

Saint Francis Solanus



NOVEMBER 2019

EMPOWERED FOR SERVICE: *The Girl Scouts of St. Francis Solanus*

Imagine a world where, from a young age, girls were empowered with confidence, courage and character. Imagine the difference these young women could make, using their unique and God-given talents to serve their parishes, their communities and the world. Here at St. Francis Solanus, we hope that our Girl Scout troop will be a place where our girls can begin to discover and nurture the gifts that God has given them, making the world a better place.

It was with this in mind that Alice Arnold began a troop at St. Francis Solanus for her own daughter and others. The girls meet after school on Friday afternoons and participate in a variety of activities and events throughout the year.

Developing leadership skills is one of the primary purposes of Girl Scouts, as the girls are given opportunities to discover and utilize their strengths.

"When they're advocating for our communities, discovering the outdoors, exploring science and technology, or powering new adventures as part of the Girl Scout Cookie Program, Girl Scouts discover they can achieve anything," Alice says. "Girl Scouts helps girls discover their strengths and change the world."

Girl Scouts also helps young women to build



The girls learned about the animals and donated dog and cat food and other needed items.

strong friendships with other girls, working together towards a common goal.

"By getting involved in Girl Scouting developed through Catholic schools or parishes, the girls are able to connect with other girls their age and share their similarities and differences while sharing their faith," Alice says.

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The Girl Scouts of St. Francis Solanus

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At St. Francis Solanus, girls are encouraged to grow in their faith and relationship with their Catholic community through various badge programs, as well as special events like Girl Scout Sunday, which gives the girls an opportunity to attend and be recognized by our parish community. At this event, girls have the opportunity to read, sing, carry up the gifts and pray together as a troop.

“At St. Francis, the Girl Scout troops come together and celebrate being a Girl Scout of the Catholic faith,” Alice says.

This year, the troop is focusing on women who have made an impact throughout history, learning their stories and drawing inspiration from their sacrifices.

“[These stories] help the girls aspire to reach high and know that even though their opinions may be criticized, they are valuable and important,” Alice says.

Alice hopes parents will encourage their daughters to become involved, and that parents and other members of the community will consider serving to mentor and guide the girls of our parish in Girl Scouts. She also reminds parents that if there is not currently a troop serving their daughters’ age group, there is help available to get started.

“Leaders are always needed, as well as people who would just like to share their time and talents with their young ladies,” Alice says. “We love having people share their knowledge and challenge the girls to think big.”

“The girls inspire me at each meeting to be stronger and become more adventurous,” she adds. “Their



Our Girl Scouts participate in our community in many different ways, including visiting the Quincy Humane Society.

unique qualities provide this world with an amazing future. I want to help take those talents they have and find the path in Girl Scouts that helps them soar.”

At the end of the day, Alice’s goal is to help the girls leave her troop, ready to change the world and make a positive impact on those around them.

“I hope they open their minds to the possibilities that are before them and strive to be women who make a difference by communicating openly with others,” Alice says. “I want them to never stop searching for more knowledge, more faith, more openness and more opportunities to change the world for the good.”

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If you would like more information on our St. Francis Solanus Girl Scout Troop, please contact Alice Arnold at 217-440-6135 or Beanie1217@gmail.com. You may also contact the local Girl Scout office at 888-623-1237.

A Letter From Our Pastor

Stewardship on Whose Terms?

Dear Parishioners,

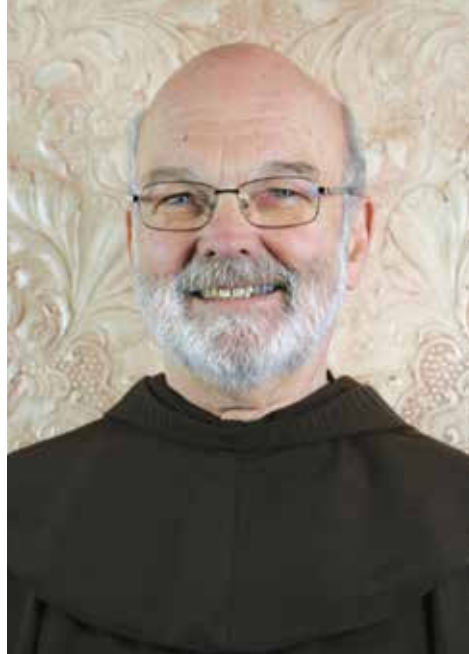
When it comes to stewardship, it seems the acceptance or rejection of it is a personal choice, and it is often based on our knowledge of it, no matter how limited that may be.

