

# ST. CLARE of ASSISI PARISH

November 2014

## Catholic Daughters Shopping Spree Brings Together the Parish Community

For the last five years, St. Clare of Assisi's chapter of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) has held an annual Shopping Spree as a special fundraising event. Each year, the Shopping Spree has brought the parish community together for the opportunity to support local vendors and to spend time together in fellowship.

"The event is an opportunity for home base and small vendors to share their gifts, talents and produce," says CDA member Susan Hicks. "The guests and customers have the opportunity to shop locally for items they may need at one site, whether it be for gifting or for personal use. There is no fee to enter, and we welcome everyone to come enjoy the event."

In the past, the event has included vendors selling soaps, lotions, baked goods, honey, salsas, aprons, bows, tutus, jewelry, cookbooks and religious articles. In addition, various crafts – such as rag rugs, mittens, wreaths, and etched glass – have also been available. A number of businesses will also be present at the event – hair salons, Watkins, Pampered Chef, Thirty-One, Mary Kay, Scentsy, and Avon.

On the same day, the parish's Youth Ministry will be holding a breakfast for event attendees.

"This is an opportunity to visit with friends, guests, and meet one another," Susan says. "We don't always take the time to meet those we attend Mass with – here is a chance to eat, visit and shop. The breakfast is a freewill donation with proceeds for the Youth Ministry program. The students have also utilized these monies to help those in need, such as people in Haiti and hurricane victims."

In addition to being a fundraiser for Youth Ministry, the event is also one of CDA's biggest fundraisers. With the funds raised from the Shopping Spree, CDA can help support various parish and school projects. These projects include purchasing Bibles for RCIA; organizing receptions and meals for Baptismal families, First Reconciliation families, and Confirmation events;



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## The “Thanksgiving Spirit”

# Doesn't Have to End at Thanksgiving

The origin of the first Thanksgiving feast is a matter of some debate among historians. But since 1863, Americans have annually set aside the fourth or fifth Thursday of November to give thanks to God for a bountiful harvest. The holiday became a matter of federal law in 1941, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint congressional resolution to observe Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday of November. Even as our society has become less agrarian, families continue to gather each November to give thanks to God for each other, and for the many blessings they've received throughout the year.

Most people associate this “spirit of Thanksgiving” with the fall holiday and its many recognizable symbols – brisk weather, cornucopias, family gatherings and plenty of delicious food. But giving thanks to God in gratitude for the gifts we have received isn't an attitude we should save for this annual holiday alone. When we live lives of stewardship – sharing of our time, talents and treasure in thanks to God and at the service of others – we can sustain life in the Thanksgiving spirit throughout the year.

The Church teaches that this daily response of gratitude is an important element of living the life of a Christian disciple. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, “Indeed,



in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory. The thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head” (CCC 2637).

And how can we express this spirit of thanks? We can serve others, living the virtue of charity by reaching out to our brothers and sisters in need through acts of kindness. We can give back to God from our “first fruits,” sharing of our treasure in thanksgiving and recognition of the need to return a portion of our gifts to God. We can utilize our unique talents to make our parish and local communities better places. And, as the *Catechism* also points out, we can even express thanks through prayerfully offering up our daily activities to

God: “Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving” (CCC 2638).

This Thanksgiving, take a moment to think of ways that you can live in the “spirit of Thanksgiving” on the fourth Thursday of November, and every other day throughout the year. Living the stewardship way of life may not always involve a precisely-carved turkey, decorations or a family viewing of *It's a Wonderful Life* – but it will provide lifelong fulfillment and joy rooted in an attitude of perpetual thanksgiving.

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*A Letter From Our Pastor*

# A Time of Hope and Giving Thanks

Dear Parishioners,

In so many ways, November is special to us as Catholics, and also to us as Americans. It begins with All Saints Day on Nov. 1 and closes with the First Sunday of Advent on Nov. 30. Of course, the fourth Thursday of the month is Thanksgiving Day.

When it comes to the Solemnity of All Saints, we have always recognized the connection with those who have died and joined the Lord in heaven. All Saints Day was instituted to “honor all saints, known and unknown.” The “unknown” has always left me enthralled. How many saints have each of us known among our friends and family, in our parish and our neighborhoods? To me, a “saint” might be someone who has provided an example of what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Thus, we begin the month by paying tribute and recollecting all those in our lives who showed us what it meant to be a good Christian.

