

MEET PARISHIONERS **ROSS AND PATTY BUTCHER** *SHARING THEIR TIME, TALENTS, AND TREASURE WITH GOD AND OUR PARISH COMMUNITY*

We all have skills that we can contribute to our parish. Some people have beautiful singing voices, and others are great with the business aspect of running a parish. Not everyone's skills are so obvious. For example, take Sacred Heart parishioner Ross Butcher, who has a talent and love for photography. He uses this talent wherever he can at parish events and Masses. His wife, Patty, uses her music and guitar skills to sing and play at Mass with Kelli Wood. She also acts as treasurer for the Altar Society and is a past member of the Parish Council.

"We have always wanted to raise our kids to appreciate what they have," Ross says.

"Being part of a small parish community, we need all the help we can get to keep the parish vibrant," Patty says. "Getting involved is one way of showing people this is a great church to be part of."

It's "all hands on deck" to keep our parishes and ministries vibrant. Ross and Patty are willing to step in where they are needed. Ross believes excellent photos help the church better represent itself, and he has taken photos for the Greeley Irish Festival. It all started when he decided to take pictures on his own at



Ross and Patty Butcher with their daughters, Keely, Bailey, Cayton and Mia

the Irish Festival.

"I wanted to use the festival as a chance to work on my film skills," he says. "Then, parish staff started asking me to take photos. You can only shoot so many windmills. It's nice to have people in the photos. I was happy to help."

Ross and Patty own a ranch. Patty also



LIVING ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL

FORMING A CONSCIENCE AND MORAL CODE

As Christians, it is important that we recognize the difference between right and wrong — both morally and ethically. Sometimes, though, this line can become blurred.

Many situations we encounter in our lives include variables that can leave us internally conflicted and unsure of how to move forward in accordance with God's will.

So, how do we work through these moral conundrums? One way is to develop a solid Christian conscience.

A moral conscience exists in the heart of every individual. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking. Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed" (1777, 1778).

Think of your conscience as the "angelic" version of yourself sitting on your shoulder, giving you sound advice.

While everyone is blessed with a conscience, each individual has a responsibility to develop this conscience from the time they are young. Parents obviously play an important role in developing their children's consciences. As the primary educators of their children on ethical issues and the Catholic faith, parents have a responsibility to teach virtue to their children and help them to avoid

fear, selfishness and pride. As we grow older, we take on the lifelong challenge of continually forming our own consciences, and establishing a moral code that enables us to make the proper judgments.

One valuable tool in forming a conscience is the practice of introspection. "It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience" (CCC 1779). In contemporary society, where there are so many distractions and routines, it is extremely important that we take the time to look inward and truly listen to what our inner voice is telling us.

Another way to ensure we are developing a good moral code is by conforming to the mind of Christ. God the Father gave us Christ, physically present on this earth and recorded in Sacred Scripture, as the ultimate example of what to do and how to behave according to God's will. In turn, when we act in loving imitation of Christ, we are certain to make practical judgments of conscience.

The next time you are faced with a moral dilemma, take some quiet time to look inward, weigh the positive and negative outcomes, and listen to the voice of your conscience. Read the Gospels for examples of Christ's teachings. By making this a regular practice, you will find that the voice of your conscience will come in louder and more clearly than you may have initially expected.

A Letter From Our Pastor

WE PROVIDE THE GIFTS, GOD PERFORMS THE MIRACLES

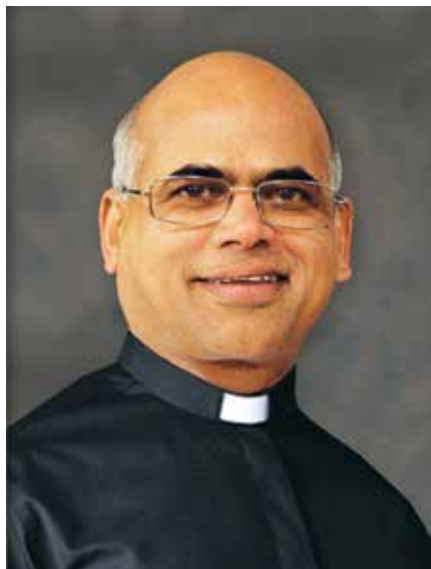
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is human nature to try to neatly place things into categories. If we categorize the miracles performed by Christ, the two largest groupings might fall under the headings “Healing” and “Feeding.”

This is exactly what we are about here in our Families in Faith community. At the base of all our liturgies is the Eucharist, when we come together in communion with the Lord and with one another to be both fed and healed. Even one of Christ’s most famous miracles — the Feeding of the Multitude — involved both healing and feeding from a spiritual and a literal perspective.

The reason the large crowd gathered was because Jesus’ reputation as a healer had spread and grown. He felt compassion for that crowd, which is another way of saying He loved them and felt sorry that they were hungry due to their willingness to sit and be with Him for so long. Recognizing it was late in the day and that many of them had not eaten, Jesus literally fed them — but that day, He didn’t stop with physical nourishment. He also fed them spiritually with His words, and simultaneously, healed their wounded hearts by preaching a message of hope and forgiveness in the midst of a dark and hardened world.

