

ST. CLARE *of* ASSISI PARISH

June 2015

“YOU CAN BRING JESUS TO OTHERS”

*Bringing the Eucharist to the Homebound
on First Fridays*

Over months of visiting, they became friends. Doris Ulmen even brings green grapes with her just because her friend likes them.

Doris also brings a source of spiritual nourishment her friend couldn't receive otherwise – Doris brings the Body of Christ through a ministry that nurtures her own spiritual life.

“Bringing the Eucharist to others helps me to stay close to Jesus,” Doris says. “There are certain people who have the faith, compassion and patience for the elderly and the time to minister to them. I feel called to minister to the elderly.”

On each First Friday, as well as on Sundays, a few Eucharistic Ministers to the Homebound bring Communion to the sick and elderly. These homebound parishioners reside in their own homes, apartments, or at Monroe Manor or Pleasant View Nursing Home.

“It is important to bring the Eucharist to them, because then they feel that they are still a part of the parish and still connected,” Doris says. “They are so appreciative and really look forward to us coming.”

Many of these parishioners particularly appreciate the opportunity to not only receive the Eucharist on Sundays, but also on First Fridays. The First Friday Devotion began when St. Margaret Mary Alacoque received a vision from Christ who promised the grace of final repentance to those who foster the devotion.

“Many people want to receive Communion on First Fridays, especially the elderly, because the First Friday devotion is important,” Doris says. “You



2 Stewardship
*Celebrating Fathers'
Roles as Stewards
to Children's Faith*

3 Our Lives are
Filled With
Examples of Good
Stewardship

4 A Look Back on
First Communion
at St. Clare of
Assisi

6 An Unforgettable
Meal *The Feast of
Corpus Christi*

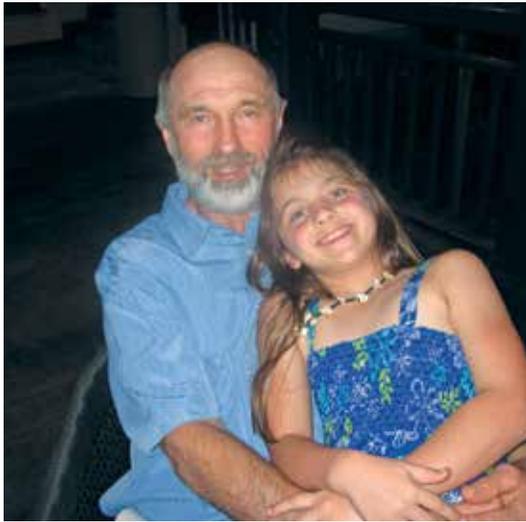
7 “Fully Participating
in Church is Good for
My Soul” St. Clare's
Sacristans

1760 14th Street, Monroe, WI 53566
Phone: (608) 325-9506
www.stclaregreencounty.org

continued on page 5

STEWARDSHIP

Celebrating Fathers' Roles as Stewards to Children's Faith



There's nothing quite like butterfly kisses from daddy to his little girl, or a camping trip filled with fishing and frogs with dad for his young son.

There is no doubt that fathers play an enormous role in the lives of their children. From the child's birth, a good father nurtures his newborn and begins a lifelong bond. He sets time aside from his busy schedule to share in his child's ongoing developments, learning the sounds, gestures and behaviors that make his child unique.

As his child grows from infancy to toddlerhood and into adolescence, a good father continues to take an active part in his child's life.

Now, instead of bouncing his son on his knee, a good father patiently teaches him how to ride a bike or play the guitar. Or, maybe a good father helps his daughter with her algebra homework or gently listens to the story of her first heartbreak and offers her a shoulder to cry on.

The role of a good father doesn't end with sharing his time and talents with his child. Instead, a good father forgoes his own wishes for the needs of his children by choosing to use his financial resources to feed, clothe, provide medical care, and house them without a second thought.

These characteristics – sharing his time to get to know his child, sharing his talents to teach his child, and sharing treasure to help take care of his child – are essential traits to being a good father.

After all, God calls all fathers to be good stewards of the priceless gift of life He bestows on them.

But sharing these three areas of life in which we practice stewardship is not enough. Instead, God calls all fathers to a higher purpose, and to the ultimate goal of helping their children get to heaven to spend eternity with their creator.

If a father has spent time, shared talents, and spent his resources for the benefit of his child, but has not helped the child grow in faith and love for God, has he done his entire job?

