



The Crossroads Messenger

1st Quarter, 2020

The official newsletter of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

Mount Washington, Kentucky

Saturday May 30

Spring Fling

RAFFLES • GAMING • FOOD • CAKE WHEEL • VOLLEYBALL



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH
MOUNT WASHINGTON, KENTUCKY

LIC #1325

Long-Range Plan Updates

Mitchell Elder & Helen Hagan
Steering Committee Chair & Parish Manager

The eagerly awaited building/renovating phase of our Long-Range Plan will soon begin. Working with JRA Architects, the Schematic Design stage is nearing completion. We have had three meetings with JRA and Wehr Constructors, plus numerous in-house Steering Committee and Sub-committee meetings. The meetings have focused on a creative, yet pragmatic, use of space within the 3.3-million-dollar budget. The design of the Parish Activity Center (PAC) and decisions for updates to the Parish Hall are being achieved through

■ See VISION, page 6

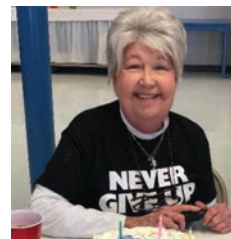
Inside:



Scouts Honored



Ministry Updates



A Tribute
To Nancy



In the six months since I last wrote an article for this newsletter, many things have happened in our Parish and in my life. One that has affected me greatly is the death of our Parish secretary and our friend, Nancy Almony, who is missed every day, especially by your highly dedicated Parish staff. The last several months have been filled with ups and downs, stresses and signs of hope, resolve and commending Nancy back to God. She is where we say "we hope to follow."

Progress on our Long-Range Plan has been steady, calculating and teaching. In every step of implementing our plan, I am reminded we are part of a bigger picture when it comes to seeking and gaining permissions from the Archdiocese. It takes time, prayer and persistence. I am so deeply grateful to our chairperson, Mitchell Elder, our Parish Manager, Helen Hagan and

all the different groups that meet to make very important decisions for today's and tomorrow's Parish that can be/will be seen on campus.

Plans to construct and update bring making decisions on current activities and space. In lieu of a Picnic 2020 (for the time being), we will have a one-day event called "Spring Fling" on Saturday, May 30, a non-holiday weekend. There will be varied and new activities at this all-day Fling! I am grateful to those who were gathered to create and lead this festival, especially the co-chairs: Joey Followay, Julie Adams and Craig Gramig. **Please be sure to put May 30 on your calendar** and to thank these people and the committee.

One other "event" is the change of hands of the editor of our Parish newsletter. As we welcome Rhonda Abner to that responsibility, I want to thank Norma Mattingly for her service. I also want to acknowledge Gina Nelson, a Parishioner of All Saints Church, who designs the newsletter and Mary Morris who keeps us on track with calling forth articles and handling the bulk mailings.

I hope you each have a prayer-filled Lent and a moving Holy Week that always blossoms into The Resurrection of Jesus! We are a fortunate and blessed people!

In Christ the Cornerstone,
Fr. Dale



St. Francis Xavier

155 Stringer Lane
Mount Washington, KY 40047
502.538.4933 - or - 502.955.5366

www.sfxmw.com Like us on Facebook!

OFFICE HOURS
Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday, 8:30 a.m. - noon

Baptism to The Cross

(And **EVERYTHING** between)



Deacon Steve Age

On Sunday, January 12, the Church celebrated the Baptism of Jesus according to the Gospel of Matthew.

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?' Jesus said to him in reply, 'Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed him. After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (NAB Matthew 3:13-17)



I preached that weekend and closed the homily with the following excerpt: "Just look at the layout of our church building, it tells the story of baptism and the cross as well. At one end is the baptismal font and the other end is the cross. Before one can reach the altar to receive Christ in the Eucharist, before one can reach the cross and join with Christ in His passion, death and resurrection, before any of this, one must first enter and pass through the waters of baptism at the font.

In the waters of baptism, we are made clean. In the waters of baptism, in the Jordan, Jesus took our sins and unrighteousness on his shoulders and we were saved. So, when Jesus is baptized, He is already accepting His Passion and death.

Just as there is a close link between Jesus' baptism and His cross, there is also a close link between our baptism and Jesus' cross. Our baptism is a sharing in the new life of Jesus we receive from his death and resurrection."

I pointed out how the main aisle of our church leads straight from the baptismal font to the altar. I inferred that, for the one who is baptized, life's journey is much the same.

After Mass, a Parishioner approached me. Gently and lovingly, this person reminded me that for a baptized Christian, the real-life journey is NOT that way at all. As I listened, I realized how wrong I was. Real

life is NOT a straight walk down a carpeted, inclined aisle in the center of a climate-controlled church. It's NOT a clear-cut walk and view from the font to the cross. Instead, there are twists and turns, rough times, and some almost impassible places.

That conversation happened weeks ago. I have come to realize the Parishioner was describing the Latin Via Dolorosa, "the way of sorrow." The Via Dolorosa was the road Jesus walked on Good Friday, the day He was led to Calvary to die on a cross. Much like the Via Dolorosa, our way is lined with many people and filled with real-life obstacles, pitfalls, and barely passable spots.

On the Via Dolorosa, Jesus met a man named Simon of Cyrene. Three gospels speak of Simon and how Roman soldiers compelled him to carry Jesus' cross. As Jesus was at His weakest, Simon emerged as one capable to bear Jesus' cross. This year, as we enter Lent and move toward Easter, may we be compelled, like Simon of Cyrene, to help someone in need. May we even be willing to carry a sister's or brother's cross.



Finally, to the one who reminded me that life's journey is not easy, but is more like the Via Dolorosa, thank you.





margee's musings



Margee Joseph
Pastoral Associate

"It's a boy!"

