



Mark Your Calendars for Immaculate Conception's First

Parish Service Day

November 5 will be a special day for our church community as parishioners participate in a service day. Last weekend, Co-Chairs of the Service Day, MaryAnn Johnson and Janice Zaengle, introduced the activity at all Masses. Under their leadership, committees are already involved in the planning for this activity, which, it is hoped, will begin an annual tradition in our church.

At a brainstorming meeting on January 13, an overwhelming majority of attendees, who represented a cross-section of parishioners, were in favor of proceeding with the idea of a parish-wide service day. Participants indicated that this activity would reflect the message of the Year of Mercy, would demonstrate discipleship in the broader community, could increase the visibility of our parish, and would give parishioners a way to get more involved in giving service. At subsequent meetings, it was decided that the day would be a half-day event with opportunities for parishioners of all ages to engage in service activities both in the community and at the church.

Several sub-committees are hard at work planning the day. The Volunteers Committee will be recruiting people to volunteer on and off site. This committee was responsible for the survey which was administered at Masses last week. The Projects Committee is securing both off-campus volunteer sites and agencies which could be the recipients of in-house activities. So far, the City Mission, Baptist Retirement, Bethesda House, Habitat for Humanity and the Joan Nicole Prince Home are among the agencies which would welcome our volunteers.

Possible in-house activities include making heart pillows for patients at Ellis Hospital, assembling breakfast-to-go bags for Ronald McDonald



House, tying fleece blankets for the Children's Hospital, and filling backpacks for Things of My Very Own.

Other committees include Helpers, which will assist in managing projects, and Publicity, which will be looking at ways to advertise this activity including Facebook Events. Administration and Finance is examining administrative and legal issues, Site Coordination will be organizing the use of church facilities, and Evaluation will be preparing evaluative tools both for participants and agencies.

MaryAnn and Janice have developed a timetable for committee progress in planning the day. At the next meeting on April 28, committee work should be taking form, and the survey will be reviewed. By the June 16 meeting, the work of each committee should be firm and issues\complications addressed so the work to be done before September can be established. All parishioners are welcome to attend these monthly meetings.

Immaculate Conception's Service Day will give members of the parish family an opportunity to serve our community with mercy, compassion and humility. Please plan to join us on the morning of November 5.

Contact: Janice or MaryAnn: ICServiceDay16@yahoo.com

Ministry Updates

Knights of Columbus—Another Year of Successful Fish Fries

The Knights of Columbus, Council 10013 wishes to thank the hundreds of people who have helped to make the Fish Fry Dinners a success once again. Our regular attenders as well as new groups made the hall a cheerful place.

The Ladies Auxiliary was indispensable performing many duties such as getting the baked potatoes in the oven on time so they would be done by 3:00, wrapping desserts, preparing condiments, manning the kitchen, and handling the orders and money.

We enjoyed the goodies from Bakers Ministry and appreciate their supplementing the baked goods from the Knights and Ladies. The Youth Ministry cleaned, set up the tables, and served all the meals to help us handle the nearly 300 dinners each week.

Frequently, people came and asked how they could help. Brother Knight, Father Jerry, showed up to help one week when we were shorthanded with potato prep. There were crews who came in for cleanup, the tough job when the other workers were tired from their ongoing efforts.

So, many thanks to the nearly 150 people who helped, and to the many who came to eat. The money raised will go to support the Knights' various community/church charities.

Contact: Jerry Havasy: 406-5675; gfhavasy@yahoo.com



Photos by Julie Ashcroft

Ladies Auxiliary

February and March were very busy for the Ladies Auxiliary. We were a great help to the Knights of Columbus with their 6 Fish Fry Dinners. Each week, our ladies arrived at noon to prepare 100 pounds of potatoes for baking. We also wrapped desserts, made individual containers of coleslaw and tarter sauce, baked, and helped with getting take-outs and eat-in dinners ready for customers. The Knights acknowledge that without the Ladies Auxiliary they would not have been as successful with the Fish Fry Dinners.

In June, we will be holding a joint picnic with the Knights.

We are always looking for new members. If you are interested in helping the Knights of Columbus we invite you to join us. We meet the same time as the Knights of Columbus, the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., except July & August. There are no dues, and the first half of our meeting consists of a Scripture Sharing of the upcoming Sunday's gospel.

Contact: Gerry Havasy: 406-5675; gmhavasy@yahoo.com

Ministry Updates-cont.

