

SS. Edward & Lucy News

SS. Edward and Lucy Parish is a Catholic community in Eastern Geauga County



DECEMBER 2012

WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF FAITH!

by Fr. Burkley

We have already entered the Year of Faith (October 11, 2012 to November 24, 2013). During this time we Catholics will institute activities and programs to help us return to the roots of our faith. You can access our parish website (www.ssedward-lucy.com) and find a link there for monthly features on the YOF. During this year we will be concentrating on several themes. First of all, outside of our worship together at Mass every Sunday and the nourishment this brings us individually and collectively, the next most important part of our parish life is religious education. Religious education helps us delve into what we believe as Catholic Christians and why. Our excellent inter generational religious education program draws together people of every age level and life situation (families, singles, seniors, children). Our program is built on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Each year we concentrate on one of the six themes of the Catechism.

For too many years we Catholics have labored under a religious illiteracy. Finally we are moving, as a church, to bring back solid teaching and knowledge. Pope Benedict calls this an educational emergency. He observed that two generations have had to labor under poor catechisms and said that we Catholics cannot let this happen to the next generation. Statistics point to the fact that four out of five Catholic young people fall away from their Catholic faith. In most cases they are rejecting a faith which they never really have known. This Year of Faith is a real opportunity for all of us to finally take the knowledge of our faith seriously. Watch the bulletins for inserts all year; take time for our Wednesday Bible Studies, take time to read (we have an excellent selection of books and magazines that changes every week or month). Check out the website regularly. Join us at Generations of Faith every month. Without our efforts and prayers this year will not make a difference for us, our parish or our world.



FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN

by Sue Noreika

As we approach Advent and Christmas let us all focus and meditate on what is spiritual in importance. Christ was born of a Virgin and came to us as an infant to be both true man and true God. The first promise of a Redeemer is found in Genesis 3:15 right after Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden indicating that God's intent all along has been for our salvation. Perhaps the most famous prophecy is from Isaiah 9:6 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Note: this passage has also been used to support the concept of the Trinity: The Everlasting Father = God the Father, the Prince of Peace = God the Son, Wonderful Counselor = God the Holy Spirit for the word trinity is not mentioned in the Bible and there are some denominations which still follow the Aryan heresy denying the divinity of Christ so here is your defense!) You may recognize these lines from Handel's "Messiah" for his whole work is based on Scripture. Here are some other prophecies you can look up. Try doing it as a family project! (By the way you can go on line or into a Christian bookstore and get tabs with the names of the books of the Bible, except for the deuterocanonical, to make it easier for you to find things.)

Some prophecies refer to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who came to be called Israel, and refer to the lineage of Christ.
Genesis 22:18 - fulfilled Matthew 1:1
Genesis 17: 19, 21 - fulfilled Matthew 1
Numbers 24: 17 - fulfilled Matthew 1
Isaiah 11: 1-5 - fulfilled Matthew 1 & Luke 3:23-38
Isaiah 7:14-fulfilled Matthew 1 & Luke 1
Micah 5:2 - fulfilled Matthew 2: 1-21
Chronicles 17: 11-13 - fulfilled
Matt. 1:1, Luke 1: 32-3, Hebrews 1:5

If you look on line you can find more. And to think that some of the prophecies were made over 1000 years before the birth of Christ! This is a time of looking forward with great joy and expectation and amazement. Don't let yourself get caught up with things of the world. Enjoy your family and friends.

And while thinking of our Savior as an infant, remember some of the passages about children. "Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of God. Assuredly I say unto you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it". And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10:14-17 Psalm 8:1,2 states "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the earth Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted by the mouths of babes and infants..." Read Matt. 21:15-17 Verse 16b contains "out of the mouths of babes..." When my youngest was little I jokingly stated that many great men had pondered the meaning of life. He quickly responded, "That's easy, Mom. It's to love and serve God." Talk about out of the mouths of babes!

