

The Spirit of Seton

Winter 2020



**Continuing our Mission
during this Crisis**



The Strehlow family watches Father Joe's homily online

From the Desk of Father Joe

Do you remember everything that happened since March 2020? I know it's difficult to remember everything; so much has changed.

On March 13, 2020, all public and private schools closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. On March 18, 2020 Archbishop ListECKI canceled all public celebrations of Mass, and the entire State of Wisconsin went into the "Safer at Home" quarantine. All businesses except those considered "essential" were closed. Many parishes did just that—CLOSED—obviously because they did not consider themselves "essential." Not St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish! I met with our staff and we all agreed that our parish was essential and important, so we remained open. We never closed! The staff had the option of working here in the office or at home—whatever each was comfortable with. But we kept the doors open and the lights never went off.

I truly wish that every one of you could see our exceptionally talented, gifted, and hard-working staff up close and personal. All of them not only kept working but actually increased their ingenuity and genius thinking. I would like to salute all of them and give you a very brief description of how they continue to minister to everyone. However, as you all know, their ministry is now quite different than before this virus hit.

Sue Switalski, our Pastoral Minister, continued all her responsibilities mostly by Zoom—Women's LIFE night, El Salvador, Rebuilding Disciples, Migrant Ministries, Social Justice, Women's Morning of Reflection, Adult Enrichment, Bereavement and Grief Support to name just a few.



Director of Music and Liturgy, **Linda Halverson**, immediately arranged music, cantors, and instrumentalists for our 8:30 Sunday Morning Live Streaming Mass. Linda also put together virtual choirs of our youth and adult choirs.



Mickey Holtz, Director of Youth Ministry, personally completed over 150 "Porch Package Drop Offs" to all the teens in youth formation. Mickey and her husband Alan also delivered spiritual gift packages of congratulation to all high school seniors. She arranged emails to all parents of our teens, and organized a work day to package over 120 pounds of rice and beans for Seton's Migrant Ministry. And this fall, Mickey is offering the Youth Formation and Confirmation Preparation programs in a blended or entirely home study format.



Director of Child Ministry, **Ann Ryan**, put together a brand-new series of Children's Liturgy of the Word videos for each week. These were made available on our parish website. She also developed, with Barb Lee, a virtual program to replace the Vacation Bible Camp, and has created a virtual program for the fall session of Family Formation Programs.



Tom Halverson, our Technology Coordinator, worked with Matt Schueller to immediately arrange live streaming of our Sunday 8:30 AM Mass—no small feat because everything was happening so quickly.



Barb Lee and **Johannah Lee**, Directors of Child Ministries, helped Ann Ryan with the Vacation Bible Camp and the virtual Family Faith Programs. They also began the fall programs to help our young children and their parents prepare for their First Reconciliation (confession) and their First Communion next spring.



Director of Administrative Services, **Dave Fennelly**, realized the canceled FunFest would result in a LOT of lost revenue. He immediately began working with the FunFest Committee, and utilizing the organizational skills of Richard Neureuther, kicked off the Virtual FunFest Financial Support drive. It was totally successful—also due to your generous contributions.



Mary Bostwick, our Financial Administrative Assistant, checked and re-checked all contributions, and organized the complete listing of all who donated to the FunFest Collection—which included over 450 individuals, families, and companies. That caused her some sleepless nights indeed.



Kathy Stawicki, our Direction of Communications, also stepped right up and inaugurated a weekly email blast of events here at Seton along with a more detailed description of everything that was continuing to happen here in our parish on our Seton website.



Our parish deacons, **Jeff Copson** and **Dick Winkowski**, began giving daily messages based on the scriptures of the day for people to reflect upon and help with any stress or worry.



Nick Sekula, our Maintenance Supervisor, organized all the help he needed to sanitize our building and all the spaces being used—over and over again. He also had to do some heavy research to be able to obtain all the supplies needed, sanitizers, masks, towels etc. You may remember that they were very difficult to buy for a long time.