The narrative of Christ taking a small amount of food and using it to feed thousands is familiar to all of us. It is reported in all four Gospels. However, I would like to highlight one aspect of that miracle. It all started with one boy who was willing to share what little he had. Because the boy made the gift of his fishes and



loaves, the Lord took it and multiplied it many times over, nourishing so many more people than what that little bit initially could.

Isn’t that what we are called to do? We make gifts of our time, our talent, and our treasure as good stewards — but nevertheless, it is God who takes those gifts and performs miracles with them. Our goal is to give what we have so that Christ might use it, multiplying it to feed, to heal and draw a multitude of people closer to Him.

The reality is that without the gifts, there can be no miracles, and without miracles, we are a hungry and broken people. Christ has come to renew, nourish, fulfill, and restore — and that, brothers and sisters, is what Christianity is all about.

Sincerely yours in Christ and His Mother,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Antony Ushakov". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Fr. Antony
Pastor



“KEEPING THE FAITH

AN INSIDE LOOK AT HOW PARISHIONERS REMAIN COMMITTED TO SUNDAY MASS

In their years of travel, St. Michael parishioners Bill and Denise Spelic have learned that the Catholic Church truly is universal. Bill travels all over the country for his work, attending RV shows and conventions, and Denise often accompanies him. They've made it a priority to find a church to attend Mass wherever they are, and that journey has given them new, yet familiar experiences.

“No matter where you go, it's the same,” Bill says. “You aren't going into a place that's unknown or makes you nervous. Greeters welcome you and invite you in and it's just a good feeling to be surrounded by other Catholics. I think that in your life, you have to surround yourself with the Catholic faith and just try to get your family to heaven.”

Along with the familiar Mass, there are always new and unique things to see.

“We like to visit other churches and look at the architecture and statues, how they run their ministries or their music,” Denise says.

Recently, Bill and Denise found themselves in Toledo, Ohio, and decided to attend a Latin Mass downtown. While the experience was somewhat new for both of them, they were struck by the beauty of the elaborate liturgy.

“Everybody was very friendly and very devout,” Denise says. “It was a good experience.”

One of the conventions that Bill goes to twice a year has a group called the Roamin' Catholics. They contact a local priest wherever the convention is held and arrange to have Mass celebrated at the site of the convention. Other times when they travel, Denise looks up local churches on Google or



In their years of travel, St. Michael parishioners Bill and Denise Spelic have learned that the Catholic Church truly is universal.

Masstimes.org and finds a Mass that fits their schedule.

“We've always known that it's our Sunday obligation, and it's the right thing to do,” Bill says. “We try to implement that into our schedule. We do the best we can and it works out.”

Before their kids were grown, Bill and Denise made sure that as a family, they always made time for Mass.

“It even continued on vacation, which is family time,” Denise says. “Going to Mass is



"I" AWAY FROM HOME

PHILIPPIANS BILL AND DENISE SPELIC

SS WHEREVER THE ROAD TAKES THEM

one of the most important things, especially receiving the Eucharist. If you get in the habit, it becomes second nature."

Denise has always reminded herself of this priority in the words of a poster she has — it reads, "Church should be your excuse for missing everything else."

Being the visitors so often has made Bill and Denise more aware of visitors in their own parish. They want visitors to feel welcomed in

our beautiful church. Denise works part-time in the parish office and she remembers receiving a note and a donation from a woman who stopped to visit.

In fulfilling their Sunday obligation, Bill and Denise have found a new richness in the faith that they were raised in.

"I think our Catholic faith should be number one," Denise says. "It's always been part of our lives and always will be."

"No matter where you go, it's the same. You aren't going into a place that's unknown or makes you nervous. Greeters welcome you and invite you in and it's just a good feeling to be surrounded by other Catholics." — BILL SPELIC

ROSS AND PATTY BUTCHER *continued from front cover*

works as an instructional coach at Central Valley Public Schools. They have four girls ages 16 to 24 — Keely, Bailey, Cayton, and Mia. Patty was raised Catholic, while Ross entered the church when their youngest, Mia, was baptized. All four girls have served in various ministries through the years.

In their free time, Ross and Patty like to watch their daughters' activities. They also enjoy kayaking, water activities, and going for a drive.

Both Ross and Patty feel blessed to be members at Sacred Heart. They are so thankful for the community and their fellow parishioners.

"I stay involved because I believe it's so important to build that community," Patty says.

"Being part of a small parish community, we need all the help we can get to keep the parish vibrant. Getting involved is one way of showing people this is a great church to be part of."

— PATTY BUTCHER

GETTING TO KNOW THE “SUMMERTIME” SAINTS



St. Christopher

School is out, and summer is now in full swing. The days are longer, warmer and filled with plenty of fun summertime activities.

