



08.2012

Saint Paul

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

St. Paul Catholic Church Commissions New Stephen Ministers

On Sunday, June 24, at the 9 a.m. Mass, eight new Stephen Ministers were commissioned by Fr. Michael Nixon.

Our new Stephen Ministers are: Christi Eadler, Ed Galbavy, Carmen Guttman, Jim Guttman, Bob Johnson, Denise Rosenbloum, Fran Viviano and Bob Wahl. For each of these new ministers, commissioning took place after their completion of an initial 50-hour training course in Stephen Ministry, which is distinctively Christian care giving.

One of the ways that Stephen Ministry is described is "Christ caring for people through people." Stephen Ministers are available to act as caregivers for anyone experiencing one of many setbacks that we all can encounter in life. This includes the loss of loved ones, hospitalization, divorce or separation, loneliness or discouragement, spiritual crises, unemployment or a job crisis, terminal illness, incarceration, and many more.

The Stephen Ministry is truly an ecumenical ministry serving in more than 150 Christian denominations. The eight new Stephen Ministers were trained at Grace Lutheran Church in a class of 21 people, including members from Grace Lutheran Church, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Cokesbury United Methodist Church, as well as St. Paul's.

Phil Peterson, the Stephen Ministry leader at Grace Lutheran Church, and Nick Thorpe, the ministry leader at St. Paul Catholic Church, facilitated the training. We are especially grateful to Phil for leading this training and for the generosity of the staff and members of Grace Lutheran Church for providing the facilities for the classes.

The Stephen Ministry class is currently continuing its classes and will complete its final training on Oct. 1. During this additional training, the eight new ministers from St. Paul are available to help anyone in need. If you or someone you know could benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister, please contact Nick Thorpe at 850-484-4854.



Stewardship

Our Spiritual Home

Where do you go to church? We've all answered that question hundreds of times before. But have you ever stopped to think about what it truly means?

"I go to St. Paul," is the usual response, and rightly so, because we do "go to" the church to celebrate Mass together. But as Catholics and as stewards of God's gifts, the Church is much more than a building within which we worship. The Church, as we understand it, is the universal body of believers, the society that Christ established to help us grow in holiness, to bring us closer to Him through the giving of our time, talent, and treasure, and to lead the world to the truth.

Before Jesus ascended to the Father, He commissioned the disciples, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:19-20). That is the Church's mission in the world today – to make disciples of all nations, to bring all men to Christ.

Our parish plays a key part in that. As members of St. Paul, we are local representatives of the universal Church. Together, as members of this parish family, we work to carry out the Church's mission on a local level. We worship the Lord at Mass, offering Him our praise and thanksgiving, and then we go forth on a mission to make disciples – to encourage our fellow parishioners in their lives of faith, and to bring unbelievers into knowledge of the truth.

In addition to being a "local representation of the universal Church," the parish is much like a family. We are communal beings, created to live with others. So, as Catholics, we are members



of the Church and, on a more immediate level, of the parish. As such, we gather together for the Eucharistic meal and we grow in faith together throughout the week, supporting one another through our participation in many parish ministries, through prayer, and through the friendships that many of us share.

In a letter written to parish priests throughout the nation, the United States bishops explained the important place of the parish in the lives of Catholic faithful: "The parish is a privileged place to announce the Word of God. It includes a variety of forms and each of the faithful is called to take an active part, especially with the witness of a Christian life and the explicit proclamation of the Gospel to non-believers

to lead them to the faith, or to believers to instruct them, confirm them and encourage them to a more fervent life."

So, we ought to feel truly blessed to be a part of this parish family. We ought to make a conscious effort to be actively involved, to build relationships with our fellow parishioners and to celebrate the Mass together as often as possible – most especially every Sunday. We are then bound to grow closer to others, to grow deeper in faith and closer to Christ. Then, together as a parish family, we are bound to proclaim the Gospel to others, inviting them to a life of discipleship, thereby, building the kingdom of God.

A Letter From Our Pastor

Strive to Be Swifter, Higher, and Stronger Stewards

Dear Parishioners,

At the end of July and for the first few weeks of August, the eyes of the world will be focused on the Olympic Games taking place in London. We will watch with amazement and admiration as athletes from all over the world run, swim, and perform seemingly impossible gymnastic routines. Their feats in these and other events will show the dedication and determination it takes to prepare to compete against the best athletes in the world.

The athletes will be doing their best to fulfill the Olympic motto, "*Citius, Altius, Fortius*" – "Swifter, Higher, Stronger." Although the Olympics will be using this phrase in the context of athletic competition, I think we could apply these words to our own lives.

That's not to say we need to "defeat" the other members of our family, our neighbors, or fellow parishioners. Indeed, we should seek ways to help them, not compete with them. But we ought to live each day so that we work for goals in a "swifter, higher, stronger" way than we did the day before.

