

Father Leo Markert, a Special Priest by Marge Rizzo



Parishioners who regularly watch our weekday Masses know Fr. Leo Markert. His calm and gentle manner and his eloquent sermons combining scripture and daily living give comfort in these turbulent times.

Fr. Leo grew up in Albany, the second of four children, attended Catholic schools, and graduated from Cathedral Academy. His aunt was a Franciscan nun in Syracuse, but the bigger influence on his decision to study for the priesthood was a priest at Cathedral, Fr. Ted Black, who drove him around Mater Christi Seminary giving him a "gentle invitation" to consider the priesthood and suggesting he take more Latin in high school. After graduating from high school, at 18, he entered Mater Christi Seminary where he was a classmate of Fr. Thomas Connery. He spent two years there and then six years at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers.

Fr. Leo was ordained on May 26, 1962, and his first assignment was St. Mary's in Oneonta. Then he served at St. Patrick's in Watervliet and also taught at Catholic High School. He went on to Albany Medical Center as a chaplain, St. Theresa's, and St. Michael's in South Glens Falls. In 1975, he received permission from the bishop to move to active duty in the Navy Reserve. For four and a half years he was a chaplain with the Marines in Okinawa and the Philippines. For three years, he served in Newport, and he continued in the reserves for another sixteen years. After this he was named pastor of Sacred Heart in Sidney and then became pastor of St. Gabriel's in Rotterdam where he served for twenty-three years. As a pastor, he became known as the "bus priest" because over the years he bought nine buses and took children and adults to visit seminaries and his aunt in Syracuse. His own father was a bus driver, so Fr. Leo might have come by this activity naturally.

See Fr. Leo Markert, page 3

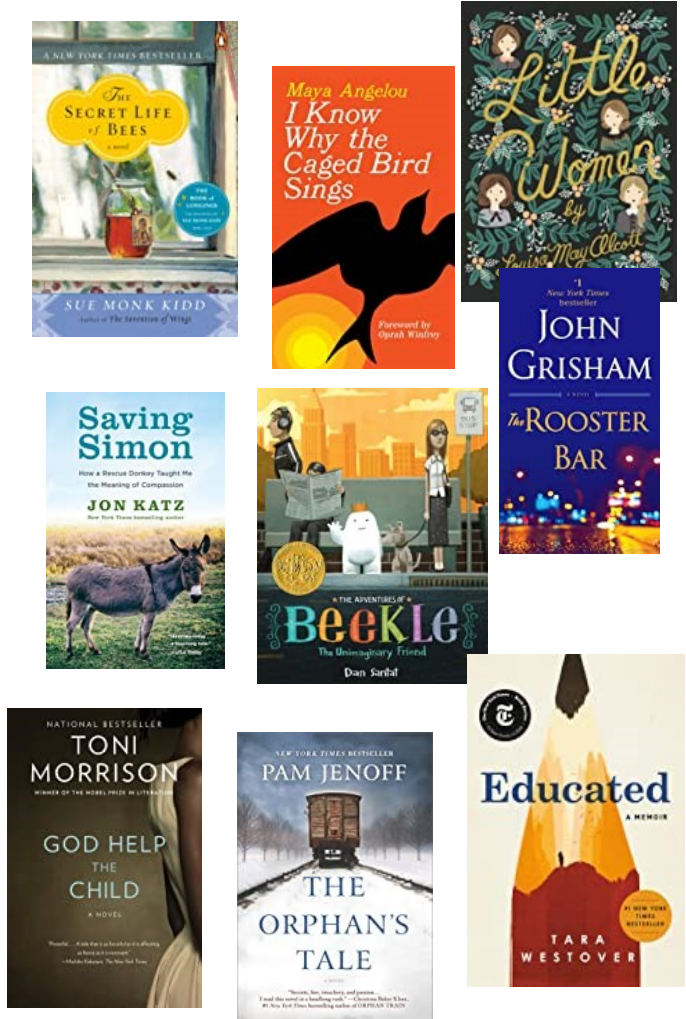
Ministry Updates

Book Club by Simone McGuinness

Book Club has continued to meet during the pandemic via weekly Zoom calls. We have anywhere from 9-16 women on the call each week and have chosen to put our next book, The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek, on hold until we can meet in person. In the meantime, each week we reflect on the good that has personally occurred to our members since our last call, and then have some kind of reflection. Sometimes our reflections are light, our favorite drink or mug, or sometimes more serious, as we reflect on the pandemic and life during 2020. Our hope is that we can meet in person soon, and resume our monthly meetings.

