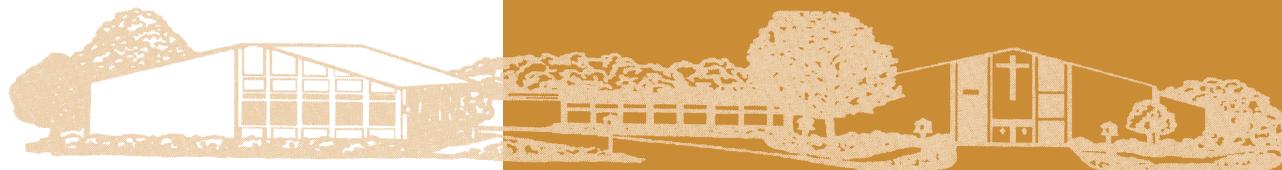




Volume 2 Issue 2 • October 2006

st. mary's *Blessings*

Church of St. Mary Parish Newsletter



Stewardship Highlights:

Bye-Bye Debt! Bye-Bye Bingo!

By Andrea Murray

B-I-N-GONE!!! The school debt, that is! St. Mary's held its last Bingo night on October 15, 2006 because the \$300,000 school debt has been paid in full. When the St. Mary's school closed two years ago, the Diocese agreed to match the funds raised by St. Mary's to pay off the debt. In only two years, St. Mary's raised their share of the outstanding balance. We could not have accomplished such a feat without the incredible organization, commitment and sacrifice of many St. Mary's parishioners.

Every Sunday evening, teams consisting of a leader and about eight others, have worked together as a well-oiled machine to greet patrons, sell admission cards, sell pull-tabs, verify Bingos, call numbers, count money, and pay out winnings, to name only a few of their *many* responsibilities! Eileen Buell, who took over the organization of the Bingo teams two years ago from Linda Knerr, shared that it was a great sacrifice for some families, who often saved Sunday evenings to break bread together. However, the reward was "Reaching our goal and paying off the debt." Despite the challenges, she went on to say, "Would I do it again? For our Church? Yes."

According to Father Jerry, Marlene Rasmussen and her sister Toni Consulo, "Have worked Bingo *every week* since the days of playing Bingo in the school." Marlene and Toni are sad to see Bingo end because of the "wonderful, wonderful people" they met and the friends they made. When asked how volunteering at Bingo fostered her faith, Marlene emphasized the importance of understanding different types of people,

respecting others, and treating others the way you would want to be treated, even when it may be difficult. Although not a parishioner of St. Mary's, Toni wanted to help a Church that was important to her; a place where she was married and where her son was married.

Whatever their reasons for volunteering, we are very grateful to the people who sacrificed their time and talent for the Bingo ministry. Our Church community is indebted to you all! Although the following list of past and present volunteers is hopefully exhaustive, there may be names which are accidentally, and regretfully, left out. To those, I am sorry! Thank you to the *many* people who made this ministry successful:

Doris Atanasio, Victor Barresi, Eileen Bestercey, Eileen Buell, Midge Boniface,

Linda Knerr, Paul Castle, Jim Chicoine, Rich and Joanne Cimma, Elizabeth Paul, Ray Fabian, Mary Frechette, Sharon Winchester, Augie and Marie Gosh, Eileen Grant, Rich Dacey, Brian and Sonia Haney, Shelby Harrison, George Hepinstall, Jay Ingoldsby and Joanne Brannock, Jim and Terry Kois, Teresa Blohm, Rosemary and Christina Lennon, Barbara Liccardi, Frank and Terry Lochner, Mary Martinez, Rosemary Miller, Marcy Mullen, Matt and Marianne Mullin, Marlene Rasmussen, Dante Lepore, Judy Reid, Bernie and Rebecca McConaghy, Lee Roohan, Tony and Kathy Rossello, Tony Rossello, Theresa Schillinger, Carol Smith, Kevin Snider, Jack and Carol Spath, Laura Spencer, Ed and Angie Stenard, George Stone, Jim and Debbie Tagliento, Julia Teal, Anthony Patricelli, Ray and Mary Tesiero, Burt and Sue Van Wie, Pauline Wishart, Donna Zadlo, Coleen Carey, Toni Consulo, Joan DeFruscio, Vicky DeJulio, Ludwig and Sherrie Haber, Maureen Vigliante, Margaret M. Kelley, Sean Shea, Paul, Deanna, and Paula Reckner, Dennis and Sherry Ryan, Tim and Genina Sheehan, Liz Champito, Joanne Kozel, John and Mary Pat Lashoff, Cathy Prendergast, Dolores Sasiadek, Barbara Molineaux, Bob Sweitzer, Jean Gamache, Ann Roe, Karen Rogers, Ashley Jackson, Dave D'Allesandro, and Barbara Murphy.



Jim and Terry Kois

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Published three times a year and mailed free of charge to the entire parish community.

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Pastor's Corner

Father Jerome R. Gingras

When autumn rolls around and apples, pumpkins and cornstalks show off their color and funny shapes, it triggers a memory I hold dear in my heart. I was in Kindergarten and Sister Yvonne Marie was my teacher. One October morning someone knocked on our classroom door, and we all fell silent, as Sister went to see

who was interrupting our, without a doubt, important lesson. When she opened the door, I could see that she was talking to a priest – not just any priest, but my Uncle Gerry, my namesake.

