



# STAR *of the* SEA

A CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP PARISH



## BIBLE STUDY AIMS TO FOSTER A REAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

**F**or Professor Mary Ann Eiler, who taught Greek and Latin literature, there is certainly much to appreciate in the works of the great Greek poets and historians. But life's truths certainly don't start or stop there.

"I don't find in them an answer to all of life's questions – Christ has that," says Mary Ann, a retired Classics (Greek and Latin) and Patristics (studies of the early Church fathers) scholar.

After years of teaching, most recently at USF, Mary Ann now spends time sharing her wealth of knowledge with our faith community at parish Bible studies. As of last year, she began leading studies at Star of the Sea.

"Why should we make a priority of making Scriptures part of our life?" she asks. "It's answered by St. Jerome in his famous line, 'Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.' If you say you're a Christian, then what do you know about Christ? And how do you live like Christ? How can you be Christ-like if you don't know His life? How can you know what God says? Knowing Jesus, knowing Scripture makes it possible for you to deepen your knowledge of God, and the more you know God, the more you love Him. You



*Each Sunday and Tuesday afternoon, Mary Ann Eiler offers a Bible study to help parishioners grow in their understanding and love of Sacred Scripture.*

get to know God in a very intimate way by reading the Scriptures."

For Mary Ann, despite her extensive knowledge of the Scriptures, a closer relationship with Christ is what she hopes attendees will foster; not merely a better understanding of the text.

"If you only study, you can explain interesting

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stories,” she says. “But that doesn’t necessarily draw you closer to God.”

The group, which Mary Ann hosts, studies various passages of Scripture, beginning with the Gospels.

“What I try to do is put the knowledge that I have out there, to set a context,” Mary Ann says of how the group delves into Scripture each week. “Then I try to show how stories relate to our life. ‘Which character are you?’ I try to make things make sense – ‘What does it mean? Can you think of an example from your own life?’”

Mary Ann hopes that the studies – which utilize study guides from Ignatius Press – will give participants the tools they need to integrate the Scriptures into their lives and practice of the faith.

“I’m trying to give them the tools to be able to study Scripture on their own,” she says. “I want them to have a sense that there is help out there. [Reading the Bible] is something that you

should be able to do at home, to have your Bible somewhere, so when you take your coffee break, you can flip through your Bible and read. We’re talking about using the Bible and making it part of our lives. I like the idea of making them familiar with it. We sit with our coffee and something to munch on – it’s very laid back.”

Mary Ann encourages parishioners to come see what it’s all about!

“I think a lot of people are awed by the idea of Bible study, and they don’t have to be,” Mary Ann says. “What we do is very easy and you can be completely quiet or talk as much as you want.

“It’s a place where people want to come, they’re amazed with what they’re learning,” she continues. “We have people with a lot of education and no education. I try to make it so there’s something for everybody. No matter how much you knew at the beginning, you always bring more home.”

*“What I try to do is put the knowledge that I have out there, to set a context. Then I try to show how stories relate to our life. ‘Which character are you?’ I try to make things make sense – ‘What does it mean? Can you think of an example from your own life?’” – Mary Ann Eiler*

*The Bible Study meets every Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and every Tuesday at 3:30 p.m. in the parish office/rectory meeting room. All are welcome!*



## WE ARE ALL MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY

Dear Parishioners,

This is a time of many celebrations in the Church. The list is almost endless at this time of year – First Communions, Confirmations, graduations, and weddings. There are so many events that bring people who are not from the parish, or even members of the Church, into our parish.

You may recall that we speak of the Four Pillars of Stewardship – Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service. I want to particularly speak of that pillar of Hospitality this month. It is important every day of every year and at everything we do as a parish community. However, at this time of year, when there may be strangers and newcomers in our midst, it becomes even more important.

Jesus is the cornerstone of our faith. In Matthew 25:35, the Lord speaks to us in terms of expectations when He says, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” He makes it clear to us that whenever we welcome any of His brothers and sisters, we welcome Christ Himself. Sometimes, we may think that this concept of hospitality is the responsibility of a committee, ministry or group of people assigned that task – but the truth is that we are all part of the parish hospitality effort.

If we are going to be a stewardship parish, and if each of us is going to be a good steward, we need to be aware that we need to seek and find Christ in everyone around us, everyone we meet, and certainly everyone who enters our church or other parish facilities.

Hospitality is a parish priority that each of us must take to heart. It is not so challenging to greet someone, smile at them and welcome them – yet, it may require a little extra effort on our part. That means we must have



an awareness of those near us, of those who may appear to be alone or new. We may not always think of Christ in this way, but if we carefully listen to Holy Scripture, we must realize that He was a caring, welcoming and friendly person. If we are to be His disciples, we need to be the same.

As stated, Jesus assures us that when we welcome others, we are welcoming Him, as well. St. Paul once said that people who are hospitable sometimes entertain angels. For us, parish hospitality is not an option. It is our way to model the Kingdom of God right here and right now.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph Illo".