If you have any questions about Book Club, books we have read or information about using your library card let me know. simone.mcguinness@mc.com

Some of the book read by the Immaculate Conception Book Club in 2020 and 2019:



RCIA by Kim Klementowski

This year's RCIA Seekers will receive their sacraments at a Mass at 10 a.m. on August 8.



Kelly Benkoski will receive the sacraments of Baptism, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.



Bill Heilman will receive the sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist.



Pattie Steeves will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Mass is closed to the public and the number of family members attending will be limited.

Let us keep the seekers in our prayers.



Fr. Leo Markert, continued from page 1

Fr. Leo retired in 2007, but his priestly activities have not ceased. He has been helping at Immaculate Conception for twelve years and also assists with daily and weekend masses at St. John the Evangelist, St. Anthony's, St. Gabriel's, St. Joseph's in Schenectady, and St. Kateri's. He helps out at REC Weekends joking that he has been in every prison in New York State, and once a month he teaches a class at Mother Theresa Academy and says Mass at Kingsway Manor. He is also Spiritual Director of the Journey Retreat Program, the high school version of the Cursillo program which has been in existence since 1975. Fr. Leo himself has done 64 Thursday-to-Sunday retreats with 15 to 20 high school students each. It is special, he says, when a student begins the retreat as an atheist and ends the experience as a believer—a “Miracle Kid.”

Fr. Leo currently lives in Socha Plaza and enjoys relaxing and boating at his camp on Galway Lake. He likes to watch police shows and mixed martial arts on television and is a devoted Red Sox fan. If you see a car decorated with Red Sox memorabilia, it might belong to Fr. Leo! One thing he does not have is a computer: he says he is like Jesus in this regard.

When asked to reflect on the message of the pandemic, Fr. Leo believes that this experience will



bring families closer together with a “common thread of togetherness” and with a greater appreciation for one another. They will be closer to God as they appreciate the gift of faith and the sacraments. He says that this time provides us with the opportunity to see God at work—helping us through it all.

It is no surprise that St. Francis of Assisi is Fr. Leo's favorite saint because of St. Francis' love of God and creation, and the simplicity of life. Often, Fr. Leo concludes his homily with the words, “Know how much God loves you, and I love you too.” A simple message but one that demonstrates how Fr. Leo lives his life: sincere, caring, devoted to God and His people.



Sacramental Milestones

*There were no baptisms
or marriages performed
between April 10, 2020 and
July 6, 2020.*

Blooms and Blessings

Photos by Julie Ashcroft and Heidi Tatro

Blooms and Blessings was held on Sunday May 24th after Mass was live streamed. Approximately 300 zinnias and hyacinth vines were given away. Even Gracie, the parish pup, attended!

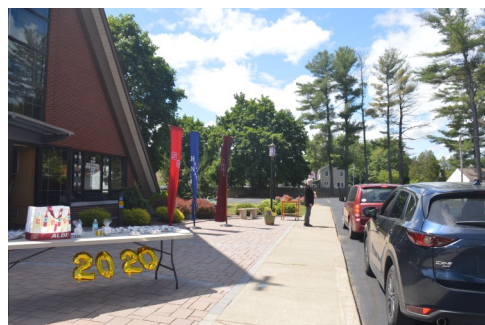


Congratulations to the Class of 2020

Photos by Julie Ashcroft



Those parishioners graduating from local high schools were honored on Sunday, June 14. They received cupcakes and candy treats as well as Dunkin Donut gift cards.



