

St. Joseph Parish • Bradley, Illinois

The Beacon

Christmas 2010

Dear Parishioners,

I am happy to have this opportunity to write all of you at this time and to wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year! This is my sixth Christmas and New Year with you at St. Joseph's. Each year I feel more and more at home and thank God for giving me the opportunity to minister here with you.

These days are certainly a great time for us to want to be with family and to count our blessings and that is how I feel in your presence. It is wonderful how the Lord is working through the people of St. Joseph's. You will learn about so many different acts of kindness and ministries as you flip through this Beacon. Toy sales, breakfasts, donations to Birthright, Harvest Sunday, gifts to our school, all as a result of people working together and caring for one another. Many in our parish give of their time and inspire us with their talents, especially our music and liturgical ministers. Countless others volunteer anonymously behind the scenes. They decorate our worship space, provide for and coordinate the monthly Persons with



(Above) Father Tony Nugent and Deacon Jerry Gregoire with altar servers (left to right) Sydney LaMontagne and Gabby Chinski before Mass Dec. 5. This is Father Tony's sixth Christmas as pastor of St. Joseph Parish.

Disabilities Mass and sell Manna gift cards. These and many more continue to inspire me. Each of them is trying to bring about the Kingdom of God.

We are a blessed community where we get to encounter Jesus and welcome Him into our lives with family and friends.

St. Joseph's is gifted because there are so many extended families that worship together here. Many families these days are scattered and yet we have the opportunity to be together or at least to welcome members home during these holidays.

My prayer is that we continue to be aware and attentive to our blessings and that we find ways to express our gratitude for all we have been given.

Thank you for the privilege of being your pastor! Merry Christmas.

Fr. Tony Nugent

Generations of Faith



(Above) Cindy Massey lights the St. Joseph Church Advent Wreath on the Second Sunday of Advent. She and her mother, Marie Ellison (left), decided lighting the candle would be something nice for them to share together during the Season of Advent. As candle carriers, they were part of the entrance procession, carrying and lighting the candle in the church Advent arrangement.

*Families observed Advent with the first-ever Parish Advent Project. Have you seen the giant Christmas Tree in the parish hall? The School and Religious Education worked together to create something new and different for families to observe the Advent Season. Interested families received Advent Tree Prayer Booklets with daily prayers and reflections. The kids colored each paper candle and leaf. These were placed on the tree. See it in "full bloom" at www.stjosephbradley.org. *

Toy sale helps families at Christmas



(Above) Linda Leroy's fourth grade class at St. Joseph School invited the student body to bring used toys to school for a special project. After sorting through the donations, the fourth graders held a toy sale. The fourth graders raised about \$400. On Dec. 3, they gave the proceeds to Father Tony Nugent and asked him to give the money to some families in need. He told them that when they give something to someone else, they feel much happier than when they get something for themselves. He said that the church has already been getting calls from moms and dads who can't afford to buy presents for their kids. "That's where this money will go ... So that the parents can feel the way you do about giving." *This was among the many ways our school reached out during Advent.*

Holy Name Hosts Charity Breakfast



The Parish Holy Name Society held a benefit breakfast Dec. 5 in the parish hall. Proceeds went to KC-Casa. (Left to right) Abigayle Devine, Samantha Zahrobsky and Cassandra Hurst help serve at the breakfast. Men of the parish are invited to the next Holy Name meeting Jan. 2.

THANKS TO OUR MANNA VOLUNTEERS ... THIS IS THEIR BUSY TIME OF YEAR!



Gift cards for gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores and more are available through the Manna Program and St. Joseph's gets a percentage back. See details on our parish Web site.

Parish Religious Education Class celebrates Christ's Birthday, makes donation to worthwhile cause



Cathy Betourne's fourth grade Religious Education class held a "Birthday Party for Jesus" Dec. 15. This year, the innovative catechist invited parents to keep it a surprise for the kids and to donate a baby item to be shared with Birthright. Fr. Tony Nugent, pastor, visited the class and celebrated with the kids and teacher.

The RE program works in collaboration with families as they journey with their children on the road of faith development. This year's theme is: "Passing on our Faith: Generation to Generation."

