



STAR *of the* SEA

A CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP PARISH



MUSIC MINISTRY

Offers Prayers Through Song During Liturgy

Chances are, if you've attended Mass at Star of the Sea for more than a week or two, you have realized that there is something that makes it stand out from other parishes in the city.

"I can't think of another parish that offers a sung Mass in both the Ordinary and Extraordinary Form of the Liturgy every Sunday of the year," says Sven Olbash, who has served as our Director of Music for the past year.

The Star of the Sea Parish Choir sings at the Sunday, 9:30 a.m. Mass, in English. At the 11:30 a.m. Traditional Latin Mass, three different choirs serve. The St. Gregory Schola sings the ordinary and proper chants for the High Mass. The St. Cecilia Chorale sings one polyphonic Mass per month, and the Stella Maris Choir sings additional polyphonic pieces each week. There are also four Choral Scholars, who assist the choral music program.

While the role of music in the liturgy is one that is sometimes misunderstood, at Star of the Sea, we hope to restore it to the proper place.

"Since Vatican II, the way the liturgy is carried



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out at many parishes gives the impression that music is something that is added to the liturgy, that we stop the Mass to sing a favorite song, or that we add some filler music while the priest is busy doing something else," Sven says. "Compare that to the medieval Church, where we see artistic depictions of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove whispering

the sacred chant into the ear of St. Gregory, while he sings it to a scribe who takes dictation. It isn't that music adds something to prayer – it's that prayers that are not sung have lost something of their original beauty and intent."

The music at Mass is an opportunity to worship God, both with our voices and in our hearts.

"The primary way in which the Church praises God through music is by carrying out the sacred liturgy," Sven says. "It is not only that we experience a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy when we sing, but it is also an act of obedience to carry out the sacred liturgy in the way that it has come down to us.

"Sometimes, we like to think that 'active



GOT TALENT?

Bring It to the Spotlight!

The word “talent” often conjures up images of stage performers in the spotlight, captivating awestruck audiences with their impeccable musical or acting skills.

While these talented performers are certainly deserving of applause, the majority of the population sits hidden in the shadows, staring on in amazement while feeling overlooked — and perhaps wishing to possess such talents themselves. But even when we feel overlooked and untalented, God knows better. As Christians, we are all called to dig deep and trust that we are specially blessed with valuable talents and abilities, even if our talents aren’t so obvious or don’t garner applause and accolades.

Along with “time” and “treasure,” “talent” is one of the “three Ts” of stewardship. Exploring our natural inclinations and preferences, especially when guided by the intricacies of our unique personalities, can unearth God-given talents.

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same spirit,” writes St. Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians. “There are different forms of service, but the same Lord.”

Some people have the gift of working peacefully with children. Equipped with patience

and gentleness, they are able to guide young souls to the Lord. Yet, others shudder at the thought of a classroom full of 5-year-olds, and instead seek the quiet solace of behind-the-scenes tasks — cleaning the church, sewing altar cloths or stuffing envelopes.

Our interests and abilities are varied, and our volunteer options are endless, as we are called to give our talents back to God in loving service. Examine your heart and prayerfully discern your gifts, then direct those gifts towards serving the people of God.

H. Jackson Brown, Jr., author of *Life’s Little Instruction Book*, once said, “Talent without discipline is like an octopus on roller skates. There’s plenty of movement, but you never know if it is going to be forwards, backwards, or sideways.”

If our gifts of talent are not guided by the discipline of prayer, just like an octopus on roller skates, we will get nowhere fast! Yet, if we keep our eyes on the goal of heaven and serve the Lord with joyfulness, our efforts will produce a bountiful harvest. In the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians, “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will reap bountifully.”

The next time you sit quietly in the shadows behind a glaring stage spotlight, rest assured that your talents are no less impressive in the eyes of God, and will always be “applauded” when directed to the service of His people.

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A WELCOMING PARISH

Dear Parishioners,

Last month, I wrote about becoming a welcoming parish, because Hospitality is the first Pillar of Stewardship. A new family registered last week, just having moved from Colorado. Angela, the mother, told me how friendly and welcoming people have been to her at Star of the Sea. Others have told me, too, how warm the atmosphere is in our parish. That warms my heart! I want to be the father of a real family, with spiritual children who love each other. We are a welcoming community, but we still have far to go. We don't want anyone who comes to our parish to feel isolated – they must know they have a home with us, and that takes an effort from all of us.

I invite all of you to our parish holy hour, every Tuesday from 7-8 p.m. We kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, the priest reads that day's Gospel, the light is on in the confessional, and the children lead our family Rosary. We finish with benediction, and the kids usually shoot some bas-



ketball as their parents are chatting in the parking lot afterwards.