As you think about the passages regarding children please think about any accounts you know of about little ones who seem to be communicating with angels, Mary or the Lord for it is while they are still "fresh from God" that this is most apt to happen and consider sharing this in a newsletter. (You tell me yours and I'll tell you mine which has witnesses from our congregation!) And as you look up the prophecies marvel that from the beginning our Lord had plans to send His only begotten Son that we should not parish but have everlasting life! Merry Christmas!

FAITH IN ACTION

by Karen Morrow

Many years ago during a transitional period in our marriage, Sam and I were "discussing" the many challenges that lay ahead for us. In the heat of the moment, he told me to, "Pick the right 'S'!", and he meant silence or support. That was my choice-support him or be silent! We laugh about it now and often find other "S" words to apply to the all important choice du jour. One "S" that I would like to share with you is Stewardship. Sometimes I feel like the word has become the buzzword for a fight or flight response. If stewardship is mentioned at church, there is a need to hurry to the closest exit before getting nabbed.

In reality stewardship is a means to becoming closer to God. It is a natural and exciting thing to be a good steward of our time, talent and treasure. We've all heard

the adage, "It is better to give than to receive", and we've heard it often because it's true! God is so smart! We are made in His image, an image of pure love, and we are taught by Christ to be doers of God's word and not hearers only. So that when we act out of love by doing for others, we reap the benefit of the action far more than the receiver. There is true joy in taking part in making life better for someone else.

Our parish community has over 60 different ministries in which to have the opportunity to make a difference, and we recently had the chance to learn about them at a stewardship fair on November 4. There will be another stewardship fair on December 2, a Ministry Mixer for ministry leaders on January 27, and more opportunities in the spring and throughout next year to become involved.

The stewardship committee is working on making stewardship a priority within our parish. We look forward to helping everyone pick the right "S" of Stewardship and become the good and joyful givers of our time, talents, and treasure.

"For just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."
-James 2:26

ECCLESIASTES FOR CHRISTMAS

by Sue Noreika

Caution: Do not read this book of the Bible before bed! It is depressing! My first impression was that it was written by someone with early dementia and depression and yet I seemed surrounded by it. I like to read paperbacks marked inspirational from the library that are fiction without bad language, sex, or graphic violence and, yes, they are still interesting. They are usually based on a Bible verse and wouldn't you know the next four books I read had quotes from Ecclesiastes. Go figure - it only has 12 chapters. In chapter 2 of Ecclesiastes there is a passage any child of the 60's would recognize as it was used as a basis for the Byrd's song "Turn, Turn, Turn - There is a time for every purpose under heaven..." Cardinal High school's choir sang "To Everything There is a Season" at their concert this past spring which was based on this passage and had put it on You-tube as a tribute to Chardon High after the shooting. Then I was watching a disaster movie - you know the type - where the earth is about to be destroyed by meteors, and they tell everyone to get together with their loved ones and quoted Ecclesiastes 4: 9-14 which starts "Two are better than one." In fact, back up and read verses 7 and 8. I was determined to find more positives in a book of the Bible that starts out with the cheerful "Vanity of vanities - all is vanity." The author (maybe Solomon when he is old, nobody is sure) talks about chasing the wind and he has this magnificent city he had built before him and it all seems

empty. Encouraging, not. But he is pointing out what is wrong in this world - that people chasing after wealth, fame, wisdom, whatever will keep seeking more of the same and get to the end of life and see that they will die like every one - good or bad, rich or poor and have nothing, for they have been chasing the wind. Can you catch the wind? No. But how often do we try by filling our lives with busyness which we try to rationalize and justify to the point that we miss out on what is important.

There are positive statements in Ecclesiastes and the challenge is to find them. This could even be a family or group activity - see who can find the most. If you don't feel comfortable marking up your "good" Bible, pick up one at a dollar store and circle all the positive statements - hint they have a theme. (This Bible can be your working one in which you highlight, underline and make notes.) I've already given you two passages.