Rosary Makers



Linda Levine was gifted at doing crafts and was looking to use her talent to do something for Mary. Then she learned about making rosaries for those who did not have them. She taught herself and for a few years made

them at home. In 1998, she began the Rosary Makers Ministry, otherwise known as the Chain Gang of the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

This is a quiet ministry which makes a big impact. Last year, the group made 1152 rosaries, and since their beginning, the group has made 31,355. The mission of this ministry is evangelization. The faith of the members is deepened and renewed as they pray the Rosary and share their faith with the world. As Arleen DeCaprio says, "I love being a part of the Rosary Making Ministry. It affords me the opportunity to spread devotion to Our Blessed Mother through the Rosary." Their work serves the poor and needy and helps to educate children in the faith. Member Eileen Crow says, "I do it because my religion is important to me and I spread it (my faith) around. I want others to pray the Rosary to increase their faith. The hands on thing is enjoyable too." Johanna Nally adds, "I like doing things with my hands and I have a special devotion to the Rosary."

The twelve members of the group, including Elizabeth Esker, a high school junior who chose this ministry as a service requirement in preparation for

Confirmation, meet once a month when they count beads and make kits for each Rosary. They take these kits home and return the completed rosaries the next month. At the end of each meeting, they pray the Rosary for the needs of each other and world peace.

The supplies needed to make the rosaries are donated by the Knights of Columbus and the Rosary Altar Society. They are purchased from Our Lady's Rosary Makers, an organization which also publishes a newsletter and provides the names of those needing rosaries both in this country and abroad. Because of postage costs, the rosaries made here at Immaculate Conception are distributed in this country to prisons, hospitals, our own Right to Life Ministry, and are sent to some parties which will, in turn, send them overseas. Our rosaries are also distributed by a woman in Albany who gives them out on the street.

Linda Levine says, "While I started this ministry many years ago in response to blessings and graces received, I am motivated by knowing that I am doing something so simple yet so profound with far reaching consequences. I am grateful that Our Lady has given me this opportunity to promote what she has asked of us at Fatima, '... that people continue to recite the Rosary everyday' for world peace and the conversion of sinners."

New members are always welcome to join in this "simple yet so profound" ministry. Neither skill nor experience is necessary. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Room 3. Interested persons can stop by or contact Linda at bandL84@hotmail.com or 399-6965.

Faith Formation by Madeline Fretto

This has been a wonderful year in Faith Formation. The children in our program have connected with the homebound and seniors of our parish, whom they have named their "Sweeties." The children filled giant Christmas stockings full of gifts for them and sent Valentine and Easter Cards to let them know they are still part of our community. Thank you to Rachel Winters for coordinating this wonderful project. On February 6, we held our 5th annual Father/Daughter Valentine Dance with a record 105 attendees. It was a beautiful time for the girls and their "dates" beginning with Mass, dinner, and a night filled with fun, and tons of dancing. This evening is definitely a family affair, because it would not happen if not for all of the help of my whole family, beginning with Michele who decorates the whole gym and makes it so magical for the girls.

We have 48 children preparing for their First Communion on May 21, 2016. They celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation on February 13th. Along with Father Jerry, we had two visiting priests to help on that morning. The children will have one more workshop on April 16 as their final preparation for their big day and a rehearsal on May 18th. The Hospitality Committee has graciously offered to serve coffee, juice and cookies after the Mass as their gift to the children and their families. Before our year comes to a close, we will have the Alleluia Mass on May 1, the Catechist Night of Reflection on May 5, the May Crowning on Sunday, May 8, and First Eucharist on May 21st. Our classes will conclude for this year the week of May 15. We are so grateful to Father Jerry and our catechists for all of their help throughout the year.

Contact: Madeline Fretto, Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, or Michele DeLorenzo, Pastoral Associate: 399-9210; mat417@nycap.rr.com

Ministry Updates-cont.

Rosary Yoga

Rosary Yoga was created 2007 by Jim Tibbetts and introduced in September 2014 to the Immaculate Conception Church.

Jesus' first New Testament proclamation was, "Purify thyself, for the kingdom of God is at hand." Exercise such as stretching is a means of physiological purification. Exercise when done as devotion of the Lord can become a visible sign, a gesture or work of penance or purification. Yoga is a purifying exercise for the body and, when done as a devotion, such as a meditation, it also becomes a purifying exercise for the soul, mind and emotions. Yoga in America is primarily a physical exercise, but, the term *yoga* means *yoke, to yoke to God or the spirit*. This was its original intention: to do yoga as a meditation on, or with God. Praying the Rosary when doing yoga is thus a devotion that purifies the body and soul.