Our Pastoral Council, under the leadership of David Knoll, organized the telephone chain in which they tried to call every parishioner to check on how you were doing and to ask if you needed anything or if there was any way we could help you and/or to be of service to you—because that is why we are here.



John Anderson, our Prayer and Liturgy decorator, put up the Stations of the Cross on the edge of our parking lot that so many of you walked and prayed. Remember, at that time, we were still in the middle of Lent and then the long Easter Season that followed.



Along with all of this, there was the Rosary recorded by Alex Strehlow and his family, the We Share collection each month with the drive through drop off under our front canopy, and the Pictorial Directory photo shoots. I am sure there is a lot more that I cannot think of right now. And if I missed one of your favorite discipleship activities, please forgive me.



Let me end by saying that little of this would be possible without all your support and assistance and donations. You are all so very generous with your time, talents, and treasure and everything you share is so deeply appreciated by our staff and all we serve together.

We will get through all of this together. Remember we are first and foremost disciples of Jesus as Lord and with His help, strength, and guidance we can do this. Pray more and worry less.

Many thanks again and again,

Deep Blessings and Shalom,

Father Joe Aufdermauer, Parish Priest, 262-782-6760

VISION

To be a growing community that inspires all to follow Jesus with a spirit of inclusion, compassion and service

MISSION

We encourage all to deepen their relationship with Jesus through scripture, prayer, stewardship and ministry to others

Greetings and “Notes”

from your Music and Liturgy Director!

Hoping that this reading brings you and your family health and many blessings. During this unprecedented time in our world’s history, we reflect on the events since March that our parish and staff did to strengthen our parish mission of “Following Jesus and Serving Others.”



Liturgy and Music Ministries were affected immediately by not being able to have choir rehearsal and of course singing/playing Mass in person. The date that I will never forget would be Saturday, March 14. On that day both our adult and children’s choirs and musicians traveled to St. Francis de Sales Seminary in Milwaukee to tape several upcoming Masses for Heart of the Nation television Mass. (Those productions are taped 6-8 weeks ahead of time to allow for editing, etc.) After we recorded those Masses, we all said our goodbyes but heard rumblings that parish Masses around our diocese might be shut down for some time. With that disbelief in people’s eyes, we left the seminary and then of course found out that was indeed true. That next week we live streamed our Mass at Seton, never knowing that we were going to be able to reach so many people to continue their spiritual prayer life in unique and innovative ways. I believe that was the Holy Spirit leading the way with an incredible team to put it all together, we are truly blessed!

The choirs/musicians stayed in touch through emails and phone calls. I provided a few Facebook chat videos and zoom calls to keep our spirits up and get some much-needed laughter and camaraderie. Paul Radke and Laurie Heer provided new recordings for music preludes for our online Mass. Around Easter time, both choirs were part of 2 virtual music/choir virtual productions that were produced by Tom Halverson and shown at our on-line Masses. Many hours were put in to accomplish that (and yes, I am his proud wife 😊) The videos were a hit on social media (YouTube etc.), and our website, and now we are preparing new video productions for Advent and the Christmas season!



Seton’s Adult and Children’s Choirs at the “Heart of the Nation” taping on March 14, 2020



Thursday night choir rehearsals were replaced by zoom calls to stay in touch.



The “Seton Virtual Kids Choir” sings “Good Morning Lord”



The “Seton Social Distancing Choir” sings “See, What a Morning”



I never thought we would experience live-streaming Easter Mass from an empty church.



The choir enjoys a masked and socially distanced bonfire with help from Cliff and his flame thrower.



Our wonderful team of cantors and musicians has been there for us since the very beginning of this crisis!

Another upcoming Advent liturgy project, is a new and expanding prayer form (similar to the wonderful outdoor stations of the cross that John Anderson who runs Art & Environment, provided this past spring) and would be called “Stations of the Nativity,” an interactive (with your phone) outdoor prayer path (walking or praying right from your car) symbolizing the Journey of the Holy Family to Bethlehem. We hope you try that out, as the previous outdoor stations reached many people, enhancing their prayer experience.