Photos and newsletters are featured on the RE Page of www.stjosephbradley.org, and links for families. You can also meet our catechists with descriptions and pictures of our RE teachers. Visitors can view the RE calendar and handbook too.

Parish blood drives are scheduled every eight weeks at St. Joseph's. We are very fortunate to have repeat and faithful donors. Our next blood drive is slated Jan. 9, 2011. To make an appointment, call 815-939-3573, or visit www.stjosephbradley.org. Walk-ins are certainly accepted too.

CCW unwraps some joy for mothers in need with Birthright Tree



(Left) The Council of Catholic Women had an amazing response to its Birthright Tree at the main church entrance. All 75 cards were gone the first week!

"I feel so blessed to have such a caring church," said Monica Leriger, president.

The group put another 100 cards out for the rest of the Christmas season.

There are many plans in the works for the CCW, including another Spa Night in February and spiritual events during Lent.

CCW Meetings are at 7 p.m. every second Tuesday of the month.

'Meowy' Christmas from the second graders at St. Joseph School



(Above left) Linda Sauter from New Beginnings Shelter thanks second grader Chase Osterhoff of Kankakee for the special gift he purchased and wrapped for the cats at the shelter. Pam Porter's second grade class at St. Joseph School in Bradley participated in a special project to give Christmas presents to cats living at New Beginnings.

The students did chores at home to earn money and then purchased items from a wish list from the shelter. Each second grader bought presents and wrapped them. Sauter, Lissa Simpkins and Kathryn Lewellen, who help run the shelter, visited the class Dec. 14 (above right) and gratefully accepted the gifts. The students also gave the class visitors a Christmas card and sang them, "We Wish You A Meowy Christmas." Located in unincorporated Bourbonnais, the New Beginnings Shelter houses over 200 stray cats. The non-profit shelter, which relies on donations to operate, provides food, shelter and medical care for cats and prepares them for adoptions.

Volunteers bring some Christmas cheer during the latest PWD Mass and social



With donations of gifts from kind parishioners and a generous monetary contribution from the parish Knights of Columbus, the coordinators of the monthly Persons with Disabilities Mass were able to get gifts for all attendees (left) of the Dec. 5 PWD Christmas celebration. (Right) Volunteers wrapped every gift beforehand. Those involved in this ministry wish to thank all who donated and helped with the Christmas gathering!

To those who decorate our sanctuary for the Christmas Season ... A word of thanks!

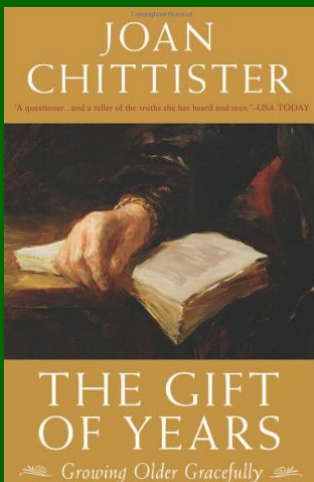


It's been a really busy time at St. Joseph Church the last few days as volunteers (some you may never even have met) worked hard to get the church ready for the Christmas season.

Many people come every year to decorate and clean the sanctuary for the Yuletide celebration. They work behind-the-scenes, but their contribution is so appreciated as parishioners and guests enjoy the beautiful symbols of the season and decorations.

We are very grateful to you for your contributions! Blessings this season.

Parish Brunch Bunch enjoys "The Gift of Years"



A wonderful parish gathering came about because of the book, *"The Gift of Years."* Invitation notices went in the parish bulletin for several weeks as well as personal invitations. About 15 people (men and women) responded to reflect on the book. The group, called "The Brunch Bunch," met four weeks in the fall and enjoyed companionship, powerful stories, and shared reflections about this awesome book. Those attended were in their mid to late, 40s, 50s, 60s and early 70s and 80s.

Another gathering of the Brunch Bunch is planned: Thursdays, Jan. 20 and 27 and Feb. 3 and 10. If you would like to come and share in these special Thursday morning meetings, call Sr. Denise or Sr. Linda, 815-939-3573.

