

The Crossroads Messenger Spring/Summer 2024

The official newsletter of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church - Mount Washington, Kentucky



SFX 2024 SummerFest and Super Raffle

Kickoff the summer at the St. Francis Xavier SummerFest on **Saturday, June 8th**. This annual event promises fun and fellowship for all ages and the chance to WIN BIG!

The festival will start early with Volleyball and Pickleball Tournaments and end the night with the **SUPER RAFFLE** drawing for 20K or a Nissan Versa Sedan. A day full of booths, food, inflatables, and live music will keep everyone entertained.

Tournaments will start at 8AM, so come out early to cheer on your favorite teams. Concessions will open at 11AM with hamburgers, hotdogs, brats, and more!

Saturday Mass will be held at 3PM to give everyone the opportunity to head over to the Xavier Center for the much-loved Fish Fry put on by the Knights of Coumbus, St. Joseph Council #12354. Dinner is served from 4PM-7PM. Take advantage of the air conditioning indoors or head outside with your plate to enjoy the live music.

There are 2 bands playing this year. **All That Band** will entertain the crowd from 4-7PM followed by **Crabgrass Conspiracy** from 7-10PM. While bands play on stage, the kids can play in the Inflatable Area. Wristbands will allow unlimited play for a reasonable price. But don't let the kids do all the playing, the Cake Wheel, an SFX SummerFest staple, will be joined by Split-The-Pot, Sweet Treats, Gift Cards, Quilt Raffle, and of course **SUPER RAFFLE!**

In collaboration with Jeff Wyler Nissan, the Super Raffle has brought back the option to win a **NEW CAR or \$20,000**. Chances will be on sale up until 9:30pm on June 8th, with the Grand Prize drawing at 10PM.

You won't want to miss this event, so mark your calendars now and plan to bring the entire family. The SFX SummerFest promises fun for everyone!



SCAN TO PURCHASE
SUPER RAFFLE TICKETS



LIC#ORG1325



The Pastor's Pen

We all can witness wonderful miracles around us every day with the “eyes of faith”. Sometimes, we stop to savor what we saw, heard and experienced... and we delight to have seen God’s hand in it.

On Saturday, April 20, I had the honor of witnessing the marriage of two fine young people, Laken Grigsby and Zach Murphy. If you recall, Laken and her family actively belonged to our parish for a long while and have since returned to their native Springfield. During that time with us, Laken was involved in a terrible car crash with a school bus on Highway 44 on September 20, 2018 @ 9:12 AM in which her whole world changed. Her recovery was very uncertain, and prayers and support were offered for Laken, her parents Pat and Sheri and siblings, Brooke and Connor. Since that time, powerful healing has come to Laken. She has fully recovered and in fact, Laken is working toward her physical therapist degree. To see what happened then and what we celebrated on April 20th was nothing short of a true miracle. **I know you have experienced the same in your lives.** I write of this because, as I come closer to retirement as a pastor, it seems that the eyes of my heart are more attuned to the hand of God’s work in a most tender, pastoral way. I see it in smaller, yet still joyful, moments that I experience with many of you in our faith-family.

I felt something similar the day after when celebrating the First Eucharist with 18 young children who came to the Lord’s Table. To see parents fulfilling their marriage and baptismal commitments step up and “bring their child up in the practice of our faith” is no empty statement. To see the sacraments so interwoven in our daily living is what I had hoped priesthood would be. It has because God does not disappoint.

Thank you for making our Catholic and Christian faith a priority. You make my ministry very rewarding and so worthwhile.

Father Dale

Pentecost is May 19th . It is called the birthday of the Church because it marks the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, signaling the beginning of the public ministry of the Catholic Church. As with any birthday, we hope to see you on Pentecost so that you can celebrate with your St. Francis Xavier faith family.

Come, Holy Spirit: you are harmony; make us builders of unit. You always give yourself; giant us the courage to go out of ourselves, to love and help each other, in order to become one family. Amen.

