

Religious Education Child Advisory Board

Bet you never heard of this group.

Every Sunday, while children from K-4 to grade 6 attend religious education classes, many of their parents spend those precious 70 free minutes helping the program plan for the future.

Kim, Karen, Mary, Sue, Lisa, Stacie, Jenny, Ralph and Eileen drop their kids off, then proceed to the Religious Education Office where they gather around a table and discuss the religious formation of children. That includes planning Family Advent Days and Family Lenten Days, which occasionally means cutting and pasting for upcoming activities.

But more than planning takes place. As soon as a parent asks a question, religious instruction begins from director, Karen Bushman. The group has learned about saints, the Holy Family, the history and development of Christian thought, major Christian traditions, and lately a bit about the world's other great religions: Judaism, Islam and Buddhism.

Amid the instruction and discussion, there is time for hospitality as snacks and beverages are provided. After the kids finish their classes, they meet their parents in the office and share the morning's discoveries...and the left-over food.

The family days which the group plans are open to all families in the parish, not just those with children in the Sunday program. The Lenten Family Day is set for February 13th, from 9:00-10:15am in Johnson Hall. If you'd like to attend, please call the Religious Ed Office (481-0777).



from *The Joyful Noiseletter*
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Dates to Remember

January

Sat., Jan. 1 - Food Pantry, Thrift Shop (9-11am)

Sun., Jan. 9 - Parish Council/Committees
Enrichment (11:30-1pm)

Sat., Jan 15 - Food Pantry, Thrift Shop (9-11am)

Sun., Jan. 16 - Donut Sunday

There are many other events taking place in our parish every month. If you're interested in knowing more, or need assistance with spiritual, physical or other needs, please contact our parish office at 482-2920.

St. Veronica's Food Pantry

Open: 1st and 3rd Saturdays

9-11 am or, call-ins by appt. 482-2920

(also call to volunteer)

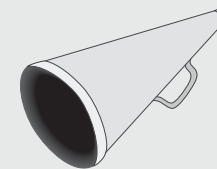
Financial Update

Great progress has been made by our new parish accountant, John Albinger, in converting our financial information into the new QuickBooks nonprofit software program. In addition, our audit of the last fiscal year is almost complete. Parishioners will receive detailed financial reports after the first quarter of 2005. People have asked about our parish assessment paid to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. There is an annual assessment based on the past financial year. For the 2002-03 fiscal year, St. Veronica was assessed \$41,000 (paid in 2004). For fiscal year 2003-04, we'll have to pay \$37,675 in 2005. These assessments (from all parishes) support the many programs the archdiocese carries out both in our community and around the world.

If you have ideas for upcoming newsletters or would like to join our group, contact:
Anna Golembiewski, Marge Pulkownik,
Fred Schmitz, Patrick Urban,
Eileen Wernsman.



St. Veronica's Voice January, 2005



St. Veronica Parish Community
"Imaging Christ to the World"

An Epiphany Story

1. Epiphany (n): any appearance of the divine in space and time.



It hadn't been a good Advent. The work never ended. Katie's boss made her stay late three or four nights each week because the recession had forced the company to downsize. Then, there

were the constant holiday pressures: cookie baking, shopping, cleaning, decorating the house, attending the elementary school holiday concert and all the rest. It was enough to make anyone say "Christmas. Bah, humbug!"

Finally, by 11:30pm Christmas Eve, everything was finished. The family made its way to the front pew for midnight Mass. It was a tradition both she and Jack had celebrated since they were married. Even though it was a struggle to get the kids ready and the toddler often fell asleep during the service, the celebration was special.

The music began and the opening procession made its way toward the altar. Slowly, a couple also began to walk up the aisle. The woman was small, yet obviously carrying the extra weight gained during pregnancy. Her face looked tired and drawn, as if she hadn't gotten much sleep. The man also looked tired. As the couple reached the altar steps, Katie realized the woman was carrying a small bundle. The couple bowed low and walked over to the manger on the left side of the sanctuary. The woman placed the blanket on the hay and began to loosen the ends. A loud wail filled the church - it was the unmistakable cry of a newborn. Fr. Jack ignored the sound and began the Mass. Katie couldn't keep her eyes off of the manger and the young parents hovering over the child.