Rosary yoga uses a different posture for every bead. There are two versions--the mat version and the standing version. For the mat sequence, the *Our Father* is always done in a sitting posture, then the ten *Hail Marys* are a sequence of ten postures. The *Glory Be* is a sitting posture bowing down to honor the Trinity. The five decades involve five different sequences: forward stretches, inversions, twists, upward stretches and abdominal muscle moves. The whole flow takes about 20-30 minutes depending on the speed. It is exercise that is fun and devotional.

Rosary yoga usually takes 25-30 minutes, and then Jim leads the group in a short 3-5 minute Christian meditation, the Jesus Prayer. Penance (purification) through stretching and Christian meditation is a means of healing.

Jim leads the Rosary yoga every Thursday night at 5:30 in the parish hall. All are welcome. Bring your own mat.



Respect for Life Ministry

Theology of the Body Returns

Well-received in 2007, we are planning to present Theology of the Body again this summer. What is Theology of the Body?

From September 1979 through November 1984, Pope John Paul II gave a series of weekly talks devoted to human sexuality, a proper understanding of the body, and marriage. The wisdom he expressed – collectively called the “theology of the body” – not only echoed previous Church teaching on human sexuality, but also formed the backbone for modern, Catholic sexual philosophy. (<http://brandonvogt.com/theology-of-body-explained-review/>)

The program is based on John Paul II's revolutionary teaching on the Theology of the Body. Presented by renowned author and theologian Christopher West, this program is designed to lay a firm foundation for adults desiring to learn and incorporate the Theology of the Body into their lives.

Make plans to attend and watch the bulletin for details.

Empty Manger Prayer Vigil to End Abortion

On a cold Monday evening, December 28, the Feast of the Holy Innocents, we led area parishes in a prayer vigil to end abortion at the Planned Parenthood facility in Schenectady. We gathered around an empty manger with candles, sang Christmas songs, and read the Nativity from the Gospel of Luke.

Ethics of Genetic Engineering – What is CRISPR and how is it being used and mis-used?

CRISPR, a new genome editing tool, could transform the field of biology – and a recent study on genetically-engineered human embryos has converted this promise into media hype. But scientists have been tinkering with genomes for decades. Why is CRISPR suddenly such a big deal?

The short answer is that CRISPR allows scientists to edit genomes with unprecedented precision, efficiency, and flexibility. The past few years have seen a flurry of “firsts” with CRISPR, from creating monkeys with targeted mutations to preventing HIV infection in human cells. Earlier this month, Chinese scientists announced they applied the technique to nonviable human embryos, hinting at CRISPR's potential to cure any genetic disease. And yes, it might even lead to designer babies. (Though, as the results of that study show, it's still far from ready for the doctor's office.)

Reference: <http://gizmodo.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-crispr-the-new-tool-1702114381>:

Contact: Larry Smith: 384-0882; LPJTSmith6@msn.com

Ministry Updates-cont.

Ellis Hospital Ministry—A Reflection by Frances Boshier

On the first Sunday of each month, a group of about six Eucharistic Ministers attends the 8 a.m. Mass usually sitting in the front rows on the north side of the church. After Mass we go to Ellis Hospital to distribute Communion and/or pray with the Catholic patients there. Immaculate Conception has participated in this ministry for many years. Several of the men and women who are or have been Eucharistic Ministers have served for some time.

After a few hours of ministering to the sick of our community, we come home feeling that we may have made a difference in someone's day. "So glad you came today. I'm having surgery tomorrow" or "I really need prayer as I received bad news from the doctor today" are some of the responses we receive. Others are planning to go home and ask for prayers for continued good health. Those who are too ill or non-responsive receive a prayer. Some patients just want

to talk. I believe I can speak for my team members in saying that it is a very rewarding ministry.

I grew up in Schenectady, so I know many residents there. In the past few years, I was able to minister to several of my classmates in their last days, and I was so grateful for this experience.

Current members of the ministry are Arlene Adams, Patti and Joseph Pericone, Kathleen Pultorak, Ann Sliva, Diana Wetmore, Donna Miller, Fran Boshier and Claudette Herzog. We can always use new members. Contact Fran at 399-8658 or Rachel Winters at 399-9168 if you are interested.