Pope Francis - Pentecost homily - May, 2020



The Deacon's Desk

Deacon Earl Baker

Recognizing the Voice of the Good Shepherd

In John's Gospel, Jesus tells us that He is the Good Shepherd. His sheep follow Him because they recognize His voice. He goes further to say that "I am the Good Shepherd, and I know mine and mine know me".

If we allow that statement to simmer within our souls, we begin to reflect and consider for ourselves...Do I recognize His voice? How do I distinguish it from all the other competing voices in my life?

A short time ago, I asked my wife this question---If she were in a large room filled with only men, and they spoke to her one at a time, would she be able to distinguish my voice from all the others? She chuckled and said *"Yes, trust me, after knowing you for 45 years, I could pick out your voice."* Her response generated gratitude in my heart, but it caused me to consider this point. The more time we spend with the Good Shepherd, the more we will recognize his voice. Getting to know His voice is something we all struggle with. Not to mention that there are many voices in the world that compete for our attention. We hear voices on social media, podcast, the daily news feed, voices and opinions of our family and friends, the voices of our culture, the voices of our own flesh, and the voices of evil. How do we distinguish the Good Shepherd's voice from all these competing voices?

God speaks to us in so many ways; in the Mass, the Sacraments, in daily life circumstances and situations, but the one place He is always speaking to us is in our conscience. This voice is always calling us to love, kindness, forgiveness and to avoid sin. We hear this voice with our heart and not our ears. This voice, inscribed in our heart by God, is our inner sanctuary. There we are alone with Him, and His voice echoes in the very depth of our being. But God does not compel us to follow this voice. He gives us the choice and the free will to follow whatever voice we choose, however, there are consequences for following some of the other voices Learning to recognize God's voice is a lifelong process. The more we hear it, the easier it is to recognize it. Listening, and responding to this voice helps us to develop a good moral conscience, and our obedience to it will bear witness to God's authority in our life.

For us to hear God speaking through our conscience, we need to be present to ourselves, and this requires time for daily self-reflection and self-examination. I encouraged you to take time each day to review the situations and circumstances of your life. Ask yourself, *"Where was God in my life today?" Was I present to his voice today, or am I just too busy for that?*

Unfortunately, we sometimes listen to the wrong voices and make the wrong decisions. Even with the best formed conscience, we can and will fall into sin. The Evil One will speak to us with an accusing voice. After convincing us to sin, he will then speak to us with words of condemnation. He will tell us we are worthless and trapped by our sinfulness. His words often create disunity and desolation. On the opposite hand, when we fall, the Good Shepherd will gently call us back to repentance. His is a message of forgiveness, mercy and hope. His is a soothing, calming and liberating voice.

Through a constantly growing faith life, lots of prayer and reading of the Sacred Word, we will learn to recognize the voice of the Good Shepherd. May your celebration of the Easter season continue, of the Good Shepherd who loved us so much that he laid down his life for his sheep.





2023-2024 Children's Faith Formation Recap Lauren Battcher, Director of Religious Education

Over 130 K-8 students participated in Children's Faith Formation (formerly known as "RE") during the 2023-24 school year. On Wednesday nights, these young people excitedly entered their classrooms, eager to gather with their peers and learn the Catholic faith, under the loving leadership of their catechists.



Every CFF classroom is like a 'family' with its own traditions. The kindergarten and first grade classes enthusiastically engage in hands on stations, crafts, and story-time as they discover what it means to know and follow Jesus. The talented second grade/First Communion class can be seen acting out the Last Supper as they learn about the gift of the Eucharist, or performing a costumed Nativity Play for their parents.

Third grade implemented a "prayer tree" this year in which students spend the first portion of class-time gathered in prayer, contributing paper leaves with their prayer requests to their collaborative display of branches (see photo). In fourth grade students take turns leading their class in prayer before learning about the Ten Commandments through various media, text, and newly donated Children's Bibles!

