



FIRST EXPRESSIONS PHOTOGRAPHY

Fall Issue 2020

515 N. Main St.
Holmen, WI 54636

MOTHER SETON

Messenger

Four People Complete the RCIA Process

Even though the Easter Vigil was not celebrated in the usual manner due to the Covid-19 restrictions, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish welcomed Brianna Thatcher, Travis Elam, and Kevin Hornberg to the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation and Mitch Oslund to the sacrament of Confirmation.

When asked what brought them to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process, Brianna Thatcher, Travis Elam, and Mitch Oslund cited their families or soon to be in-laws. Brianna also noted her husband's participation in Focus college ministry and the lifelong friends made there. She said: "Their fellowship and personal relationships with Jesus was what really drew me in." Travis reported coming to Mass with his fiancée and her family for years and wanting to partake fully in the Mass as well as be married in the Catholic Church. Reflecting on the journey to full communion during the pandemic, Brianna reported that the RCIA facilitators were "devoted to making sure that we continued classes by any means necessary." She was disappointed at "not getting to join the church during Easter Vigil ... but when it was finally safe enough for us to be together to join the church, our church family did everything they could to make this special for us." Travis looked forward to the RCIA sessions and is "very thankful for all the help I've had coming into the church."

As for how this has affected their life, Brianna said that she "can now fully participate in Mass with my husband and children. My husband works at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and it has been so nice to be able to attend Mass as a family there. I plan to continue my journey and strive to better know Jesus and all that the Catholic Church has to teach. With the help of my wonderful husband, loving in-laws, and new friends, I look forward to the rest of my life deepening my relationship with Christ." Travis noted that "becoming Catholic has been a pleasant gift in my life. ... I have also found myself happier and more calm since I started putting my faith in God and the Church." Mitch said It made him aware of "the importance of the church being part of my family."

Now, it is the parish's responsibility to continue to be welcoming and make "the parish feel like a good family" as Travis said.

The purpose of the Mother Seton Messenger is to assist a congregation of worshipers in becoming a communion of believers who act for the betterment of all.



Parr for the Course...

Many years ago I picked up a book by William Least Heat Moon entitled "Blue Highways." Road maps used to show the local and lesser traveled roads in blue. Thus the book's title. Passengers on the Greyhound bus became familiar with the blue highways. I regret the loss of Greyhound because upon retirement, my "bucket list" included taking the bus cross country without any particular itinerary in mind. Except to travel the blue highways.

These days of pandemic have introduced me to new travels. At Monsignor Malin's recommendation, I walked the trails at the Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge. For a short distance I hiked in Perrot State Park. My brother and I reminisced as we explored the Kickapoo Reserve near our hometown of La Farge. Truth is that I probably would not have made the visits without the pandemic closing doors and opening others.

I pray that soon the pandemic will end, but I hope to remember that these days have brought me and many of us new opportunities to observe, ponder, pray, and rest with loved ones and with God. The trials of these days have opened our eyes so that we do not pass others along the way without looking at them and recognizing a sister or brother. These days that have been so very difficult have also helped us recognize that each day offers the opportunity to learn, to deepen a relationship, or to mend one in need of repair. In the midst of fear, frustration, loneliness, we thank God for those who bear joy and find that they inspire us to want to do so for others.

I want these days of Covid-19 to end, and never to return. But still I find that our God can use even such a terrible thing to invite us not to rush through life but to hope through life. Walk slowly and bow often, the poet says. Especially these days, the Lord asks us to see that each day is a gift from God, and one which we can return to him with thanks.

The Lord be with you.

Father John Parr

The identity of the spring issue's parishioner is Len Beranek, retired home builder, electrician, and farmer; former member of the Pastoral Council as well as the builder/restorer of wooden church furnishings.



Do You Know This Parishioner?

This parishioner was born in Black River Falls and was raised in several Wisconsin towns, graduating from Westby High School. She earned a master's degree in Nursing and worked for 39 years (34 years as a Clinical Nurse Specialist in the High-Risk Pregnancy Clinic) at Gundersen Health System. She retired as the Lead Educator for the Resolve through Sharing bereavement program.

Her greatest joy is her children: an adult daughter who lives in Minnesota and an adult son who lives near her. She enjoys baking, scrap booking, quilting, knitting, and family gatherings. In the parish, she is currently a minister of hospitality, part of the Elizabeth Ministry, and serves on the Stewardship committee. She has made presentations at Young at Heart on a variety of topics.

For those who are stumped, the identity of this issue's parishioner will be revealed in the next issue.

