

# ST. CLARE *of* ASSISI PARISH

*April 2015*

## “The Foundation of Everything” *Keeping the Faith With Eleanor Staab*

**E**leanor Staab had a simple early morning ritual – she would leave breakfast on the table for her nine children before quietly attending 6 a.m. daily Mass. Little rituals like these laid a foundation in the Staab home.

“The way to foster vocations is for the parents to practice their faith,” Eleanor says. “If the parents practice their faith, the kids will do the same.”

From a small country town of German immigrants, to an orphanage in the Ukraine, to a mission in Argentina, Eleanor and her children have kept the faith and brought it with them in their own vocations.

Eleanor was raised in a Catholic family of four girls on a farm outside of St. Cloud, Minn. In a town of many first-generation German immigrants, she remembers several people still speaking German.

“The church was very much a central part of our whole life and social life,” Eleanor says. “As a family, we went to Mass every Sunday, Confession once a month, and said prayers every night. We went to a small Catholic school in the country.”

After she received a hospital-based nursing certificate, Eleanor went back to school because she wanted to teach.

While attending St. Louis



*Eleanor Staab with her late husband, Bill*

University, she met her future husband, a medical student named Bill, on a blind date.

As soon as they were married, Bill was called to be a flight surgeon in the Korean War. Afterwards, he completed his fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic, and then Bill and Eleanor had the choice to pursue a position in California or here in Monroe.

“We chose Monroe because it was closer to both our families,” says Eleanor. “In the late 1950s we moved here, and Bill started at the Monroe Clinic. Right away, we joined the parish.”

For years, Eleanor helped Connie Batty to set up and care for the chapel at St. Clare Hospital, which was run by the Sisters of St. Agnes. She made brown scapulars to share with parishioners and taught catechism. Eleanor also led the Rosary before the 8 a.m. Mass.

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# Cultivate YOUR Personal Garden FOR CHRIST THIS Spring

Everyone loves springtime. The weather is warmer and beautiful flowers are blooming all around us.

But anyone with a beautiful garden will attest that the flowers do not magically appear as if the season change itself miraculously makes the flowers bloom. Beautiful flowers and lush gardens are the result of the gardener's hard work.

Imagine that a man is given some flower seeds. The man then buries the seeds in the ground and leaves them on their own. As the months pass and rain falls, some seeds may receive enough nourishment to bloom. But simply burying seeds in the ground will hardly make for a gorgeous garden. Rather, if the man truly wants to enjoy many beautiful flowers, there is much care and work ahead. Recognizing the hidden beauty within these simple seeds, he must cultivate the ground, plant the seeds in a solid foundation, then water and fertilize them throughout the year. Only

then will he see the proper fruit these seeds were made to bear.

This simple illustration speaks to the heart of us this season — not only as we look around at the flowers, but more importantly as we reflect on the springtime of the Church. We are celebrating the great feast of Easter when, through His death and resurrection, Christ offers us the greatest gift of all — eternal life with Him forever. This celebration leads us to reflect on the many gifts God has given us in this life and the fruit they will bear, especially as we look to life eternal.

He has given each of us a multitude of gifts so that we can better serve Him and bring others to Him. Do we notice the hidden potential of our gifts? Do we see them, like the seed, as seemingly small yet so full of fruit? Everything we have — our time, talents and treasure — is a gift from the Lord. Do we accept gifts in gratitude, then put them to use by

cultivating and nourishing them so they will bear the proper fruit?

Just like springtime flowers that we enjoy, our time, talents and treasure need to be cared for. Our gifts need to be cultivated and nourished. Only then will we see them for what they are — wonderful gifts given by God meant for His greater glory.

Like the seeds, if we use our gifts flippantly, we may see some fruits here and there. But we are called to so much more — we are called to build a beautiful garden. We are called to offer God the most beautiful flowers of all.

This season, as we look at all the beautiful flowers around us and enjoy God's creation, let us think about the seeds in our own lives. Ask yourself if you have accepted the gifts God has given you — your time, talents and treasure — and have cultivated and cared for them properly. Or, do they just sit dormant within you yearning to bloom?

