



STAR *of the* SEA

A CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP PARISH



WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARISH NEWSLETTER!

Dear Parishioners,

Welcome to the first issue of our new monthly parish newsletter!

As our parish community continues to grow and develop stewardship as a way of life, we recognize the need for increased communication. Through this newsletter, we hope to share stories that will help us all to better understand who we are as Catholics and what we are doing as individual members of Christ's family. In upcoming issues, we will focus on what's going on in the Star of the Sea community, and how those activities and events are changing hearts and minds and helping parishioners grow closer to Christ and each other. Each article will ultimately focus on Christ at work within our community through the stewardship way of life.

Our hope is that this newsletter will be a successful means for ongoing education and formation in our faith, and I pray it will be a vehicle



through which you are informed and inspired to become more actively involved in the life of Christ and the parish.

Another way I hope to improve our parish's communication efforts is through a comprehensive parish survey that will be conducted this spring. Through the survey, I want to hear from you regarding our parish and its future. A survey will be delivered to each home, and then I will ask you to take the time to fill it out and return it as soon as possible. Your input will be very important, and it will give the Pastoral Council and me a better understanding of your thoughts about our parish.

This fall, we will conduct our Annual Stewardship Renewal. The Renewal is the time each year when we ask each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time we write down how we will become more devoted to Christ over

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WHAT DOES STEWARDSHIP MEAN?

What comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship”?

Do you think of it as just another way to talk about money? Do you quickly dismiss it as a notion that has nothing to do with being Catholic?

Stewardship is actually a concept that is Scripturally based, and is absolutely vital to our life as Catholics. God tells us, in the very first book of the Old Testament, “Be fertile and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth” (Gen 1:28).

What does that mean to us today? It simply means that God is telling us, “This is yours, so take care of it.” One of the first things God tells us to do is to be good stewards of the gifts He has entrusted to us!

The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to stewardship. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions, or money. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!

As Catholics, we refer to the three facets of stewardship as “time, talent and treasure.” Although these are three concrete ways to express and measure stewardship, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us that stewardship is part of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call in every aspect of our lives.

The Scriptures and Church traditions teach us one important point that cannot be overstated — that stewardship is primarily based on our need to give in gratitude, not on the Church’s need to receive.

It is important to remember that stewardship is a way of life, and not a program. True Catholic stewardship involves an ongoing call to live as followers of Christ. How do you live



Richard and Jeanine Donohue on Mt. Tabor, Israel, during our February Parish Pilgrimage

your faith in your daily life with your family and friends? How much time do you spend in daily prayer, going to Mass or being involved in parish ministries and activities? What percentage of your income should you give back to God every week? What talents do you have that could be used to strengthen our parish family?

In the coming months, we will be developing a better understanding of how stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call to discipleship. And with God’s help, changes will occur in each of our hearts as we devote ourselves to a stewardship renewal within our parish. Examine how you are currently responding to God’s call to stewardship. If God called you home tomorrow, would He proclaim, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?

FAASTAR: PRESERVING OUR FILIPINO HERITAGE IN SAN FRANCISCO

An Interview with Estrelle Chan

Part of the beauty of Catholicism is its universality. We come from all different backgrounds and heritages, but we share this beautiful faith. Our time, talents and treasure reflect that we each also have individual gifts to share with the community. This way of stewardship is to recognize that God has given us gifts and to share those with our faith community.

This universality and sense of sharing is the foundation for the Filipino American Association of Star of the Sea, or FAASTAR. The organization was founded in 1974 with the objective of creating camaraderie among Filipinos as well as preserving the Filipino traditions and cultures within Catholic practice.

“Each country has its own unique cultures,” says Estrelle Chan, parishioner and President of FAASTAR for eight years. “It is very important for the present generation to not only preserve its heritage, but to pass it on to the next generation and share it with both Filipinos and non-Filipinos. We have an obligation to educate the younger generation.”

Estrelle notes that the Philippines were under Spanish rule for 400 years, and Catholicism is one of the things inherited from that time.