The Year of Mercy Logo and Motto



The Year of Mercy logo and the motto together provide a fitting summary of what the Jubilee Year is all about. The motto *Merciful Like the Father* taken from the Gospel of Luke, (6:36) serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure (cfr. Lk 6:37-38). The logo—the work of Jesuit Father Marko I. Rupnik—presents a small *summa theologiae* of the theme of mercy. In fact, it represents an image quite important to the early Church: that of the Son having taken upon his shoulders the lost soul demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation culminating in redemption.

The logo has been designed to express the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love and power to change one's life. One particular feature is that while the Good Shepherd, in his great mercy, takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, one's own humanity and the future that lies ahead, contemplating, in his gaze, the love of the Father.

The scene is captured within the so-called *mandorla* (the shape of an almond), a figure quite important in early and medieval iconography, for it calls to mind the two natures of Christ, divine and human. The three concentric ovals, with colors progressively lighter as we move outward, suggest the movement of Christ who carries humanity out of the night of sin and death. Conversely, the depth of the darker color suggests the impenetrability of the love of the Father who forgives all.

When Terrorism Strikes by Fr. Jerry Gingras

It seems almost common at this point, like an everyday event. We're not surprised any longer and perhaps we have even come to expect it. What am I talking about? Terrorism, when innocent people are killed or maimed physically and emotionally for life. Children left parentless. Partners suddenly uncoupled. Whether these terrorist attacks take place in California, Belgium, the Ukraine or the UK, we Americans can identify with them as we recall and relive the horrifying events of September 11, 2001, with the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and the downed plane in Pennsylvania. With the media today, tragic events connect us with other worlds in just minutes. Images of immense sorrow and pain are etched in our memories forever. We are made numb.

So what are we to do? One thing that we can do is pray. We need to place our losses, and the losses of those who suffer, into the context and framework of our faith. We need to come together as a community for prayer. We need to come together as a people to express our hope that God's intervention will change our feelings of emptiness, fear, and sadness that follow senseless tragedy.

These horrific events make us realize that our world is not the same, and may never be, the same. Things that we thought would be

constant are changed in a few seconds. It is at times like these that we draw our strength from our resources in faith. Our Scriptures remind us that throughout history, people from all walks of life grieved, mourned, and lamented deep losses. The Psalms are filled with broken people crying out to God: "*They cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress* (PS 107); Jeremiah laments the destruction of Jerusalem; Job cries out in distress that his days "end without hope." We need only listen to the bloody Jesus who cries out from the cross: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." All these laments help us focus our feeling of helplessness. We are given permission to cry and express them to a loving and compassionate God.

The words of St. Paul come to mind in these painful times of crisis: "*If one member suffers in the body of Christ which is the church, all the members suffer with that member*" (1 Cor 12:26). St. Paul's words help us put the suffering of tragedy into perspective, and at the same time, help us proceed with rebuilding our own lives. May we continue to pray for those people around our world who suffer the horrors of terrorism, so we may be signs and symbols of Christ's peace in the world. May the families of those victimized by terror find consolation, healing and grace. May those who have been killed by acts of terror rest in the promise of heaven.

Meet the Staff: Madeline Fretto, Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation

You don't have to talk about her job with Madeline Fretto for too long a time to realize that she loves what she does. Her job as Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation is busy and varied as she directs the religious education for the children of Immaculate Conception. She manages it all with enthusiasm and good nature, and her sunny office reflects both her personality and the way in which she approaches her position.

A member of Immaculate Conception for fifty years, Madeline started volunteering at the church in 1979 helping in the office and teaching religious education. While she was volunteering, she still worked in her father's market, the Maybrook IGA, did the bookkeeping for her husband's business, and for 10 years ran a video store in Rotterdam Junction. She then took a part time job in the religious education program, was co-director for 13 years, and became the sole Pastoral Associate eight years ago.

Madeline's duties include registering students, recruiting and training catechists, and visiting classes, which meet three days a week for grades kindergarten through grade six. The classes begin in the gym where everyone recites a decade of the Rosary and then participates in a musical session with Director Derek Stannard. Books, unit plans and calendars are provided to the catechists, and Madeline reviews anything else that is brought in before it is used with a class. In the Rainbow program, children with a variety of learning disabilities receive instruction, and Madeline works with the catechists and parents to ensure that the children receive their sacraments. Older children who have not received the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion attend twelve sacramental classes each year. In addition, a workshop is held before First

Reconciliation for the children and their parents, and another workshop is held for the children before First Eucharist.