St. Paul uses a similar athletic image and applies it to the spiritual life when he wrote, "Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one. Thus I do not run aimlessly; I do not fight as if I were shadowboxing. No, I drive my body and train it, for fear that, after having preached to others, I myself should be disqualified" (1 Cor 9:25-27).

St. Paul was referring to the ultimate goal of the whole Christian life. The "imperishable crown" he mentions is that



given to those who are with God in heaven, where they "shall reign forever and ever" (Rev 22:5). And we should never forget that "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil 3:20). As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, "Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness" (1024).

We also celebrate during August the person who most perfectly exhibited dedication to a "swifter, higher, stronger" cooperation with God's will, the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary falls on Aug. 15, in the very middle of the month. Please make plans, whether you're here or out of town, to

worship at Mass on this Holy Day of Obligation.

In closing, here is a stewardship suggestion for August: make a commitment to devote at least half the time you spend watching the Olympics this month to prayer and worship. It may be a challenge, but you'll find your soul has become "swifter, higher, stronger."

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Doug Halsema
Pastor

Summer Provides Ideal Opportu



Summer is certainly the golden season of sunshine, vacations, barbecues and baseball. But it is also an incredibly active and vital season for youth ministry events.

Given the frantic daily pace today's youth must maintain, especially between school, sports and extracurricular activities, it is no surprise that many of the youth ministry's marquee events now occur during the summer months.

Our parish's regular youth ministries — Fraternus, Sororitas (soon to be called "Fidelis") and Tuesday Night Talks — are on break for the summer, giving our parish youth the opportunity to participate in three very special events.

This past June 11 to 15, three high school-aged parishioners attended the Christian Leadership Institute, where they spent the week learning and sharpening leadership skills, and drawing closer to Christ through prayer, Reconciliation and daily Mass. The Institute's strengthened spirituality and leadership training will equip our teens to become leaders in their youth groups, schools and beyond.

"The Christian Leadership Institute is a unique opportunity for our teens," says Wendy Karczewski, St. Paul's co-ed youth events coordinator. "They had to be nominated by the parish to attend, so it's an honor to go. Having received this training, we're hoping to plug them in as teen consultants for our parish youth programs, and that some of them will have the opportunity to be involved on the Diocesan Youth Council, as well."

Later in the month, from June 25 to 30, a group of 21 boys and six men from our parish's *Fraternus* program went on their biggest excursion of the year, as they attended *Fraternus* Ranch in Milton, Fla.

"Ranch is really the culmination of the entire year for the program," says *Fraternus* Captain Andy Chambers. "We bring the guys that have been going to our weekly

Frat Nights week after week, and we take the challenges and the virtues we've talked about throughout the year, and pour that all into one week."

This year's Ranch event saw the group from St. Paul joining with around 100 more boys and their mentors from *Fraternus* organizations around the country. The entire camp competed in games like Capture the Flag and Ultimate Frisbee, while they also completed various challenges like building furniture for their outdoor chapel, and constructing a bridge to cross a large stream. They also participated in daily Masses, Eucharistic Adoration, praise and worship, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

"The goals of the week at Ranch are to bring the boys together with good Christian men in a solid Catholic atmosphere, and to draw them closer to Christ through the outdoors," Andy says. "All of the activities and games require teamwork — the older boys working with the younger ones, and the men participating right there with them, as well."

The third and final event of the summer was the Steubenville Atlanta Conference. Held from July 13 to 15, Wendy and a handful of chaperones took almost 30 teens to Atlanta where they joined with thousands of other teens for three days of worshipping God through praise and the sacraments.

"Steubenville is like a revival or a mission for the teens — they go and are totally renewed in the faith," Wendy says. "The teens that went got a chance to be around hundreds and hundreds of Catholic teens from across the region who were all excited about their faith. In addition to Mass, there was great praise and worship music all weekend, awesome workshops, incredible times of Eucharistic Adoration and opportu-

Opportunities for Marquee Youth Events

nities for Reconciliation. It was really an amazing experience for everyone.”

Having experienced several powerful, faith-inspiring events this summer, our youth are primed for another wonderful year of youth ministry programs this fall.

Children who have never participated in the St. Paul youth ministries are invited and encouraged to do so. There is no more important time for the development of faith than the teenage years, and the parish has done a marvelous job of providing wonderful opportunities for our young people to come together in a healthy and safe environment, where they may continually grow together in their faith.

Please consult the parish bulletin for information about youth ministry programs commencing this fall.



The Assumption of Mary

A Time to Celebrate!

Can a pile of bones really be that exciting? Every year, tens of thousands of pilgrims visit St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, eager to glimpse the spot in which the bones of St. Peter, our first pope, are reported to remain to this day.

The relics of saints have been venerated throughout the ages in every corner of the world, yet the bones of the very first Christian, the Mystical Rose, are nowhere to be found. Where are the remains of the Queen of all Saints?