So how does this book of the Bible apply to Christmas? For one, it gives a view of what is wrong with our country and can make you stop and think about where you fit in and what you personally can do. How much time do you spend chasing the wind versus taking time to enjoy and share with family and friends? You may remember the song "Cats in the Cradle" (younger people can look it up on line) about a man who was so busy he kept saying to his son "You know we'll get together then, son. You know we'll have a good time then." Then never happened. And when the man was older and retired, he called his son who had all sorts of excuses for not talking and he knew his son had grown up just like him. They were both chasing the wind and not taking time for what matters most. Please read the lyrics, they show how easy it is to get caught up chasing the wind and miss out on sharing the journey of life. You may think you can make time tomorrow, but what if tomorrow never comes, or if you keep postponing tomorrow. Make time for family and friends today for in them you find true blessings. Two, as you anticipate and enjoy this Christmas season evaluate how much time again you spend chasing the wind. A friend told me about someone she knows who prepares a huge dinner complete with three types of meat because it has always been a family tradition - and eats alone. How many feel compelled to make all 50 of grandma's cookie recipes because it is tradition or be a slave driver decorating every room in the house (oops, that's me) unless you can do it in a fun way involving family and/or friends for this is supposed to be a season of preparation, sharing and joy. Consider being secret Santa's and leaving anonymous goodies or even cash gifts at homes of people in need. Imagine the look on the receiver's faces when they open the door to find a box or basket and don't see you. You could actually continue this throughout the year, at times when people don't often receive extras. That's part of the message of Ecclesiastes - sharing the joy

of the journey of life for that is a gift from God. In regards to the verses in chapter 4, my study Bible suggests take time to reconnect with your spouse. Being caught up with kids, work, housework, etc. can pull couples apart. What better place to start getting back together and REALLY listening to each other without interrupting than by the light of a Christmas tree? Maybe you could even start doing Bible study or at least praying together at least once a week. You've got nothing to lose and everything to gain.

One last thing from Ecclesiastes, chapter 5:2-5. This is regarding vows. If you remember on Stewardship Sunday, you may have filled out a card indicating you would participate in a church ministry and signed your name. That was a signed, sealed and delivered vow. If you signed a document at work and failed to follow through, you would receive discipline possibly including termination. It could certainly effect your pay. With spiritual things you have been paid in advance with Christ dying for your sins. And our works proceed out of thankfulness and to bring glory to God. Also, if you look for them, such works bring further blessings such as getting to know others, camaraderie, seeing the response of those you serve, just knowing that you have helped part of a larger picture. Do not be afraid that you cannot do something - God will provide whatever you need. No excuses - I wrote my last four articles while I was in cardiac ICU for acute respiratory failure - so there. (Linda and I shared a lot of laughs proof reading those over the phone because of the errors I had made). Do I know how to throw a guilt trip on you or what? Actually I did do that, but that is me. During this season of contemplation, think about what you signed up for (call Karen at the St. Ed's office if you don't remember - she's going to love me), pray about, and get involved. You've only got blessings to gain! Enjoy a blessed Advent and Christmas season!

WOMEN'S DAY OF REFLECTION

by Mona J. Trybus

On September 29, 2012, the women of SS. Edward & Lucy Parish and their guests gathered in Winca Hall for a Saturday morning retreat.

Sister Mary Ann Spangler, HM, began with an invitation to pray forward. She used a quotation from Henry David Thoreau that set the tone for the morning. Her message was Praying with Mary through the Seasons of Our Life.

Live each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influences of each.
Henry David Thoreau
US Transcendentalist author
(1817-1862).

In her invitation, she invited us to look, to be open to surprise and to ask ourselves, "What season am I in?" She suggested we pray with imagination through our season, whether they are four seasons of the year or the seasons of our lives. She advised us to appreciate where you are in your life; each season, each day and year is a gift as well as a challenge.

In particular she chose Mary to be our partner as we prayed to her as a friend trying to imagine how she faced the obstacles we have in our present lives. We were given time to be free to choose a spot in the church or hall to spend time alone as we meditated. There were many examples given in her booklet to suggest, for example; 'autumn - morning frost, falling leaves, grey skies with a response of teach us to let go' or 'barren trees, shortened days, heavy clouds and a response of teach us stillness.'