After the readings, Fr. Jack encouraged his parishioners to remember that Jesus was not just truly divine but truly human. Jesus cried when he was hungry or tired or wet. The ordinary events in the life of any new mother and baby happened to Mary and Jesus. The birth altered the relationship between Mary and Joseph in the same way any newborn changes relationships within a family. Then Fr. Jack

invited everyone to imagine that they were one of the shepherds or a Magi coming to visit the Christ Child. What gift would they bring?

At first, Katie felt she would have nothing to offer. But suddenly, she realized that our faith is placed not in some abstract theology, but in the presence of God among us. All of our ordinary activities have become Spirit-blessed because God became Man. As Katie gazed on her own sleeping toddler, she felt a rush of maternal love that Mary must have known. In the silence of her heart, Katie had her own epiphany - God is truly with my family and me. What she could offer the Christ Child was another family, her own.

Karen Bushman

January is Pro-Life Month

"America needs no words from me to see how your decision in Roe v. Wade has deformed a great nation. The so-called right to abortion has pitted mothers against their children and women against men. It has portrayed the greatest of gifts--a child--as a competitor, an intrusion, and an inconvenience." (Mother Theresa)

On January 22, 1973 the United States Supreme Court announced a landmark decision. According to Justice Harry Blackmun, writing for the court majority, a woman has a constitutional right to an abortion during the first six months of pregnancy. Prior to this ruling, a majority of states prohibited abortion except when the pregnancy threatened the woman's life. The Roe decision held that states could place restrictions on abortion only during the final three months of pregnancy.

The Catholic Church has firmly held a pro-life stance arguing in favor of the sanctity of life from the moment of conception to natural death, a seamless garment. The United States Catholic Council of Bishops has linked efforts against abortion and euthanasia with efforts against poverty, racism and capital punishment. In a recent statement, Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics, the Bishops called upon Catholics to recognize that the human person is "the temple of the Holy Spirit - the living house of God. All direct attacks on innocent human life, such as abortion and euthanasia, strike at the house's foundation."(full text of the bishop's statement is at www.nccbuscc.org/prolife/gospel.htm).

The bishops are encouraging Catholics to recognize and remind society that denying the inalienable right to life to one segment of our population, whether it be the unborn, the physically or mentally challenged, or the terminally ill, imperils and diminishes that right for everyone. The legal protections for the most vulnerable among us need to be strengthened, not weakened. It is important that our elected officials promote policies that protect human life and dignity. Information about pro-life activities within the archdiocese (including Life Chain) and throughout the U. S. can be found on the Archdiocesan website, <http://www.archmil.org/>.

Getting to know...Jim Stanhope

A lot of us think of him as the Parish Chef! At many events at St. Veronica's where food is served, you'll find Jim Stanhope cooking. That includes roasting the chickens for the summer festival's annual dinner (a warm job indeed) and preparing omelets for the parish's winter fest. Jim says he acquired his cooking skills from his mother, and being the oldest of 7 children, that entailed using some of those talents at an early age. Perhaps that's why Jim appears to be a natural and unphased by having to cook for hundreds of people. In fact he enjoys it!

Not only will you taste Jim's cooking, you'll also hear him singing. He and his wife Valerie are in the parish choir. Occasionally, he's gone upfront to cantor (so has Valerie) and Jim also plays the guitar at some Masses.

When at home, Jim keeps himself busy by undertaking home improvements. He's in the process of re-siding his home. His day job is in the banking industry, where Jim works in support services and analysis.

One of our multi-talented, multi-committed parishioners!

Contribute!

If you have story ideas for our monthly newsletter, please call Fred Schmitz at 744-1070. Also, feel free to submit articles or join our group. We meet briefly once a month.