Thankfully, God provides us countless examples of how to teach children about God and instill Christian values into their lives. Beyond Bible stories, catechism classes and Vacation Bible Schools, God offers spiritual enrichment through the Mass, the sacraments, adoration, and countless parish ministries.

As the head of the domestic Church, the father can help further instill a sense of love for God by being good examples to their children. That example starts with attending Mass each week and praying with their children on a daily basis. The prayer can be as simple as a short thanksgiving prayer, reading the Gospel, saying intentions, or even saying a short prayer on the way to school.

Good fathers take an active role in their child's faith. As we approach Father's Day, let us encourage all fathers to be good stewards and help their children each day toward their final destination – to be reunited with their first father, God in Heaven.

A Letter From Our Pastor

Our Lives are Filled With Examples of *Good Stewardship*

Dear Parishioners,

We do not have to look very hard to find examples of stewardship in our lives. It starts right here in our own parish. Think of the people who serve us in so many ways. There is a group of wonderful people who are here at the parish, sometimes every day, helping to make our faith community operate effectively, especially in terms of worship and liturgy. Then, of course, there are those who serve tirelessly and selflessly with our many parish ministries, which reach out to those around us — to those in need.

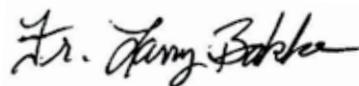
This kind of service — discipleship — is exactly what Christ was saying when He told us to “Love your neighbor.” Think of others in our Church, our communities and our lives who show us what it means to be a good steward. One of the first who comes to mind is our Holy Father, Pope Francis. His very life is a testament to what it means to serve — to be a good steward. In one of his recent homilies, the pope said, “Real power is service. Jesus reminded us ‘He came not to be served, but to serve,’ and His service was the service of the Cross. For the Christian, getting ahead, progress, means humbling oneself. If we do not learn this Christian rule, we will never, ever be able to understand Jesus’ true message.” That is my message for

both you and me — we must be willing, at times, to put our own comfort and desires aside for the needs of others. That is what true stewardship is really all about.

Summer is upon us — we are entering that time of year when things slow down a bit, and we tend to live life at a more relaxed pace. Nevertheless, it is not a time to let our faith lives slow down. In fact, it is a great time to enrich and focus on our faith and our God.

God’s creation is all around us. As we enjoy the summer season and bask in the sun, I hope you will take time to remember the wonders of His creation and His glorious gifts. We also must strive to renew our efforts to be good stewards every day by continuing to serve others, and to be thankful for the many living examples of stewardship we see at our parish and in our daily lives.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Larry M. Bakke
Pastor



A LOOK BACK ON *at St. Clare*

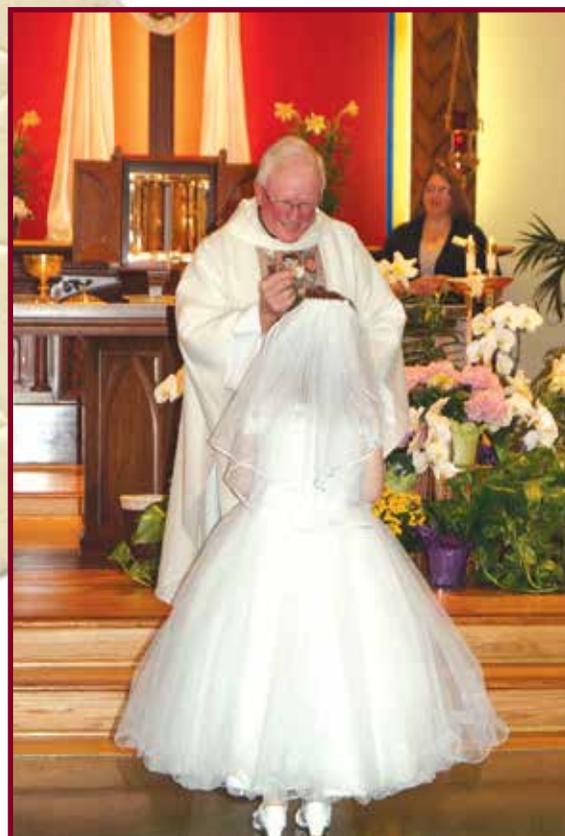
We congratulate all of our students who made their



FIRST COMMUNION

at St. Clare of Assisi

Bring your children for their First Communion this spring at St. Clare of Assisi!



First Fridays *continued from front cover*

receive special graces if you receive Communion on nine consecutive First Fridays.”

When a parishioner becomes sick or unable to attend Mass, he or she may notify the parish office, and the office compiles a list of the individuals the ministers visit. Doris works with the ministers to assign different parishioners to each of them.

