

# *The Canticle of St. Francis*

Published quarterly by St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church  
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Parish Newsletter: Volume 13, Issue 2

Summer 2008

## Sacramental Preparation for First Eucharist & Confirmation



Confirmation preparation, which began in the 7th grade, continued into the spring of the 8th grade for the youth of our parish. In addition to classroom time, youth, sponsors, and parents met (*left*) for educational and spiritual experiences. Youth in the 8th grade Wednesday program (*below left*) enjoy ice cream and friendships as they complete the 18-month preparation process. The red draping of Pentecost is displayed in church (*pictured below*) as the bishop's delegate, Fr. Douglas Osborn celebrates the **Sacrament of Confirmation** for our 2008 Parish class. 104 youth were confirmed. The 7th grade youth are expressing their faith in service with anticipation of Confirmation in spring of 2009.



Children gather around the altar during the Eucharistic prayer as they celebrate their **First Holy Communion Mass**. Altogether 139 parish children celebrated their First Eucharist on the first weekend in May. *Photo below:* Parents are an important part of the First Eucharist preparation. Contact Ellen Ward at [ward@rc.net](mailto:ward@rc.net) or 821-2130 or 821-2132 for information.



## Mark Your Calendar—Summer 2008

Saturdays, May – October: **Read a Book to Migrant Children** / 3:30PM / DuRussel Farm, Manchester / Hilary Connors / 316-2633.

Saturdays all Summer: **Sustainable Garden Project** maintenance & harvest in the front yard of the rectory. / Tracy Nagy / 734-971-2464.

July 16: **Infertility Support for women** / 7:00pm / Church Library / Jennifer 734-645-2567

July 17, 24 & 31: **Jesus, the Way: Path of Christian Discipleship** @ 7:00 p.m. / Music Room - Marty Lucas - 821-2125

July 18: **Serve A Meal for the Hungry** / 3PM or 5PM / Delonis Center Shelter / Bridget / 665-9549.

July 22: **SENIOR Citizens' Picnic Lunch** / 11:30AM / Washtenaw County Farm Park / Scott Wright 821-2121

July 22, August 5 & 19: **Christian Initiation Inquiry Sessions** @ 7:00 p.m. / POMR - Marty Lucas - 821-2125

July 25: **Summer Baseball Trip** (Lansing Lugnuts), bus leaves St. Francis at 4:00pm Fr. John Linden (734) 769-2550

July 27: **Young Adult Regional Picnic** @ 12:30 pm Independence Lake Park Jen 821-2126

July 29: **Mission Trip to Central America 2009** Planning Meeting 7PM / Parish Office / Rita Kieras / 761-7796.

July 30: **Edge M.S. Youth Group-Water Park Trip/Splash Universe- Dundee**/12:00 p.m./Victoria Emch (821-2133)

August 24: **Freshmen Ice Cream Social** @ 7:00 pm Youth Room Jen 821-2126

September 5: **M.O.M.S**/10:00 – 12:00pm/Chapel/ Janene Ternes 821-2122

September 7: **Parish Picnic** / 12:15 outdoor mass, picnic 'til 4:00pm / behind the church / Janene Ternes 821-2122

September 7: **Edge M.S. Youth Group-Ice Cream Social** /6:00 p.m./PAC/Victoria Emch (821-2133)

September 7: **First Sunday Night H.S. Youth Group of the year** @ 7:00 pm/Youth Room/Jen 821-2126

September 27-28: **High School Fall Retreat** / Jen 821-2126

### Vacation Bible School Mon- Fri, July 21—25 9 a.m.--12 noon

Register at [www.stFrancisA2.com](http://www.stFrancisA2.com) (click on *Vacation Bible School*), and at the Religious Education and Parish Offices.

**High School & Middle School Students, and Adult volunteers needed!!!** Sign-up forms available at <http://www.stFrancisA2.com/rel-ed/vbsvolunteer.htm>

**Questions?** Contact: Religious Education Office (Catherine or Ellen) at 821-2130 or 821-2132.



## Pentecost at St. Francis Parish: *We celebrated our universality!*

During the Pentecost liturgies we celebrated our universality, as well as our community and oneness as members of the Body of Christ. At St. Francis, we are blessed with a faith community whose members come from many different countries.