The morning passed much too quickly. The good women of our parish never let a guest go home hungry. We were greeted with breakfast breads, donuts and coffee. Then when we finished, the spouses of the members came bearing hot soups, sandwiches and desserts, all served with an abundance of smiles and hugs.

The weather may be turning cooler, but not inside Winca Hall where there was so much warmth and love. The feeling continues as I reflect upon that day.

A ST. ANTHONY INTERVENTION

by Norma Giardina

My St. Anthony intervention occurred last summer, the summer of 2011, in Italy. Our daughter, Diane, her husband Mike and two children, Meghan (age 20) and Michael (age 16) along with my husband, Bob, and myself were staying at a hotel on the Isle of Capri.

We left the hotel one morning on a tour of this breathtaking island. While in Anacapri we did some shopping. There were so very many shops and we wanted to visit all of them. First we stopped at a perfume shop that welcomed us in with lovely scents and we wanted to try them all. From there, we strolled in and out of art galleries, ceramic shops, linens and t-shirt shops. Our energy knew no bounds as we hurried along on that splendid day. We did not miss a shop!

Our morning went by much too fast and just as we were ready to get back to the van, Diane discovered that she did not have her sunglasses. I knew that those glasses were not just ordinary sunglasses, but ITALIAN PRADA'S! They were very expensive, valuable and could not be replaced easily.

She asked me to go back to the van and let the driver know she would be back as fast as possible. I knew she intended to retrace

our route in search of her glasses. My first thought was that she would never find them as we had been to many places and touched too many things.

The crowds were big and there were simply too many shops. I thought to myself, "Oh ST. ANTHONY, help her to find those glasses. I know this is a frivolous request, but PLEASE help her to find them."

Diane rushed back revisiting every single shop. No one had seen any sunglasses. Finally, she arrived back at the very first shop where our shopping had begun several hours before, the perfume shop. She rushed in and she never had a chance to ask anyone about her glasses. A little Italian man came up to her and said, "These are for you!" and handed her the precious sunglasses. She was stunned!

I still get chills when I think about it. Diane thanked him and left. We think he was the store manager but he had not waited on us. Our clerk had been a young woman. We could not believe that with the crowds there that morning that he could just rush up to Diane and say what he did as if he were just waiting for her to return! We were amazed, but very grateful.

But I knew who I had to thank. In my heart I know why this small miracle had occurred. I say, "Thank you, St. Anthony".

DOWN IN THE DUMPS

by Sue Noreika

Not everyone finds the holiday season and months thereafter to be joyous because of painful memories or loneliness. Maybe it is the first Christmas without a loved one, lost either to death or a breakup no matter what your age. Maybe it the loss of a job or anything else significant to you. Here are some passages that may help. Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians 4:5b-8, 9b: "The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally... whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think on these things.... and the peace of the Lord will be with you." This does not necessarily mean that your actual circumstances will change, but if you open yourself and feel the peace of God, it can give you the strength to get through anything. The next part deals with one advantage of our pea brains. We can usually deal with only one kind of thought at a time so that if we are focusing on positive thoughts, counting our blessings (yes, we all have them) there is not room for negative thoughts. If you are really down in the dumps, write down your blessings - writ-

ing makes them more real to you. My husband and I have this ongoing joke about saying hello to Mr. Positive and good-bye to Mr. Negative, but I guess you didn't need to know that... This won't apply to all situations, but there is that old saying about God never closes a door but that He opens a window. Ask yourself if you are so busy looking at the closed door that you don't see the window even if it is a huge picture window.

Paul goes on further in 11b-13 "... for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength." Paul wrote this when he was in jail waiting to find out if he was being sentenced to death. Talk about blooming where you are planted! Sometimes it seems like circumstances have handed us a death sentence of a sort, but look for a positive - yes there is at least one. Will you learn something you can use to help someone else in the same experience? You are not the only one who has been in this type of situation nor will you be. Can you use this time for reflection and increase your faith. Can you shine your light to others in this trying time for you.