“I have a booklet about bringing Communion to the homebound, and I pray with them before giving them Communion,” Doris says. “Then, I visit with them. I might stay 15 minutes to a half an hour.”

Through her regular visits, Doris has become close friends with many of these special members of our community, including the 90-year-old woman to whom she brings green grapes in the nursing home.

“Relationships develop because you’re visiting with them and get to know them,” Doris says. “They are always so happy and thankful to see us.”

For over 20 years Doris has brought the Body of Christ to the homebound, literally bringing them spiritual nourishment and fostering their ongoing connection to our faith community. She encourages others to consider becoming active in this vital parish ministry!

“I think I have grown in my faith by bringing the Eucharist to others,” Doris says. “And it is always good to have new people to help bring Communion to the homebound! You can bring Jesus to others.”

For more information about becoming a Eucharistic Minister for the Homebound on First Fridays or Sundays, please contact the parish office at 608-325-9506 to connect with Doris Ulmen.

An Unforgettable Meal

The Feast of Corpus Christi

If you were to make a list of “famous people from history” to invite for dinner, there’s a good chance Jesus Christ would make the cut.

As a historical figure alone, the meal conversation would no doubt prove interesting.

Yet, the thought of spending personal time with Christ ushers in additional considerations that far exceed a mere “getting to know you” routine. Jesus Christ is the only human being in history who is also your Creator – He already knows you intimately!

You might then imagine that if Christ revealed Himself to you personally, then you would immediately love Him deeply and believe without doubt. You might think to yourself, “If I could just meet Him once, it would be easy to believe.”

There is a bit of truth in this thought. As human beings, we are affected by personal presence, and the most intense communication transpires through physical contact. Just ask the apostle, Doubting Thomas. The sight of Christ alone

was not enough – Thomas required physical touch to be satisfied.

The beauty of the Gospel message is that it is universal. Just as the resurrected Christ invited Thomas to touch Him in the flesh, so too does Christ invite us – His disciples in 2015 – to meet him physically in the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

So, if you would like to share a meal with Christ, the time is here! You have already been given a perpetual, open-ended invitation to dine with Him, in His Father’s house. Through the gift of the Eucharist, we are invited to share in the eternal banquet of heaven. This belief is the incomprehensible glory of our Catholic faith.

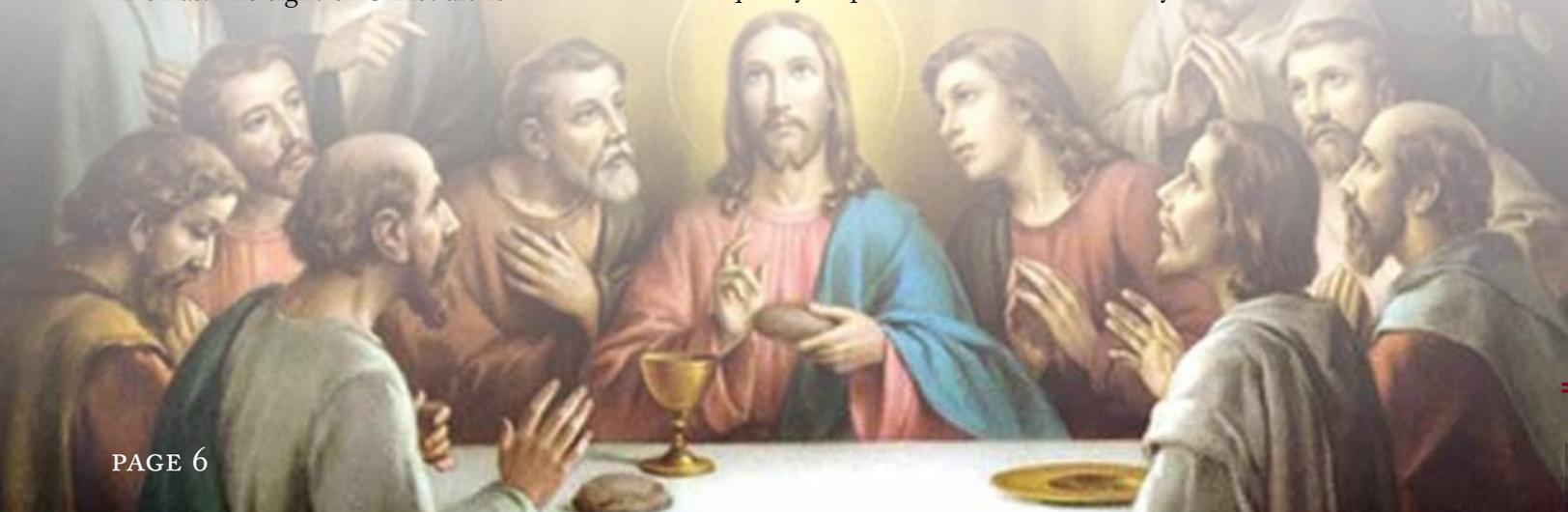
We celebrate with great joy, therefore, the night in which Christ instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. Although “re-presented” at every Mass, we commemorate this event on two special feast days of the liturgical calendar – on Holy Thursday and on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

