



SAINTS JAMES AND PATRICK PARISH

To remain in Christ and to reveal Christ to others

February 2019 Newsletter

And What is Stewardship?

Letter From Our Pastor

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

As a parish and diocese we hear a lot about being Disciples of Jesus and living a “Stewardship way of Life.”

In looking around for the best explanation, I found an article written by Msgr. Thomas McGread which was in his parish bulletin in December, 1978. May God help us to “catch up” in our understanding of how to live joyful lives.

“The words “steward”, “good steward” and “stewardship” enjoy a prominent place in Sacred Scripture, especially in the Parables of Our Lord. The meaning of these words has to do with the dimension of a person’s faith. A person’s faith requires that he recognize Jesus of Nazareth as the Good Steward by acknowledging Jesus’ supreme goodness for managing His Father’s business of redeeming mankind at the cost of His life. A person’s stewardship requires drawing closer to Christ in love and expressing gratitude for His Stewardship on our behalf. Christian Stewardship is identified by several meaningful characteristics:

“1. Christian Stewardship provides a spirituality that the layperson can take home from Church, exercise at work and express through his personal involvement in his community and church.

“2. Christian Stewardship successfully bridges the material

world around us and the supernatural world of grace within us.

“3. Stewardship enables the Christian to measure the extent of his faith in love of Christ by the kind and quality of stewardship acts he performs

“4. Stewardship gives joy. The Christian who voluntarily gives of his time and abilities for works of the parish or diocese will always experience joy if he does them for Christ. He is not however, guaranteed freedom from frustration at times.

“5. Stewardship is not job-oriented or project-minded. It is a way of life for a lifetime.

“6. Christian Stewardship takes a positive view on money. It looks upon money not only as a medium of exchange but a symbol of the person himself who has it. By the way he acquires it, uses it and shares it, the person himself is revealed.

“7. Christian Stewardship puts money into its proper perspective. It shows the person how to manage money in a way that will bring him closer to Christ. \

“8. Stewardship trains a Christian to become aware that God is the ultimate Giver of the gift of money. To give to God should be “from the top” -- not what may be left over.

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Appreciation Dinner

Thank you to the many volunteers who use their time, talent, and treasure to bring God’s love to others.

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Invest in Kids Act

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February Dedicated to the Holy Family

The Catholic Church encourages us to view the month of February as a special devotion to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph because it's a model of virtue for all Christian households.

Pope Leo XIII said, "Nothing truly can be more salutary for Christian families to meditate upon than the example of the Holy Family, which embraces the perfection and completeness of all domestic virtues."

The family structure is where we learn to freely love God and others without self-interest. Also, the family is where we learn to pray and to practice the gift of charity. Pope St. John Paul II said, "The family, more than any other human reality, is the place in which the person is loved for himself and in which he learns to live the sincere gift of self."

Let's use this month to reflect: Do our families model the Holy Family? Are our families open to God's grace? Do we love our parents and children



with pure intentions? Are we willing to forgive each other?

Although every family makes mistakes, trust that God's love and forgiveness are always present. In the words of Pope St. John Paul II, the best way to strengthen a family is to attend Mass together: "In the Eucharistic gift of charity the Christian family finds the foundation and soul of its communion and its mission."

This year, the entire month of February also falls within the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green - a color of hope. Our hope is in the glorious resurrection and in reaping the eternal harvest of Heaven.

In addition, Pope Francis's 'Apostleship of Prayer Intention' for February is for the generous welcome to victims of human trafficking, enforced prostitution, and violence. Let's use this month to pray for open hearts, loving families, and an abundance of hope.

Alive With Goodness

The Annual Volunteer Appreciation gathering on Saturday, January 26th was alive with Stewards of all ages celebrating God's gifts. We had a great crowd on a cold evening. A delicious spaghetti dinner was prepared by one of our great stewards, Pete Vercellino. Jr Hi students for our parish school served as the hosts and hostesses. As usual there is great amazement at the number of people who volunteer at our parish and beyond—to make God's love present in our midst.