These parishioners represented their homelands, proclaiming the Word in their native languages: Sana Shakour (Israel); Pat To (China); Ihn Han (Korea); Norma Doyle (Canada); Viera Ciganilova-Shwaki (Slovak Republic); Igantius Arokiaraj (India); Tony Waas (Sri Lanka); Theresa Mhangami (Zimbabwe); Eusebia Mwasaru (Kenya); Rone Eisma (Philippines); Catherine Savage-Gibbish (Scotland); Naly Odum (Cambodia) and Ike Odum (Nigeria).

**Truly we are a world-wide church!**



## Adults growing in grace & wisdom

### Easter Vigil 2008



**Baptism** is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are reborn as sons and daughters of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word."



"You have been enlightened by Christ.  
Walk always as children of the

**Light** and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts."



"All powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ...send your

**Holy Spirit** upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence."

### SOUP & Speaker

Parishioners enjoyed a simple soup supper with bread and beverage.

Fr. John talked about suffering in the life of a Christian.



"*Inconvenient Truth*," a talk about environmental change and how that is affecting life on planet Earth was conveniently brought to us by Frank Parkinson.

### Eight Great Dates

Nineteen couples registered to embark on a journey from good marriages to great ones by focusing on their relationship as a couple.

The school music room was transformed into a somewhat romantic setting with twinkle lights, candles on bistro sized tables, and a small bit of décor. Effortless Entertaining provided simple, but delicious food each date night. World Youth Day Pilgrims assisted with the child care through the "Hire a Pilgrim" project.



"What a great program!"

"These date nights really gave us an opportunity to refocus on our marriage and recommit to spending time together." "Reminds me again why I fell in love with my wife."

Watch the weekly "Forum" for information on the fall program dates! If you have questions about the program you may contact Marty Lucas at 821-2125 or [mlucas@stfrancisa2.org](mailto:mlucas@stfrancisa2.org)

# H

## igh School Youth



This spring, the high school youth ministry was quite busy. We hope you were able to join us for the Living Way of the Cross on Good Friday. The presentation went very well. The teens appreciated the costumes loaned to us by *Fantasy Attic Costumes*. If you missed the Living Way of the Cross this year, you are invited to see next years.



Besides our usual busy schedule of Bible studies, youth nights, and social events, this April the youth group went on retreat. We joined with three other parishes' youth groups for a weekend—talking about relationships, faith, and God. It was a great event and we look forward to next

**September 27-28** when we will join with the other youth groups again for a **Fall Retreat**.



# T

## heology on Tap

**YA<sup>2</sup>ACHT—**

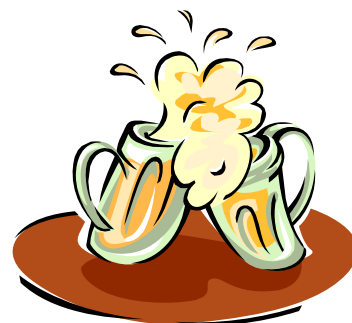
**Young Adults**

[married or single 20-30's]

On May 13th, the Ya<sup>2</sup>acht Club wrapped up **Theology on Tap** for the 2007-2008 year. It was a great year with topics ranging from:

- ♦ environmental stewardship, to
- ♦ relationships, to
- ♦ faith and fear.