If you are experiencing grief following the loss of a loved one, holidays can be a very trying time. You usually have to go through a whole year of events and even then have sorrowful moments. I still want to pick up the phone and tell my mom something although she died several years ago. If it was a child who passed it is much harder. How can God allow such a thing? There are things that happen in life that we cannot answer. But we do know that Christ as man also experienced suffering. We know that God will never forsake us and will carry us when we feel we can no longer carry ourselves. When we see God face to face it will probably be made known to use the meaning of events in the tapestry of our lives that we cannot currently understand. Rev. 20:3-4 proclaims "And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes' there shall be no more death nor sorrow nor crying (mourning). There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

On a different note, one thing I have learned about pity parties is that nobody wants to come. And I had a royal one last spring - it lasted several days and the longer it lasted, the less even, or maybe I should say especially, my family did not want to be around me. And I was convinced it was fully justified - until a Bible verse entered my mind. Christ came that we "might have life and have it abundantly" John 10:10b. Oops, I'd messed up again! I was denying the abundant life

Christ intended for me and denying His death on the cross and resurrection! Haven't had a pity party since.

Remember, if you are feeling depressed, try to find someone you can talk with since sharing can lighten any load. I am not talking about a pity party but about sharing your concerns. Father Burkley is a great listener. So am I and I have short term memory loss from chemo so if you want something kept secret, I'll probably forget it! But seriously, if you are very depressed, consider strongly seeing a doctor and taking an antidepressant. If you were a diabetic, you would take medication if ordered for your decreased insulin production. If you had thyroid problems you would take the medication the doctor ordered. True clinical depression is associated with a decrease in the neurotransmitters in the brain which can be supplemented with medication. It is best to combine medication with therapy to help break up the negative spiral of thoughts that accompany this type of depression. It is not the type of being down in the dumps that you can pull yourself up by your bootstraps. In fact you cannot even find your boots. Please get help if this is happening to you. If you have a primary doctor, start with them. You may find you have some other treatable problem. True depression is anger turned inward. People often try to self treat with alcohol or drugs. Even if you do not turn to those, remember that God has provided people ready to help and

He wants you to have an abundant life and, yes, you do deserve it because God made you in His image and He has your name engraved on His hand. If you think God will not forgive you for something you have done - WRONG - if you truly repent all that is left is for you to forgive yourself and live your life as God would have you live it.

May God's all forgiving goodness and love encompass you this holiday season and beyond and bless you with His peace.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

by Jean Gehring

"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18: 24

God In You...

I sought God in the clouds on high, where cherubs dance in the endless sky.

I searched above on the wings of a prayer, but still I didn't find him there.

But when I turned, I saw Him every place, in every act of kindness, and on every face.

I found Him in my child so fair, and in each smile that says, "I care."

I found Him in each gifted hand, and in each heart that understands.

I found Him in the humble and wise.

I found Him in my true love's eyes. for far about the sky of blue

*He lives in each heart that is kind and true
And so of course my friend I found God in you*

A best friend is forever who accepts you regardless of your faults, who compliments your strengths and you can share your most inner thoughts and troubles with. When becoming a Stephen Minister, you gain many friends and are touched by many souls be they care receivers or other Stephen Ministers. There is nothing so special as being able to share with a special friend. When problems arise and we can share with another, it is a feeling like none other. When the weight of the world on your shoulders is shared with another, it lightens that load and becomes a feeling of relief. Share with another and your sun will seem brighter.

HOLY CHRISTMAS MASSES

December 24

4:00 pm Children's Mass @ St. Edward

6:00 pm Vigil Mass @ St. Edward

12:00 am Midnight Mass @ St. Lucy

December 25

8:30 am @ St. Edward

10:30 am @ St. Lucy

Merry Christmas

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