One more note for Liturgy, we continue to evaluate how we are doing to make your now “in-person” liturgical experience a prayerful and comfortable one. Know that we are very blessed to have Sippel Hall set up for overflow seating for all Masses during the weekend.

There are chairs spread apart, along with Mass streamed on a screen in Sippel Hall. This is definitely a fluid situation time that we are working with, and we are giving it our best to help make your prayer journey a deeper, and meaningful one, while keeping everyone safe. We are blessed to have Sippel Hall during Christmas Masses because we will be able to handle the greater volumes of people, but as Father Joe continues to say, whatever you feel comfortable with for you is best.

We look ahead to 2021 for new beginnings along with strength and hope in the resurrection, following the mission of Jesus to Follow Him and Serve Others!

Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ— Ephesians 5:18-19



Stations of the Nativity

We invite you to prepare for Christmas by praying the “Stations of the Nativity” in the Seton parking lot. You may walk or drive-through the stations throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Online Children's Liturgy of the Word

Ann Ryan, Director of Child Ministry



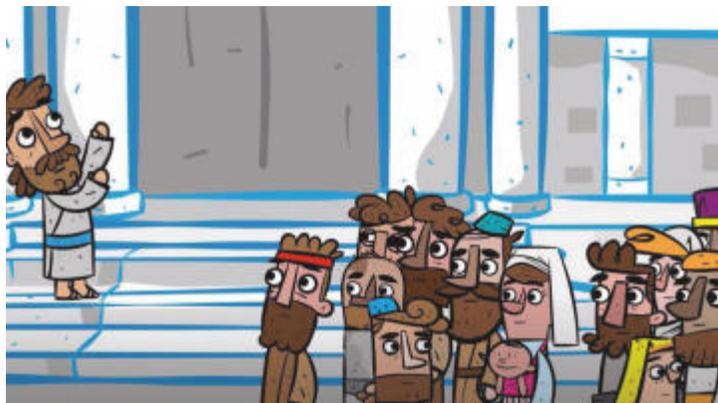
When COVID-19 struck back in March, the ministries at Seton were faced with two options: be paralyzed or get creative. Seton quickly began producing online Masses each weekend to reach parishioners and non-parishioners alike. But what about the other areas of ministry? What about the children and families—who were already facing difficult and overwhelming times? How would we continue to reach and support this important population?

With all in-person ministry programs canceled including Children's Liturgy of the Word, it became the highest priority of the Child Ministry team to find a way to continue to connect with families and children so they would feel supported on their faith journey. Online Children's Liturgy of the Word accomplished just that, and much more.



Beginning on Palm Sunday the Child Ministry team produced a series of 10-15-minute videos that not only highlighted the Gospel message for the weekend at an age-appropriate level for children but involved Seton kids in the process. Each Online Children's Liturgy episode is composed of: an engaging introductory activity (such as a game) to hook the audience and introduce the topic for the day, prayer, a visual representation of the Bible story, a short homily/ message for children, a challenge for the week ahead, and best of all, one or two videos of children from our own parish sharing their thoughts and ideas on a topic relating to the Gospel message.

It's this last component that really sets Online Children's Liturgy apart from other similar programs already available online. By involving children in the process, they became invested in the final product. Children were able to see their friends sharing their ideas about life and faith and were empowered to do the same. Online Children's Liturgy also gave Seton kids a sense of ownership and pride over the project. As a result, the videos spread beyond the boundaries of our small community, reaching and evangelizing greater numbers than we could have possibly imagined at the onset. The project even grabbed the attention of the Archdiocese in late spring because it was such a unique contribution to children's ministry during the pandemic.



This fall, production of Online Children's Liturgy of the Word took a pause in order to allow for the Child Ministry team to focus on other family programming opportunities. Tune into our YouTube channel for past episodes, and keep an eye out for a return this Advent!

God's Backyard BIBLE CAMP™

Where Kids have a blast serving Jesus!



God's Virtual Backyard Bible Camp

From August 3rd through the 7th, 60 children participated in Seton's first ever Virtual Vacation Bible Camp. Due to the virtual format, the high energy and enthusiasm of the kids was keenly missed throughout the Seton building and grounds this year. However, families sent in pictures of the amazing experiences they had learning about God's love for them and serving others from their own homes, during God's Backyard Bible Camp 2020.