Fr. Joseph Illo  
Pastor





## ALTAR SERVERS HELP CREATE A *Beautiful*

As Catholics, we are blessed to be able to gather as a family of worship at the Mass. Here at Star of the Sea, we are especially blessed to be able to celebrate the Latin Mass, as well as the Mass in English. For both forms of the Mass, liturgical ministries play a large role in ensuring that each part of the Mass is a beautiful offering to God. Altar servers in particular are a great help – by taking care of the details, they allow the clergy and liturgical ministers to completely focus on their role in the Mass.

“The Catholic Church is founded around service,” says Gregory Seeley, who leads the parish’s altar servers as Head of Ceremonies. “By making sure the sacred ministers have what they need, they can be more prayerful and really focus on the sacred duties they are administering. It frees their minds to focus on the prayers, intentions and the depths of the Mass itself.”

At Star of the Sea, boys and men of all ages are welcome to become altar servers. For the Latin Mass, seven servers are needed for different duties and responsibilities – for the Mass in English, four or five are needed. A typical Latin Mass will include two acolytes, a crucifer, a thurifer, two torchbearers, and a master of ceremonies. For the Mass in English, the torchbearers and master of ceremonies are not generally needed.

Gregory conducts training on an individual basis. He will first sit down with servers to talk about the different parts of the Mass and the meaning behind them. They will then walk through each part of the Mass, as Gregory explains what goes on in each part and how to correctly perform each duty.

“There needs to be a sense of reverence because we’re in God’s house,” Gregory says. “I explain how the Church has been doing this for a long time, and how it’s done. We also talk about the language of the Mass – for the Latin Mass, it’s not in English, and so they need to learn what certain words mean. I try to make sure they are able to grasp and appreciate the language of the Church.”



The parish’s servers are scheduled on a “buddy system,” which allows new servers to learn from more experienced servers, and are rotated through the various different roles that an altar server plays.

“When someone new comes on, I’ll usually pair them with someone more experienced,” Gregory says. “I often serve as a Master of Ceremonies, so if someone seems unsure, I’ll be able to give them little instructions throughout the Mass. Every two weeks, they’ll change to a different role, and during those two weeks, two servers switch off doing that duty. Once they’ve gone through all of them, they cycle back through again.”

Through their different responsibilities, altar servers ensure that the Mass is a reverent, sacred experience for all involved.

“When you go to something like a graduation

# Beautiful, Reverent Mass **FOR ALL**

ceremony, you want that moment where the person receives their diploma to be special – so you make sure you have everything ready to go so that when the moment comes, there’s no fumbling and it all goes smoothly,” Gregory says. “When you think about the Mass in this way, you want everything to run smoothly so that the priest can offer the Mass with all his heart and mind; so that the lectors and musicians can sound clear and dignified and beautiful; and so people are inspired to pray and have more respect for the sacrifice that is being offered.

“There is no one greater than God, so we should all be giving Him our best,” he adds. “This way, the people who are doing the actions are able to appreciate, understand and perform their duties. And those who are watching are able to appreciate the sacred nature of what is going on. It also adds to the aesthetic of the ceremony when everyone is well-coordinated, and it makes the Mass look organized and beautiful.”

Altar server Paul Dzul, 16, has been able to better understand the rich history and tradition of the Church through his experience as a server.

“While I serve for the Mass in English every once in a while as they need me, I mostly serve for the Latin Mass,” he says. “Even though it wasn’t the original Mass of the apostles, it has been around for a long time, and I think it gives such a great understanding of the history, beauty and, sometimes, difficulties of being a Catholic. It has provided me with a wider lens to see what it really means to be Catholic, and what my faith entails.

“I have also had the opportunity to become closer to the priests, who know so much about the Church and the Mass,” Paul adds. “Gregory has also taught me so much over the past two years, and it’s been such a blessing for him to mentor me.”

Throughout his two years as an altar server, Paul has seen how his relationship with God has grown as a result of his service.

“Serving God in any way provides for a closer relationship with Him,” he says. “When you’re up on the altar helping the priest, you are that much closer to Jesus. It’s a really unique window into the Catholic faith, and I have been able to learn so much more about the history of the Mass and the Church.”

## **Different roles for altar servers:**

**Acolytes:** Carry in candles during the opening procession and during the Gospel, bring up the cruets at the offertory, and perform general maintenance duties throughout the Mass to make sure everything runs smoothly.

**Crucifer:** Carries the cross during the opening procession, holds the book when the altar is incensed, assists the priest in various ways.

**Thurifer:** Carries incense, maintains it throughout the Mass and makes sure it’s ready to go when needed. Also assists the Master of Ceremonies.

**Torchbearers:** Kneel at either side of the altar with candles during the Sanctus and throughout the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

**Master of Ceremonies:** “Conducts” the other servers by giving cues, providing explanations when need, and ensuring that all servers are performing their duties correctly and at the proper times. Is very familiar with the Mass and the details of the liturgy.

