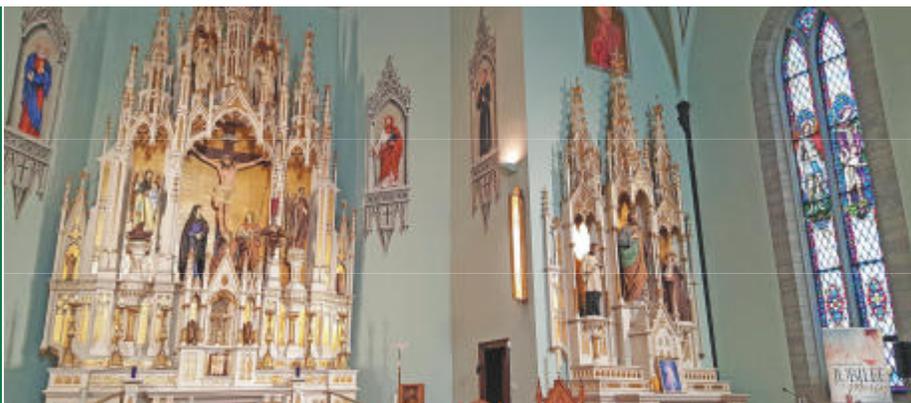


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JANUARY 31, 2021 • FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

On February 2nd, the 40th day after Christmas, we celebrate 'the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.' According to the Mosaic Law, a woman was ritually "unclean" for 40 days after childbirth. And so, she had to present herself to the priests at the temple and offer sacrifice in purification of her uncleanness and redeem her firstborn son. Furthermore, contact with anyone who had brushed against mystery – birth or death, automatically excluded a person from Jewish worship. Obviously, Jesus being the Son of God Almighty, this law was not binding on Mary. Yet, it was in obedient conformity with the law that Mary humbly submitted to the ritual, offering, in keeping with the economic status, two turtledoves, two young pigeons, the sacrifice of the poor.

After the completion of the purification ceremonies, there occurred a prophetic scene - two holy people encountering Jesus, Simeon and Anna. They had the grace of encountering Jesus in the moment of his offering. They had long awaited this moment, and now have lived to see the joyful moment in which their hope was fulfilled.

The feast of the presentation of the Lord is very old. It goes back to the first half of the 4th century. It was introduced into the whole of the Eastern Empire, by Justinian I in the year 526 A.D., in gratitude for the cessation of the great plague at Constantinople, which was celebrated 40 days after Christmas. This feast is also called "Candlemas" because in the 8th century, Pope Sergius introduced the solemn procession of clergy and laity carrying blessed lighted candles into the church as a tacit reminder of the "Light to the Gentile" and "the entry of the Son of God into the Temple," a title the Feast bears in the Armenian Church.

Commemorating the tradition and celebrating the Feast, next weekend, after all the Masses we will bless new candles, which will be used in our homes. Kindly bring your candles to be blessed.

St. Blaise (Bishop & Martyr)

The story of St. Blaise's life is based on old legend and seems to have been introduced into the West at the

time of the Crusades. St. Blaise, by profession a physician, and a man of outstanding virtue, was appointed Bishop of his native city of Sebaste in Armenia, the present Turkey. During the persecution of the Christians, St Blaise was arrested, tortured with a wool-comber's brush, and finally beheaded when he refused to deny Christ.

He is invoked particularly against disease of the throat on account of his having saved the life of a boy who was choking to death on a fish bone. St. Blaise was so popular during the Middle Ages that in Rome alone there were 30 churches dedicated to him. He is one of the 14 Holy Helpers and the Patron of Wool-combers, wax-chandlers, builders and physicians. 'The blessings of throats,' will take place this weekend after all the Masses. We will have common blessings due to COVID-19.

National Catholic Schools Week (Jan 31 - Feb 6)

This year, National Catholic Schools Week will be held January 31 - February 6, 2021. One of the great traditions of the Roman Catholic Church is her dedication to learning. For the most of her history, the Church has been the custodian for scholarly endeavor. Our catholic schools provide various opportunities for students to grow in faith, love, and charity.