As I was walking outside just before the Rosary the other night, a lady with a baby in a stroller went by. "Hi!" I greeted her. She looked into our beautiful church and asked, "Can anyone come in?" What a question! Is everyone welcome into God's house? The answer is yes. The woman was Indian, probably Hindu. Mother Teresa wrote, "Some time ago, a Hindu gentleman was asked, 'What is a Christian?' He gave an answer that was both very simple and surpris-

ing. 'A Christian is someone who gives himself.'" To be Christian means first to welcome the stranger – "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" – and to welcome from the heart, we must give of ourselves. It will cost us – a smile, a word of welcome. We risk inviting someone into a relationship with us. But you have to give a little to get a lot.

While we do have a warm parish by comparison, many of us still don't know most of the people with whom we worship. The first Sunday barbecues are a good way to get to know each other, but even a simple greeting after Mass and "My name is Jack. What's yours?" will do. To help, we will begin posting the names of newly registered folks in the bulletin from now on. Let no one be a stranger at Star of the Sea!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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

Fr. Joseph Illo
Pastor





Social Media Offers Essential

While the Catholic Church is over 2,000 years old, the Gospel message of Christ and His invitation for us to follow Him remains relevant with each passing generation. As Catholics, part of our life of stewardship is allowing Christ's message to influence our lives in such a way that the way we live in the present times is a witness to God's personal love. As such, it remains the task of the faithful steward to find ways to use social media for the good as we live in a society and culture that is continually "plugged in" and connected.

Parishioner Michael Haring views our use of social media and modern technology as part of our calling to baptize secular culture.

"Everything we do as Catholics is an expanded catechism lesson and part of baptizing the culture," Michael says. "The Catholic Church is light years ahead of everyone else in regards to the arts – Christ using parables was the first form of social media."

Michael refers to social media as a tool that is "very powerful and beneficial – yet, not complete." The modern temptation is to use social media to no end – without meaning or purpose. Part of our Catholic calling is to allow social media to become a means to an end.

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– Michael Haring

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Because our social media platforms are so vast and instantaneous, they provide an outlet for connecting with both believers and unbelievers alike, easily transforming into tools of evangelization. As Michael reminds us, the essential part of using social media as Catholics is using them to the end of true personal connection in the "real world." Through these platforms, we are allowed to spread the word about events, share our faith with others, and



Our parish YouTube channel



Our parish Facebook page

Framework for Evangelization

invite our friends and family into the practice of the faith or events where conversion may take place.

“Social media platforms have been vehicles to advertise events and provide events for those people who can’t come, such as being able to watch a lecture on YouTube after the fact,” Michael says.

By using modern technology and platforms to baptize the culture and share our Catholic faith, we acknowledge that our faith is not “outdated or unable to keep up with the times, but rather one that embraces all parts of our individual lives. It is also a deep recognition that, in the words of Michael, “God is intimately interested in all aspects of our lives.”



Our parish Twitter page

If you would like to follow along with Star of the Sea as we use social media to baptize the culture, please consider checking out the church in the following ways – Facebook at www.facebook.com/starparishsf; Twitter through @starparish, YouTube at youtube.com/starparish and Instagram through @starparish.

Music Ministry *continued from front cover*

participation’ means doing something that is externally observable – singing a song at Communion, or holding hands during the Our Father,” he continues. “However, the primary way that we participate in the liturgy is internal – we join our hearts and minds to the sung prayer of the choir in the same that we open our hearts and minds to Christ’s Presence in the Gospel.”

Singing in one of the choirs or choral groups is an opportunity to use your gifts to serve, while also being open to deepen one’s relationship with God, through the sacred Liturgy. Music ministry can be thought of as the strings that not only tie the liturgy together, but also unite us in prayer. When performed well, the words and the melody can resonate in the minds and hearts of all gathered, creating an opportunity for evangelization

by drawing Mass attendees into a deeper faith and prayer life. It can also help ministers to serve and see the presence of Christ around them.

As Sven points out, one excellent way to become involved in music ministry is to fully participate as a member of the congregation.

“Sing all of the dialogues and responses, all of the prayers, all of the antiphons,” he says. “One easy way to tell what you are supposed to sing at Masses with choir is that I always accompany the congregation on the organ. So if the organ is playing, that means it’s your turn to sing. Once you are fully participating as a member of the congregation, singing with the choir is a way that you can help others learn to participate more fully in the sung parts of the liturgy, as well as to assist in fostering silent prayer.”

If you are interested in becoming involved in the Sacred Music Program here at Star of the Sea, please contact Sven Olbash at sven@starparish.com or 415-577-1827.



CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF THE *Sacred Heart of Jesus*

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is probably the most widely recognized representation of Christ's divine love and unwavering compassion for all of humanity. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been practiced for centuries, and this devotion continues to play an important role in today's Catholic faith. As we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on June 3, we have a wonderful opportunity to learn more about this essential Catholic devotion and its role in Church history.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart extends as far back as the 11th or 12th centuries. While there are no definitive texts or histories that verify initial devotees, it is understood that the devotion grew out of the Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries of the time. By the 16th century, documented devotional prayers and exercises had been formulated, and the ascetic writers began making more extensive reference to the Sacred Heart. But it was not until the 17th century that devotion to the Sacred Heart moved beyond being practiced on a private, individual basis. St. Jean Eudes established the first feast of the Sacred Heart, and this was shared with devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It was then that the devotional feast of the Sacred Heart began to spread to other dioceses and religious communities.

However, the devotion as we know and understand it today largely stems from the visions of Jesus Christ to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. While these visions were numerous, the most remarkable revelation, known as "the great apparition," occurred during the octave of Corpus Christi in 1675. As Jesus said to Margaret Mary, "Behold the Heart that has so loved men...



instead of gratitude I receive from the greater part (of mankind) only ingratitude."

Reporting her vision to Fr. Claude de la Colombière, Margaret Mary was then directed to write an account of the apparition. Despite her initial reluctance to do so, as well as her misgivings upon its completion, this written account would soon be published and widely read among both clergy and laymen, thus playing an instrumental role in spreading the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Another book, *The Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*,

was written by Jesuit Father Croiset after Jesus told Margaret Mary to have Fr. Croiset write it. Following Margaret Mary's death in 1690, Fr. Croiset would compose a short biography of her life that was amended to his book, which served to further increase interest and practice of the devotion.

Over the course of the next century, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus would continue to spread. By the latter half of the 18th century, a Mass of the Sacred Heart was given papal approval for Poland and Portugal, followed two decades later by Venice, Austria and Spain. Then, in 1856, the Feast of the Sacred Heart was officially established by Pope Pius IX.

While the specific readings and exercises for the feast day have been changed and replaced over the years, the basic tenets that extend back to the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque remain the same — the acknowledgment of and devotion to Christ's unending compassion and love for all of us.

Our parish continues to carry on its own devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Please join us on First Fridays after the noon Mass to grow closer to Jesus through this beautiful devotion.

STAR OF THE SEA PARISH COUNCIL

Brings Stewardship Efforts to the Forefront

As many know, our Star of the Sea Catholic Community is sharing in a parish-wide effort to live out stewardship. With this effort very much in mind, we are gifted to have our Parish Council here at Star of the Sea.

“Stewardship calls for us all to be involved and to use our talents to serve one another and the Church,” says Parish Council President Ryan Sebers. “There are many opportunities in our parish for that, and the Parish Council is one of them.”

The function and importance of a parish council is noted in the *Code of Canon Law*: “If the diocesan bishop judges it opportune... a pastoral council is to be established in each parish, over which the pastor presides and in which the Christian faithful, together with those who share in pastoral care by virtue of their office in the parish, assist in fostering pastoral activity” (536.1).

The development of our Parish Council began about a year ago, when Fr. Illo initially invited a few dedication parishioners to attend a discussion on the scope and function of a parish council.

“At that meeting, we discussed potential other members,” Ryan says. “As a result, we formed a council, and I was privileged to be selected President. I feel incredibly blessed to be a member of the Parish Council. The experience has drawn me closer to the Star of the Sea parish community, and I believe our discussions of significant issues contribute to the vision and direction of our pastor, Fr. Joseph Illo.”

The Parish Council meets monthly, and the



Ryan Sebers, President of our Star of the Sea Parish Council

meetings tend to be about 90 minutes in length. The purpose of the council is to serve as a consultative group of parishioners dedicated to supporting our pastor and parish community in fostering pastoral activity. With the direction of the pastor, the council investigates those aspects of the parish that pertain to pastoral works, and in turn, the council makes recommendations to the pastor.

“We prefer that council members serve for a minimum of at least one year, but we continue to welcome new members, and some of the original members have moved on for various reasons,” Ryan says. “You might say our principal role is

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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.*

Star of the Sea Parish Council

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pastoral planning, which involves evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and services, improving our pastoral services, and developing new pastoral programs.”

In the past year, the Parish Council has discussed and addressed a number of topics, including the creation of an adoration chapel, the current Mass schedule and times, opportunities for prayer, capital improvements, lighting, the development of stewardship as a way of life, our music programs, education programs, missions, evangelization, service groups, and more.

“Our meetings are lively and full of energy,” Ryan says. “Being directly involved with matters of the Church and my parish, particularly in unison with Fr. Illo, has expanded my faith through the contemplation of issues much larger than myself and even the others on the council. The collective contributions of our Parish Council members represent a desire and a willingness to be the instruments of God’s holy and most perfect will.”

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Parish Council, or if you would like more information, please contact Ryan Sebers at 650-748-9686 or Fr. Joseph Illo at 415-751-0450.