The Joy of Music

Each year the final presentation of the January Tour of Millikin University Choir is St. Patrick Church. This year the choir was just in from Florida where they inspired many with the gift of music. On Sunday, January 27th these young people under the direction of Dr. Brad Holmes lifted up our hearts in praise of God. It fills one with hope that young people with the gift of music so joyfully share the gift with others.

Parishioners March for Life

A group of our parishioners attended the 2019 Diocesan March for Life in Washington, D.C. last month, and they joined hundreds of thousands of people to advocate for pro-life issues, especially for an end to *Roe v. Wade's* legality of abortion. It was the 46th annual March, and the theme was that everyone is "Unique From Day One".

"I think God put it into my mind to go to the March, and I've always been pro-life," said parishioner Desiree Renfro, who attended with her husband John and two children, Riley and Lane.

The group departed on a bus to Washington D.C. on Wednesday, January 16 and returned Sunday, January 20.

The trip included a youth rally, Mass, the March for Life demonstration parade, a visit to the U.S. Capitol, and much more. Each event was inspiring, but the youth rally was special.

"The youth rally was the combination of a concert, two motivational speakers, and Eucharistic Adoration," parishioner Frances Sperry said. "I didn't expect to see all that, and it was my favorite part of the trip because I realized that nearly half the people attending were about high school and college-aged kids."

"The high point was definitely the youth rally," Desiree said. "It was so enlightening to see so many youth in one place, and my husband enjoyed seeing a lot of the young priests."

One of the other highlights of the trip was the bond created among the group during the bus rides.

"When you're with a group of people you don't know at first, you create a little community of like-minded people who believe what you believe," Frances said. "It was a cool experience."

"The camaraderie was built with the bus trips, and our director got us acquainted from the beginning," Desiree said.

The March for Life featured many inspiring speakers, and the most notable in-person appearance was a surprise visit



from Vice President Mike Pence. President Donald Trump also sent a video message to the large crowd.

"The March for Life shows what we believe, and it doesn't change because of politics, social norms, or the secular beliefs of the day," Frances said. "We fundamentally believe what the Church has believed for 2,000 years."

"The March for Life was awesome because we were gathered in one place with so many thousands of people rooting for the same cause," Desiree said.

Although the March for Life was impactful and inspiring, there's much more work to be done for the pro-life movement, and everyone is encouraged to act.

"I think there's a big lack of knowledge about abortion in our society because people don't think of it as terminating a life," Desiree said. "It's important to make people aware of what abortion actually is, and we have to spread the word."

Each person can help by sharing the message with their loved ones and children, which Francis believes is the most important step.

"In our parish we need to focus more on our youth because the youth is our future, and they'll carry our voices further," she said.

Thank you to everyone for your prayers and participation in the pro-life movement, and you can learn more about the March for Life by visiting www.marchforlife.org.

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Consider Donating to School Scholarships

The Invest in Kids Act – also known as Empower Illinois - is a unique tax scholarship program because it creates scholarships for low-income families who attend non-public schools while also providing donors with a 75-percent state income tax credit. The 2018-19 school year was the program's first year, and it had a positive impact on Catholic students in our diocese.

"During year one, 260 scholarships were granted to students in 27 Catholic schools in our diocese," said Brandi Borries, the Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools. "And generous donors designated over \$730,000 to our schools."

Despite the success on the diocesan level, St. Patrick School only had six contributors in 2018. Five students received full or partial scholarships but more than 50 students applied and qualified for scholarships. Donors can designate their donations specifically to St. Patrick School, so please considering donating!



Invest In Kids Scholarship Tax Credit
Program Important Information

The application process for the 2019-20 school year opened on January 15, and the diocese is taking the necessary steps to grow the number of donations.

"We hosted reps from Empower Illinois for an informational presentation and invited all principals, finance persons, and development directors to attend as we prepare for year two of the program," Brandi said.