Each child received his or her own At-Home VBC Kit containing all the supplies needed to complete the various activities. Each day began with a video that presented the theme for the day and included Bible story and reflection, craft instructions, service projects, flat Jesus activity, and songs (with dance moves!) All had been prerecorded by several of the amazing volunteers we have each year for Vacation Bible Camp. As you can see from the pictures, faith, fun, and learning to serve others were attained by all the at-home participants!

Thanks, to the incredible number of people who helped make this virtual VBC possible!

Barb Lee, Coordinator of Child Ministry

You HAVE KEPT

The Spirit

MAY



The We Share food collection for Hope Center went great despite the rainy weather!



MARCH

The Migrant Ministry has delivered groceries and masks to over 40 families in Milwaukee and Waukesha. Seton's Workcamp Teens to help us repackage 1,200 pounds of bulk beans and rice.

Despite the pandemic, you continued to generously support the monthly We Share food collection drives. The Drive-through donation in April was for the All Saints and the New Berlin food pantries.



Your generous donations in June helped stock the New Berlin Food Pantry.



APRIL

'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me!'

— Matthew 25:40

JULY



Our parish provides dinner for St. Vincent de Paul's Meal Program at their north site whenever there is a fifth Wednesday in a month.



Thank you for all the school supplies that were donated to Notre Dame School of Milwaukee!

AUGUST

OCTOBER



Despite the less than ideal weather, you generously donated a truck full of clothing and household items to the St. Vincent de Paul Fall Clothing Drive. Our We share collection for the month went to St. John Paul II Food Pantry.



SEPTEMBER



Every November we collect food donations to provide Thanksgiving meals for families in need through House of Peace.

This year you shattered our old record of 425, by packing **578** complete Thanksgiving meal boxes!



NOVEMBER

September was a busy month as we were back at the St. Vincent de Paul Meal Program, sold Fair Trade Coffee at Seton, and collected food for the House of Prayer.

Teen Outreach Day at Seton

Even though mission trips were canceled this past summer, a pandemic could not stop our teens and adults from serving others. We gathered on a beautiful June day and completed many projects together! We painted the children's games for the Seton FunFest and gave a face lift paint job to the enclosure for our church dumpster. We re-bagged 1,200 pounds of beans and rice for our parish Migrant Ministry for families on the south side of Milwaukee; we made 150 sandwiches for Hope Center in Waukesha; and we collected shoes for an outreach ministry in Guatemala! Our group shared devotion prayer time and a hearty lunch together! The day was filled with laughs, smiles, hard work, and all of us went home knowing we had made a difference!



Prayer Care Packages for Teens and High School Graduates

With restrictions strictly imposed on us from March thru May, we could not gather here at church with our parish teens, and we knew it was time to go to them. Over several weeks, we put together Prayer Care Packages and delivered each one to their homes. The packages included religious gifts, prayer cards, candy, notes and a variety of special items just for them to let them know we are praying for them and remembering them! As a name was placed on each bag, a prayer was said specifically for that teen. Plus, special Prayer Bags were assembled for our graduating seniors to wish them all the best as they pursue future endeavors!



What is Greater?

"Greater" is an online Confirmation retreat. We know how important a solid retreat experience is during the Confirmation preparation process. Though we love the idea of taking teens away for an in-person weekend retreat, we know that option is not currently available. This year, our Confirmation teens will participate in a virtual retreat, which calls them to grow in their relationship with Jesus through encounters with others who have fallen in love with Him, and to deepen their relationship with Him on a daily basis. The retreat encourages our teens to evaluate where they are currently in their lives and challenges them to strive for something "Greater"—living as a follower and disciple of the Lord.