Thanksgiving Day also gives me time to remember. It is a day to reflect on the ways in which God has so richly blessed us. Every day and every week should be a time of thanksgiving for us as good stewards. Appreciating that God is the source of all our blessings is at the heart of stewardship. Just a few days after Thanksgiving, our Church launches our new year with Advent — a time of expectation of the coming of Christ, and a time when we begin the whole process of thanking God for the blessings we have received.

As part of his Advent message last year, Pope Francis said, “For the great human family, it is necessary to renew always the common horizon toward which we are journeying. The horizon of hope!” This month should renew our hope, from honoring the saints we have known to our expectation of the coming of Christ. We join the Holy Father in recognizing the journey – may God continue to bless you and keep you on your own journey.



Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Larry M. Bakke  
Pastor

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## ST. VICTOR SCHOOL CELEBRATES *Green County*



There are many fun celebrations throughout every academic year. At St. Victor School, one such event each year is Green County Cheese Days, which celebrates the Swiss heritage of Green County.

"It is a community-based event that celebrates our Swiss heritage and acknowledges the role that cheese and cheese factories have in our community," says Joe Peters, Principal at St. Victor School.

This year, the annual Cheese Days festival was held Sept. 19, 20 and 21 on the Square in downtown Monroe.

This year's festival was a centennial celebration, occurring 100 years after the first Cheese Days festival in 1914. The event included three days of parades, entertainment, food, music and fun in recognition of Green County's Swiss heritage. There were more than 150,000 people involved in celebrating this year's Cheese Days.

While the Cheese Days festival is not specifically a school or parish event, St. Victor school participates in some of the event's festivities. St. Victor School had a role in two parades – the Friday night Children's Parade

and the big, three-hour Swiss Colony Cheese Days Parade on Sunday. St. Victor Students also performed in the Children's Showcase of Talent on Friday, Sept. 19.

"It is a great way to showcase St. Victor School, as well as to learn and grow in the knowledge of our community's heritage," Mr. Peters says.

St. Victor School's participation in both parades and the concert has become a tradition for the past 14 years or so, and the students and faculty enjoy the time taking part in these celebrations.

# CELEBRATES SWISS HERITAGE

## *Swiss Cheese Days*



"It is fun to participate in parades, as well as enjoying learning about our Swiss culture," Mr. Peters says. "And the food is awesome!"

This event is not only a chance to have fun and learn about the Swiss heritage of Green County, but it is also an opportunity to build community.

"It brings together our entire community to celebrate all things Swiss," Mr. Peters says. "But mainly cheese!"

For more information about the Green County Cheese Days and St. Victor School's involvement, please call the school office at 608-325-3395.

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***– Mr. Joe Peters,  
St. Victor School Principal***

## St. Clare of Assisi Parish Financial Summary

	2013-14 <u>Actual</u>	2014-15 <u>Budget</u>	Change from <u>Prior Year</u>
<b><u>General Parish</u></b>			
Total Income	\$747,605	\$767,197	\$19,592
Total Expense	<u>\$391,332</u>	<u>\$400,757</u>	<u>\$9,425</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	\$356,273	\$366,440	\$10,166
<b><u>School</u></b>			
Total Income	\$354,861	\$336,122	(\$18,739)
Total Expense	<u>\$761,137</u>	<u>\$705,711</u>	<u>(\$55,426)</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	(\$406,277)	(\$369,589)	\$36,688
<b>(1) <u>Faith formation</u></b>			
Total Income	\$13,662	\$3,500	(\$10,162)
Total Expense	<u>\$85,469</u>	<u>\$118,743</u>	<u>\$33,274</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	(\$71,807)	(\$115,243)	(\$43,436)
<b>(2) <u>Capital Improvements</u></b>			
Total Income	\$0	\$12,240	\$12,240
Total Expense	<u>\$68,766</u>	<u>\$8,670</u>	<u>(\$60,097)</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	(\$68,766)	\$3,570	\$72,337
<b><u>Cemetery</u></b>			
Total Income	\$25,848	\$25,600	(\$248)
Total Expense	<u>\$38,200</u>	<u>\$24,401</u>	<u>(\$13,799)</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	(\$12,352)	\$1,199	\$13,551
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<b>(3) <u>Total All Divisions</u></b>			
Total Income	\$1,141,975	\$1,144,659	\$2,683
Total Expense	<u>\$1,344,904</u>	<u>\$1,258,282</u>	<u>(\$86,622)</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	<u>(\$202,929)</u>	<u>(\$113,623)</u>	<u>\$89,306</u>

**Footnotes:**

- (1) - Faith Formation: Income is down from last year due to not charging for Faith formation tuition and expenses are up due to staff changes.
- (2) - Capital Improvements: Collections for the school/kitchen remodel were done in the 2012/13 fiscal year and expenses were incurred in the 2013/14 fiscal year.
- (3) - The overall net loss of \$113,623 for 2014/15 assumes no increase in parish collections. In order to generate a positive net income, parish collections would need to increase 20%.