Simple Living Group Celebrates Five Years of *Laudato Si*

By Marilyn Pedretti and Lisa Reid

In addition to delving into *Laudato Si* at our monthly meetings over the last five years, the Simple Living group has worked on several projects. In *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis talks about a “spirituality [that] can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world” (paragraph 216). Our Common Home Prairie is in its third year of preparation with help from a number of parishioners and community members. This season and last required a number of mowings (thanks Len Beranek and Tom Hundt!) so the site does not look much like a prairie yet. There is still much to do to remove a number of invasive plants (the destructive weeds of a prairie). We will be calling on our “passionate concern” to get a handle on that in the coming seasons.

We also started a square foot garden three seasons ago hoping to show what is possible even in a small garden space. We have grown various vegetables and encourage anyone who would like to harvest them to do so. We also give some to the food pantry. If you have not seen the veggie garden yet, stop by and check it out by the northwest doors of the church (just past the kitchen).



Planting the square foot garden: parishioners help plant last year's garden in between Sunday Masses (photo by Lisa Reid).

Still Reaching Out during Our Time Apart

By Shari Ireland

During normal times, our Homebound committee met regularly a few weeks before a holiday to stamp cards. We typically assembled 75+ cards for each holiday. These cards were then addressed and mailed to those parishioners and loved ones unable to attend church or even leave their home for various reasons. Our committee members also delivered special treat bags for Valentine's Day and organized a Spring Pie Social at Prairie Homes. For the past couple of years, these activities and card making were funded by the sales of candy and nuts in the fall.

Since March, we have had to halt our card making. However, seven committee members agreed to continue sending cards and reaching out to those parishioners who are homebound. We are anxiously looking forward to the time when we can safely gather to stamp cards and visit in person. All are welcome to join us when we resume. Check the weekly bulletin for updated information and dates.

We thank the parish staff and parishioners for your continued support of this outreach ministry. Thank you to all those who have joined us to stamp and assemble cards in the past and to those who have made and donated cards to help keep our ministry active during our time apart!

Milestone Wedding Anniversaries in the Parish

To quote Audrey Hepburn, “The best thing to hold onto in life is each other.” Marriage can be difficult, but those who have been in one for decades know the truth of this observation. Pope Francis writes in *Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)* “It is not helpful to dream of an idyllic and perfect love needing no stimulus to grow. A celestial notion of earthly love forgets that the best is yet to come, that fine wine matures with age. ... It is much healthier to be realistic about our limits, defects and imperfections, and to respond to the call to grow together, to bring love to maturity and to strengthen the union, come what may.”

These parishioners are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversaries this year; they are listed with their wedding date.

Dennis and Rose Mihalovic	March 19
William and Peggy Zink	May 2
Rodger and Nancy Kuczynski	May 16
Richard and Judith Jakes	June 6
Russell and Margaret Skifton	June 27
Patrick and Joanne Stephens	August 8
James and Susan Peterson	August 29
Dennis and Sharon Krumenauer	September 5
Harry and Ellen Caulum	October 24
Robert and Donna King	October 24

Celebrating their 60th wedding anniversaries are:

Charles and Diane Bertram	May 7
Joseph and Arlone McCabe	May 14

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).



At the Heart of Racism: White Privilege

What is racism? Two years ago, in a pastoral letter on racism - *Open Wide Our Hearts* - the bishops of our country offered this definition: “Racism arises when—either consciously or unconsciously—a person holds that his or her own race or ethnicity is superior, and therefore judges persons of other races or ethnicities as inferior and unworthy of equal regard.” The set of unearned assets that a white person can exercise, but of which they are not necessarily consciously aware, can be termed white privilege.

In an article in the *National Catholic Reporter*, Father Bryan N. Massingale writes about an incident in Central Park, where a black bird watcher asked a white woman to obey the park’s rules and leash her dog. Her response was to call the police and make up a lie to put him in danger. Father Massingale lists the assumptions that were probably the basis for her behavior. Among these assumptions were that “her race would be an advantage, that she would be believed because she is white” while his race would be a “burden.” Father Massingale’s article provides much to think about; it can be found at www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/assumptions-white-privilege-and-what-we-can-do-about-it or by searching on NCR white privilege.

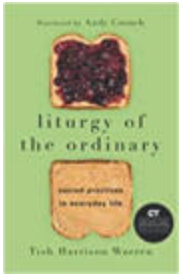
Your initial response may be that it is not your fault that you are white or that this is reverse racism. In any case, you do benefit from white privilege, and it is your fault if you do not maintain awareness of this. It is a fact that some people have to work much harder to experience things that you may take for granted. Striving to develop empathy for those less privileged will enable us to see them as the neighbors Christ calls us to love as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:39).