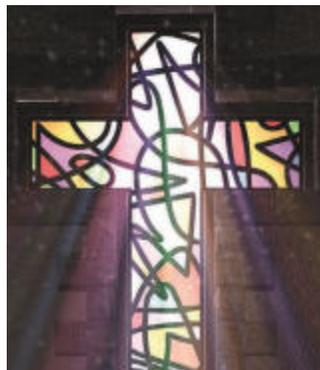
For more information, visit the Empower Illinois website at empowerillinois.org or call Carla Hahn – our Parish Financial Secretary/Tuition Administrator - at 429-5363.

Bishop Launches 'A Solemn Promise' Webpage

Bishop Paprocki and the Diocese of Springfield has recently created a webpage titled 'A Solemn Promise' to provide dialogue and transparency regarding the sexual abuse troubles besetting our Church.

"It has become clear to me that, as regrettable as the circumstances are, this dialog must be part of our collective journey to a life of intentional discipleship ... I invite and encourage each of you to join this dialog, as members of the body of Christ, and I welcome your insights, concerns, and suggestions," Bishop Paprocki said.

Since 2002, our diocese has promoted an environment of awareness and safety that is on par with leading organizations throughout the country, and in some ways more advanced than many, at least in its maturity. Our Review Board and Special Panel have been in place and effective for more than 15 years, and our safe environment awareness and prevention efforts have been widely implemented and successful:



Individuals Trained Since 2002: 57,000

Children Trained Annually: 16,000

Individuals Trained Annually: 3,300

Trainings Conducted Since 2002: 2,600

Safe Environment Facilitators: 250

Safe Environment Coordinators: 130

This proactive training has resulted in very low levels of abuse cases in our diocese for the past two decades, and there is a similar trend nationally. Nonetheless, the diocese remains committed to an environment of

vigilance and proactive defense against any recurrence of abuse.

"While I anxiously await clear and definitive reform measures from Rome, I will continue to advance work within my authority, and with all my ability, to prevent abuse and misconduct in our diocese and to continue to advocate for reform nationally," Bishop Paprocki said. "This is my solemn promise to you."

You can learn more statistics and information on the 'A Solemn Promise' webpage: <https://promise.dio.org>.

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Photo Collage

Catholic Schools Week Lunch



Stewardship continued:

“9. Genuine Stewardship teaches Christians to be concerned where and how to share their parish’s financial overflow.

Stewardship is not just to meet budget needs. True Stewardship provided the surprise that surplus funds are always around.

“10. Jesus Christ is God’s greatest gift to mankind. Stewardship tells the person to share a portion of his money to make

possible that the “Gift” be given to those who do not have it. These ten characteristics are not meant to be exhaustive of the fundamentals of Stewardship but to be helpful of a better understanding of its true meaning.”

Visit:
www.ssjpparish.com

Like our Facebook page: Saints James and Patrick Parish (the one with the parish logo)

Upcoming Events

Catholic Charities Fundraiser

Saturday, March 2 @ 6:30pm — Knights of Columbus Hall

This Mardi Gras Fundraiser will feature music by 90’s Daughter and food by Mac’s Pigskin Diner. Tickets are \$65 each or a table of 10 for \$600.

Ash Wednesday – March 6

It’s not too early to be thinking about Lent. Ash Wednesday is March 6.

High School Scholarships

The Springfield Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is offering four \$500 scholarships to outstanding Catholic high school girls. The deadline to enter is March 30. Call the parish office at (217) 429-5363 for an application.

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Msgr. Duetsch to Lead Parish Mission

Save the Date for our Parish Mission from March 23-26 as we welcome our visitor Monsignor Daniel Duetsch, Pastor of St. Bridget Church in Loves Park, IL. He's also the Vicar for Clergy for the Diocese of Rockford and formerly spent 12 years as Pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church in Batavia, IL.

You can learn more about him by reading his social media posts on Facebook and Twitter or by listening to his recorded talks titled "The History of Salvation" and "Salvation Nation: From Eden to Calvary" available via Lighthouse Catholic Media.



Msgr. Dan Duetsch (center)

The Parish Mission will take place at all Masses on the weekend of March 23-24 and also in the evenings of March 24-26.

Mass Times

Saturday
 4:00pm: St. James
 5:30pm: St. Patrick

Sunday
 8:30am: St. James
 10:00am: St. Patrick

Contact Us

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