



January/February 2022

From the desk of Father Larry Tharp

Sacred Heart Church

400 Nilles Road
Fairfield, Ohio 45014
(513) 858-4210
Phone
(513) 858-4211
Fax

Church website
www.sacredheart-fairfield.org



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IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH DYING?

The purpose for the title of this article is not to sensationalize or shock. Typing the aforementioned title into almost any internet browser will result in an overabundance of opinions. Some gleefully offer affirmation of the theory or premise. Some suggest the contrary and find much reason for optimism. Still others tearfully accept the question itself as an obituary. My purpose in this article is not to suggest that I have some personal magical clairvoyance or any hierarchical authority of any kind, but simply to weigh in on the issue with my “two cents.”

Let me begin by framing the question in its contemporary context, for the posing of the question is as old as Christianity itself. When we talk about the “Catholic Church” most commentators think only in secular terms of the legal institution. They want to know if the corporate legal and financial entity (colloquially known as the Catholic Church) with its franchisees is declining.” Believers tend to hear the title of this article not so much as a question, but more as an indictment. As we all know however, the “Catholic Church” is comprised of twenty-four rites including but not limited to the Roman Rite, all in union with the Roman Pontiff and practicing the same seven sacraments. The Catechism taught us that there are three attributes of the Church; authority, infallibility, and indefectibility. The last means that our faith in Jesus Christ assures us that the Church cannot be killed or done away with. I believe with all my heart and soul that the Church is now and will always be guided by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I can assure you with the certitude of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; the Church is not now, and will not be “dying.”

But let’s be realistic and admit that any atheist will scoff at the aforementioned reasoning; as well as any syllogism contingent upon “faith.” So do we question our faith and give up trying to convince ourselves that the Church we love is not dying? Of course not! Rather, we look at those writing the Church’s epitaph and pity them for accepting the “sensational” over the “probable.” Since the postulation of Heisenberg’s principle of indeterminacy in Quantum physics, science has told us that we cannot claim certainty; only probability. Owning the probability that there is a God, and the enormity of evidence pointing to the veracity of public opinion in Jesus time, communal faith in Jesus Christ is the only reasonable way to assure longevity. Thus the words of Gamaleil in Acts 5:35-39 remind us of the inescapable reality; “you cannot fight God and hope to win!” Therefore, we as followers of Christ in his Holy

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Church, we see God's hand in the reality around us and we, the Church, are the witness to the reliability of the teaching. In other words, the very existence of the Church verifies the probability of its divine origin.

Critics will deny the aforementioned perspective with the retort that I am "wishing." But remember that wishing for a sure thing can be the genesis of "hope" and can lead us to accept the choice of practical faith.

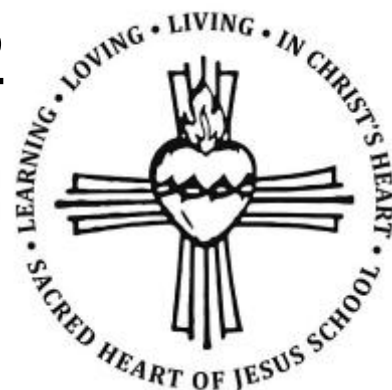
Contemporary drug culture aside, human beings will typically choose reality over fantasy. How many people on the Titanic would trade their seat on a lifeboat for the fantasy of a "feel good" drug? When the catastrophic consequences of sin result in situations in which nothing makes sense anymore; be assured that humans will seek resolutions that have a high degree of probability. All of contemporary science, art, and technology, which seem to be most tangible in the unstable times in which we live, will fail to resolve cataclysmic misfortune. This is inevitable. Humanity, cast adrift in a sea of fantasy and the uncertainty of relativism, will seek resolution in the probable, the real; namely God. Suddenly, the idealistic cultural illusion will surrender to the reality that there is something bigger than puny humanity. And what do you do when you are seeking sanity in the uncertainty of a mindboggling blizzard of disappointment? You go to Church!

So my syllogism becomes the following: Major premise: "Certainty is a philosophical impossibility in a relativistic world. Minor premise: There is enormous anecdotal evidence that a metaphysical reality beyond the purely tangible experiences in space and time as we know it is at least experientially "probable." Therefore, human beings are likely to continue to search for meaning in the midst of philosophical chaos. Faith will bring them to the only answer possible....Jesus Christ.