*Just like springtime flowers we now enjoy, our time, talents and treasure need to be cared for. Our gifts need to be cultivated and nourished. Only then will we see them for what they are — wonderful gifts given by God meant for His greater glory.*

*A Letter From Our Pastor*

# Celebrating the Joy of Christ's Resurrection

Dear Parishioners,

There are many aspects of the Easter celebration that bring joy to the Christian. Not only do we rejoice in Christ's resurrection, as He conquered death, but we also rejoice because of the eternal reward we gain through it. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (654) puts it, "The Paschal mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life."

This new life that we speak of is a life of abundance and freedom found not only in our current existence, but also in our eternal life in heaven with God. In a beautiful mystery, Christ's resurrection is the source of our own future resurrection. In his Letter to the Romans, St. Paul wrote: "For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection" (Rom 6:5).

When Christ overcame the grave, He opened the gates of heaven that had never been opened before. Through His resurrection, we have the opportunity to be united with God in eternal bliss and happiness. What greater grounds for thanksgiving can there be than this Easter hope? We should sing with joy about this promise from God!

But how can we best express that joy? How can we thank God for the greatest gift that we could ever be given? We can join in worship, praising God in our words and deeds, and share the Good News of His victory with our family, friends and neighbors. Most importantly, we respond to His graciousness with a gift of our own – a gift of our very self. When we give our time, talent and treasure to God and to others in service, we make a concrete gesture of thanksgiving in return to the One who is most deserving of our love.

This Easter season, let us live out Jesus' reassurance that "In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world" (Jn 16:33). Despite the challenges of our daily lives and the struggles we may be going through, Christ has won for us eternal victory, giving us a hope for a better tomorrow and peace that will never end. That, my brothers and sisters, is reason to rejoice.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Larry M. Bakke  
Pastor



Logo designed by Tracey Johnson, local artist and Educational Assistant at St. Victor School

# A Look Back on Our MARDI GRAS GALA

*This past February, our community gathered to share in fun and fellowship, all while supporting St. Victor School, during our Seventh Annual Mardi Gras Gala and Benefit Auction. We thank all who attended this wonderful event!*



## Holy Week & Easter Schedule

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1ST

2:00 p.m. – Living Stations

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. – Confessions

7:00 p.m. – Mime of Our Lord's Passion

### HOLY THURSDAY – APRIL 2ND

6:30 p.m. – Mass

7:30 p.m.- midnight – Evening of Prayer

### GOOD FRIDAY – APRIL 3RD

Noon – Our Lord's Passion

7:00 p.m. – Mime of Our Lord's Passion

### EASTER VIGIL – APRIL 4TH

8 p.m.

### EASTER SUNDAY MASSES – APRIL 5TH

6:30 a.m., 8 a.m., 10 a.m. – St. Victor Church



## Eleanor Staab *continued from front cover*

Bill, who passed away from cancer in 1990, and Eleanor were blessed with nine children – Ed, Chuck, Greg, Cathy, Theresa, Jenny, Anne, Mary Jane, and John. As a family, they stayed close to parish and school life.

“All the kids went to St. Victor School, and we said daily prayers,” Eleanor says. “We said the Rosary together in the evenings and got the kids to Confession regularly. All the boys also served at Mass.”

When the Staab children discerned their vocations, several prayerfully considered the religious life, and two children are still in the religious life. Jenny is a consecrated member of Miles Jesu. While discerning a calling to the religious life, Theresa started an orphanage and a soup kitchen that continue to serve local communities in Ukraine.

Eleanor's son Greg, now Fr. Greg, was a missionary with the Oblates of the Virgin Mary. We particularly re-

member him in our prayers as he battles an illness contracted during missionary work.

“Greg spent many years teaching at a seminary in Boston and then helped at an immigrant parish in Los Angeles,” Eleanor says. “He speaks Spanish fluently and did some missionary work in Argentina and Philippines, where he got sick. I know excellent doctors are taking care of him.”

As she remembers spending the past decades in the Monroe community with her family, Eleanor is particularly grateful for St. Clare. Within our parish community, Eleanor and Bill raised their family to keep the faith and bring it with them wherever they are called.

“The Catholic faith is the foundation of everything we have done,” Eleanor says. “St. Clare has been very important to us over the years. We have had excellent priests and a great parish and school that just keep getting better!”