The noblest question in the world is: What good may I do in it? — Benjamin Franklin

Spotlight on Jeanne Behr—A Personal Reflection

In this *Pipeline* series, we hope to familiarize parishioners with those among us whom we see often but know little about. Readers are invited to contact Annette Botsford at abotsfor@nycap.rr.com with suggestions of future subjects for this feature.

My name is Jeanne Behr, a parishioner at Immaculate Conception in Glenville. I am honored and humbled to be interviewed for the Spotlight section of the Pipeline newsletter. That being said I prefer asking others about their struggles rather than telling you mine. I enjoy a good conversation listening to people's journeys, theology discussions, and just plain old conversations over a beer!

I am the youngest of 5, 3 sisters and 1 brother. As I would often tell my parents that "they finally got it right!" I grew up in a time period where all the neighborhood kids would play outside. After my chores were done, I would leave the house to play and not return until dinner time. My neighborhood was surrounded by fields and woods, which was splendid to play games, baseball in the field, jumping off dirt cliffs, catching frogs, ice skating on the lake, swimming and so much more. The best thing was riding our bikes to grandma's house for some yummy baked goods.

My parents gave me the deepest appreciation for life and taught me integrity, love and perseverance; sadly, we lost our Dad nineteen years ago. When all of my siblings get together with my Mom who lives in Florida, now 93, we reminisce about childhood stories and photos. These conversations are delightful to hear since there is a fourteen year difference from myself to the oldest sibling. I was a naïve teenager but with the help of my siblings and parents they gave me a good foundation to become a mature self-supporting young woman, however, that doesn't mean we didn't have our share of family arguments!



In times of feeling defeated, my Mom, a working Mom, was always there with an understanding hug or some reassuring words like her famous phrase "It builds character." Yet, she gave me strength, and taught me to have self-respect. Even though some of these times may not have been happy times, such as missing curfew or spending most of my young life grounded, Mom's message was always consistent, "I will always love you." Mom continues to pass down her wisdom, love, and kindness and encourages me to do what makes me happy. My Dad was my "booboo" healer and the star that lit my life. He was a military man, and an architect. He showed me how to fix and care for a home, taught me how to play golf and demonstrated a philosophy of giving to others as we would go out to volunteer organizations. Three expressions of wisdom my Dad would always say to me were: "Remember you can do anything you put your mind to," "Put God first," and "If you can, always help your fellow man."

See Jeanne Behr, page 7

Jeanne Behr, continued from page 6

In my junior year of high school, I was diagnosed with scoliosis and unfortunately during my senior year, I had to undergo back surgery. In a weird turn of events, this experience taught me a lot, not that I would recommend going through it but it provided me with a deeper sense of understanding of the struggles and hardships that some people go through. I met so many wonderful people on this journey.

At the great year of twenty-two, I moved out of the house thinking that my boyfriend and I knew everything about the world. As for my father, he seemed hopelessly out of date - "Curfew at midnight? you got to be kidding," and "What's wrong with getting a motorcycle permit?"

While attending college at Hudson Valley Community College, I worked full time, earned an AAS in Banking. I went on to a BS in Management from Sage Evening College and a Master's in Education (Special Education) from Russell Sage. I may have taken a non-traditional path, working and attending college, but in doing so, I learned to provide support and comfort to others, earn one's trust, and be there for someone when life has thrown them a curve, such as family issues, dependencies, or tragedies.

Consequently, after many years of travel, fun, the passing of my Dad and two unsuccessful long term relationships, I made a promise that it was time to listen to my Dad's words of wisdom, "Remember you can do anything you put your mind to," "Put God first," and "If you can always help your fellow man."

I settled down, bought a home, and worked hard to obtain a successful career. I worked for the State of New York and the Health Research Incorporation for thirty years in a variety of roles, such as Senior Healthcare Program Manager, Senior Computer Programmer/Analyst and Fiscal/Contract Administrator. In addition, I became an adjunct teacher for Mildred Elley, in business management and information technology.