Sacred Heart of Jesus School

Join us for our
Open House on Sunday,
January 30, 2022
1:00-3:00 p.m.

shjs.org



Sacred Heart School

Submitted by Heather Wagner, Principal

Happy New Year! We are in the second half of the school year, and it is at this time that we not only celebrate being a Catholic school, but also begin to look forward to the 2022-2023 school year.

In mid-January our eighth graders will receive their admissions packets and scholarship offers from the local Catholic high schools. This time for eighth graders can be bittersweet, as they turn their eyes to the future education beyond the walls of Sacred Heart. We are so proud of all that they have accomplished, and we pray that the Holy Spirit guides them in their decision making.

On January 30, we kick off Catholic Schools Week with our Open House for prospective families. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the amazing school we have. The teachers, representatives of organizations, and parents are excited to share with our guests what makes Sacred Heart a special place to attend school. Registration has opened for the 2022-2023 school year as well. If you know a family who cannot attend Open House, please encourage them to reach out to Julie St. Clair, and she will schedule a tour for them.

During Catholic Schools Week, the planning team has embraced our school theme of Care for God's Creation. Each day has a related focus: Caring for God's Gift of the World, Caring for God's Gift of Water, Caring for God's Gift of Plants, Caring for God's Gift of Animals, and Caring for God's Gift of Each Other. The committee organized activities for each day including a visit from Ned's Kindness Adventure.

We are thrilled to share that starting in the 2022-2023 school year, seventh and eighth graders will be able to choose the electives they will take. Electives will be offered in art, physical education, technology, Spanish, and music. These electives will offer a more in-depth exploration of the topic chosen instead of being a survey course. This choice will allow students to explore their passions, as well as begin to adjust to the types of courses offered in high school.

Thank you for your continued support of Sacred Heart of Jesus School. There is something so powerful about being able to embrace education steeped in our faith. For this opportunity, we are grateful.

- Heather Wagner, Principal



Office of Faith Formation

Bryan Miller, DRE

Marianne Fleckenstein, Secretary

January 2022

A Prayer for the New Year

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
 where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is despair, hope;
 where there is darkness, light;
 where there is sadness, joy.
 O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
 to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
 Amen.
 —St. Francis of Assisi



Sunday Missals:

Sunday Missals for the new Liturgical Year are available in the Parish Office for \$3. While supplies last.

Pope Francis wants to hear from you:

The Holy Father is asking for as many of the baptized as possible to participate in archdiocese-wide meetings taking place in January and February, 2022, to discuss how we can collectively better advance the message of salvation. Please consider participating in one of the 12 scheduled meetings. To learn more and to sign up, please visit www.catholicaoc.org/synod.

Children's Religious Education:

NO REP CLASSES ON: **JANUARY 3 – CHRISTMAS BREAK**
 JANUARY 17 – MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

PASTORAL REGION REP Report Cards will be handed out to parents on Monday, Jan. 10th

Catholic Schools Week:

THE THEME FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK January 30th – February 5th is: "Learn, Serve, Lead, Succeed"

There will be an ALL SCHOOL Mass on Tuesday, February 1st at 8:15 a.m.



Office of Faith Formation, Continued...

Sacrament Information:

CONFIRMATION

Mon. January 10th, Deadline to return COMPLETED/SIGNED Sponsor/Candidate workbook and Confirmation name choice (First page of workbook.).

Sat. January 22, 5:30 – 9:30 p.m. is the **MANDATORY SPIRIT RETREAT** for Confirmandi with NET MINISTRIES in Fellowship Hall. All paperwork must be turned in before Monday, January 17th.

FIRST EUCHARIST

Mon. January 31, 7:15 p.m. PARENTS ONLY MEETING in church w/Fr. Tharp for SACRED HEART & ST. ANN.

February 2022

Children's Religious Education:

No REP Class on February 21st, 2022 - President's Day.

Volunteer Information:

ALL PARISH VOLUNTEERS: NEW CHILD PROTECTION PLATFORM – The Archdiocese of Cincinnati is no longer using VIRTUS. Instead, we are only using **SafeParish™**.