## Food Pantry Volunteering Reveals Spirit of Generosity at St. Clare of Assisi

While many Americans spend the month of November anticipating a day filled with home-cooked family favorites, finding healthy and nutritious food can be a daily struggle for others. That's why parishioners from St. Clare of Assisi are making it a special mission this month to make that struggle a little easier to bear.

Organized by parishioner Tammy Krieger, St. Clare of Assisi has been selected by the Green County Inter-Church Food Pantry to exclusively provide volunteers for the month of November. The food pantry is open every Monday from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and St. Clare will send two volunteers to help every Monday this month.

While there, volunteers help pack totes with basic food items that families need throughout the week. A staff member interviews incoming families, while another volunteer brings the food out to the individual in need.

"They have large totes and small totes depending on the size of the family," Tammy says. "It's a new food pantry, and it's very nice and very well-organized. It makes it easy to work."

*"Overall, I'm just very thankful to the parish for all their help and their donations, because I feel it makes a difference in the community for the people that are in need. I think St. Clare of Assisi has a lot of wonderful people who are willing to get involved and help. I would say spiritually, it's a good feeling to know that you're helping people and you're not asking for anything in return." – Tammy Krieger*

November may be St. Clare's assigned month to help out, but as an avid volunteer with both the food pantry and Second Harvest in Madison, Tammy says parishioners have been helping every month of the year. On the first Sunday of each month, Tammy helps with the collection of food donations from the parish and delivery to the food pantry.

"The people of St. Clare of Assisi are very generous," Tammy says. "Parishioners bring in food items, and then after the 10 o'clock Mass, we transfer the food to the pantry. The food that they bring to the church is nonperishable. Each month, the food pantry will call the church and let them know what they're low on. Sometimes, they're low on certain items and let people know what they're looking for if there is a need."

Tammy says items donated by St. Clare parishioners easily fill around 15 regular-sized shopping totes, which adds up to "a lot of food." Other members of the parish who regularly lend their time helping deliver food include Ann, Andy, and Monica Sefcik, Dale and Tina Buvid, Sara and Bill Latimer



*Tammy Krieger*

and family, and Eric and Michelle Benzschawel and family.

"We have a lot of wonderful volunteers," Tammy says. "A lot of people will come out after Mass to help carry bags, and it goes really quick."

For Tammy, seeing this kind of generosity and spending time helping with other Christians has been an inspiration.

"Overall, I'm just very thankful to the parish for all their help and their donations, because I feel it makes a difference in the community for the people that are in need," Tammy says. "I think St. Clare of Assisi has a lot of wonderful people who are willing to get involved and help. I would say spiritually, it's a good feeling to know that you're helping people and you're not asking for anything in return. You're involved with other people of your same faith and they're doing it for the same reason."

If you or a family member would like to volunteer, simply call Tammy Krieger at 608-325-2868.



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## Catholic Daughters Shopping Spree

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child care and snacks during Marriage Enrichment dates; a welcome meal for the Love Begins Here support team; and any other activities or events that the parish and school may need.

Since the event draws both numerous vendors and attendees, volunteers are crucial to its success. Although many volunteers are members of CDA or the Youth Ministry, any parishioner is welcome to help out.

“We assist with set-up for the vendors, and assist Youth Ministry with set-up and during the breakfast as needed,” Susan says.

Participating in the Shopping Spree as a volunteer is a great way to grow in a spirit of stewardship.



“As each of us receives fruits and gifts from the Holy Spirit, we should then in turn use them to serve one another as good stewards of God’s grace,” Susan says. “As stewards, we safeguard material and human resources while modeling the life of Jesus – sharing time, talent and treasure for the life of our parish community and for one

another. After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Mary is the patroness of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, and we strive to follow her example.”

The Shopping Spree will take place on Sunday, Nov. 23 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information about the event, or to get involved as a volunteer or vendor, please contact Susan Hicks at 608-851-9137 or [court Mazzuchelli@luckymail.com](mailto:court Mazzuchelli@luckymail.com).