Peace, Mickey Holtz, Director of Youth Ministry



Father Gene's Help Center

Since 1969, Father Gene's Help Center has provided dignity through free clothing to people in need in the Milwaukee area. Seton parishioners have continued to support the center with donations of clothing and volunteer hours. Previously, the center's clients would place orders by phone or fax, and the orders were filled by volunteers. This year, Father Gene's expanded to offer in-person "shopping" by appointment.



Seton parishioner John Anderson redesigned the storefront space to facilitate the in-person experience.

Outreach Grants

Our Outreach Grant Ministry met in May 2020 to distribute our spring grants. These grants are supported by the parish and distributed following a formal application and discernment process. Due to the COVID 19 crisis, focus was placed upon local area nonprofit organizations whose services were severely compromised by the pandemic. The recipients of our spring 2020 are:

- ◇ St. Catherine's Residence
- ◇ St. Hyacinth Food Pantry
- ◇ Hunger Task Force
- ◇ Silver Spring Neighborhood Center
- ◇ Freidens Community Ministry
- ◇ Cathedral Center (Open Door Cafe)
- ◇ Just One More Ministry
- ◇ Waukesha Free Clinic

To find out more about these ministries, please visit their websites and explore their volunteer opportunities.

Opportunity Corner

where you can help



The Story Behind Online Streaming

"We know that all things work for good for those who love God—who are called according to his purpose." – Romans 8:28

We didn't know it at the time, but over the course of several years it seems that God was leading us to be ready for a pandemic we didn't know was coming!

Ready to do something we never anticipated doing—which was to livestream our Sunday Mass every week.

Way back in 2011, Mike Russo began recording Father Joe's homilies and putting them on our website for those who missed Mass or wanted to re-listen to the message. These were audio only recordings. As these proved popular, Matt Schueller took the extra step of bringing in his home video camera, setting it up on a tripod in the front row, and recording video of a few special homilies every year—Easter, Mother's Day and Christmas.

In October of 2017, when we started a 6-week message series called "Keys to the Kingdom", Matt began recording the homily every week, but we realized that was not a very sustainable ministry. After all, what if Matt was sick, or out of town... or heaven forbid was hit by a bus out on one of his bike rides! (True story: it ended up being a car, not a bus.) We also knew that the quality of our recordings was not what we wanted it to be, particularly the audio which the camera had to pick up from the reverberations in the sanctuary.

In 2018 we decided to invest in a more permanent solution. At either end of the sanctuary we installed 2 remote controlled cameras with powerful 30x zoom capabilities. From our new video desk, generously built by Roger Schaus, we could control

the cameras and switch between them with a video mixer. The sound could be taken directly from all the microphones coming through our existing sound

board—Father Joe's wireless lapel mic, as well as the microphones for the lectors, musicians, and choir. Besides recording the homily each week, our new system allowed us to send a closed-circuit signal to Sippel Hall, where we had overflow seating on Christmas Eve in 2018 and 2019.

This is why we *thought* we needed this equipment. But then, COVID-19 happened.

In mid-March, when the entire state was shut down, we were hit with the sad realization that there would be no Mass for the 4th Sunday of Lent. We knew of course that we could record the service and post it on YouTube, but we quickly realized that we had all the equipment we needed to actually livestream our Mass! We felt that having the Seton community praying *together* would feel different than just watching a prerecorded video.

As a ten-day shutdown turned into weeks and then months, many churches effectively went dark or did their best to make do with laptops or iPhones. We feel so blessed that through no wisdom of our own, Seton has been able to continue its mission. We are so grateful that although we may not yet be together physically, we continue to celebrate together in Spirit.



Originally Matt used a video camera recorder on a tripod to record the homily



The sound for our livestream comes straight from our 24-channel digital mixer.



Thanks to a generous donation from Randy and Patrice Hudzinski we now have 4 remote controlled HD cameras.



More than 500 people every week watch our livestreamed Mass.

Tom Halverson, *Technology Coordinator*



Seton's First Virtual FunFest

2020 will be remembered for many things and Seton's annual FunFest will be no exception. Some are calling it a Virtual Festival; others, the Festival that never happened. The Oxford dictionary defines festival as a period of celebration, typically a religious commemoration, but for Seton it is also a major fund raiser that generates 10% of our annual income.