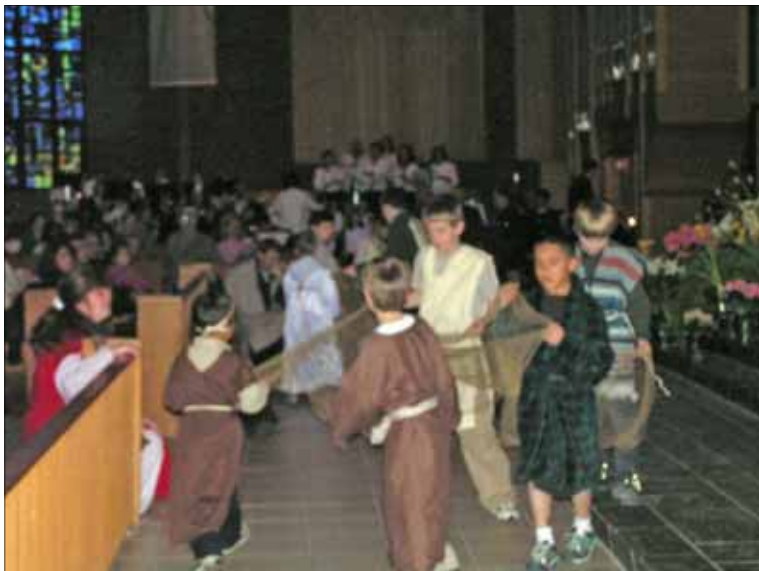
A huge thanks is offered to all our presenters. They helped to make this year a wonderful experience. Plans are underway to begin next year's series in September. Keep an eye out for all the new topics and presenters.





## Religious Education is A Journey of Faith

**Easter Festival**—Children acting the role of fishermen (*below*), ready their nets to catch disciples for Jesus during the first Easter Festival at St. Francis parish.



**Preschool Enrichment**—Children in the Preschool Enrichment program delight in hearing their own creative stories read to them while they snack (*above*). St. Francis offers Preschool Enrichment on Mon & Wed for 3 year old children, and Tues & Thurs for 4 year old children. The program for 4 year old children is celebrating 25 years of introducing the young child to literacy, math, and science within a faith context. **For enrollment information**, contact Ellen Ward at ward@rc.net or 821-2130/821-2132.

**Formation in the Faith** takes place through a variety of experiences. Here, as part of the Easter season, children in 4th grade (*right*) wait their turn to answer questions about the Resurrection stories. There was Easter treasure to be had after the work of studying scripture.



**Middle School Youth**—At least once a month, youth in middle school are offered the opportunity to put their faith in action through a group service project.

Pictured above, youth put together *boxes of love* to benefit the less fortunate. With the help of Victoria Emch, St. Francis has expanded the middle school program to include events of service, education, and social gatherings.



**Registration for Fall 2008-2009 Religious Education classes has begun!** Registration forms are available on the web at [www.stfrancisa2.com](http://www.stfrancisa2.com) (click on *Religious Education*) or call 821-2130. **Early Registration Discount:** Register before August 1, 2008 and receive \$25 off the total tuition.



## St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School

### *The Arts are Alive at St. Francis*

We are blessed at St. Francis to have the most amazing fine-arts faculty. Mrs. Opaleski, Mrs. Sommerfeld, Ms. Toma, and Ms. Drake are overflowing with creativity; they educate, inspire, and challenge the students to not only dream up beauty but also create it. This spring, St. Francis School has been abloom with concerts, plays, and art shows. Here are some highlights:



Middle School Drama presented *The Emperor's New Clothes* on May 15<sup>th</sup>.



Mr. Coucke, Mrs. Dalian, Mrs. O'Sullivan, and Mrs. Opaleski outdid themselves this year on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade play. Mr. Coucke even appeared on stage as Old Bear in *Old Bear and the Toy's Gift*. The May 22<sup>nd</sup> performance was outstanding.



Thanks to Ms. Drake's innumerable hours of hard work, and the generous help of several parent volunteers, The Spring Arts Show filled the school with the students' beautiful creations on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.



On April 24<sup>th</sup>, the Tri Arts Shows featured an impressive assortment of our students' talents. The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band and Concert Band played several amazing songs; Musical Theater and Drama each performed scenes from their respective shows; the choir sang two beautiful songs; and Forensics showcased two pieces.



Our very own 7<sup>th</sup> grader, Annie Patton (*right*) took home First Place in April at the State Forensics Competition with her performance of *Stregga Nona*!





# The **EDGE** is about **Jesus, Fun & Serving!**

It has been an exciting and busy winter for the Edge. Our focus this winter has been to *learn the importance of serving others in both large and small ways*. In February, we made Valentine cards for the homebound parishioners of St. Francis. Then, in March we worked in a soup kitchen for the first time! We traveled to Detroit to work at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. It was an eye-opening experience for everyone! We also helped at the first annual St. Francis Parish Easter Festival which was loads of fun!