## Our St. Clare Parish Lenten Goal – **\$5,800 to Build One Well for One Village!** *The Living Water of Baptism to Living Water on Earth*

In 2006, the Sisters of St. Francis in Dubuque, Iowa set a lofty goal of raising \$40,000 to launch the Sister Water Project to bring clean water to villagers in Honduras and Tanzania. As of last year, they far surpassed their goal – the Sisters have raised over \$500,000 for their Sister Water Project. The urgency around global water issues has become increasingly clear. Women in Tanzania walk up to nine miles to fetch water, not always suitable for drinking, while malaria takes the lives of untold numbers of their children. In Honduras, 50,000 children under the age of 5 die annually from water-related illness, while 80 percent of all illness in this Central American country is due to impure water.

As of 2013, the Sister Water Project has completed well projects for over 50 villages in Tanzania and two water systems in the village of Gracias, Lempira, Honduras; organized three mission trips; supported Briar Cliff University's water project mission trips; and Catholic Relief Services water projects.

Each well built in Tanzania affects 500 people. A one-time donation has lasting benefits. The contribution to the Sister Water Project is just once, but people will fill their buckets with clean water from the well every day.

What can we as a parish do **now** to help? Perhaps you can set out a large drinking glass and place your donations in it as a reminder of each glass of clean water you drink per day, and the many times we use water daily – toilets, showers, cooking, laundry, brushing teeth, moistening cloths, washing cars, watering plants, etc. So many times, we use water without even a thought. Please consider helping us at St. Clare of Assisi provide a well this Lent. What an awesome goal!

Donations may be dropped in the Sunday collection basket or sent to the parish office at 1760 14th St. Any checks should be made out to St. Clare of Assisi Parish.



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# Easter Vigil Will Bring New Catholics Home Through RCIA



Each Easter, we have the special opportunity to celebrate the resurrection by welcoming a new group of adult Catholics to our faith. This process is known as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA. As the Easter Vigil draws closer, those individuals who have chosen to participate in this process complete a months-long journey that has often solidified a growing faith.

“It’s a lengthy preparation,” explains Coordinator Jane McAuliffe. “We meet every Tuesday starting in early September and they come faithfully every week. This group has been really good.”

With the help of Bert Leach, Jane helps lead the group through varying discussions that address the “hows and whys” of the Catholic faith. As Jane explains, sometimes these discussions will range from the basics to more challenging ideas that allow those going through the RCIA process to go deeper in their beliefs.

“We focus our discussion on the principles of our faith,” Jane says. “A lot of times, their questions take us in different directions. For somebody coming into our faith, they might not be aware of Ash Wednesday or the Easter Vigil or the Feast of the Assumption. Sometimes, the questions take us in a direction of where they need

to go and what they need to know. You always have to be open to going where their questions need answering. It’s been very rewarding.”

RCIA candidate Richard Mullenhour says the process has given him a deeper understanding of reasons why we have certain traditions and how we celebrate holidays.

“I’ve had a loose Christian faith for years, and always felt the Holy Spirit guiding me away from really bad options I could have chosen in my life,” Richard says. “Once I met Alejandra, my fiancée, and she told me more about her faith, I started looking into it a bit and realized that all of the Christian faiths were just branches off of Catholicism. I felt that I should get back to the source, which by my logic makes it the closest to what God wants, because it’s been revised less from the original. I also just felt the push to follow this path, and I try to listen when I get that push.”



*Richard Mullenhour –  
RCIA candidate Richard  
Mullenhour*

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## RCIA *continued from page 7*

Richard says he's looking forward to receiving the Eucharist as a full Catholic and getting comfortable following along with the Mass in a way that many "cradle Catholics" seem to have been ingrained.

"I just want to more fully understand what God wants of me, and how I can become more likable to Him," Richard says. "I know that He loves us all, but 'like' and 'love' are completely different things."

Through this process, Jane says her team and Fr. Larry do a variety of things to put the candidates at ease, including giving them an up-close tour of the church and

inviting them to participate in parish stewardship opportunities, such as a "secret angel" initiative that helps brighten the day of elderly and homebound parishioners.

Parishioners are invited to watch this year's group of candidates receive their full initiation into the Church at the Easter Vigil Mass. For those who might want to volunteer with the RCIA program, or are considering becoming a Catholic, Jane says a new group will be starting again in the fall. Contact Jane McAuliffe at [faithcoordrv@gmail.com](mailto:faithcoordrv@gmail.com) for more information.

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*— Richard Mullenhour*