"The Gift of Years." captures the essence of what we are experiencing as we face the blessings and burdens of the years allotted to each of us. Attendees will enjoy music, prayer, followed by reflections.

Thank you to those who attended the first series and for being such powerful influences in the lives of others.

Do you Know? Did you Know?



(Left) Do you know Carmelita Johnson? She's a very faithful, compassionate member of St. Joseph Parish. Did you know that she comes to the church every Monday morning and collects and sorts all the food provided by the people each weekend?

Despite personal tragedy and loss in her life, Carmelita said she is so grateful for all the blessings the Lord has given her. Volunteering at the church is just her way of thanking God, added the woman of faith.

For several years St. Joseph's has been collecting food for the Center of Hope in Kankakee, which provides for 750-975 families per week. (Thanks so much for your support!)

Please continue to give food and toiletries at church for the Center of Hope. Our parish's generosity will go along way, especially during the Christmas Season.

Knights of Columbus in Action!



(Above) The parish Knights of Columbus have been busy with many projects. Proceeds from their recent breakfasts have gone to charitable outreach in the community.

This Christmas season, the Knights were slated to host a pancake breakfast with Santa for the kids and families.

This dedicated group from St. Joseph Parish meets on the first Thursday of the month for fellowship and to make plans for Catholic Christian service projects.

Men of the parish are more than welcome to join them. For more information, contact Steve Bell, 815-937-0974, spbell@yahoo.com. (Next scheduled breakfast: Jan. 9, 2011).

Parish youth 'Rake N' Run'



(Above) The St. Joseph Parish Youth Ministry sponsored a "Rake N' Run" event Nov. 21. This was the third year offering this ministry to elderly and disabled residents of the community.

A very grateful resident called the parish afterward to thank the teens and adults for their service at her home. As the visitors went about their work on her lawn, she said couldn't hold back the tears of gratitude.

Find out more about more about this wonderful parish ministry by visiting the Youth Ministry Page of www.stjosephbradley.org. There you will find pictures of events and retreats, the YM calendar and much more!

A Healing Mass is scheduled at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 8, 2011. Visit the Pastoral Care Page of our Web for details.

Teens collect food from 2,000 houses throughout Bradley during Harvest Sunday!

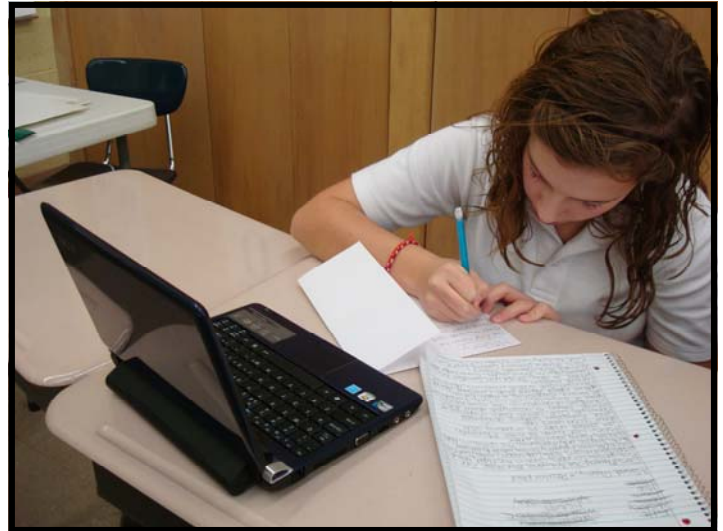


(Left) Teens and adults of Kankakee-area parishes took to the neighborhood streets to garner donations during Harvest Sunday, which was held over two weekends, Nov. 7 and 14. It was another successful collection. Those involved collected food for the Salvation Army, Center of Hope, St. Vincent DePaul and for food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Thanks to all who committed their time, energy and vehicles to this impressive endeavor as well as the friendly folks who offered food at their doorsteps.

St. Joseph Parish will be hosting this event next year. The dates are Nov. 6 and 13, 2011. The Youth Ministry is going to need the whole parish to come onboard to make the collection run smoothly.

St. Joseph School very grateful for 'high tech' Christmas presents!