"It's a girl!"

"Let me show you pictures of my new grandbaby!"

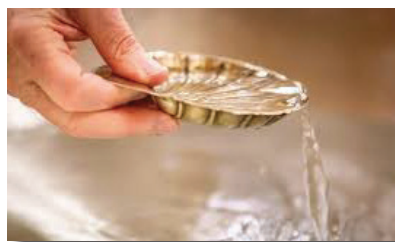
Welcoming new life is a happy event and these words are spoken with joy and pride. When such a blessed event occurs in our family, we want the whole world to know and to celebrate with us.

In the Catholic faith, we welcome a baby or child into our Parish family through the Sacrament of Baptism. For the parents, especially first-time parents, this is a time of tremendous joy and pride. Families come together, pictures are taken, food is shared and often gifts are given. Baptism, however, is about much more than the celebration.

Baptism, as defined by the Catholic Church, is the first sacrament of initiation, the very first sacrament that one receives. It is through Baptism that one becomes a child of God; original sin is washed away and a relationship with God begins. To help first time parents and godparents understand what Baptism is about, a course called Reborn is offered here at St. Francis Xavier Parish.

Reborn can be found online at <https://watch.formed.org/reborn>. It is a four-part presentation on the Sacrament of Baptism. The first time I watched this program, I was impressed with how current and up to date it is with the attitudes and thinking of young parents

today. Reborn takes one through the historical and scriptural references of Baptism from creation to the Baptism of Jesus. It amazes me how often Baptism is foreshadowed throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament.



The Rite of Baptism is explained in full and easy to understand detail. One comes away with a knowledge and understanding of why we baptize

infants, what each part of the ritual means and even why Jesus was baptized. It further explains how we, as baptized Catholics, share in the roles of priest, prophet and king with Jesus Christ.

There have been positive comments from every family I have shared this course with. Each family comes away with a good understanding of the sacrament and is well prepared to bring up their child in the Catholic faith. Godparents, many who are cradle Catholics, have commented on how much they learned through this preparation class. A part of this program is also used in the RCIA process. If you are interested in learning more about the sacrament of Baptism, I encourage you to view this program by logging on today!



Opportunities For a Journey in Faith

The season of Lent is a great time to begin a new journey of faith in preparation for Easter. To inspire adult Parishioners to continue growing in faith, St. Francis Xavier offers a great diversity of **Adult Faith Formation** opportunities.

BREAKING OPEN THE LECTIONARY

Mondays 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Church Choir Room

This Lectionary-based faith sharing group studies the readings for the upcoming weekend. Sessions include: reading the scriptures and studying the biblical context, discussing Bible study and faith sharing questions. All are welcome. Join at any time. Contact is Al Zielberg at 502-693-5696 or email at ajzerz@gmail.com.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays 6:45 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Church Choir Room

This group offers a new topic each year. The current study is *Our Father's Plan: A Catholic Bible Study of Salvation History* by Ignatius Press. Informational videos featuring Dr. Scott Hahn and Jeff Cavins are viewed, followed by group discussion using study manuals. Study materials are provided free. Anyone may join the class. Contact the facilitator at louis.leppert@yahoo.com or simply come to the class.

OPENING THE WORD

Wednesdays 6:45 - 8 p.m.
RCIA/Youth Room - RE Building

Opening the Word by the Augustine Institute is a weekly Scripture reflection program providing insights into the upcoming Sunday Readings. Sessions include a short video presentation designed to facilitate thought, prayer and group discussion. RE parents and all adult Parishioners are welcome. Materials are provided free. Contact Joe Recktenwald 313-348-3771 or join us anytime.

Lenten Faith Formation Resources

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION (RCIA)

Sundays 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Youth/RCIA Classroom - RE Building

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the process of the Catholic Church to initiate new members into the faith. Beginning with an Inquiry phase any person from the age of reason (7 years) to adult interested in becoming Catholic may attend weekly sessions on various aspects of the faith. Sessions include sharing stories of faith, breaking open the Word, and learning the teachings and practices of Catholicism. The unbaptized (Catechumens) and those baptized as Christians (candidates) are presented to the Parish through the Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming. After consenting to become Catholic at the Rite of Election they are then brought into the Catholic faith at the Easter Vigil. Active adult Catholics willing to serve as sponsors to catechumens/candidates are welcome to join us. Contact Margee Joseph 502-538-4933 or margee.joseph@sfxmw.com.

FORMED

FORMED provides the very best Catholic content from more than 60 organizations to help individuals and families explore their faith anywhere. St. Francis Xavier Church subscribes to FORMED allowing access for every Parishioner. The site provides thousands of movies, children's programs, e-books, audio, programs and studies directly to your browser, mobile or connected device. Simply Go to <https://formed.org>, then click on the SIGN UP button. When prompted, click "I belong to a Parish" and type in St. Francis Xavier Church. Scroll to find our address, then click it; click NEXT when prompted, and type in your name and e-mail.

With your personal account you can enjoy Catholic content anytime, anywhere!

Vision Taking Shape

Continued from Front Page

sensible cuts, while ensuring that the most important needs are met in the final plan.



Coupled with the design phase of the projects, we have requested permission from the Archdiocese to work on the new construction and renovation projects simultaneously. This gives us a considerable cost savings advantage. Wehr Constructors has drafted a letter to the Archdiocese to begin this approval process. Com-

binning the projects will require flexibility on our part concerning use of current space, which we will address as the need arises.