As we celebrate 'National Catholic Schools Week,' let us pray for our school, MCES, that we continue to educate our children in ways of God.

Have a blessed week!

Stay safe

Fr. Kishore Babu Battu SAC



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WHY DO WE DO THAT?

I get annoyed with myself when I am distracted while I pray.

Is it a sin?

How can I be more attentive?

The mind is a marvelous and complex thing, producing amazing thoughts, images, wisdom and inspiration. Yet at times it is like a two-year-old: it does not follow directions, does what it wants and loves to tell us “no!” This is probably the oldest and most common problem in the spiritual life—dealing with distraction. It comes in all forms: good intentions forgotten, wandering thoughts at Mass, daydreaming, etc. A little poem says it all: When the soul begins to pray, the brain always wants to play!

There are many ways to handle distractions. If we are distracted by thoughts about our families or friends, we should pray for them. If we lose our focus, we need just “re-collect” ourselves. If some worry or concern just won’t leave our mind, then we deal with it and come back to prayer or make it part of our prayer. And when words just won’t come, the only prayer we might offer is our presence, our suffering, and our desire to be close to the Lord. Most importantly, we need to be patient with ourselves. These things are not sinful, but reminders of our human frailty. Our weaknesses and good efforts are all acceptable to God, who reads the love in our hearts and the good intentions of our minds.

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Embracing Change in Christ

It’s officially one month since we popped the champagne, toasted 2021 and wrote down a list of resolutions. This is usually the time when we start to take a good, hard look in the mirror to assess what we have done — or have not done — with the first month of this brand-new year.

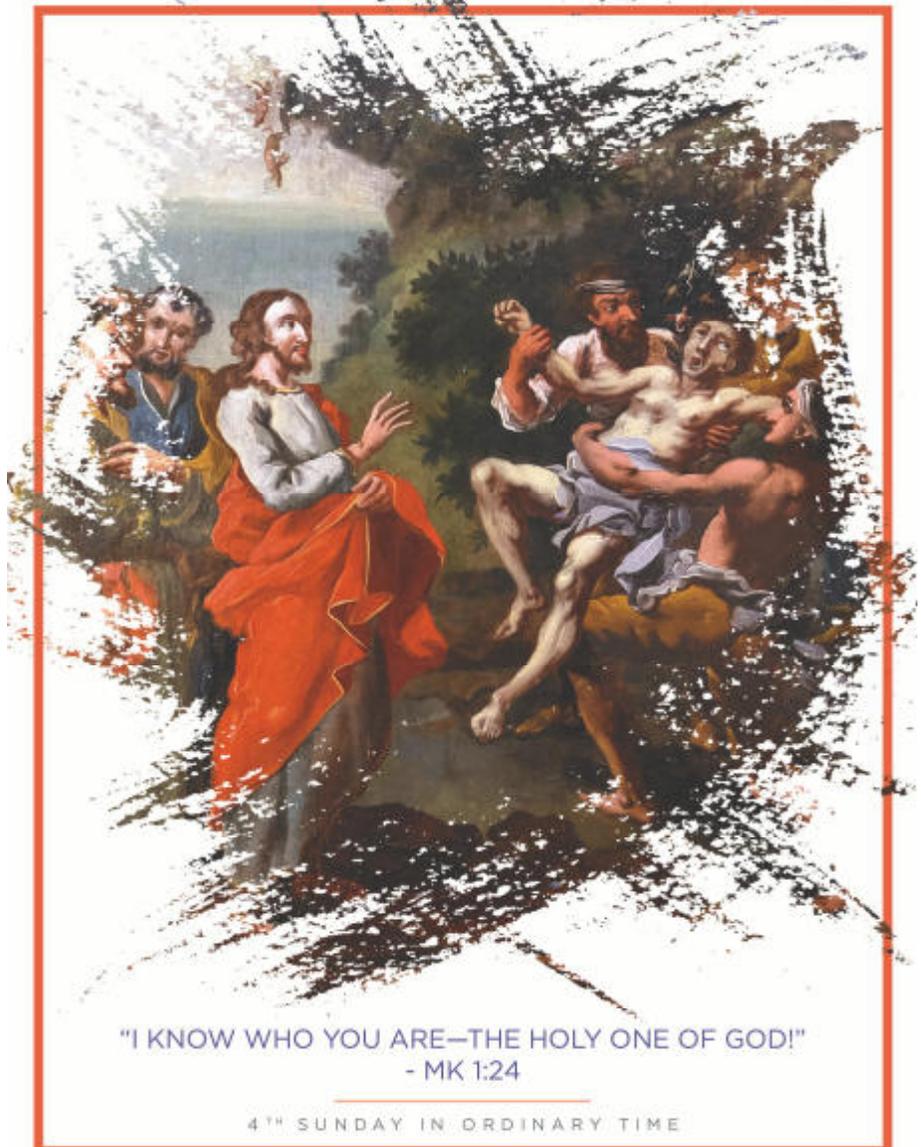
New years can be scary, can’t they? Full of promise, sure, but also full of room for failure. Full of space for our old baggage, old fears and the continuation of old mistakes.