After a short conversation, Sister Yvonne turned and gestured for me to get my coat. Something was up. I was beaming because my uncle, the priest, was getting me out of class. Sure enough, I was whisked off to Uncle Gerry's car. As I got into the back seat of his black Chevy, I saw my mother and grandmother. I was told we were going for a ride, and ride we did!

Somewhere on the journey we stopped at a roadside vegetable stand and I remember eyeing pumpkins – hundreds of pumpkins – big ones, small ones, some tall and skinny, some short and fat, and some weighed even more than I did. Then Uncle Gerry said the magic words . . . "Go, pick one out." I claimed the biggest pumpkin I'd ever seen! My uncle's gesture of kindness and generosity was truly a **blessing** I'll never forget.

So here we are in this colorful season of autumn and my mind happily drifts off to my Kindergarten days. I cannot help but smile as I revisit that special memory logged into my heart forever. Hopefully, this season of abundance and fruitfulness makes us all recall those times of **blessing** and grace that we have experienced. Perhaps we could pause a moment and recall those abundant **blessings** God bestows upon us every day. I think we would find that it would take hours, not moments, to list all of God's **blessings**. So, during this season, and soon the holy days of Advent and Christmas, may we be open to God's **blessing** of himself and respond with gratitude and joy!

Peace,

Fr. Jerry

Do You Know? By Jackie Stack

Do You Know About the Season of Advent?

Advent is celebrated during the four weeks immediately preceding Christmas in a spirit of anticipation and waiting for the Messiah. The Church invites us to be aware that just as Christ grew and matured in Mary's womb, Christ is growing and maturing in our hearts.

Advent looks back to the first coming of Christ - his birth at Bethlehem, but it also looks forward to his second coming - sometime in the unknown future when Christ will come again. (*Journey of Faith*)

Our liturgies during Advent reflect

these themes in the prayers we pray and the songs we sing. We light the Advent wreath and use the colors of purple, royal blue or rose as symbols of anticipation, purification and penance.

Cardinal John Henry Newman wrote this reflection on the season:

"This then is to watch: to be detached from what is present, and to live in what is unseen; to live in the thought of Christ as he came once, and as he will come again; to desire his second coming, from our affectionate and grateful remembrance of his first."

Do you have any questions about being a Catholic? If so, drop me a note in the collection basket or email me at jajadave@nycap.rr.com and I'll try to find the answer for you!

MISSION STATEMENT

The Church of St. Mary is a Catholic Community, united in faith and Eucharist with the Diocese of Albany, New York, and the Church throughout the world.

As a Catholic Community, we believe in and model our lives on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are committed to active worship and prayer, lifelong faith formation, and the physical and spiritual support of those in need. All are welcome into our community.

Because of our belief in God's abiding presence, and with the support of the Holy Spirit, we share a common commitment to Stewardship which invites disciples of Jesus Christ to acknowledge their gifts from God and to share those gifts of time, talent and treasure justly and charitably in the service of the parish community and the local and global community.

Behind the Scenes

By Stephanie Scheibly

We are fortunate as parishioners to be surrounded by people who do things without being asked, who work to make events run smoother, and get the job done. They work humbly behind the scenes and expect no acknowledgement for their service. We want to recognize these people and thank them for all they do for our parish.

Thank you **Augie Gosh** and **George Stone** for your years of service preparing the church, and now the chapel, for liturgy each weekday morning. It is either Augie or George who opens the church, lights the candles, prepares the altar cloth, gets the lectionary ready for the day's readings, puts Father Jerry's

Sacramentary book on his chair, and ensures the host and wine are prepared for Father to consecrate. They also check the Memorial Book for the names of our deceased members so they can be mentioned by name. After mass, Augie or George wash the vessels and put the items back in preparation for the next day.

Thank you **Marianne Mullin** for your faithful years of service processing mailings that go to the whole parish, including our newsletter *Blessings* and the Christmas and Easter mailings. Marianne coordinates a work group that folds materials, stuffs envelopes, adheres addresses, and delivers mailings to the post office. Another task, which she undertakes on a weekly basis, is to add

any inserts to the 500 weekly bulletins, like special letters from Father Jerry and forms for upcoming events.

Thank you **Donna Fitzgerald** for heading our latest ministry at St. Mary's, the Child Care Program during 11:00 a.m. mass. This service enables parishioners to drop off their children ages one and up, so they can concentrate on the spirituality of mass, knowing their children are well cared for. Donna, a professional teacher, not only cares for the children personally, but also coordinates a volunteer list of young adults and parents to help out each week. The children have a fun and safe time in the nicely decorated classroom at the end of the school hallway.