This summer, as we take family vacations, gather with friends and loved ones for barbecues, spend time by the pool, and enjoy all of the usual summertime activities, we can also take the time to reflect on some of the saints who are associated with the summer.

Family vacations are perhaps the most iconic of all summertime activities. Although there is no patron saint of vacations, there are a number of saints associated with traveling. One of the most popular is St. Christopher. According to his story, St. Christopher was an extremely tall and strong man who served Christ by helping people cross an especially dangerous river. That is why many people wear St. Christopher medals while traveling — to ask for his blessing and protection.

For those of us who are taking road trips this summer, there is St. Frances of Rome, the patron saint of cars and drivers. While St. Frances died well before cars were invented, her story says that her guardian angel went ahead of her when she traveled at night and lit the road with a lantern to keep St. Frances safe.

There are also saints we can look to when traveling by plane. St. Joseph of Cupertino was a Franciscan friar who is said to have frequently and miraculously levitated off the ground during intense prayer sessions. Because of this levitation, he is recognized as the patron saint of air travelers. St. Therese of Lisieux is also associated with aviators and flying.

If you are going on a cruise this summer, you can ask for the intercession of St. Brendan the Navigator, an Irish monk who founded the Clonfert monastery and monastic school, and is the patron saint of mariners and sailors. He and his brothers sailed the Atlantic Ocean and evangelized on a number of islands, and may have even reached the Americas.

Another favorite summer activity is swimming. Whether you choose a pool, a lake or the ocean, seek the intercession of St. Adjutor of Vernon, a knight who was captured in the First Crusade. His captors tried to force him to give up his faith, but St. Adjutor escaped by swimming to his freedom. For this reason, he is the patron saint against drowning, and for drowning victims, sailors and swimmers.

The summer is also a time of amusement and enjoyment. One of the biggest national celebrations of the summer is the Fourth of July. For this type of summertime activity, we look to St. Barbara, the patron saint of fireworks.

There are also a number of saints with feast days during the summer. The feast day of St. Anne, the mother of Mary and grandmother of Jesus, is celebrated on July 26. July 31 is the feast day of St. Ignatius of Loyola, who is also associated with stewardship. These are just two of the many saints whose feasts we celebrate this summer.

No matter what kinds of activities we choose to enjoy during the summertime, let us remember to honor the saints who have gone before us, and give their intercession for us as we walk through our own journeys of faith.



St. Joseph of Cupertino



St. Brendan the Navigator



St. Adjutor of Vernon

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

ANSWERING THE CALL TO EVANGELIZE AND SHARE CHRIST IN OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) are instrumental in the setting of the Mass and outside of it, as well. Made up of lay people in our parish community, our EMHCs assist our clergy members in distributing the Eucharist to our congregation. The EMHC gives Communion to those attending Mass, as well as the homebound, regularly.

Those who take part in this ministry are participating in the call to evangelization as they bring the Body of Jesus to our parish community members. We are blessed by these volunteers who serve our parish in this way. Being a part of this ministry, the ministers themselves hold great responsibility and a dedication to reverence for the Eucharist.

“If you are responsible and reverent, you are on the road,” says Ron Glaser. “I personally encourage people to be faithful and holy, and to have a desire to learn and grow in the faith. None of us are ‘there’ until we are there. Learning about your faith is a lifelong task that draws us into the love of God and our destination, which is eternal life in heaven.”

Ron is part of the EMHC ministry at St. Michael’s Church. He became involved in the Newman Center while studying at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

“In college at UNL, I got involved in the Newman Center, in the choir, and on the board,” he says. “Each new move brought opportunities to serve in one way or another. It usually started with the priest asking for help and saying ‘yes.’”



Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion carry the great responsibility of bringing Jesus to our parish community. Those who serve do so with reverence and respect for the Eucharist.

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EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION *continued from page 7*

The EMHCs are required to arrive for Mass early to ensure everything is set up for the liturgy — such as the credence table, gifts table, and wine, among other items. They must dress appropriately and treat the Eucharist with reverence. They assist with gathering the Communion vessels and purifying them as needed after Mass. Overall, there is a need for members to have a prayerful disposition. While it is the members themselves who distribute Communion, it's also important for them to first

seek their own strength in the reception of the Eucharist.

“It is important to understand that these ministries of the Church require prayerful and reverent attention,” Ron says. “Without regular time spent growing in our love of God, we will fall short and not serve to the best of our abilities. We may even quit from burnout or just lack of drive. The Eucharist and the sacraments are the sources of our service and the quality of our prayer.”

If anyone is interested in learning more about this ministry or getting involved, please contact the parish office at 308-497-2662.

MASS SCHEDULE:

7 p.m. Saturday - St. Michael in Spalding | **7 a.m. Sunday** - St. Michael in Spalding
9 a.m. Sunday - Sacred Heart in Greeley | **11 a.m. Sunday** - St. Theresa in Ericson