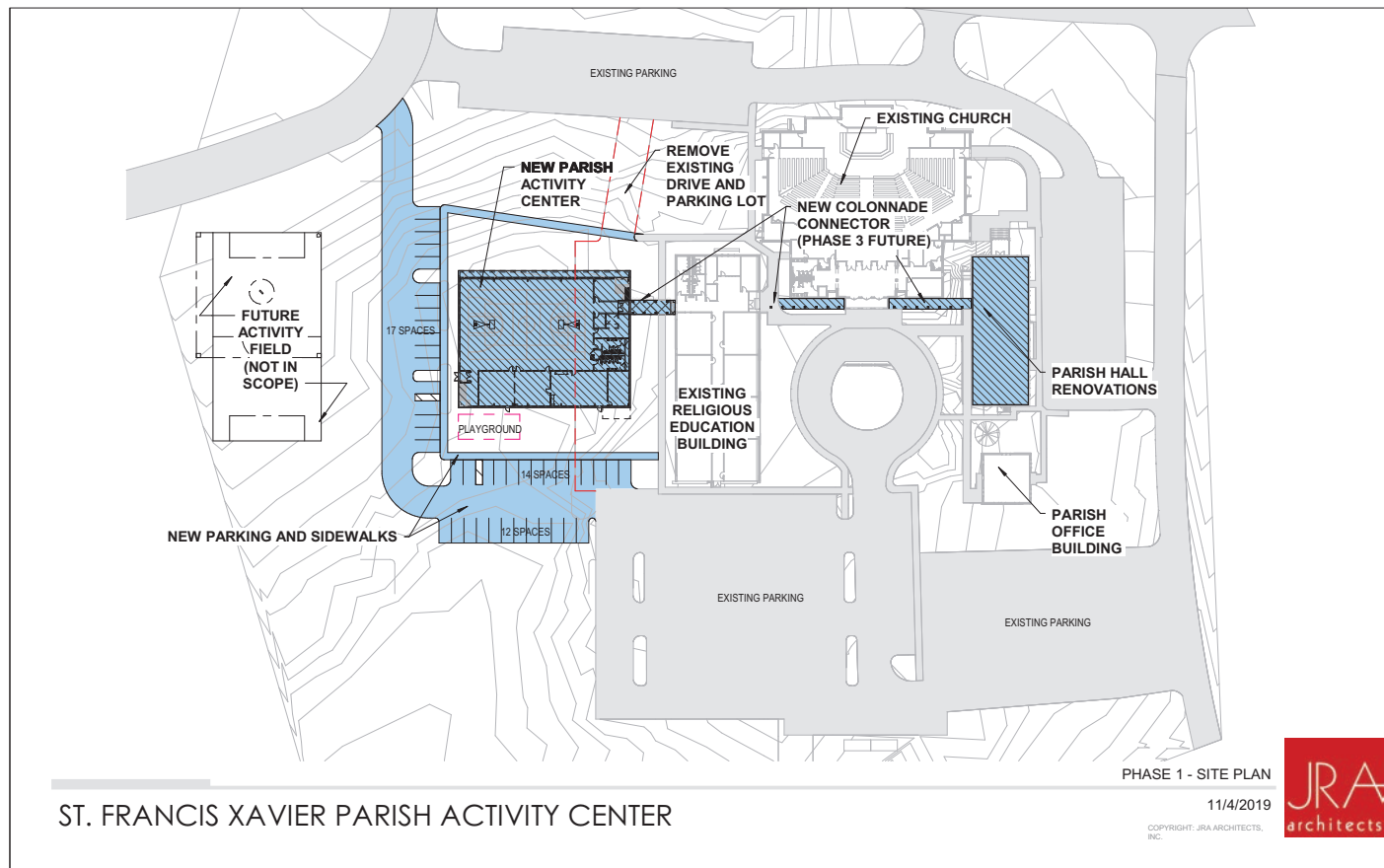
Included here is the campus site plan showing the convenient location of the future PAC on the west side of our current Religious Education building. Though some parking next to the RE building will be affected, there will be additional parking created on the west



and south sides of the new building.

We are very fortunate and grateful that capital campaign collections continue ahead of schedule. We especially appreciate those who have already paid their pledges in full, enabling less borrowing. If you are new to the Parish, we invite your donations toward our expansion projects.

These much-needed spaces will be for all to enjoy now, as well as those generations to come!