The same can be said of Christ, and the new life he offers us, if we are brave enough to accept it. Opportunities like that can be intimidating. In that moment, we might find ourselves like the man with the unclean spirit crying out: “What have you to do with me, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?”

Jesus is a comforter of the afflicted; he is a consoling figure, but he is also a challenging one. Sometimes we have grown attached to our afflictions. The idea of correcting bad habits or forming new ones is frankly terrifying to us. We have a voice deep inside who sees Christ and his invitation to repentance, and it cries out in fear: “I know who you are!”

When we live in the present, disavowing the baggage of the past or fear of the future, we submit ourselves to the promise of redemption. Let us be brave everyday stewards and invite Christ’s healing power into our lives. We won’t regret it — I’m sure the demoniac never did.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS



REST IN PEACE



In your charity, please pray for the repose of the soul of **Sharon K. Robinson**, 79, survived by husband, Raymond, children, Sherry (Bill) Hawes, Raymond (Trudy) Robinson Jr., Shelly Robinson, Sheila (Brian) McLachlin, and Stacy (Paul) Toth; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; sister, Shirley Curley, and brothers Harley Aichler and Kenny (Joanne) Aichler.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.

EFFECTIVE NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2021, Sunday Masses will be at 8:30 am and 10:30 am.

This is a return to the 8:30 am Mass we have celebrated for years. Earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic, Masses were moved to 8 am and 11 am to allow enough time to clean and disinfect the church between Masses. The parish has purchased and begun using a sprayer in addition to the team of people cleaning and are now able to return to our previous schedule.

Thanks for your patience!

LIVE THE LITURGY

Most of us are not trail blazers. Throughout history though, there have been many folks who tirelessly and persistently pursued the promptings of their hearts without giving any care to what others thought or trends dictated. Jesus is one of them. St. Teresa of Calcutta and St. Francis of Assisi are examples of others. The rest of us are people who take a more measured look at things, want to test the waters, and take our time choosing what path or person to follow. We need credible witnesses of faith. We need the Moses people in our lives to show us by word and deed who God is and what integrity and a purpose-driven life looks like. They are the pointers to truth, who even though they struggle themselves, seem to embody an unspoken timeless wisdom that just sounds and feels right. Jesus taught with this same type of authority and caught the attention of the greatest of skeptics. They were astonished. Even though we need our human prophets we can also be somewhat prophetic ourselves by putting integrity and conviction behind our embrace of the Gospel. Perhaps much to our surprise, we all have the power to be a credible witness. Are you willing to give it a try?

GOSPEL MEDITATION

Most of us are quiet people who desire to live a good and holy life, promote the values and mission of the Gospel as best we can and desire to one day inherit the surprise of life eternal God promises to us. We are not trail blazers. We are simple people who want to do the simple things of life well. But there are others who left a more profound impact along the way of the paths they walked. Folks like Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Thomas Merton, Gandhi, St. Teresa of Calcutta, and many others left lasting impacts and legacies. Like Moses, they show us by word and deed who God is and what integrity and a purpose driven life look like. They show us how to be holy. We need Moses people like these to give us inspiration, hope and an example of holy living.