The joy of this “holy gift” cannot be adequately expressed on

Holy Thursday, due to its nearness to Good Friday. Therefore, the Feast of Corpus Christi – also known as the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ – is given its own day on the liturgical calendar.

Throughout the rest of the world, the Feast of Corpus Christi is normally celebrated on the Thursday following Trinity Sunday, thereby mirroring Holy Thursday. However, the U.S. does not maintain this feast as a Holy Day of Obligation. It is considered a “moveable feast” – this year, the Feast of Corpus Christi occurs on June 4, but the celebration is transferred to the following Sunday, June 7.

On this glorious feast, take the time to thank Our Heavenly Father for the gift He bestows on us through the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In the words of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta: “When you look at the Crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you then. When you look at the Sacred Host, you understand how much Jesus loves you now.” Happy Feast Day!



“Fully Participating in Church is Good for My Soul”

ST. CLARE’S SACRISTANS

As a child, and later as an adult, Susan Hicks observed and mimicked her role models at her parish. She learned how they cleaned the linens and prepared the hosts. She learned by imitating, anticipating a time when she could become a sacristan herself and participate more fully in parish life.

“Fully participating in church is good for my soul, my Catholicism and the health of my mind, body and spirit,” Susan says. “As a child, I watched and learned, and I am thankful for the examples I had. That example is a gift we can give our children!”

At St. Clare, a small group of volunteers participate in the daily workings of the parish by serving as the sacristans before each Mass. They assist with preparations before as well as during and after Mass as needed.

“Throughout my childhood and adult life, I have done pieces of the sacristan’s job, like cleaning the linens and polishing the brass,” says Susan, a sacristan for the past several months. “Now there are four of us, and

together we’re collaborating according to who is available for what Mass or special event.”

The sacristan arrives 30 to 45 minutes before the beginning of Mass. Preparations include laying out the necessary vessels and ensuring the servers and lectors are in place. They check the holy water in the fonts and arrange the items for the offertory collection. They observe if anyone might need Communion brought to them in the pew.

“A sacristan is an observer who makes sure things are in place and ready for everyone to engage in the celebration of the Mass,” Susan says. “During Mass, you make sure there are enough Communion ministers, and after Mass you might assist Father with the cleaning and washing of the vessels or the sink.”

If necessary, the sacristans help with altar linens, dry cleaning and the general housework of the church. As an observer and participant, the sacristan receives a

continued on back cover

“Fully participating in church is good for my soul, my Catholicism and the health of my mind, body and spirit. As a child, I watched and learned, and I am thankful for the examples I had. That example is a gift we can give our children!”

– Susan Hicks





ST. CLARE of ASSISI PARISH

1760 14th Street
Monroe, WI 53566

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Monroe, Wis. 53566
Permit No. 177

Return Service Requested



Sacristans *continued from page 7*

unique perspective of parish life “behind the scenes” in this sacred space.

“The sacristan also does whatever Father delegates, needs or asks,” Susan says. “It is a great way to learn more about the liturgical seasons and the liturgy in general.”



Through their quiet but vital work, the sacristans maintain the little details that go unnoticed when we come together as a faith community for Mass. For Susan, being a sacristan and generally

servicing the church has been one way to provide an example to her children.

“You forget about all these little things that are ‘housekeeping’ in a way,” Susan says. “When they were young, my kids came with me to clean the church, to separate the palms and to learn by example.”

Anyone who would like to serve as a sacristan and support the celebration of the Mass is more than welcome to join this small dutiful group in their work.

“I’m thankful that I am able to do things like this and be a sacristan, because there may come a time when I can’t,” Susan says. “It is easy to say ‘no,’ but it is good to say ‘yes’ and to participate in different ways in parish life!”

For more information about the sacristans at St. Clare, please contact the parish office at 608-325-9506.