2020 LENT CALENDAR

LENT IS A-MAZE-ING

Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
Feb. 26th Ash Wednesday Our trek through this maze of Lent toward the cross is beginning. Hmmm. Is there any way we can get out of it?		27th Our Lent journey is interwoven with our own life journeys. So, let's make this a-maze-ing Lent about both journeys, okay?		28th It is said that life is a highway. How is your life like a journey, a war, a dance, a party, a long line at the DMV, a rat in a maze? What metaphor best describes your life?		29th <i>Pray: Dear Lord, be with me on my two journeys—one toward your cross ... the other through the pathways of my life. Amen.</i>	
Sunday March 1st Be honest with yourself today. What's the worst choice you've ever made on your journey of life? The best?		Monday 2nd Read Genesis 2 to see how close humanity was to a loving God. Read Genesis 3 to see how far off track they fell.		Tuesday 3rd Luckily, God had a new plan for his wayward humans—a new PATH. It would be a long, hard, winding path. But it would lead back to paradise!		4th In a Bible with headings, scan through Genesis and Exodus to see the beginning of the "Road Back To God."	
8th In the wilderness, God's children learned to rely on God. What "wilderness journeys" have led you closer to your loving Lord?		9th The road into Jericho was a quick, easy one (finally!). Read about it in Joshua 6. Have you had any easy journeys?		10th Ever have bumps in your life's journey? God's people did! Explore some of them by paging through the book of Judges.		11th Chart the high and low points in your life. Can you see God's presence in the mountains AND the valleys?	
15th Our second trip to Jericho isn't so easy. Read about it in Luke 10:25-37.		16th Do you make plans ... take precautions ... for a tough journey? How about in life itself? Do you take God, your strong Defender, with you every day?		17th The man in the Samaritan story fell into peril. What perils haunt you? Pray for courage.		18th The peril of the man in the Samaritan story is a deadly peril. How do you consider death? Lent is an appropriate time to think about it.	
22nd Okay ... it's Lent. We need to talk about those 10 Commandments. Only this Lent, let's call them "Rules of the Road."		23rd We NEED rules of the road. Without them every trip would turn into a demolition derby.		24th How would LIFE become a demolition derby without God's "10 Rules of the Road"?		25th The first three commandments are called "The First Table of the Law." They have to do with our relationship with God. Read Exodus 20:1-11.	
29th Here's an awkward twist in the maze to deal with: What temptations most plague you?		30th A life's journey that focusses on self-gain is driving in circles. It can never offer true happiness, joy or (most importantly) a path past life's "dead" end.		31st Think back to the lesson of Genesis 3—how Eve and Adam's journey toward "self-enlightenment" led to a dead end ... BIG TIME!		26th "The Second Table Of The Law" deals with our relationship with others.	
5th It's Palm Sunday. As Jesus approaches his death, it's good to remember that our Shepherd is leading us not into death valley ... but through it!		6th <i>"I am the ROAD, also the TRUTH, also the LIFE. No one gets to the Father apart from me." John 14:6</i>		7th Jesus' dead end on the cross shows us a new WAY of living—God's self-sacrificial WAY to LIFE!		27th We can't keep God's Law perfectly. But we can "practice," the way doctors "practice" medicine. How can you practice the commandments today?	
12th Easter Sunday <i>After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" —Matthew 28:1-9</i>		8th What would a prayer from the perspective of Barabbas sound like—a man on a dead-end path, given a new way by Jesus?		9th Write a prayer from the perspective of a disciple at the Last Supper. Pray this prayer as you join the Lord at his table this week.		28th Remember: Keeping the commandments can't save us ... because we CAN'T keep them perfectly. We are sinful ... and sin's wage is DEATH.	
13th Holy Thursday Read Psalm 23 (a good one to memorize!). What if you imagine God as a SHEEPDOG instead of a Shepherd? Jesus is rounding you up and bringing you home!		14th Our Shepherd/Sheepdog is leading us down "paths of righteousness for his name's sake." That means our living gives God glory!		19th You have friends on the road of life with you. Family, too. But who are the "robbers"? What perilous people join you on your journey?		20th "Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil." Read Matthew 6:13	
20th Good Friday Is there a way out of this Lenten maze? YES. But ... the way out is DEATH. Thank the Lord he travelled the path so we don't have to!		21st The Samaritan showed extravagant grace (Luke 10:35). What extravagant grace have you experienced? What extravagant grace can you show others?		22nd Remember: Keeping the commandments can't save us ... because we CAN'T keep them perfectly. We are sinful ... and sin's wage is DEATH.		23rd Remember: Keeping the commandments can't save us ... because we CAN'T keep them perfectly. We are sinful ... and sin's wage is DEATH.	



The Crossroads Messenger 1st Quarter 2020





Duty to God: Scouts Recognized For Faith & Values

Mary Morris
Newsletter Committee

The BSA Religious Awards Ceremony was held on January 26 at the Cathedral of the Assumption. Four SFX Parishioners received the Ad Altare Dei (To the Altar of God) Emblem. Congratulations to Nathan Abell, Luke Aubrey, Christina Collett, and Corey Ryan Hundley.

The Ad Altare Dei program is for Catholic Scouts who have completed the 6th grade and have been active in their troop for 6 months. The program's purpose is to help scouts develop a fully Christian way of life. Organized in steps, the program is based on the seven sacraments. A certified counselor leads Scouts through the 6-8 month process.

Young people grow in personal maturity and social responsibility through BSA Scouting activities. Members develop a strong desire to build a culture of goodwill, respect for the environment and acceptance of duties.

Boys and girls ages 7-17 are invited to take part in the opportunities Scouting offers. Contact Terry Collett 502-645-0979 or visit <http://archlouccs.org> for information. Meetings are held in the RE building on Tuesday evenings at 7 pm.



Christina Collett is the daughter of Nancy and Terry Collett. Involved with Girl Scouts since Kindergarten, she is a Second-Class Scout with Troop 776. She is a freshman at Bethlehem High School, and joined Troop 776 in 2019 when the BSA became co-ed.

Nathan Abell is the son of Melissa and Trevor Abell and is a First-Class Scout with Troop 776. He is sponsored by Busy Lady Quilt Shop. A previous Cub Scout for five years, he is an 8th grader at Mount Washington Middle School.

Corey Ryan Hundley is the son of Elizabeth and Robert Hundley. He is a Tenderfoot Scout of Troop 776 and was a Cub Scout prior to joining the Troop. He's an 8th grader at Eastside Middle School.

Luke Aubrey is the son of Wende and Terry Aubrey. A Second-Class Scout of Troop 776, he is sponsored by St. Francis Xavier Church. A previous Cub Scout for five years, he is an 8th grader at Mount Washington Middle School.



Collett Earns Eagle Scout Worked To Restore Cemetery Grounds For SFXMW

Mary Morris
Newsletter Committee

Benjamin Collett, a senior at Bethlehem High School, and member of St. Francis Xavier earned his Eagle Scout honor on November 5, 2019. Ben has been involved in Boy Scouts since the first grade. His favorite part of scouting has been attending and working summer camp at Camp Crooked Creek. He currently serves St. Francis Xavier Troop and Pack 776 as a Cub Scout Den Leader.