(Above left) Rich Howell and Hollace Clark of the Bradley/Bourbonnais Rotary Club are joined by Jean and Frank Koehler of Bourbonnais and Sister Mary Ann Hettel, sscm, principal, at the Nov. 29 unveiling of the new Promethean Board for the fifth grade classroom at St. Joseph School. The Koehlers recently purchased the interactive board through a matching grant from the Bradley/Bourbonnais Rotary Club. The Koehler donation was made from the estate of Frank Koehler's late mother, Millie Koehler, who was a long-time supporter of Catholic education. "We thought this was a great way to honor her." Approximately \$14,000 from the Koehler family and the Rotary Club has been divided between St. Joseph School, Maternity BVM and Faith Baptist in Bourbonnais.

(Above right) St. Joseph School was recently able to purchase 15 Netbooks (small laptop) computers for use by the junior high students. Now the school has a total of 27 Netbooks, which is enough for an entire class to work with these computers at the same time. The students can do research and math problems, take quizzes, play educational games and access Web sites of their textbooks for supplemental material and lessons with the Netbooks. Generous donors invested in the computers at the school's 2009 and 2010 Fall Spectacular Auction events. Overall, about \$9,000 was raised for these computers for the classroom. (Pictured) Eighth Grader Maggie Sammons of Bradley employs an innovative study tool as she works with a Netbook at St. Joseph School in Bradley.

Upcoming Happenings



St. Joseph Parish plans to hold a Ministry Fair in the coming months. Volunteers from each of the ministries are invited to come and showcase their ministries. It will be a fun setting where we hope prospective ministers will feel comfortable about getting involved at our parish. A weekend hasn't been selected yet, so continue to check the bulletin and web site for more details.

Some of our parish ministers shared what their ministries mean to them ... They were all quick to encourage others to join them in becoming actively involved at St. Joseph's. ...

"As I greet our parishioners on Sunday I become more familiar with them and they become my friends in Christ. Distributing the Body and Blood of our Lord gives me a great feeling and makes me closer to God ... I do not feel worthy to perform this task, but feel so privileged to be able to do so."
-Joan Busted, Hospitality and Eucharistic Minister

"Serving in ministry is how I can continually learn and grow in my faith. The people I have met along the journey have been wonderful examples of cultivating the gifts they received from God. Serving others is the best gift we can offer one another. In return, we are blessed in so many ways."
-Jennifer Hoge, RE Coordinator, Eucharistic Minister

"It feels so good to have all of the people coming into Mass smile at me. I really look forward to being by the door waiting for them."
-Janice Miller, Hospitality Minister.

"I realized that if I wanted my children to be more active in the parish I needed to be a leader to them. I feel that it has brought us closer together. I was really nervous at first, but as time has gone on I have found a sense of calmness and happiness within myself while giving Eucharist to the community of St. Joseph Parish."
-Laurie Huffman, Eucharistic Minister

"I have been an altar server since fifth grade and I really like it. It feels really great to come home from Mass on Sunday knowing that I helped out with it."
-Abby Huffman, Altar Server

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Upcoming Happenings

Continued from previous page ...

"I continue to volunteer at St. Joseph's because I not only feel welcomed by the parish community to do so, but I enjoy proclaiming God's word for not only my benefit, but also for others around me."

-Anna Huffman, Teen Lector

"I've been a homebound minister for nine years. I started that ministry when my father was sick. After he passed, I knew I had to continue to share Eucharist with the sick because of the way dad appreciated it and how it made me feel to bring Jesus to him. I have learned a lot from the people that I've brought Communion to. They always look forward to my visit and I always look forward to Friday when I'm able to bring Jesus to them."

-Kathy Storer, Homebound Communion Minister

"I began teaching RE because I wanted to be a bigger part of my children's formal religious education. Over the years, I have developed a deeper love for my faith and I hope that it is rubbing off on the young minds that attend my classes. I don't only rely on the religion book. All children love to work with their hands and working on art projects which reflect their faith helps to teach them in a better way that just by telling them how their faith should be formed."

-Alma R. Trauscht, RE Catechist

"I enjoy making people feel welcome in church just like I would do in my home. Greeting people with a smile helps to make the day more special."