In a normal year, our festival generates about \$190,000 in income that is offset by about \$75,000 in expenses for an average of \$115,000 profit. Sponsorship generates about \$65,000 of the income. This year Festival Chair, Jim Schutte, and Seton parishioner Richard Neureuther asked Fr. Joe if they could appeal to previous sponsors for assistance in these difficult times. Never one to miss an opportunity, Fr. Joe suggested inviting all our parishioners to become sponsors.



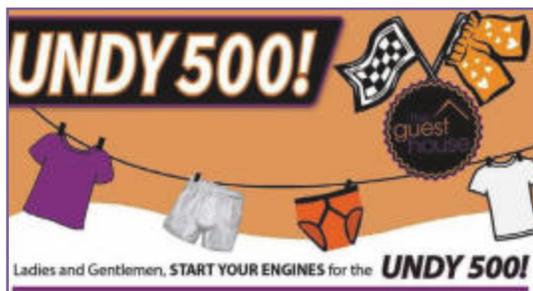
The response was remarkable. Over \$130,000 was donated and our 2020-2021 budget is back on solid ground. Banners recognizing our Platinum, Gold, Silver & Bronze sponsors are hanging in the church's gathering area. Once again the Spirit of Seton was in full gear. The only thing missing was the fellowship and camaraderie which we all look forward to. Let us pray that Fun Fest 2021 will be part of our return to normalcy. Be sure to introduce yourself to Jim Schutte to see if there is a place for your talents in next year's Seton FunFest.

Dave Fennelly, *Director of Administrative Services*



Undy 500

The Undy 500 for The Guest House was a huge success. They had a record number of contributions this year 3,888 total items of which St. Elizabeth Ann Seton contributed **1,136**, our highest total ever. This was enough to not only win First Place in the Faith-Based Division, as well as being the top contributor to win the **Overall Grand Championship**.



CRS Rice Bowl Collection

Now, more than ever, Catholic Relief Services needs our support and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton once again stepped up to serve others.

We raised \$3,742.00 to send to the CRS Rice Bowls collection.



Pastoral Council Discernment in the year of COVID-19



Like so many in our community, Seton's Pastoral Council faced many new challenges during Discernment this year. Calling out to members of our Seton family to step up and take a chance to join something new during this year of COVID-19 was overwhelming in the beginning. We had talked about skipping it altogether, but with determination, innovation and help from the Holy Spirit, everything came together beautifully. In the end, the Seton family delivered, as they always do, just like they did with Virtual FunFest and the We Share drive-thru collections.

The innovations tried for this year's Discernment included video messages at Mass, on the web site, and on Facebook. There were also frequent "bulletin blurbs," and numerous Zoom meetings. Perhaps the most uncomfortable innovation was the final Discernment meeting, which is always held in the sanctuary. Could a spiritual and prayerful meeting be held via Zoom?



Kris Graf



Phyllis Granowski



Elaine May



Brigid Riordan

Happily, even though we had to discern via Zoom, there were six wonderful candidates who felt the pull of the Holy Spirit and joined us. Five of those candidates are now your new members of Pastoral Council: Kris Graf, Phyllis Granowski, Charlie Kelly (*photo not available*), Elaine May and Brigid Riordan. Please help us in giving them a warm welcome when you see them at Mass. Also, please remember that the goal of the Pastoral Council is to be the voice of the parishioners, so all the members of this council welcome your thoughts and comments as they strive to Follow Jesus and Serve Others.

Mary Jo Gottschalk, *Outgoing Pastoral Council member, and part of the Pastoral Council Discernment Team*

The Spirit of Seton

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FEEDBACK/ IDEAS/SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback, ideas or submissions?
We are always happy to hear from you!
Email your thoughts, ideas, and photos to
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St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

FOLLOW JESUS | SERVE OTHERS

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Christmas Mass

DECEMBER 24 – 4 PM & 11 PM

DECEMBER 25 – 10 AM



We will livestream all three Christmas Masses and offer overflow seating in Sippel Hall and Seton Hall.