“America is a multicultural country,” Estrelle says. “It’s easy for immigrants to try to assimilate or adapt. But being Catholics under one roof, we should be one big family, spreading the words of the Lord, living in a peaceful, loving world.”

Each year, FAASTAR celebrates a handful of Filipino feasts to preserve traditions – Flores de Mayo, San Lorenzo Ruiz and San Pedro Calungsod (the first and second Filipino saints, respectively) as well as the Simbang Gabi novena, in preparation for Christmas. Estrelle hopes the activities of the group will help bring more and more people to Mass.

Estrelle’s words remind us of the beauty in our various heritages and how Catholicism is a way of life that enriches our cultural traditions. Passing on the heritage and traditions of Catholicism is a beautiful act of stewardship, especially for the younger generation.



Estrelle and Peter Chan enjoyed a recent trip to the Holy Land, pictured here in Cana

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– Estrelle Chan

If you would like to learn more about FAASTAR, please contact the parish office at 415-751-0450 or Estrelle Chan at 415-575-0828.



OUR PARISH'S "STAR OUTREACH"

An Interview with

Since her early college years, Star of the Sea parishioner Jacqueline Paras has been passionate about social justice. From organizing programs that ministered to gang members to promoting chastity in local public high schools, she actively worked to live out the Gospel message outlined in Matthew 25:35 – “for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

“I was always someone who just was really passionate about living out the Gospel and developing my own ministry with Christ,” Jacqueline says. “To do this, you have to give in service to others. Jesus makes it very clear that this is what we are all called to do.”

Growing in this conviction over the years, Jacqueline recently felt a strong desire on her heart to serve the homeless and the poor of our community. So, when she was asked to take over the leadership of the new Star Community Outreach Ministry – also referred to as Star Outreach – this past September, she eagerly stepped up to the plate.

“Through this ministry, we are reaching out to the community, primarily the poor and homeless – those who are in real need materially and physically,” Jacqueline says. “It pretty much revolves around the Corporal Works of Mercy.”

Over the past months, the ministry’s outreach has taken a number of different forms. For example, each month, volunteers assist the local Missionaries of Charity in serving over a hundred meals. The ministry also helps support the Gabriel Project, an archdiocesan ministry dedicated to aiding women in crisis pregnancy situations. Seeking to meet the spiritual as well as physical needs of the community, Star Outreach also recently coordinated two Eucharistic processions.

“For the Jubilee Year of Mercy, we have also decided to do a drive every month for those in need,” Jacqueline says. “For January, we did gloves, February’s drive was shampoo, March’s drive is razors and shaving cream, and in April, we will do a bar of soap.”

As we grow in our love for God, it is natural for that love to overflow to others. The Gospel teaches that service is our love for God in action. Through it, our relationship with Christ is deepened as we more perfectly enter into His merciful heart.

“The love that you have for God, you just have to serve others to show it,” Jacqueline says. “It’s an obligation, almost. But I do it because it is a tremendous joy. The best moments are when I’m serving a homeless person and we have that moment of personal contact. I can’t fully explain

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– Jacqueline Paras



Mariella Zavalos clothing homeless, January 2016

OUTREACH TO THE NEEDY™

by Jacqueline Paras

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Still a relatively new ministry, Star Outreach is always looking for new volunteers. Monthly meetings take place every first Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. in the Rectory. During this time, members share a meal together while discussing and planning outreach activities. For Jacqueline, the eagerness of the volunteers has been a great blessing of the ministry.

“It is just so encouraging to see their joy in serving,” Jacqueline says. “Another thing that has really touched me is that the last couple of months, our pastor, Fr. Joseph, has just joined in. It is so beautiful to see our pastor there serving with us.”

If you are seeking a way to more fully give and receive God’s mercy, please consider joining the Star Community Outreach Ministry at their next meeting or supporting an upcoming outreach project!



Star of the Sea parishioners helped distribute food to over 100 homeless individuals during the month of January through the Star Community Outreach Ministry.