Eagle Scout is the highest and most prestigious rank in scouting. Ben's Eagle Scout project was improving the landscape at St. Francis Xavier Cemetery. The cemetery is located at the corner of Dooley Drive and Snapp Street (behind the Subway/Fiesta Mexicana building).

Ben was assisted by several Boy Scouts from Troop 776 as they cleaned out weeds and small shrubs from landscape beds, and leveled dirt to fill in several small ditches on the cemetery grounds. Cardinal Curbing of Mt. Washington installed permanent curbing around the statue of Jesus and the four landscaped corners of the cemetery.

New shrubs, purchased from Country Corner Greenhouse, were planted. River rock, from Marrillia Environmental topped off the project. Solar power lights were also installed around the statue of Jesus located in the center of the cemetery.

Benjamin would like to thank all the local businesses for their support of his Eagle Scout project. His future plans include attending Murray State University where he will study wildlife and conservation biology.

If you know of someone interested in taking part in the opportunities offered through Scouting, contact Terry Collett at 502-645-0979.



Leppert awarded St. George Emblem

Terry Collett
BSA Troop 776

During the BSA Religious Awards Ceremony on January 26, Parishioner Lou Leppert received the St. George emblem. The award, presented by the Catholic Committee on Scouting, recognizes the recipient's outstanding contribution to the spiritual development of Catholic youth in Scouts BSA. Over three years, Leppert guided six scouts from Troop 776 through the Ad Altare Dei Emblem requirements.

Leppert has also spent many years volunteering in his Parishes. He currently serves as the St. Francis Xavier Pastoral Council Chairperson, is active with the Knights of Columbus, and leads a Wednesday evening adult bible study class. We congratulate and thank him for sharing his time, talent, and knowledge to make a difference as a leader in the Church.



Duty to God All Catholic Scouts whether they are Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts or Venturers have the opportunity to earn Religious Emblems to exhibit their spiritual growth within their age-appropriate scouting programs.

LIGHT OF CHRIST is to help the Cub Scout develop a personal relationship with Jesus. With the parents' active assistance & participation in this program, it is hoped that the Cub will come to see Jesus as a real person and his friend.

"Parvuli Dei" (Children of God) emblem is to help young boys explore a wide range of activities in the presence of God in their daily lives as members of their families & parishes.

"Ad Altare Dei" (To the Altar of God) program is to help Catholic Scouts of the Roman Rite develop a fully Christian way of life in the faith community. The program is organized in chapters based on the seven Sacraments.

"Light is Life" is a program developed for scouts of the Eastern-rite Catholic Churches. Light is Life respects the cultural and ritual differences among the various Eastern Catholic Churches.

"Pope Plus XII" The program deals with different life choices (single, married, religious, ordained), occupations and ministries in the church as calls from God. (Vocations)

For more information on how to use these programs
nccs-bsa.org/emblems
 or contact us at 972-580-2114

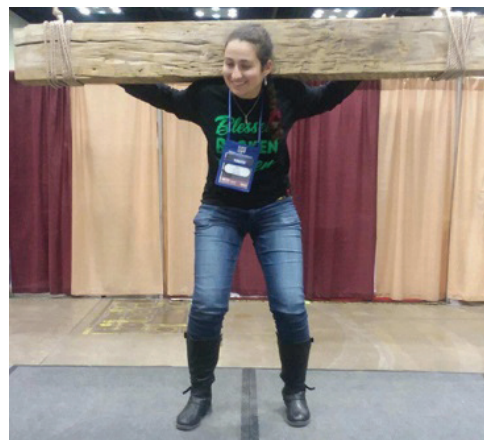
NCYC - The Road to Emmaus

Tricia Reuss
High School Youth Group

This past November, I had the opportunity to attend the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis with nine members of our High School Youth Group. Along with other youth groups from the Archdiocese of Louisville, we collected Archdiocesan related items and created clothes pins with favorite Bible verses and social media links written on them to share with other teens from around the country. I found myself becoming nervous to miss school, to miss an honor band audition, and to attend my first Catholic conference. When Thursday, November 21 came, we boarded the buses at Saint Gabriel Church and I settled in and began planning the events I would attend at the conference.

After checking into the Indianapolis Convention Center with our Youth Ministers, Joe Recktenwald and Dave Richardson, we spent time in the hall visiting display booths with items for purchase, games, and volunteer opportunities. I visited the Saint Meinrad booth and received a "tiny saint" tag to clip on the zipper of my backpack or purse. This led me to the actual Tiny Saints booth, where I found a Saint Cecilia (my Confirmation saint) tag, and a Pope Francis tag for my sister, Lauren.

We visited an area dedicated to Catholicism in African missions. There we filled out a card with our name and wrote an answer to the question, "What mission do you feel God is calling you to?" We then designed a prayer button to match our answer to



the question. In return for completing this project, we chose a button that had been completed by another student to take with us so that we could pray for them. We added prayers to the NCYC Western Wall of Jerusalem and lifted a crossbeam from a cross like the one Jesus carried. The cross beam was only 80 to 85 pounds compared to the one Christ carried on his journey to Golgotha.

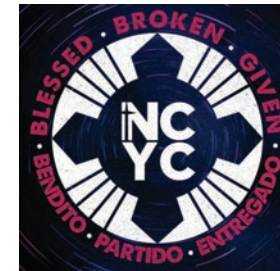
NCYC officially kicked off Thursday evening with approximately 20,000 attendees who were treated to a concert by *For King and Country* at Lucas Oil Stadium. The concert was followed by a night of preparation, discussion, music from our "house band", and a video from Pope Francis who offered his blessing on us as we embarked on our weekend journey and beyond.

Friday morning's events began at Lucas Oil Stadium with music. We discussed the biblical theme of our conference, the Road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-35). Then we listened to keynote speaker, Immaculee Ilibagiza.