Please [follow the link below to register](#) in the **SafeParish™** program. Use the same name and email address you had in Virtus so your information can be correctly connected and added to **SafeParish™**.



SafeParish™ is a learning management platform that provides a broad array of training, education, information, and programs for Catholic organizations. It is a child and workplace safe environment program specifically designed for Catholic entities. The technological core of **SafeParish™** is McCalmon's proprietary learning management software. McCalmon has more than 100 learning management platforms built from that core. McCalmon also supplies most of the content. McCalmon's experts research, write, edit, and publish blogs, articles, podcasts, videos, and alerts on **SafeParish™**.

For new school or parish volunteers – Please contact Marianne Fleckenstein, Save Environment Coordinator, in the Faith Formation Office (858-4213 or mfleck@sacredheart-fairfield.org) for instructions on qualifying to be a volunteer.



ASH WEDNESDAY ALL SCHOOL MASS, MARCH 2 AT 8:15 A.M.

Sacrament Information:

THURSDAY, MARCH 3RD – CONFIRMATION PICTURES & PRACTICE see parent handbook for details.



Women of Faith

Submitted by Nancy Brunner

Women of Faith - Women following Mary's last words: "Do whatever he tells you." John 2.5

Having heard the whispers of the Holy Spirit, the Women of Faith have provided spiritual reading (books at Christmas for the last two years), bottles of Holy Water at Easter, a prayer cards to pray for our priests, over 200 brown bag lunches for the homeless in Cincinnati and organized a Rosary Rally and the prayer night for the SCOTUS hearing of Dobbs vs Jackson Women's Health case. And, we've barely begun! Our next two gatherings are scheduled in RH1 on Tuesday, January 18th & Tuesday, February 15th from 7-9 pm.



So what is the Spirit laying on your heart? Let Him speak through you and let us work together to answer that call. Our Women of Faith ministry is open to all adult women regardless of their personal situation. Just come as you are!

The Giving Tree

Submitted by Karen Ray

"The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

There are no greater commands as these"

~Mark 2:13

Dear Parishioners of Sacred Heart,

It is with a very GRATEFUL heart that I share the good news. With your generosity we were able to share gifts with over 140 children this year by your donations of close to 350 wonderfully chosen gifts.

Our committee was overwhelmed by your support and we look forward to serving families of Fairfield again next year.

Your kindness resulted in some very happy children and families this Christmas season.

Thank you!



Women Together

Submitted by Marty Bruner

Women Together is a parish ministry for widowed, divorced and single women of Sacred Heart and St. Ann churches. We meet on the third Tuesday of each month, from September through May, in the Sacred Heart undercroft, Room 4 starting at 3:30 p.m. for a social gathering and then followed by the 4:00 p.m. meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 18th with the social gathering starting at 3:30 p.m. and then the 4:00 p.m. meeting.

We support our parish by volunteering for church activities and we offer opportunities to get involved in our community. We welcome anyone interested to meet our members, who not only participate in Women Together activities, but also volunteer in our community.

Upcoming events:

- Women Together does not have any activities planned for the next few months due to the holidays. Additional details will be in the bulletin.

For more information about Women Together, please contact Marilyn Schlabach at 829-3697.



Sacred Heart *Community Blood Drive*

Thursday, January 20

2:30pm – 6:30pm

Appointments Encouraged

Donortime.com

Sponsor code #665

Scan QR code to
make appointment



Community
Blood Center

GivingBlood.org
937-461-3220

Connecting Corner

Submitted by Peace and Justice

January: Happy New Year!