More often than not, it isn't easy to accept something — even in the way of faith — if we are not comfortable with it. It's too easy to reject something that will challenge us to think "outside the box." And while that may be enticing, most of us don't like to go beyond our comfort zones. Too many are still thinking stewardship as a way of life is "outside the box."

But I would wager that happens because we want things on our terms only. Stewardship only on our terms often lacks something. It is a different story when stewardship is on the Lord's terms. Stewardship on His terms leads to a life of holiness — a life we identify as discipleship.

When I practice stewardship on my own terms, I may get only part of what the Lord wants me to do. When I practice stewardship on the Lord's terms, I am more faithful to His call to be the disciple He expects me to be. However, it isn't always the most comfortable or easiest road to travel. I am often pushed beyond my comfort zone and challenged to trust that the Lord's ways are truer than my own. I would venture to say it is human nature to take the easy way out and stay with what we are comfortable doing. I am convinced that authentic discipleship is always intended to be lived on the Lord's terms. Stewardship must be done so, as well.

If you have ever read any spiritual books,



perhaps about the lives of the saints or general stories about our faith from gifted Catholic authors, you may find they all have one thing in common — they all seem to agree that whatever happens to us, whatever we try to do, it must always be on the Lord's terms. Who are we to argue? When we try to live life on our own "terms," don't we always seem to come up a little bit short?

"Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts" is a familiar quote from the apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians that goes on to describe in great detail the Lord's terms for holiness. Shouldn't these terms be the same for the stewardship way

of life? Our call to discipleship and holiness is based on those terms, not always only on ours.

"Stewardship on whose terms" will always challenge us to look to the Lord for the terms He has laid out for us. Understanding and accepting them is essential to be His disciple. That has always been very clear in the Gospels. When our terms become the Lord's terms, then becoming the faithful stewards we are called to be is inevitable — and in the end, isn't that just the way Jesus would want it?

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



Parish Office Help People Do their Best for

As a stewardship parish, Parochial Vicar Fr. Bob Barko says it's important for us all to be continually examining our gifts and finding new ways to utilize them for the Lord. That's why he and Parish Business Manager Sue Holbrook are so excited about recent changes made within the parish office staff, each designed to help parish staff members better serve our parish community.

"These are changes we felt called to make because we all have different gifts and as a parish we want to both identify and encourage that — to put people into positions where they will succeed, ultimately to build the glory of God," Fr. Bob says. "We're in the 'front line' here at the parish — the ones who meet people all day. So, it's really important for that stewardship process to begin with us — for our office staff to reflect who we are as a parish family."

Coming from a long background of business administration himself, Fr. Bob has tremendous experience when it comes to office management. So when he came here to St. Francis Solanus roughly three years ago, he was eager to put his talents to use in order to foster an even more efficient office atmosphere.

"We've been blessed with so many wonderful past staff members who really laid the groundwork for us," Fr. Bob says. "But having been a business administrator my whole life, I felt like we could make

some changes to help make communication even clearer and give further clarity to job descriptions."

One of the initial changes was to transition Sue to a more private office in the back as opposed to the front area where she had previously worked. This would allow Sue to focus more fully on her hefty workload which includes payroll and human resources for both the parish and the school, bookkeeping, financials, working with the Finance Council, and nearly continuous communications with the diocese.

"Sue comes to us with decades of business, accounting and bookkeeping experience, and I felt it was important that she have some separation from all the necessary interruptions of parish life so that she can better maintain the accounting and business side of the parish," Fr. Bob says.