We do not need to do what they did or even mirror their relationship with God. Each one of us is God's special creation, with a purpose and soul known only to us. We need to learn how to open up and bring, without compromise, our soul-ness to life. We know when someone is authentic and centered because they always point to truth, even though they struggle and sin themselves, and they embody an unspoken timeless wisdom that just sounds and feels right. Jesus taught with this same type of authority and it astonished many who listened. We do not need to move mountains, advance a cause, write books or become notable. All we have to do is become credible witnesses of the faith we profess. Moses people can teach us how to do this.

St. Oscar Romero was an amazing man and a Moses figure for sure. He saw God in the burning bush and brought the flame of Gospel faith to the poorest of the poor, challenging the evils of the society in which he lived. He was tireless and persistent. He must have gotten very close to the problem because it cost him his life. He suspected it would. St. Romero said, "When we leave Mass, we ought to go out the way Moses descended Mt Sinai: with his face shining, with his heart brave and strong to face the world's difficulties." We can learn from this wisdom. If we allow the power of the Mass to truly transform us, we will leave that holy encounter changed. Our face will shine, and we will have courage. We can then bring what we have received to life's challenges. That sounds doable, doesn't it? Because of the example of our simple holiness, people will be amazed.

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St. Agatha

231 - 251

St. Agatha, also known as Agatha of Sicily, is one of the most highly venerated virgin martyrs of the Catholic Church. It is believed that she was born around 231 in either Catania or Palermo, Sicily to a rich and noble family.

From her very early years, the notably beautiful Agatha dedicated her life to God. She became a consecrated virgin, a state in life where young women choose to remain celibate and give themselves wholly to Jesus and the Church in a life of prayer and service. That did not stop men from desiring her and making unwanted advances toward her.

However, one of the men who desired Agatha, whose name was Quintianus, because he was of a high diplomatic ranking, thought he could force her to turn away from her vow and force her to marry. His persistent proposals were consistently spurned by Agatha, so Quintianus, knowing she was a Christian during the persecution of Decius, had her arrested and brought before the judge. He was the Judge.

He expected her to give in to his demands when she was faced with torture and possible death, but she simply reaffirmed her belief in God by praying: "Jesus Christ, Lord of all, you see my heart, you know my desires. Possess all that I am. I am your sheep: make me worthy to overcome the devil." With tears falling from her eyes, she prayed for courage.

To force her to change her mind, Quintianus had her imprisoned - in a brothel. Agatha never lost her confidence in God, even though she suffered a month of assaults and efforts to get her to abandon her vow to God and go against her virtue. Quintianus heard of her calm strength and ordered that she be brought before him once again. During her interrogation, she told him that to be a servant of Jesus Christ was her true freedom.

Enraged, Quintianus sent her off to prison instead of back to the brothel -- a move intended to make her even more afraid, but it was probably a great relief to her.

Agatha continued to proclaim Jesus as her Savior, Lord, Life and Hope. Quintianus ordered her to be tortured. He had her stretched on a rack to be torn with iron hooks, burned with torches, and whipped. Noticing Agatha was enduring all the torture with a sense of cheer, he commanded she be subjected to a worse form of torture. This evil man ordered that her breasts be cut off.

He then sent her back to prison with an order of no food or medical attention. But the Lord gave her all the care she needed. He was her Sacred Physician and protector. Agatha had a vision of the apostle, St. Peter, who comforted her and healed her wounds through his prayers.

After four days, Quintianus ignored the miraculous cure of her wounds. He had her stripped naked and rolled over naked over hot coals which were mixed with sharp shards. When she was returned to prison, Agatha prayed, "Lord, my Creator, you have ever protected me from the cradle; you have taken me from the love of the world, and given me patience to suffer: receive now my soul."

Agatha is believed to have passed into Heaven around the year 251.

She is commonly featured in religious art with shears, tongs, or breasts on a plate.

St. Agatha is the patron saint of Sicily, bellfounders, breast cancer patients, Palermo, rape victims, and wet nurses. She is also considered to be a powerful intercessor when people suffer from fires.

Her feast day is celebrated on February 5.