*If you are interested in becoming an altar server at Star of the Sea, or if you would like more information, please contact the parish office at 415-751-0450.*





## The Machado Family: Living Ste

**O***mnia in bonum* – “all for the good.” This simple Latin phrase, originating from St. Paul’s letter to the Romans 8:28, is a comforting reminder of God’s mercy. It teaches us that God, in His infinite goodness, transforms all our weaknesses and blunders into good. Spoken to them during a particularly difficult time in their lives, these words have become a kind of family motto for Star of the Sea parishioners Paolo and Elizabeth (Liz) Machado, deepening their trust and dependence on God.

Both Liz and Paolo were blessed to have been raised in the Faith and to have benefited from Catholic education. Yet, like so many young people, they each went through periods where they struggled to truly take ownership of their faith, being pulled by other attractions and pressures.

For Paolo, things changed when an Opus Dei numerary asked him a profound question: “Don’t you want your life to be an adventure, like that of John Paul II or Mother Teresa?” These words had a deep impact on Paolo, causing him to re-evaluate his life, centering it more fully upon Christ. Similarly, Liz’s spiritual life was transformed through a seemingly innocent



*The Machados feel blessed to have become part of a community that “truly makes Christ present” to them.*

question posed by her college roommate during her freshman year at the University of Illinois.

“At the Newman Center dormitory, I was paired up with a random girl,” Liz says. “We were talking on the phone and she asked me, ‘So, are you *actually* Catholic?’ I remember immediately saying ‘yes’ because I just wanted her to like me. But later, I was impressed by the fact that she was genuinely Catholic and excited about things like the chapel.”

This led Liz to reconsider

her own beliefs, choosing to truly understand and become involved in the faith she had professed since childhood.

Looking back, these life-changing questions played an important role in leading Paolo and Liz toward one another. Paolo gradually became more involved in the lay movement Opus Dei, which had been instrumental in his spiritual formation since his grammar school years, while Liz felt called to join the Communion and Liberation movement. According to Liz, “Opus Dei and Communion and

# *wardship All for His Greater Good*

Liberation really brought [them] together,” which they now see as all being part of God’s bigger plan to lead them to their vocation.

The couple was married and blessed with a beautiful daughter, Sophia, and they began looking for a parish to call “home” – leading them to join Star of the Sea last August. Paolo and Liz were initially drawn to our community because of the warmth they immediately experienced. Today, this warmth has only grown, transforming the parish into a second home where they feel strengthened and encouraged in their faith life.

“I was on maternity leave for about four months, and every day we could go to Mass at noon, structuring our day around it,” Liz says. “Fr. Illo immediately welcomed us. He has really been a wonderful, proactive person who has truly welcomed us and kick-started us getting involved.”

Living in San Francisco, the couple notes that it is easy to become discouraged, feeling like few people know and serve God. Activism in parish life, says Paolo, has helped “refresh” them by reminding them that they are not alone.

“It is so encouraging to go to Church and be reminded that there are other people striving for holiness and working on their relationship with Christ,” Paolo says.

Liz adds that she experiences God’s love regularly through parish life.

“I think having these conversations with people that I wouldn’t typically have, these people who love me for no other reason than that I’m part of the community, truly makes Christ present to me,” she says.

The Machados can be seen regularly at Star of the Sea, joking that the rectory has “literally become like home.” Paolo has also become part of the Stewardship Committee, while Liz belongs to the Improvement Ministry and Perpetual Adoration Project. In the process of becoming involved, they have learned about the true meaning and power of stewardship, seeing its benefits firsthand. And as Paolo points out, stewardship goes hand in hand – and is synonymous – with friendship.

“[It is] a deep friendship that cares about another’s soul and wants to share what is truly good with others,” he says. “A friend is another self – so what we think is good for us and what we would benefit from, we naturally want to give that to another person.”

Ultimately, stewardship is about giving all that we can give – no matter how small or seemingly unimportant – trusting that God will take our efforts and transform them into something great for the good. *Omnia in bonum.*

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*“[Stewardship is] a deep friendship that cares about another’s soul and wants to share what is truly good with others. A friend is another self – so what we think is good for us and what we would benefit from, we naturally want to give that to another person.” – Paolo Machado*

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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:** *Vigil: 4:30 p.m.,  
English Daily Mass: 8:30 a.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.*

# Movie Night at Star of the Sea!

*Come and watch a new film on the history and meaning of the original painting of Christ's Divine Mercy, commissioned by St. Faustina and now in Lithuania. The film's director, Daniel DiSilva, will be on hand to speak on how he discovered the true image of Divine Mercy and why he made the movie. No charge for the movie, but a free will offering taken up. Popcorn, hot dogs and drinks will be available. **May 22 at 5:30 p.m.** in the auditorium. See the film's trailer at [www.divinemercyfilm.com](http://www.divinemercyfilm.com).*