All are welcome to join in serving Christ, hidden in the poor and suffering. For more information about the Star Community Outreach Ministry, please contact Jacqueline Paras at outreach@starparish.com.

OUR LENT AND HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Stations of the Cross – After Noon Mass on Fridays and at 7 p.m. in the Main Church

Soup Supper and Consecration to Jesus Through Mary – Every Friday at 6 p.m., School Cafeteria

Holy Thursday, March 24

5 p.m. (Latin), 7:30 p.m. (English)

Good Friday, March 25

1 p.m. (English), 3 p.m. (Latin)

Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil, March 26

5 p.m. (Latin), 8:30 p.m. (English)

Easter Sunday, March 27

8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. (Latin), 1:30 p.m.

Vatican Exhibit on Eucharistic Miracles

April 2 — 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

April 3 — 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Presentation of miracles stories, scientific studies and scriptural basis of the True Presence — Star of the Sea Auditorium

April 2 — 5:30 p.m.

April 3 — 9 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m., and 4 p.m.





A HISTORY OF LENT AND LENTEN PRACTICES

When we embark on the journey that is the season of Lent, we enter into a season of preparation, sacrifice and penance, culminating in Holy Week and the joyous celebrations of Easter. And while the liturgical season of Lent offers us a time for solemn reflection, it is also widely welcomed each year as an opportunity to be drawn ever closer to our faith.

But just how did this penitential season come to be? And how did the reverent hallmarks of Lent – such as fasting and prayer – become so deeply ingrained in our observance of this season?

To understand the Lenten season, it is important to understand the word “Lent” itself, which is derived from two Anglo-Saxon terms: *lencten*, meaning “spring,” and *lenctentid*, which is the term for both “springtide” and “March” – of course, Lent often falls throughout most of the month of March, and during the transition into (and renewal of) the spring season. In Latin, the corresponding term for “Lent,” *quadragesima*, refers to its dating from the 40th day before Easter.

This brings us to another hallmark of the Lenten season – its length of 40 days. However, Lent was not originally observed for this length of time. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, Easter preparations consisted of three days of fasting and prayer. In some places, this preparation was extended into the entire week prior to Easter – which we now observe as Holy Week. There is also some evidence that, in Rome, Easter preparation was as long as three weeks.

In its early form, Lent was an intense period of spiritual and liturgical preparation for catechumens who were to be baptized at Easter. At the time, many members of the community observed this period of preparation alongside the catechumens. But, as time passed and more people were baptized as infants, the connection between catechumens and Lenten preparation gave way to a focus on the themes of repentance and fasting during Lent for *all* Christians.

It was not until the fourth century – upon the legalization of Christianity – that Lent developed into its current length of 40 days, which mirrored the length of Jesus’ fast and temptation in the desert, as chronicled in Luke 4:1-13.

Yet, interestingly, the Lenten observations of fasting and prayer did not always take place for 40 *consecutive* days. For instance, in Jerusalem, fasting was observed for 40 days, Monday through Friday, but not on Saturday or Sunday – thus, Lent lasted for a total of *eight* weeks. In Rome and the West, fasting took place for six weeks, Monday through Saturday, with Lent being observed over *six* weeks. The practice of fasting for six days over the course of six weeks eventually prevailed, with Ash Wednesday being instituted to account for 40 fasting days prior to Easter.

And as the length of Lenten observance developed over time, so did the observance of fasting itself. At first, some areas of the Church abstained from all meat and animal products, while others made exceptions for certain foods, like fish. And while a person was to only have one meal a day, a smaller repast would be allowed so that manual laborers could maintain their strength throughout the day. Eventually, eating meat was allowed throughout the week, save for Ash Wednesday and on Fridays.

In fact, two of our most common and beloved Lenten and Easter traditions – the Shrove Tuesday meal and Easter eggs – developed from these early Lenten observations. Initially, abstinence from dairy products was observed during Lent, with dispensations given if pious works had taken place. Eventually, this particular rule of abstinence was relaxed entirely. Today, pre-Lenten pancake breakfasts, Easter egg decoration and egg hunts remain as enjoyable seasonal opportunities for fellowship and fun within our parish families!