- Saturday, Jan 1 is the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Pope Francis' 2021 prayer: "Holy Mother of God, to you we consecrate this New Year. You, who know how to cherish things in your heart, care for us, bless our time, and teach us to find time for God and for others. With joy and confidence, we acclaim you: Holy Mother of God! Amen". The 55th **World Day of Peace** is also on 1/1/22. Pope Francis' message is entitled "Education, work and dialogue between generations: tools for building lasting peace".
- Concerning the Synod on Synodality: "As a first step, the **Holy Father wants to hear Holy Spirit led input from all the people**. He has called all the dioceses throughout the world to convene "consultative" meetings, to be completed by April of 2022." For our own Archdiocese of Cincinnati, AOC, "in Jan/Feb: Deanery meetings take place and Deanery coordinators summarize findings." Please go to this website for further information, www.catholicaoc.org/synod, pray to the Holy Spirit to discern how you can participate in this dialogue.
- 2021 was a wonderful year in **Filling Dorothys' Cupboard** for our local needy neighbors. Month after month you faithfully added food and personal care items. We will have an approximate total in the Connecting Corners of early January bulletins. We also acknowledge and thank the distinguished *Cupboard Team*, without whom this Outreach would be impossible: Bekki & Bill Hull, Pat Charles, Anne Zettler, Donna & Brian Roselle, Dottie & Don Hamilton, Dottie & Gerry Betsch. We mourn Rick Bausch, we welcome two new members: Gail Hartoin and Mary Jo Briggs. Our gratitude goes to the School for their monthly collections and to our Partner Pantries who distribute the items in our Community, namely Food Pantry, Open Door Pantry and Serve City. Finally, Lauren O and Bill keep us on the straight and narrow. We appreciate you. January focus: Soup and bar soap
- **NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION?** Laudato Si' Action Platform: Maybe enroll as a family to **Care for Creation** (one of the themes of Catholic Social Teaching) to promise concrete action steps in 2022? www.laudatosiactionplatform.org/register/

February: Happy Valentine's Day

- Feb 8 is the international Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking and is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, a slave in the 1800's and the patron saint of the Sudan in Africa.
- Please show love this month and donate to Dorothys' Cupboard: Protein, beans, tuna, lentils, canned meats (Heart Healthy foods)
- News about our Two Dorothys! On Dec 8, 2021, Dorothy Day's cause for Sainthood went to the third and final stage as "evidence" of her holiness was shipped to Rome. Dorothy Stang, a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur from Dayton Ohio, moved to Brazil 40 years ago to help the poor build independent futures for their families. She was shot to death Saturday, February 12, 2005 in Anapu, Para, a section of Brazil's Amazon rain forest, and immediately after her death, Sr. Dorothy was formally recognized by the Vatican as a modern-day martyr. This year we note her 17th year as a Martyr. "We need to be poor with the poor and reappropriate a kind and tender relationship with Mother Earth. Then we will know how to act." Sr. Dorothy.
- We recall Jesus' call to Love God and to Love our Neighbors. May your daily actions reflect Love and Charity in February.



Happy New Year and Happy Valentine's Day!

- From Peace and Justice Commission

St. Vincent de Paul

Submitted by John Kiesewetter

Your St. Vincent de Paul Donations Make a Big Impact

You might wonder what happens after you toss some dollars or a check into the St. Vincent de Paul collection baskets four times a year. Well, those few dollars made a big impact for Fairfield, Lindenwald and Fairfield Township residents in need in 2021.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society serving the Sacred Heart-St. Ann Pastoral Region helped 370 families – some multiple times – during the past year.

It's been a busy year – thanks to your continued support through monetary donations and support. We provided utility assistance to 148 families, many facing an imminent cut-off. We helped pay rent, assisted homeless people and provided food. We handed out clothing vouchers worth a total value of \$2,225 made possible by the clothing donations to the St. Vincent de Paul bin in the Sacred Heart parking lot. In a two-week period in November before Thanksgiving we helped a record 39 families in 14 days.

Vincetians from Sacred Heart and St. Ann also distributed Communion; made wellness checks (in person or by phone); delivered coats from the Knights of Columbus Council 8115 Coats for Kids program and the Giving Tree gifts you purchased and wrapped.

Our next fifth Sunday of the month collection is Jan. 29-30. Every dollar you give to our St. Vincent de Paul goes to residents here in the Sacred Heart-St. Ann Pastoral Region. Donations also can be made at any time through the church office.

Here are our St. Vincent de Paul efforts in 2021 by the numbers:

370	Households visited in person or by phone
120	Families helped with rent assistance
148	Families helped with utilities payments
\$7,700	Amount in Kroger gift cards given to 89 families to buy food, gas or medicine
\$2,225	Clothing vouchers given to 31 families
\$639.99	Auto repair expenses paid for two families
\$1,029.18	Bedding and/or furniture for four families

If you can assist us in our ministry, call John Kiesewetter at 513-668-1672 or email johnkiese@yahoo.com.