In returning to my Catholic faith, after leaving it for over thirty years, my colleagues informed me about Immaculate Conception in Glenville. To be honest, I did not have any high expectations. But much to my surprise ICC was different. Between the parishioners' warm welcome and Father Jerry's homilies, which are relevant to my life struggles, I was pleasantly surprised how his homilies affected me. Since getting involved four years ago, I continue to experience this yearning in my heart to deepen my knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith. I recently graduated from the Kateri Institute for Lay Ministry Formation, and have assisted and been the co-chair of the Morning of Service community event with Maryann Johnson and Janice Zaengle, co-chair the new ministry Friends in Deed with Cindy Peterson, and helped to re-open the church from the COVID 19 pandemic. As I am a recent retiree, I hope to have more time to enjoy the things I love to do, just to name a few, helping animals and other volunteer organizations, assisting more in ICC, tutoring young children, golfing, playing pickleball, and making room to try new adventures.

Working 12-14 hr days in response to this unprecedented public health pandemic, I witnessed the frustration, exhaustion, fear and joyful moments caused by the pandemic. However, I was comforted by the many acts of kindness and unity that transpired from responding to this event. Perhaps during the quarantine period there might be a silver lining, a time to pause and re-focus ourselves on what is really important, family, friends and God. Now as we start to reopen the economy, maybe we can see the world through a different lens and make changes to the constant juggling of family activities, over extending ourselves and running ragged. Instead, do something extraordinary, create a world of compassion, unity and respect, non-judgmental, and use love and kindness as the roadmap of the world.

Spotlight on Dan Sliva—from *Parish Pipeline*, July, 2017

After 45 years as a member of Immaculate Conception and ten years as a trustee, Dan has had an opportunity to contribute to and be a part of many church activities and improvements in our Church.

These improvements and activities have resulted in an increase in our Mass attendance and opportunities for (that appeal to families) which attracts others to be a part of our parish community... and Dan feels it is important to continue this effort.

Dan Graduated from Lynch High School in Amsterdam and attended RPI from which he earned a degree in chemical engineering. He went on to earn a Master's Degree from the University of Rochester and a Ph.D in chemical engineering from RPI. After a thirty-year career in management at General Electric's R & D Center and the GE Silicone Business, Dan retired to pursue a variety of activities including serving as an adjunct professor at Union College and the College Saint Rose, shared his talents as a board member of the Empire State Aerosciences Museum, Birthright of Schenectady, the Office of the Aging of Schenectady County, and the Great Sacandaga Lake Association.

Over the years, Dan activities here at our church included the Residents Encounter Christ prison ministry, Call-to-be church, the stewardship effort, ministry fairs, the Renew



program and the Parish Council serving as president of that body for four years. Along with fellow trustee Maryann Haskell, Dan has taken an oath of fiduciary responsibility pledging to oversee the monetary affairs of the church in order to preserve its financial well-being and has also been involved in the various projects to upgrade our facilities, including the church interior, the rectory, and the parish center.

Through his work as trustee, Dan believes he has learned more about his Catholic faith and the operation of the Catholic Church and by dealing with our many volunteer parishioners, who are very serious about their faith, he has learned more about his own faith. He has come to a greater appreciation of the importance of our church volunteers to the success of our parish and enjoys meeting and talking with parishioners. For relaxation, Dan always enjoyed the outdoors and has spent many days at his camp on the Sacandaga Reservoir.

Dan and his wife Ann are the parents of three children, two daughters and a son and the grandparents of four. To Dan and Ann, Immaculate Conception is like home, integral to the fabric of their lives. So, even though they have moved to Clifton Park from Woodhaven in Glenville, they will continue to be part, an important part, of our parish community.

In this twenty-seventh issue of the *Parish Pipeline*, some of our ministries have updated their activities. Immaculate Conception is fortunate to have many more ministries which will be highlighted in coming issues. For a complete list of ministries,

- see the church website: <http://www.icglenville.com>
- contact Maryann Haskell, 399-6706, e-mail maryann.haskell@gmail.com
- fill in the information below and drop it in the collection basket. You will be contacted.

Name _____ Phone # _____

I am interested in the following ministry/ministries:

October 17-18:
 Distribution of the next
 issue of the Pipeline

October 5: Submissions
 due