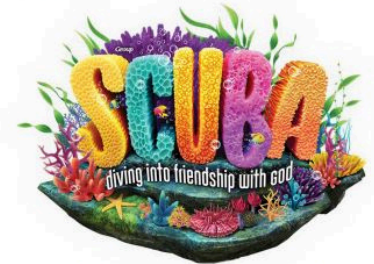


Our 5th grade class is highly competitive and frequently engage in team games to review the truths of our Catholic tradition. The 6th grade class is known for their "word of the week" (respect, patience, accountability... just to name a few) and their Advent of Kindness challenge where they document the light they bring to the world each week.

The 7th and 8th grades are full of questions and engage in authentic conversations about what it means to follow Jesus in middle school and beyond. It's incredibly inspiring to hear these students discuss their faith journey. Fourteen 8th graders are to be Confirmed on May 23, celebrating the end of their time as a CFF student and the beginning of a lifetime of intentionally choosing to be a disciple of Jesus.

We will truly miss our CFF kids during summer break, but look forward to seeing them at events such as "Scuba" Vacation Bible School (registration is open!) and having them back in late August when CFF resumes!

You're invited to VBS 2024!



Kids in grades preK-5 are invited to Scuba VBS! At Scuba VBS, we'll dive into an amazing undersea adventure and experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God!

Scuba VBS is FREE!

Preregistration is required to ensure we have enough materials for all participants!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL at

St. Francis Xavier!

June 17-21

5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Please consider **volunteering** for this event! We are in need of crew leaders, activity station assistants, safety/security, and various other roles! In addition to **adult** volunteers, **middle** and **high school students** are encouraged to join in the fun through service too!

No experience needed. Necessary training will be provided!

Scan the QR code to register or volunteer!

Questions? Email Lauren Battcher (Director)
lauren.battcher@sfxmw.com.





Paula's Ponderings

Paula Silliman, Pastoral Associate

Ah, the sweet siren call of summer—a time for lazy beach days, road trips, and soaking up the sun. With all the temptations to kick back and relax, it's easy to let your Sunday morning routine slip away. But before you trade your pew for a hammock, let me make a case for why you should still go to Mass during the summer months.

First and foremost, let's talk about commitment. When you make a commitment to your faith, it's not a part-time gig. Jesus doesn't clock out for summer vacation, so why should you? Just because the sun is shining and the temptation to sleep in is strong doesn't mean your spiritual journey takes a hiatus. In fact, summer can be the perfect time to deepen your connection with your faith and carve out some quiet moments for reflection amidst the chaos of vacation mode.

And speaking of vacation, let's not forget that Mass isn't just confined to your home parish. One of the beauties of Catholicism is its universality—no matter where you roam, you can always find a church to call home for an hour on Sunday morning. So why not take advantage of your travels to explore new and unique churches? From quaint country chapels to grand cathedrals, each one offers a different glimpse into the rich tapestry of Catholicism. Who knows? You might stumble upon a hidden gem that becomes your new favorite place to worship.

But perhaps the most compelling reason to keep attending Mass during the summer is the sense of community it provides. Sure, you could spend your Sundays lounging by the pool or catching up on sleep, but there's something special about coming together with your fellow believers to celebrate the Eucharist. It's a reminder that you're not alone on your journey—that you're part of something bigger than yourself.

And let's not forget the spiritual nourishment that Mass provides. In a world filled with distractions and noise, the Mass offers a sanctuary of peace and tranquility—a chance to quiet your mind and open your heart to the presence of God. Whether you're facing challenges or simply seeking guidance, the Mass offers solace and strength to help you navigate life's ups and downs.

So, as tempting as it may be to hit the snooze button and skip Mass during the summer months, I urge you to resist the temptation. Jesus is always with you, ready to welcome you with open arms whenever you choose to seek Him out. So don't take a vacation from Him—instead, let your summer adventures be an opportunity to deepen your faith, explore new places of worship, and strengthen your sense of community. After all, the sun may set on summer, but your relationship with God is eternal.