She survived the Rwandan Genocide in 1994 and her speech struck a chord in me. I realized how lucky we are to live in a country that protects freedoms and prevents its government and citizens from killing those with opposing viewpoints or different nationalities. I want to read Ilibagiza's autobiography about how her relationship with Christ was strengthened during that time. Following the keynote speech, a teen from the Archdiocese presented our Youth Group with the Archdiocese of Louisville flag. I proudly carried it around for the rest of the day until I passed it on to the group from Saint Raphael Church.

On Friday night, we recognized Saint Cecilia's Feast Day (the patron saint of music) with music and discussions of our day. The Sacrament of Reconciliation took place that evening in Lucas Oil Stadium. Though I didn't attend confession at the stadium, I did so earlier in the day and was astounded to see 50 or more priests, in rows with chairs in front of them, celebrating Reconciliation with thousands of teens and adults!

Saturday morning, while searching for coffee, I met a Hispanic nun from California and we conversed in Spanish. She gave me a flyer about her church, her order, and how they serve their local community. I later attended the Spanish Mass and spent the rest of the day taking in more sights and sounds of the conference.



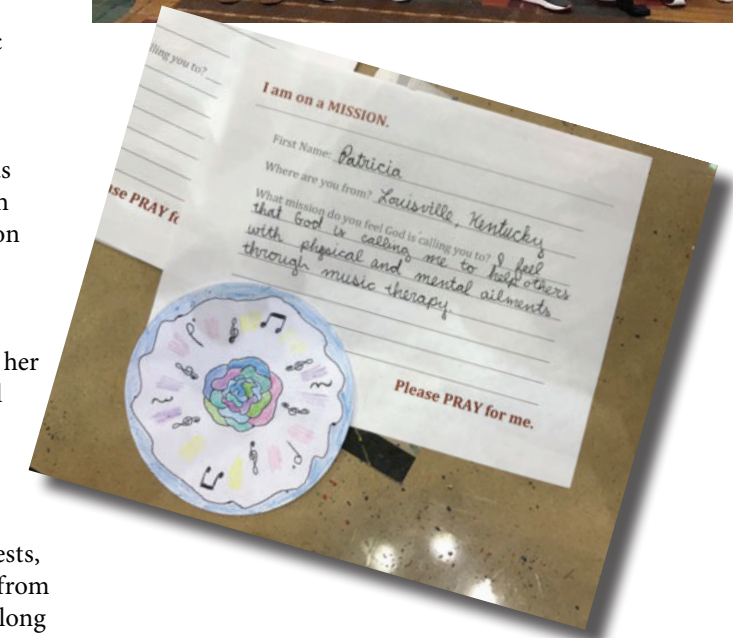
sights and sounds of the conference.

On Saturday night, priests, bishops and archbishops from around the country led a long procession into Lucas Oil Stadium for the NCYC closing Mass. Archbishop Charles Thompson of Indianapolis led us in prayer. After Mass, we learned that the 2021 NCYC

theme is "Ablaze," from the second chapter of Acts, where the Holy Spirit is sent to the Apostles.

While I am sad that this may be my only NCYC experience, I hope to attend the college-aged portion in 2021. I am glad I had this opportunity. It has strengthened my faith in Christ to see so many young people in one place, celebrating Him. It has encouraged me to do all I can to bring Christ to the world, to continue to pray as Pope Francis asked each of us to do.

Would you like to support our High School Youth Group? Consider making a tax-deductible gift to help offset the cost for them to attend NCYC, mission trips and retreats throughout the year. Donations can be taken to the Parish Office, placed in the collection basket marked "For High School Youth Group", or given online at <https://sfxmw.com/online-giving/> (Scroll down to the High School Youth Group to complete a secure online contribution.)



Service In Action



Youth Make Blankets

High School Youth Group and 8th Grade Confirmation students made hand-tied fleece blankets for 20 boys at the Sunrise Children's Services Home in Mount Washington.



Inkeepers Needed For Room In The Inn

Dianne Rucker
Outreach Ministry

Outreach Ministry is excited to announce our involvement in a new project - Room in the Inn. This transitional program serves homeless and displaced men, women, and children of Bullitt County who have been living a life in crisis. The program provides structure and accountability to those who need a hand up and hope for the future. Outreach Ministry will provide participants with a hot evening meal once a month.



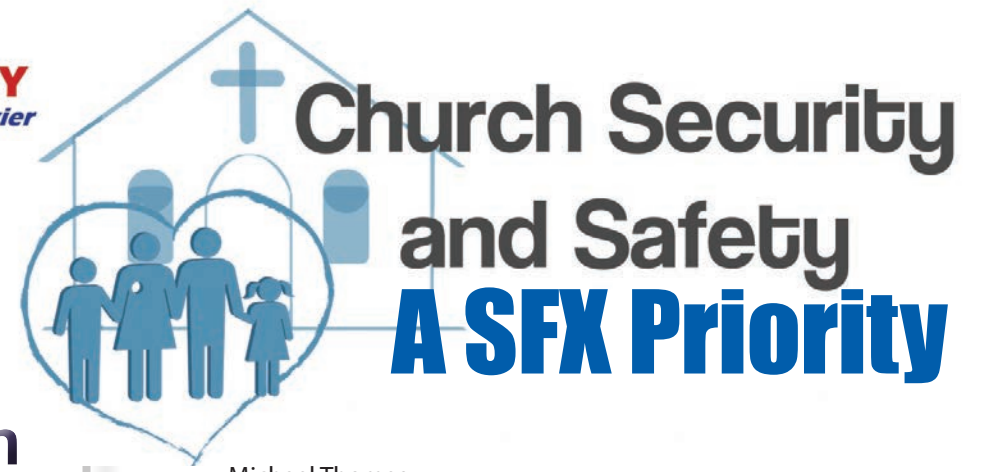
Additionally, we will send them with a packed lunch for the next day.