Prayer:

Saint Agatha, you suffered sexual assault and indignity because of your faith and purity. Help heal all those who are survivors of sexual assault and protect those women who are in danger. Amen

https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php? saint_id=14

St. Michael Campus Renovation Underway!

Long before the COVID-19 Pandemic, the St. Michael the Archangel Parish Leadership Team was working on the Missionary Strategic Plan for the parish and realized there were several great needs at St. Michael Parish and specifically in the school building: more preschool classroom space, a more appropriately located office for Mrs. Reynolds, our Director of Early Childhood Education who oversees our childcare center, more storage space, and an updated kitchen that would benefit both the school and parish.

St. Michael Parish is blessed to have the Luella Amolsch Trust, which has directly supported our school for many years. The trust serves our families by providing scholarships and funding. A portion of this trust can be utilized every few years to complete capital projects within the context of the school.

Though the COVID-19 Pandemic has created challenges, the project is in the best interest of MCES because it will allow us to grow and utilize the St. Michael Campus to its fullest potential.

The project consists of two main parts, and is well underway!

Part 1: The Stage, Gym Office and Early Childhood Education Office will be demolished and converted to one large, State of Michigan licensed preschool classroom. Windows will be added to the front of the building, a sink will be installed and all electrical will be updated. Several updates will be made in the gym to allow for better audio/visual presentations.

Part 2: The kitchen and adjacent, unused restrooms will be demolished and converted into a larger kitchen and storage room for tables, chairs, and PE equipment. The kitchen will have up-to-date appliances, equipment, plumbing and electrical. A portion of the current kitchen storage will be converted to office space for the Director of Early Childhood Education, relocating her office to a location adjacent to the Daycare Center Entrance.

The full cost of this project will be funded by the Amolsch Trust. We are grateful for Ms. Amolsch's support of Catholic education and our parish! My goal today is to just let you know about this exciting project and the great things we have on the horizon at St. Michael campus.

The project will be completed by Mid-American Group of Newport and their sub-contractors. There should be little disruption to the school and childcare operations and should be completed within 150 days. We will post updates as this exciting project progresses.

Here are some photo updates!





Pray for:

Rebecca Alexander	Craig Dominiak	Pat Orr
Theresa Balk	Jeffrey Eagle	Kenny Pardo
Javier Barrios	Veronica Greenawalt	Leigh Ann Parrack
James Barron	Marion Hass	Donna Perez
Monica Beeson	Kate Herr-Maletich	Zayden Perry
Carolyn Bellino	Tricia Hummel	Mary Ray
Florence Bialy	Rose Kavanagh	Parker Reau
Lynda Billock	Edna Kinsey	Mary Ann Soleau
Philip Bloom	Lois Knegendorf	Betty Steffes
Addie Bressler	Alice LaPrad	Wilbur Stotz
AJ Bressler	Donna Leask	Janelle Thursrud
Marlene Campbell	Madeline Lemerand	Donna Torres
Thomas Carpenter	Dorothy Louwsma	Bob Vajcner
Fr Daniel Complo	Stella Mannausa	Alex Vanisacker
Kathy DeFigueiredo	Diane Mennell	Alice Villarreal
Bill Dempsey	Albina Motyka	Linda Wallace
	June Neph	Arlene Walsh
		Cody Wood
		Mary Zubkoff

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY:

Major Matthew Aubry	Sgt. Michael Makela
Brett Bennett	Staff Sgt. Angelo Marino
Tracy (Scobel) Bennett	Staff Sgt. Emily Marino
Pvt. Adrien Boudreault	Airman 2 Drew McLaughlin
Major Zachery Briscoe	Sgt. William McGowan
CWO3 Ricky Brown	S. Sgt. Jill (Hoffman) Miles
Cpt. Kyle Burkardt, DDS	Major Tim Payment
Cpt. Patrick Burkardt, DDS	Alan Scobel
1st Sgt. Robert C. Cebina	Major Marcus Sitterly
LCPL Chase E. Collingsworth	Gregory Smith
Spc. Skylar Cooper	M/Sgt. Marian Olmsted Smith
SMS. Wayne Fetty	Spc. Travis Weber
Cpl. Jacob Luthy	Cpt. Brian Worley, USMC
	LCPL Justin Zukowski