-Judy Rosene, Hospitality Minister

"I feel privileged to be part of St. Joseph Parish ministry. Keeping ministry going here has to start or continue with each one of us. We are standing on the shoulders of those who came before us. It is now our time to participate in the ministries that my other Dominican Sisters or our grandparents, parents and elders have been part of ... They planted the seeds. We now have to harvest and keep the ministries growing for the next generation."

-Sr. Denise Glazik, OP., pastoral associate, Lector and Eucharistic Minister

"I was on the original committee that started the Greeters at St. Joe's. Because of this, the ministry has been close to my heart. I feel a special calling and it has been very gratifying to see how the parishioners have responded. Before, people would come into church with their heads down and very seldom spoke to anyone. After we started greeting we could see the difference and that makes it all worthwhile."

-Regina LaFontaine, Hospitality Minister

"As a professional entertainer, I can attribute many of my words and actions to specific songs or lyrics. One song in particular comes to mind, 'Who Will Be Jesus.' In the song, the question is asked, 'Who will become Jesus to those we encounter in our daily lives?' Indeed, we are Jesus' hands and feet and voice alive here on earth continuing his mission of bringing love and peace and joy to others."

- Brian K. Zasada, Sr., Music Ministry

"It makes me feel good that I'm the first person people see when they come. I think I'm able to make them feel comfortable and want to be there. I find myself paying more attention too."

-Rob Rosene, Teen Hospitality Minister

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“Learning Liturgy” in the works at St. Joseph’s

What is the Mass?

Why do we do what we do at Mass?

Why is there an opening and closing procession?

Why is there Scripture at Mass?

Why are there always three readings at Sunday Mass?

Who are we talking to during the Eucharistic Prayer?

Accept the sacrifice at whose hands?



Why do we bring up the gifts?

Are there different Eucharistic Prayers?

Why do we stand during the Gospel?

Why do we have baptisms at Mass?

Why do we only get sprinkled with Holy Water occasionally?

Why do priests wear different color vestments on different weekends?

What’s the significance of coming to the front for Communion?

How do I prepare for Mass?

You’ll find out the answers to these questions and more as we participate in a Learning Liturgy or Teaching Mass at St. Joseph’s. During this special celebration of Eucharist all the parts of the Mass will be broken down, explored and explained. This will be a refresher for some and an eye-opener for others as we discover “why we do what we do” at Mass each week. The date and time has yet to be chosen for this inspiring and thought-provoking event, so continue to check the bulletin and Web site for more details.

St. Joseph Parish Confirmation 2011 News

As you may recall, Bishop Sartain has been transferred to Seattle. To ease the burden of scheduling within the Joliet Diocese, the pastors of the diocese have been asked to preside at their own Parish Confirmation Celebrations until a new bishop is installed.

Here at St. Joseph’s we continually strive to provide the best liturgies and faith formation we can to all our parishioners. The permission from the diocese has provided us with the unique opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation at three separate Masses within our weekend liturgies.

Families of our confirmation

classes have been given the opportunity to select the date and time of their choice from the three options:

Confirmation Dates & Times:

Saturday, April 2, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 3, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, April 10, 2011 at 11 a.m.

We are certainly excited to share the gift of our young people receiving this sacrament and hope it will fan into flame the gifts we received at Confirmation. What a blessing for our entire Parish Family!

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



(Above) On, Saturday, Dec. 11, the Parent Club of St. Joseph School hosted a Soup Lunch and Christmas caroling event in the school gym. School parents donated and served soup, bread, desserts, and hot chocolate and coffee to parishioners. Students and some parents shared the Christmas spirit by entertaining the guests and singing Christmas carols in the decorated gym. Learn more about the Parent Club at www.stjosephschoolbradley.org

Las Vegas in Bradley is coming up quick ... Do you feel lucky?



The 20th annual Las Vegas Night in Bradley is scheduled March 4 and 5, 2011.

High roller tickets are now available!! Visit www.stjosephschoolbradley.org to download a voucher or stop by the school to purchase tickets. The grand prize is \$30,000.

Please come out to this fun event and support our parish school!