We Need Your Help!
The evening meal will be served in the RE building on the 4th Friday of each month to approximately

12 guests. Innkeepers (volunteers) are needed to prepare dishes and serve the meal. Packaged food items are also needed to prepare sack lunches.

We need 4-5 innkeepers each month to set-up, serve, and enjoy mutual fellowship with our guests who arrive at 6 pm. Not everyone who donates a dish would need to stay for the dinner.

To become involved in this worthwhile project serving our brothers and sisters in need, sign-up in the gathering space of the church. Indicate your date of preference to prepare food, donate lunch items, and/or serve as an Innkeeper. For more information about the program, call Dianne Rucker 502-649-2003.



Michael Thomas
Campus Safety Committee Chair

Our team has been developing a campus safety plan for over two years. We consider and discuss the safety needs of various aspects throughout our campus. We have found that most local churches have safety procedures in place. Some have had them for years, while others are new to it as we are. Researching the practices of others gave us great insights. Most churches were locking the doors once services began. This procedure is now in place at SFX.

Our Safety Team, comprised of specially trained individuals who share their talents, guide us in the best ways to utilize and implement safety procedures. Members of the team, first responders, Father Dale, Pastoral Council, Catholic Mutual (our insurer) and the Archdiocese are all consulted as we work to develop a campus security plan.

Team members participate in education and training meetings that offer best practices in a variety of events that may occur on church campuses. You may have noticed members of our team volunteering at Masses or during RE on Wednesday evenings. As our team grows, we could expand into other SFX campus events. It is our goal to be the eyes and ears of the Parish so that we are better prepared should an emergency arise. Parishioners are asked to help us. If you see something, say something to one of the Safety Team Members. If you are unsure who to tell, ask one of our Hospitality Members (Ushers) and they will point you in the right direction at Mass.

We are grateful for the knowledge and time shared by our Safety Committee members. Without them, we would not be nearly as prepared as we are today. We are looking for more qualified individuals to join our committee. Parishioners over the age of 18 who are in the medical field, first responders, and those with commercial knowledge of the safety industry are encouraged to come on board. You will learn important first aid techniques, while getting to know fellow Parishioners with like skills and interest. Email us at safety@sfxmw.com.

Though we cannot predict the type of event that may occur on our grounds, we are doing our best to prepare for any emergency situation. Safety at SFX will be constantly evolving to meet the needs of our growing faith community.

There are many ways you can contact us to report a safety concern or learn how to join our committee. Call the Parish Office at 502-538-4933, attend a Safety Team meeting, talk with a Safety Team member, or send a message at <https://sfxmw.com/contact-us/request-to-safety-team/>

In Loving Memory of Nancy 1949-2019

Homily given by Deacon Gerry Mattingly at the
Funeral Liturgy, Monday December 23, 2019:

I first met Nancy at an RCIA meeting in the Fall of 2004. Mary Jo and I were new to St. Francis Xavier.

Nancy and each of us here this morning has a story. Our stories began before we were born and they continue to be written even now. Our personal stories are important to us, particularly when we have a chance to tell them to other people. Our stories convey more than information about our individual lives. They provide a picture of our character, our dreams, our relationships, and even how we view ourselves. None of our stories are formed or told in isolation. Our individual stories intertwine in places where they intersect the stories of others and God's story. It's important for us to recall our individual and communal stories so we can remember where we come from and to dream about our future.

Nancy's beautiful story began before that 5th day in November 1949 when she was born to her loving parents in Monkton, Baltimore County, Maryland. East of Monkton is an area called "My Lady's Manor," known for its horse farms, sprawling countryside and stately old homes. Nancy grew up on one of those horse farms where her father worked. She left Maryland but always thought of herself as a "Maryland girl." Her hobbies included collecting lighthouses as they reminded her of her home state.




Nancy was the biggest Baltimore Ravens football fan west of the Allegheny Mountains. She bled purple and gold. In the position Nancy is with the Lord, just a suggestion, don't bet against the Ravens if they make it to the Super Bowl. Nancy even converted me. I don't miss a Ravens game anymore. The Ravens and Lamar Jackson are must watch TV.


Nancy was a loving wife to her husband, George Arthur Almony, Jr. for 48 years before George went home to the Lord on Monday, April 6, 2009. Nancy and George were loving parents of Karen and Tim Almony, grandparents to Kayla, Morgan, Brandon, and granddaughter, Alexis, who preceded her in death, and great-grandparents to baby, Coleson Almony. Coleson is the newest Christian among us. Coleson was baptized by


Father Dale last week at Nancy's home. Nancy was also the sister of Michael Ball and Skip Ball. Skip preceded her in death.


Words used to describe Nancy are: feisty, independent, hardworking, selfless, dedicated, loving, giving. She always put herself last while taking care of others first. Nancy was dedicated and loved her family. She avidly followed "her girls," Kayla and Morgan, on many softball trips when they played on traveling teams, on Bullitt East High School's team and when they played for Saint Mary's College across the road from Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. Nancy was a warm weather girl and I think she liked the softball trips to Florida and other warm spots the best. Nancy worked as an accountant before she became a Parish secretary at All Saints Church in Taylorsville and later here at Saint Francis Xavier Church.