Besides her instructional duties, Madeline oversees several unique and special activities: the Father-Daughter dance, the sixth grade "Praying in Color" program, monthly children's masses, student of the month awards for grades one through six, and the Advent giving program through which each class fills a huge stocking for a person recommended by Pastoral Care Coordinator Rachel Winters. Madeline also credits her assistant Michele DeLorenzo for organizing Thanksgiving, Christmas and Lenten projects.

Madeline has been married to her husband Angelo Patrick for fifty years. They are the proud parents of three children and grandparents of six. In her spare time, Madeline loves to swim, read, and cook--her specialty is sauce and meatballs. She and her husband enjoy NASCAR, dining out in restaurants, and trips to Las Vegas every other year.

If you ask Madeline Fretto to name the best thing about her job as Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, she cannot name just one best thing. She views her co-workers and the catechists who teach in the program as giving, cheerful and helpful. Madeline enjoys the comradery she shares with the families of the parish and loves watching the children grow up and move through the classes. Immaculate Conception's strong and vibrant program is due in large part to the enthusiasm Madeline brings to her leadership.



Immaculate Conception's CYO Biddy Boys Are Tournament Champs



The team from Immaculate Conception is the Schenectady County CYO Biddy Boys A Champions for the 2015-2016 season. They completed a perfect 17-0 season by defeating St. Mary's in the championship game by a final score of 36-30.

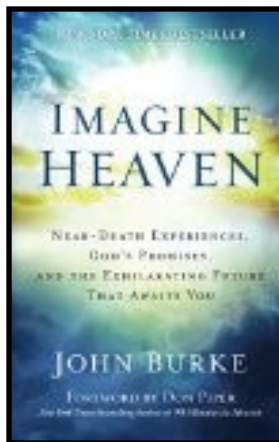
The members of the team are (bottom row, left to right) Andrew Wilson, Kayden Carolus, Griffin Fraterrigo, and Aaron Corker and (top row, left to right) are Carter Kline, Carson Vien and Justin Adach.

Thanks to all who supported and volunteered to make this season such a success.

Book Review: *Imagine Heaven* by John Burke

Reviewed by Kevin Bean

In 1979 while sitting in his parent's bedroom with his father who was dying of cancer, John Burke picked up *Life after Life* by Dr. Raymond Moody. Moody's book looked at Near Death Experiences which is where the term *NDE* came from. At the time Burke was studying engineering and "didn't have much interest in God or the afterlife or anything beyond the next party."



voice saying, "Pray to God." As an atheist his first response was "Are you kidding me? What a cop out," but his torment was so excruciating that he cobbled together a prayer that was part *Pledge of Allegiance*, *Psalm 23* and *God Bless America*. Amazingly he was pulled out of Hell and whisked to Heaven where he had a revealing and emotional conversation with Our Lord. After returning to this life he resigned from his cushy post in the academy and opened a church in rural

The research that was involved is truly astounding; Burke interviewed over 1000 people who had Near Death Experiences and includes over 100 examples/stories of those *NDE's*. That research also includes people of different cultures and religions. Some of those referenced are Colton Burpo, *Heaven is for Real*, Don Piper, *90 Minutes in Heaven* and Dr. Ebon Alexander, *Proof of Heaven*. Burke uses hundreds of passages from Scripture to connect the dots between our life on earth and what is to come in Heaven.

Chapter 16, *What about Hell* is both eye opening and scary. Dr. Howard Storm, Chair of the Art Department at Northern Kentucky University, recounts his *NDE* as he inched closer and closer to Hell. Yet he heard a

Kentucky.

The one question that God asks of many of the people during their time in Heaven is "*What have you done with the life I have given you?*" I have thought about this question countless times since reading this book; it truly gives one pause.

Those of us who have deep faith are on a journey, and each journey or path is different, but ultimately, when we leave this life, we will answer to God. If I could afford it, I would buy hundreds of copies of this book and hand it out to those who believe and those who have questions about their faith.

In this tenth 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.icglennville.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:

July 16-17: Next issue of the Pipeline to be distributed.

July 5: Submissions due.