January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
2 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass	3 Parish Office Closed 7:30am Mass	4 7:30am Mass 7:30pm Parish Council (CR) 7:30pm St. Vincent de Paul (RH2&3)	5 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	6 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH)	7 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	8 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
9 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass 1:30pm Baptisms (CH)	10 7:30am Mass 7pm REP (School) 8pm Pre Baptism Class (RH2&3)	11 7:30am Mass 7pm PTS Meeting (FH) 7:30pm Knights of Columbus (RH2&3)	12 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	13 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH)	14 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	15 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
16 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass	17 Parish Office Closed 7:30am Mass	18 7:30am Mass 3:30pm Women Together (RH4) 7pm Women of Faith (RH1) 7:30 St. Vincent de Paul (RH2&3)	19 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	20 7:30 Mass 2:30pm Blood Drive (Lot) 7pm Choir Practice (CH) 7:30pm KofC Women (RH2&3)	21 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	22 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass 5:30pm Confirmation Retreat
23 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass 1:30pm Baptisms (CH)	24 7:30am Mass 7pm REP (School)	25 7:30am Mass 7:30pm Knights of Columbus (RH2&3)	26 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	27 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH) 7:30pm KofC 4th Degree (RH2&3)	28 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	29 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
30 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass 1pm SHJS Open House (School)	31 7:30am Mass 7pm REP (School) 7:15 1st Eucharist Parent Meeting (CH) 7:30pm St. Vincent de Paul (RH2&3)	UC– Undercroft CR– Conference Room FH - Fellowship Hall UR– Stage/Upper Room CAF– Cafeteria SCHOOL– Entire school CH– Church HOSP– Hospitality Room in the Undercroft RH 1, 2, 3, 4– Rooms in Undercroft NOTES:				

February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:30am Mass 7:30pm Parish Council (CR)	2 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	3 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH)	4 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	5 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
6 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass	7 7:30am Mass 7pm REP (School)	8 7:30am Mass 7:30pm Knights of Columbus (RH2&3)	9 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	10 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH)	11 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	12 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
13 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass 1:30pm Baptisms (CH)	14 7:30am Mass 7pm REP (School) 8pm Pre-Baptism Class (RH2&3)	15 7:30am Mass 3:30pm Women Together (RH4) 7pm Women of Faith (RH1) 7:30pm St. Vincent de Paul (RH2&3)	16 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	17 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH) 7pm KofC Women (RH2&3)	18 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	19 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
20 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass	21 Parish Office Closed 7:30am Mass	22 7:30am Mass 7:30pm Knights of Columbus (RH2&3)	23 7:30am Mass 7pm RCIA/RCIC (RH2&3)	24 7:30 Mass 7pm Choir Practice (CH) 7:30pm KofC 4th Degree (RH2&3)	25 7am Mass 12pm Eucharistic Adoration	26 8am Mass 8:30am Confession 4pm Mass
27 8am, 10am, 12pm Mass 1:30pm Baptisms (CH)	28 7:30am Mass 7pm REP (School)					

UC- Undercroft
 CR- Conference Room
 FH - Fellowship Hall
 UR- Stage/Upper Room
 CAF- Cafeteria
 SCHOOL- Entire school
 CH- Church
 HOSP- Hospitality Room in the Undercroft
 RH 1, 2, 3, 4- Rooms in Undercroft

NOTES:

Sacred Heart of
Jesus Church
400 Nilles Rd.
Fairfield, OH 45014
(513) 858-4210 Phone
(513) 858-4211 Fax

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January & February Events



- 1/1 New Year's Day
- 1/3 Parish Office Closed
- 1/17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day -
Parish Office Closed
- 1/22 Confirmation Retreat
- 1/30 Sacred Heart of Jesus School
Open House
- 1/31 First Eucharist Parent Meeting
- 2/21 Presidents Day - Parish Office
Closed
- 3/2 Ash Wednesday