Welcoming our New Parishioners

Wende Aubrey, Engagement Coordinator

Since January 2020 there have been nearly 200 new families register with St. Francis Xavier Church. Our ability to welcome these new members on a personal level was hampered by Covid and has been slow to catch up. All of that is about to change. Starting this summer, we will introduce regular Meet and Greet sessions that will give new members the chance to get to know each other and learn about the ministry opportunities here at SFX. There will be a few initial gatherings in **late May** with invitations sent out to all those who joined since 2020 to belatedly welcome them to our parish. Going forward, every 2nd Thursday of the odd numbered months there will be a **Meet and Greet from 7:00-8:30** for our newest SFX families. While the focus of these gatherings will be on the new families, anyone in the SFX community is welcome to attend to share their experiences and get to know our newest members. If you are interested in attending an upcoming event, check out the SFX calendar on our website at SFXMW.COM , or contact me directly at (502) 385-6716.

I am looking forward to sharing time with all our new families!

Wende



A special thanks to everyone in the SFX faith family who donated time, talent and treasure to make our Holy Week and Easter celebration so special.





#iGiveCatholic Update

Jennifer Sweeney, Parish Business Manager

On Tuesday, November 28, 2023 (**Giving Tuesday**), St. Francis Xavier participated in our first ever #iGiveCatholic day of giving. Our 2023 campaign focused on our Children's Faith Formation program which serves more than 130 children in grades K-8. The program aims to help our youth encounter God and prepare them for the sacraments through catechism, scripture, music, liturgy, prayer, and community. Through the generosity of our SFX community, we raised \$8,173! The monies raised were earmarked to make improvements in the RE building, which included new furniture and improvements in safety and technology. We are very happy to report that the following items have been purchased using iGiveCatholic funds:

- *Two 65 Inch Smart TVs and 2 rolling media carts*
- *New foyer check-in table and chairs for the CFF*
- *Sofa, chair, coffee table and end table (matches the furniture in the Xavier Center)*
- *Two magnetic white boards for the foyer*
- *SFX Logo to be hung in the foyer*
- *Security black out curtains for classroom doors*
- *White boards for classrooms*

The furniture placement and whiteboard hanging will be done during the CFF summer break. Stay tuned to the bulletin for details on the completion date. We hope to have an open house after a weekend Mass to show all the renovations.

Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, December 2, 2024!** The SFX community will once again be asked to participate in Giving Tuesday through #iGiveCatholic! Our campaign will be focused on Children's Faith Formation; specifically transforming the RE building office into a meeting and planning room that may be used for catechist collaboration! More details to follow!



#iGIVECATHOLIC

BUNCO NIGHT

Our Women's Club was very pleased to have a near full capacity of excited bunco players Thursday, April 25th, in the parish hall. For an estimated 20 years, the Women's Club has held a Bunco Party at SFX. The Women's Club and its members provided sandwiches, appetizers, salads, desserts and drinks. There was a fun and festive Derby theme of Run For The Roses! Thirty sets of dice started rolling at 6:30 and continued until 8:30. The participants competed for a host of special bunco prizes as well as many fun door prizes.



In the spirit of welcoming each guest and evangelizing our faith, a small gift made by a Women's Club member was given to each player. Adult guests (including one brave man) enjoyed the company of other SFX members as well as many from surrounding parishes and communities. Many tried their luck at Split the Pot throughout the evening. It was a great evening filled with lots of laughter, smiles and excited screams of "BUNCO!"



Spring Bunco is one of the Women's Club's three fund raisers for the year, including Fall Bunco and the Christmas Bazaar. These fundraising events enable the Women's Club to support other parish ministries in their endeavors, (High School Youth Group, Community Ministries, Parish Garden, Prayer Blankets), as well as to support to the church and surrounding establishments.



The Women's Club is looking forward to seeing our old friends and new acquaintances at our next Bunco on Thursday, September 26, 2024. Mark your calendars!