Readings for the Week of January 31, 2021

Sunday: Dt 18:15-20/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9 [8]/1 Cor 7:32-35/Mk 1:21-28
Monday: Heb 11:32-40/Ps 31:20, 21, 22, 23, 24 [25]/Mk 5:1-20
Tuesday: Mal 3:1-4/Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10 [8]/Heb 2:14-18/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22-32
Wednesday: Heb 12:4-7, 11-15/Ps 103:1-2, 13-14, 17-18a [cf. 17]/Mk 6:1-6
Thursday: Heb 12:18-19, 21-24/Ps 48:2-3ab, 3cd-4, 9, 10-11 [cf. 10]/Mk 6:7-13
Friday: Heb 13:1-8/Ps 27:1, 3, 5, 8b-9abc [1a]/Mk 6:14-29
Saturday: Heb 13:15-17, 20-21/Ps 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 [1]/Mk 6:30-34
Next Sunday: Jb 7:1-4, 6-7/Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [cf. 3a]/1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23/Mk 1:29-39

WEEK AT A GLANCE FEBRUARY 1 - 7

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Mass 8:15 am - church
Holy Hour 9 am - church
Boy Scout Meeting 7:30 pm

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

The Presentation of the Lord; World Day for Consecrated Life

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

St. Blaise, Bishop and Martyr; St. Ansgar, Bishop

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr

Mass 8:15 am - Church

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6

St. Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs

Confessions 3:30 pm - church

Mass 5 pm - church

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Mass 8:30 am - church

Mass 10:30 am - church

Baptism 12 pm - church

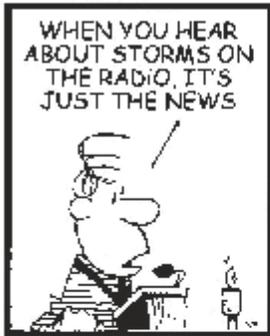
CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS will be mailed by January 31, 2021, to all who donated more than \$250 to St. Michael the Archangel Parish during the 2020 calendar year. (Statements for CSA donations over \$250 will come directly from the Archdiocese of Detroit.)

If you have any questions, please contact the parish office at parishoffice@stmichaelmonroe.com or 734-241-8645.

LITURGY SCHEDULE FEBRUARY 1 - 7

DAY & TIME	INTENTIONS
Monday 8:15 am	Intentions of Fr Phil Ching ✠ Salvatore Soresi
Friday 8:15 am	✠ Jose Jimenez ✠ Ellen Wickenheiser
Saturday 3:30 pm 5:00 pm	Confessions ✠ The People of St Michael
Sunday 8:30 am 10:30 am	Intentions of Fr Phil Ching ✠ Dorothy Bezeau ✠ Mary Sue Terrasi

4th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



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 DeeDee Perkins, Office Manager x14
 Dr. Ray McLellan, Music Director x39 rm@msu.edu
 Leslee Smith, Faith Formation Director 734-241-6097
Monroe Catholic Elementary Schools (MCES)
Mr. Kyle Kubik, Executive Principal 734-241-6335
 kubik@monroecatholicschools.com
 St. Joseph Cemetery 734-241-1411
 SMCC High School 734-241-7622
 St. Vincent de Paul 734-241-8645 x42

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time:

In the Gospel today we read that because Jesus spoke with authority his reputation spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee. As his disciples, we can also speak with authority when we put our faith into actions by helping the poor and suffering.

Have you considered answering the call to serve the poor by joining the Society of St. Vincent de Paul?

For more information, please call 734-241-8645 extension 42.

May God Bless You!



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- Lynn Fedewa
- Kyle Kubik
- Molly Roehrig

FINANCE COUNCIL

- Traci Calkins
- Ignazio Cuccia
- Jim DuBay
- Tela Geiger
- Dave VanAcker

PARISH COUNCIL & COMMISSION REPS

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- Jean Brose, Worship/Christian
- Zachary Bruck, Chair
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