your time at the event, your participation makes a difference in how we come together as a parish.

“It’s a great way to build community in the parish,” Jennifer says. “Come and visit, support other parishioners with crafts to sell or a small business. This is a great time to visit, and it’s getting close to the holidays. There are not a lot of events when we can see each other. We support the parish when we go to the Parish Picnic in the

summer, and this is also a way to support the parish in the winter. You can buy some unique gifts — our bazaar is made up primarily of people in our parish who have their own businesses.”

Jennifer encourages parishioners who are crafters to take part in the Holiday Bazaar for two reasons — the crafts are a great way to express stewardship in the giving of time and talent, and the work is a way to keep the crafts alive and passed on to the younger generation.

“When people make something and run a small business, this helps kids learn about running a small business, as well as learning the craft,” Jennifer says. “It’s a really good way to carry that on.”

Anyone who is interested in volunteering during the Holiday Bazaar or setting up a vendor booth may call Jennifer Arens at 217-430-5752.

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, 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.