Book Reviews

By Kathy Smalley

Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life

Tish Harrison Warren, 184 pages, hardcover, 2019



I don't know about you, but this Covid-19 pandemic has me rethinking the way I live my life – the day-to-day activities that I mindlessly attend to; the hows and whys of the way I react in certain situations; and the relationship between me and my family, friends, the earth, and God. Unplanned, forced self-isolation has a way of making us all contemplatives.

Tish Warren's *Liturgy of the Ordinary* is a perfect book for reflection during these chaotic times. Warren is an Anglican priest, wife, and mother from Texas who shows us the sacred in the mundane moments of a day. From waking to checking her emails, to losing her keys, to relaxing with a cup of tea, she shows us a path to follow, a means to see our God at work in us everywhere and always.

Written in a style like Anne Lamott's *Traveling Mercies*, you will find yourself nodding in agreement, or shaking your head in recognition of a similar situation, or laughing out loud at a scenario so vividly familiar. It is an easy read that will have you reflecting upon her words for days after you finish the last sentence. Her down to earth writing is comforting and familiar; a treat to savor and much needed in our lives that have been turned upside down.

She says, "God is forming us into a new people. And the place of that formation is in the small moments of today. The crucible of our formation is in the anonymous monotony of our daily routines." Warren takes the reader on a walk through a typical day doing ordinary activities and shows us how to find God's presence and grace along the way. She says, "This kingdom vision – our identity as those blessed and sent – must work itself out in the small routines of our daily work and vocation, as we go to meetings, check our email, make our children dinner or mow the lawn."

Her chapter entitled "Losing Keys: Confession and the Truth About Ourselves" is both hysterical and mystical. The "Stages of Searching for Lost Objects" will make you giggle in recognition. Warren says, "Here is where I find myself on an ordinary day, and here, in my petty anger and irritation, is where the Savior deigns to meet me. Repentance is not usually a moment wrought in high drama. It is the steady drumbeat of a life in Christ and, therefore, a day in Christ."

As we are all trying to figure out the new normal in a pandemic world, we are grieving what we have lost: the ability to go wherever whenever, the comfort of touch and hugs, the certainty of work and school. Our hearts ache as we forgo dinners out with friends, sporting events, and communal worship with our St. Elizabeth Ann Seton family. Warren's book is a good antidote for what ails us. She shows us that God is with us as we shelter in place and that the Lord does not abide by social distancing. She says, "God is at work in us and through us as we wait. Our waiting is active and purposeful."

I found the discussion questions and suggested practices at the end of the book helpful and believe you will too. Questions like, "The author says, 'We tend to want a Christian life with the dull bits cut out.' Do you struggle with this? If so, how?" or "How do you see your small sphere and ordinary days as part of the broader mission and work of God's redemption?" require contemplation and reflection. Soul searching is where we meet our God and where we are reminded of God's never-ending love for us.

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish

515 North Main St. • Holmen, WI 54636-9387



Non Profit Org.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

Holmen, WI 54636

Permit #15

Mission Statement



The parish of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is established to bring us together as a Catholic Faith Community. Our parish life centers on the Eucharist, during which we celebrate the presence of the Risen Lord among us. As a baptized faith community, we the people of

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish are open to the Spirit of Jesus who brings to us new life.

We provide support for all our members through liturgy, worship, the sacraments, religious education, service and social events. We reflect a familial love in our ministry to one another. We are witnesses to the Christ who has touched our lives. We are His Church and proclaim His Gospel. We pursue justice and peace. We are responsible to the community at large of Holmen, the Diocese and the World.

Here to Serve You

Staff

<i>Pastor</i>	
Father John Parr	526-4424
<i>Pastor Emeritus</i>	
Monsignor Delbert J. Malin	526-4908
<i>Pastoral Associate</i>	
Sister Bridget Donaldson, O.S.B.....	526-4849
<i>Pastoral Minister</i>	
Carol Reider	526-4424
<i>Coordinator Religious Education, 3 year old –5th Grade</i>	
Mary Luebke	526-4424
<i>Director Religious Education, 6 –12th Grade/Youth Minister</i>	
Patrick Brueggen	526-4424
<i>Director of Music</i>	
Beth Lakmann	526-4424
<i>Secretary</i>	
Sandy Jerue	526-4424

Editorial Staff

<i>Publisher</i>	Father John Parr
<i>Editor</i>	Katherine Warzynski
<i>Book Review Editor</i>	Kathy Smalley

Publication Schedule

Vol 8 No 1	March 2020	Vol 8 No 3	September 2020
Vol 8 No 2	no issue	Vol 8 No 4	December 2020

Deadline for articles is the 1st of the preceding month. Send all inquiries to:

Father John Parr
Church of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
515 N. Main St., Holmen, WI 54636-9387