Parish Leadership at the Walk for Life this year

THE LITTLE ORATORY MEN'S FELLOWSHIP AT OUR PARISH

We Have a Wonderful Cross Section of Men Involved.

More than 400 years ago, St. Philip Neri developed a series of evening meetings at which there would be prayers, hymns, readings from Holy Scripture and other Church documents, followed by a lecture and then discussion. As a priest in Rome, St. Philip Neri felt this kind of spiritual exercise was important to and beneficial to men, and such meetings were held in a hall called the Oratory. From that beginning evolved a complete society that not only gathered in fellowship, but also undertook mission work throughout Rome.

Centuries later, right here at Star of the Sea Parish, Fr. Joseph Illo has organized a ministry we call the Little Oratory, using the original oratory as a model.

The group meets twice a month on the first and third Wednesdays from 7-9 p.m.

"We begin with 45 minutes in the church, which includes exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, a brief presentation by me and then 20 minutes of reflection, followed by Benediction," Fr. Illo says. "It is a holy and spiritual way to begin our evening."

Following the time in the church, the men retire to the Rectory for food and fellowship. "This is something recommended by our Archbishop," Father says. "There are around 10 Oratory Communities in the United States, and we hope to develop a San Francisco Oratory in years to come."

In the past 30 years, much has been done



Fr. Driscoll giving a talk at the Little Oratory in May

throughout the United States within the Catholic Church to provide opportunities for men to gather and share. It is certainly important for men to have these outlets, as emphasized in a well-known passage from the Book of Proverbs – "As iron is sharpened by iron, one man sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17). The meaning behind these holy words is somewhat obvious, especially when you consider the historical context in which the Book of Proverbs was composed. To sharpen an iron tool or instrument, people had learned that rubbing two of them together was beneficial to both – two iron blades when rubbed together, each becomes sharper and more efficient. Men can reap the same benefits through meeting, prayer, sharing, fellowship, and interaction. It is equally important for men to come together in God's name as brothers in Christ.

Fr. Illo says the Little Oratory has been very successful to date.

"We have around 15 men who are there loyally every time," he says. "However, there are another 20 to 60 men who may join us on occasion. I would encourage a man to schedule this as part of his monthly devotions, but I also would emphasize that a man is welcome to come once or any time he may wish. I think they would find this very beneficial in expanding and exploring their faith. There is always information in the bulletin."

Men of the parish who would like more information about the Little Oratory may call the parish office at 415-751-0450, or are welcome to simply show up at a scheduled meeting.



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LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sunday: *Quiet Mass: 8 a.m.,*

Family Mass: 9:30 a.m.,

Latin Mass: 11:30 a.m.,

Contemporary Mass: 1:30 p.m.

Saturday: *English Daily Mass: 8:30 a.m.,*

Vigil: 4:30 p.m.

Weekday Masses:

Latin Mass: 7:30 a.m.,

English Mass: noon

Confession:

15 minutes before every Mass,

Saturday: 3:15-4:15 p.m.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARISH NEWSLETTER! *continued from front cover*

the next year with our commitments of **time** (using my time on earth wisely; making time for personal prayer, family prayer, and quality time with friends and loved ones); **talent** (using God-given gifts to strengthen the Church through service to parish ministries and other activities), and **treasure** (the wise and just management of my financial resources; giving a proportionate amount of my income to the parish).

As we strive to develop stewardship as a way of life at Star of the Sea, the support and involvement of each individual parishioner is necessary to sustain the life of our parish. All of you have a place here, and all of you have a role to fill in the life of the parish as we live our lives as disciples of Christ.

May the Holy Spirit renew and refresh all of us as we work together to build our parish family through the use of our time, talent and treasure.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Illo
Pastor

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Ryan Sebers

Corinna Gamez

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Mary Ellen Mannix

Nora Uyeda

Glenn Dudro