"Our day is a day of interruption," Sue adds. "That's part of the ministry in that we never know what's going to happen from day to day. So, in order to ensure the best possible service to our parishioners I was moved out of the 'front lines,' so to speak. Then we were able to move Krista Putman into that position of answering the phone and just generally being present to parishioners. She also assists our new Director of Religious Education, Michael Holbrook."

Working closely alongside Krista is Administrative



*Krista Putman,
our front-line staff
member*



*Administrative
Assistant
Caitlin Kendrick*



*Communications
Coordinator
Marcia Steinkamp*



*Associate Pastor
Fr. Bob Barko*



*Emmie Venvertloh, one of
the many parish volunteers
who gives her time and
talents to the parish office*

Staff Changes for the Glory of the Kingdom



St. Francis Solanus staff members — (front row, from left) Emmie Venvertloh, Yukari Shindo, Caitlin Kendrick; (back row, from left) Sue Holbrook, Krista Putman, Mike Holbrook (DRE), Fr. Bob Barko

Assistant Caitlin Kendrick, who is responsible for managing the Parish Center and its events. She also writes the weekly bulletin, assists Krista in greeting parishioners and guests, and takes care of all sacramental records for the parish. Then, too, there is parishioner Marcia Steinkamp, who contributes significant amounts of time weekly as the Communications Coordinator for the parish. Using her expertise, Marcia is continuously finding ways to help our parish operate more effectively and transparently. This includes continuous technological and media updates, as well as ongoing work with parish ministries and councils.

With all of these staff members working closely together, Fr. Bob says there naturally arose a need to develop more detailed job descriptions. This provided further clarity on staff responsibilities, avoiding unnecessary overlap and fostering an even more cohesive work environment.

“With jobs shifting around, we felt the need to develop job descriptions, clearly identifying who is responsible for what,” Fr. Bob says. “Of course, there are always situations when it’s ‘all hands on deck.’ But I find this in general eases tensions, because if

someone falls ill or has a sudden emergency, we all have some idea of what that person does.”

“This really inspired us also to begin doing some cross-training,” Sue adds. “That way, in the event of an illness or vacation, we can continue providing the services needed to our parishioners.”

By implementing these changes and further refining the office staff workings, the hope is to continue strengthening our St. Francis Solanus community, becoming better equipped to meet the needs that arise within the parish, and working more effectively together in building the Kingdom of God.

“I feel so very blessed by our predecessors who have done their job so well, really laying the groundwork from me and making my job so easy,” Sue says. “I wouldn’t be able to do what I do here without that. Part of our role here as the staff is to take the pressure off Fr. Don and Fr. Bob — to minimize the tasks so that they can be there for parishioners sacramentally and pastorally, who truly need them.”

“As a parish we’ve committed to the process of stewardship — time, talent and treasure,” Fr. Bob adds. “We all have different gifts and this is all about helping people do what they do, and do it well.”

Celebrating the Feast of St. Leo the Great, Pope of Rome, Nov. 10

Regarded as one of the best administrators of the ancient Church, St. Leo the Great displayed tireless dedication as pope. From securing true Christian beliefs and settling doctrinal controversies as a Doctor of the Church, to defending Rome against barbarian attack and his commitment to the spiritually centered pastoral care of his people, St. Leo the Great provides a wonderful — and historically significant — example of a Church administrator who used his skills to reinforce the essential connections between spirit and structure. This resolute upholding of the faith earned him the title of “the Great.” Indeed, Leo himself held that everything he did as pope was to represent St. Peter, in whose place he acted, and to represent Christ, the head of the Mystical Body.

A native of Tuscany, Leo was believed to have been born around the year 400. The earliest known information about Leo is that he was a deacon under Pope Celestine I and Pope Sixtus III. During his time as a deacon, he was already recognized for his skills in mediation when the emperor designated him with the task of settling a dispute between the two highest officials in Gaul.