It has been said and written that being a Parish Secretary requires these ten attributes:

-  *She is confidential. She hears and finds out all kinds of things that she cannot share.*
-  *She is resilient. She must not let her feelings get hurt easily. She is a buffer, the complaint department, the problem solver.*
-  *She is flexible. "Blessed are they shall not get bent out of shape."*


 *She is humble. A Parish Secretary must have a servant's heart.*


 *She is friendly. A Parish Secretary gives service with a smile. She always goes the "second mile."*

 *She is "spirit-filled." A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity. A Parish Secretary sees the opportunity in every difficulty.*

 *She is honest and trustworthy.*

 *She is respectful and professional.*

 *She is dependable.*

 *She is a gatekeeper. She helps train the staff how to communicate with the pastor.*

I am sure every pastor Nancy served would agree she had all these attributes.

Whenever I would get bummed out about something going on in the Parish or elsewhere, I would go to Nancy's office. No telling how many times over the years this happened. Nancy always listened. Sometimes



she would give me a different perspective. Sometimes she would just listen. One thing for sure, I always felt better when I left Nancy's office than I did when I went in.

Nancy was a great listener. Before Nancy and George moved to Mount Washington, Nancy was a member of St. Bernard Parish in Highview where she was involved with the RCIA process. She continued serving on the RCIA team here at St. Francis Xavier until her recent illness. Nancy was a people person. She loved the Church. She loved discussing her faith with others, teaching them about her beloved Catholic faith and answering any questions inquisitive catechumens may have.

In this role on the RCIA team, she was sort of a defender of the faith. I found this saying on Nancy's Facebook page: I stand with the Catholic Church, born Catholic, raised Catholic, stay Catholic, die Catholic. I am Catholic yesterday, today and forever. Those were not just words for Nancy. It was apparent to anyone who knew her that she believed and lived these words everyday of her life.

Sometimes, we get so wrapped up in our own stories, that we forget there is a much greater narrative unfolding all around us that includes us all – the story of God and His kingdom. This happens a lot this time of year as we attend the many Christmas parties and festivities and join the crowds in looking for that perfect gift.

During Jesus' earthly ministry, He gave the people around him glimpses of this bigger story through the miracles He worked and the challenging words He spoke. Every now and then, Jesus used parables to illustrate and explain these pieces of God's story He was showing to them.

Sometimes, I think about what Jesus might say right now the Kingdom of Heaven is like. I wonder how He would take the things in our life and portray His heart to us in this moment. I don't know, exactly, but I do believe He might stand here and say: "The Kingdom is like family and friends grieving the loss of a mother, a grandmother, a great grandmother, a sister, a co-worker, a friend. They come to Me for my comfort and my peace. It's seen when I offer space for them to come and instead of hardening their hearts, hiding behind a past they regret, a future full of unknowns, or pain that cuts so deep. They come close to Me just as they are."

Jesus might stand in front of us and say, "The kingdom, Karen, Tim, Kayla, Morgan, Brandon, Coleson, Michael and all of Nancy's family and friends, is like this: it's the legacy of a hardworking, selfless, dedicated, loving, giving person named Nancy. This person named Nancy always put herself last taking care of others first. Someone who planted seeds of selfless love in each of you that will go on for generations and generations. These

seeds of selfless love bless the hurting world that I love until it is all made right again. That, Nancy's family and friends, that's the Kingdom." As we live into our grief. As we live with this new reality. As we move through the Christmas season and it seems there is no room for our pain as there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn.

When you wake up Christmas morning, and it's unlike any Christmas you have known before. As reality sets deeper and deeper, remember that Christmas is not about what is going on all around us. It's not about the magic or bows. It's about that which the Magi sought and the Angels sang: that which is inside the stable.

So, where do we go from here? We go to the stable, to the crib. We go to the God who held back nothing to redeem us, not even his only begotten son. We come and peer into the manger cradling a baby and we realize it's not "being strong" or "staying positive" or "moving on" that God asks of us. We realize it's okay to be weak and vulnerable before this God who became weak and vulnerable to save us.



When your heart beats for conversations that simply cannot be, and your arms ache for the hug that won't be returned, go where you know there is space enough to hold these very real sorrows. Go to the stable. Go to the crib. Go to Jesus. Return often to the one the world was waiting for thousands of years ago that Christmas Eve night. The One who has promised to come back again and wipe every tear from our eyes. Open up your hearts and say "God with us, Emmanuel, come close. I know this is not how you meant the world to be, but I know this is not the end. God, as it hurts, oh it hurts, fill our hearts with your presence. Help us know you are near."

Brothers and sisters, the very first Christmas was as much about those who sorrow as those who rejoice. Jesus, that baby, the son of God who overcame death so that we could know life itself, eternal life with Him and with Nancy and George and all those who have passed before us.



St. Francis Xavier

155 Stringer Lane
Mount Washington, KY 40047
www.sfxmw.com



Like us on Facebook!

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
MT.WASHINGTON, KY
PERMIT NO. 50

Lenten Celebrations

Ash Wednesday: February 26 @ 7 p.m.

Holy Thursday: April 9 @ 7 p.m.

Good Friday: April 10 @ 7 p.m.

Easter Vigil: April 11 @ 8 p.m.

Easter Sunday: April 12 @ 10 a.m.

Stations of the Cross: Fridays @ 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday @ 3 p.m.

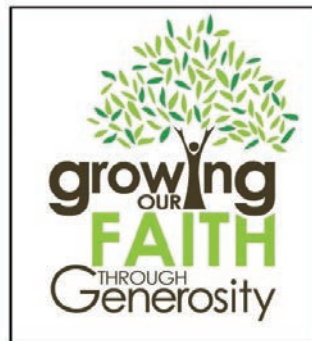
Eucharistic Adoration:

Tuesday March 17 @ 9 a.m.- Noon

Communal Penance: Sunday March 22 @ 2 p.m.



Don't Forget!



Please turn
in your 2020
Stewardship
Forms!