Augie Gosh and George Stone



Marianne Mullin



Donna Fitzgerald

Welcome to St. Mary's



John Martyn and fiancé
Nicole McCabe



Nancy Schultz and son
Nicholas



Robert Bednarczyk
(fiancé Erin Francis
wasn't available)



Dawn and Joseph Herzberg
with son Andres

Getting to Know Each Other Better

By Shannon Hutton

Terry Petroccione

Terry Petroccione believes that when you volunteer your time and talents, “you always get more than you give.” Although Terry began her career as a chemist, it wasn’t until she volunteered to teach religion 22 years ago that she found her calling. “I’ve loved teaching religion so much that I’ve kept doing it all these years.” Once Terry started teaching religion on Sundays, she realized during the week that she missed teaching. “The children are just so wonderful.” So, Terry started teaching science to middle school students in 1979 and has continued ever since. Terry has been a Faith Formation teacher at St. Mary’s since 1986, the year she joined our parish. “Religion class has become a family commitment. All my children have helped.” Terry and Emilio have three children, Reece, Rosaleen, and Danny. She also became a Eucharistic Minister in 1992 and would “recommend it to anyone who enjoys people.”

Where is your hometown?

I grew up in Centereach, Long Island.

How do you enjoy spending your free time?

What free time would that be? I’m looking forward to having more free time. Now that I have two children away at college, I’m like a deer in headlights. I’ll have to learn how to relax.

Where is your favorite place on earth? Why?

A place I haven’t even been to yet. I want to go to a Polynesian island with my husband so we can relax with peace and quiet.

What books have influenced you? Why?

How to Organize Just About Everything by Peter Walsh. I haven’t read it yet, but it may influence me if I ever get around to reading it.

What accomplishment in your life are you most proud of?

That’s easy! I’m most proud of my children and the way they’ve grown up and the people they’ve become.

What is something people would be surprised to learn about you?

If I had my druthers, I’d like to write humor, such as newspaper articles or a book.



Who in your life has had the greatest impact on you? Why?

My husband, Emilio, because he is everything I’m not. He has taught me so many things, to enjoy so many things I wouldn’t have experienced. He brings laughter into the room and keeps it there. He’s taught me to put myself out there a little more. All the things I’ve been able to achieve personally and professionally have been because I know he’s there. I always want him to think highly of me. He’s the one I never want to disappoint.

What keeps you coming to St. Mary’s?

It’s the people. There’s a wonderful spirit of belonging and warmth, you feel like you belong. The community spirit fills in the missing piece in life when relatives are so far away.

What do you see in St. Mary’s future?

I’m hoping we see more of the influx of young families, and those people get involved in the ministries so they can share their creativity and special talents. That will help solidify our community.

What do you hope to hear God say when you enter heaven?

Your family is waiting.

Our Parish Family Photos



(left to right) Kaycee Fields, Jackie Danner and friends



Rachel and Laura Haney



Jim Tagliento and Jack Spath



50th Anniversary for Pat and Don DeWeerd



Alex and Le Pelli with Father Jerry



St. Mary's Kids

Many Hands Make Light Work

By Stephanie Scheibly

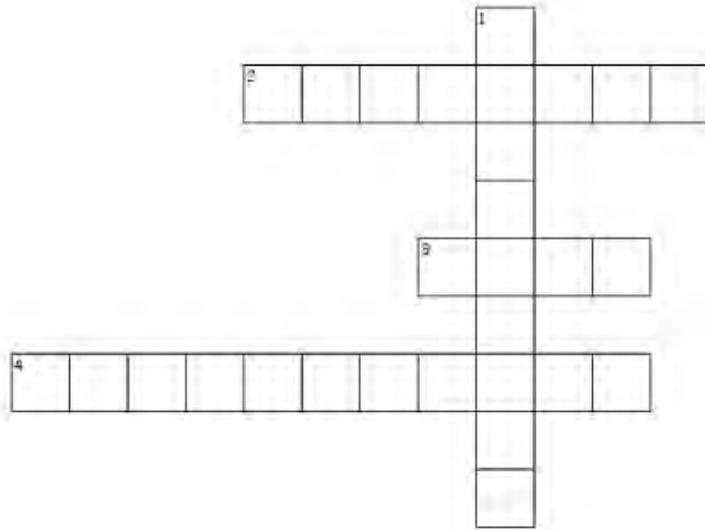
Father Jerry encourages us to “give of our time and talent” and a great way to do so is by helping out a parish ministry. Getting involved helps us feel more connected with our parish family members!

Volunteerism is something we learn to do during our lifetime. We learn the importance of lending a hand, of giving of ourselves, and we reap the benefits of doing so in the form of satisfaction for having helped others.

Although there are no specific calls from ministry heads for this edition of **Blessings**, please be aware that you are always welcome to join any of the numerous ministries here at St. Mary’s.

Please take some time to become familiar with those ministries by looking through the Church of St. Mary Family Album or by picking up the pamphlet in the church entrance entitled “Ministry Catalog.” Other specific needs may be noted in the weekly church bulletin.

The Greatest Commandments



Across

2. You shall love your _____ as yourself.
3. Jesus said you should love the Lord, your God with all your heart, soul and _____.
4. They asked Him, "Teacher, which _____ in the law is the greatest?"

Down

1. The _____ gathered together and tested Jesus.

(The answers can be found in your bible: Matthew 22:34-40)

Kids' Spot

By Sonia Haney

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