When it comes to the day, manner, or year of the Blessed Virgin Mary's death, nothing is certain. No account is given in Scripture. The Church turns instead to Tradition for an answer.

Since the birth of the Church, no Marian relics have ever been venerated nor can they ever be, because her body was *assumed*, or taken up, into heaven. There exist, therefore, no remains of the Blessed Virgin's body on this earth. She lives, right now, body and soul, in heavenly glory.

Although the particular dogma of the Assumption cannot be found in the writings of Scripture, if we look at many other writings by the early Christians, it is clear that the Church has always held this dogma to be true. Even more, though there is no statement of fact in the Bible itself that Mary was assumed body and soul, the truths that we do know about Mary from Scripture simply serve to back up the reality that she was assumed into heaven. She gave herself wholly to the Lord and followed His will for her life, perfectly, to the end.

The Assumption of Mary reveals that the promises of the Lord – including the resurrection of the body – were fulfilled in Mary. She shared most intimately in the life, death, and resurrection of her son, and was free from original sin and its effects (including corruption of the body at death).

It was no surprise, therefore, in 1950 when Pope Pius XII declared infallibly the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a dogma of the Catholic Faith with these words: “The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heaven.”

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is observed on the liturgical calendar as a solemnity (of higher importance than a feast). On August 15, this wonderful celebration is accompanied by great hope in the resurrection of the body and everlasting union with God in heaven.

In the words of Pope Benedict XVI during his homily Mass on the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary in 2006: “Mary is ‘blessed’ because – totally, in body and soul forever – she became the Lord's dwelling place. If this is true, Mary does not merely invite our admiration and veneration, but she guides us, shows us the way of life, shows us how we can become blessed, and how to find the path of happiness.”

Alongside Catholics throughout the country, be sure to celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption on Aug. 15. This is a declared Holy Day of Obligation in the Church and a great liturgical feast. Mark your calendars!



St. Paul Honored to Host Ordination of Most Rev. Gregory L. Parkes as Fifth Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee

Most Reverend Gregory L. Parkes was ordained a bishop and installed as the fifth Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee in a solemn Mass at St. Paul Catholic Church in Pensacola on June 5. Bishop Parkes was ordained by Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski, Archbishop of Miami, as the principal consecrator in the majestic Rite of Ordination of a Bishop. Bishop Felipe J. Estévez, Bishop of St. Augustine, and Bishop

John Noonan, Bishop of Orlando, were co-consecrators. All the concelebrating archbishops and bishops then followed suit, laying their hands upon the head of the new bishop in the gesture of ordination. Among those bishops consecrating Bishop Parkes were Bishop John H. Ricard, SSJ, emeritus of the diocese, and Bishop Martin D. Holley, auxiliary bishop of Washington, a native of our diocese.



*Archbishop Wenski announcing
Bishop Park's appointment*



*Nuncio reading the proclamation
from Pope Benedict XVI*



*Msgr. Michael Reed with the
Proclamation from Pope Benedict XVI*



*Bishop Parkes receiving the
Blessing of the Gospel*



*Bishop Parkes blessing the congregation at the
end of Mass with Bishop Ricard*



*Newly ordained
Bishop Parkes in the Recession.*

Address Service Requested

Talk to Your Son or Daughter About Religious Vocations

With the recent ordination of Bishop Gregory Parkes here at St. Paul (*see page 7 for photos*), now is a good time to discuss religious vocations with your son or daughter.

Once considered a noble and viable profession by many youth, becoming a priest or religious sister isn't something many young people consider today when planning for their future. Sadly, many people "rank" the religious life below that of married life, considering it a less desirable vocation. However, in God's eyes, each vocation – priesthood, married life, religious life or the single state – is important, and will have a profound impact on how the individual grows in holiness throughout his or her life.

For many of our young people, encouragement by a mother or father is all that's needed for one to pursue the possibility of a religious vocation. Our priests are here to help, too. If you have questions about what it's like to serve as a parish priest, or if



you are unsure if God is calling you to the consecrated life as a religious sister, ask Fr. Doug or Fr. Michael for guidance and support. Parents and young people can also contact the Diocesan Office of Vocations directly at 850-435-3552. Msgr. Stephen Bosso, Director of Vocations, will be happy to answer any questions. In addition, youth programs such as Fraternus or Sororitas (soon to be called "Fidelis") are effective in helping young people consider religious vocations. Get your son or daughter involved in one of these programs, if they aren't already!

Parents, above all else, pray for an increase in vocations within our diocese. And, do not be fearful of God calling your son or daughter to serve in this noble way. Today's Church, more than ever, needs young men and women of strong faith to serve as ordained ministers and religious sisters!

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m. | **Daily Mass:** Monday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m.
Confessions: Saturdays, 9:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m., 1st Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., and by appointment
Eucharistic Adoration: Thursday 9:00 a.m. until Friday 7:30 a.m.