In the year 440, upon the death of Pope Sixtus III, Leo was unanimously elected by the people as the pope’s successor. Just weeks later, he would enter upon a pontificate lasting 21 years. This timespan would prove to be a crucial era for the centralization of the government in the Roman Church.

Importantly, Leo’s recorded papal letters and sermons have survived through the centuries, thus providing key historical sources regarding his career and personality. In fact, his particular prose style — *cursus leonicus* — would have a lasting impact on ecclesiastical language.

A major priority during Leo’s papacy was to sustain the unity of the Church — he was devoted to combating the heresies that threatened this unity. He was also a tireless champion of almsgiving, fasting and prayer, while clearly and concisely expounding Catholic doctrine. Leo put much of what he said and wrote into action as well, as he invited and encouraged bishops to meet and consult with him in person. These committed efforts took place largely in the shadow of the Western Empire’s



approaching collapse, and Leo would serve as a steadfast representative of lawful authority during this turbulent era.

Indeed, a crucial point of Leo’s papacy occurred during the invasion of Italy in 452. As Attila and his forces made their way to Rome, having already overrun several cities, the ruler of the Huns demanded a dowry from the reigning emperor. As a result, three envoys were sent to negotiate with Attila — one of which was Pope Leo I. While the exact nature of the envoys’ negotiations with Attila are not known, historians often credit Leo with compelling Attila to withdraw from invading Rome. And while the Vandals would sack the city of Rome just three years later, it is believed that Leo’s assertiveness and influence also helped to repress murder and bloodshed during this invasion.

Even as he maintained courage in the face of such challenges, Leo continually worked to address the everyday needs, concerns and interests of his people. He died in the year 461, most probably on Nov. 10 — which is celebrated in the Catholic Church as the feast day of St. Leo the Great.

HOLY NAME SOCIETY

Savoring Faith, Fellowship and Fun

For Nathan Koettters, the Holy Name Society has been a rich source of inspiration and a foundation on which to build Christ-centered friendships.

“When I was growing up, my dad was a member of the Holy Name Society at his home parish, and now I am glad to be a member as well,” says Nathan, who now serves as president of the group at our parish. “It gives the men of our parish ways to socialize, find support in their spiritual lives, and recognize how they can use their talents to help the parish community. When I was a new parishioner, belonging to the society was a great way for me to get connected, meet new people and learn more about what the parish has to offer.”

The Holy Name Society technically includes all male parishioners from our parish, but active participation is left up to the discretion of each member. About 90 members attend the society’s annual banquet, and a good number of members enjoy participating in its service-oriented events and social meetings.

“We have a lot of fun – our group isn’t quite as serious as other parish groups may be,” Nathan says. “The relaxed time of fellowship we share is something that is really missing from today’s fast-paced, hectic world. We are a laid-back, ‘no-pressure’ kind of group, and our members are free to be as involved as they are able to.”

The group hosts various meals throughout the year

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Flipping pancakes for our Pancake and Sausage Breakfast



Making Christmas fruit baskets



Participants at our annual Golf Outing

St. Francis Solanus

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

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to raise funds for various parish and school needs. Each fall, they organize a pancake and sausage meal to raise money for the Boy Scouts, who help with the event. On Ash Wednesday, they host a fish fry and on Palm Sunday, a chicken dinner.

In September, they raise proceeds for the parish school by hosting a golf outing. A couple of weeks before Christmas, society members get together and arrange Christmas baskets with treats such as oranges, apples, shelled peanuts, and grapefruit or candy. The proceeds from this project go towards the parish school.

Furthermore, they also maintain the food stand during the St. Francis parish picnic each summer.

Overall, the Holy Name Society is a fantastic way for men to discover the treasures of the Catholic Faith, the joy of community, and the satisfaction that comes from putting others first.

“We are always looking for new members,” Nathan says. “Any time you surround yourself with people you can pray with and find a way to serve with, your faith will be strengthened. Being part of the Holy Name Society is a great way to live out stewardship!”

For more information about this ministry, please contact Nathan Koettters at 217-242-9382 or email him at nkoettters@quincynotredame.org.

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.