In April, we helped at the Food Gatherers' warehouse in Ann Arbor. We had fun bagging food. Of course, the hardest part was not being able to eat the yummy food! We also had lots of fun activities including a visit to Zap Zone and our Annual Edge Olympics! The eating contest was by far the favorite event of the night!



## Upcoming Summer Event:

Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, July 30th** as we head to a water park- [Splash Universe](http://www.splashuniverse.com) in Dundee!

**For more information** on these and other great events and activities planned for this Summer and Fall, please read the weekly *Forum*! You can also check **The EDGE** website at: [www.stFrancisA2.com](http://www.stFrancisA2.com) under the *Middle School* link!

## Please contact

Victoria Emch at 821-2133, or e-mail [emch@stfrancisA2.org](mailto:emch@stfrancisA2.org) for more information on **The Edge**.



**THE EDGE events are  
open to all  
6th, 7th, and 8th graders!**

## SOCIAL MINISTRY [821-2121]

### New Orleans—Going South 2008

THANK YOU to the St. Francis Parish Community from Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of New Orleans

In appreciation of the financial, spiritual, and physical support from the entire St. Francis parish community, volunteers were specially recognized at a Volunteer Dinner at the headquarters of Operation Helping Hands. On behalf of our parish, the St. Francis team working in New Orleans March 8 – 15, 2008, was presented with a painting of St. Louis Cathedral, the well-known landmark on Jackson Square. In our third year of sending teams to help gutting and rebuilding, we were pleased to accept this award on behalf of St. Francis Parish Community. (Currently the painting is displayed on the wall in the main entrance to the church.)



We also placed a handprint from our team on the wall of volunteers, and we toured a completed home. The more than 90 people who have traveled to New Orleans on behalf of St. Francis over the past three years, know that we are only a small part of the contributions made to the recovery effort. True support has come from the entire St. Francis community. We were honored to be there for you. [www.stfrancisa2.com/goingsouth/](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/goingsouth/)

### Rebuilding Together (Christmas in April) *THANK YOU!!!*

Rebuilding Together the last Saturday in April each year is a one-day program of home repair. St. Francis Parishioners, dedicated to assuring that low-income homeowners, particularly those, who are elderly, disabled, and families with children, live in warmth, safety and independence, help each year to preserve and revitalize a house in our community.

Thanks to all who contributed to our successful project! Your generosity will be remembered by the receiving family for years to come - Well done!

St. Francis volunteers (& other friends): Brian O'Neil, Brad Roth, Caitlin Roth, Thomas Durussel-Weston, Mary Lemire, Bernardo Gonzalez, John Shaheen, Lee Anne Shaheen, Cherie Holodnick, Anya Holodnick, Victoria Emch, Jim Wiseman, Linda Wiseman, Lori Ferris, Ryan Ferris, Bruce Moln, Jim Palm, Tony Tramontin's son, Jackson Sweeney, Joe Wottreng, Mark Wottreng, Isaac Potts, John Scheible, Camille Chippewa, Chen Yan, Jeff VanRaden, Rosemary Markel, & Ana Markel.



The 2008 homeowner was, disabled and also has Parkinson's. Some tasks included: Front door and door going upstairs did not work. Plumbing problems - toilet pipe leaks. Kitchen faucet nozzle was broken. Problems with back door & drippy faucets. There was also a TON of yard work. More photos at: [www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/rebuildingtogether.htm](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/rebuildingtogether.htm)





Stephen Ministers provide confidential one-to-one Christian care to people experiencing a difficult time. Stephen Ministers meet weekly with their care receiver for around an hour to listen, care, encourage, pray, and provide emotional and spiritual support for the person. Caring relationships last for as long as the person's need persists.

**There are five different types of "Needs for Care":** · Crisis Care: (new immediate issue); · Follow-Up Care: (after shocks, continued



## Stephen Ministers on Retreat

recovery); · Chronic Care: (terminal, never ends); · Preventive Care: (prior to anticipated event); · Supportive Care: (for a friend caring for a loved one).

Four new Stephen Ministers and two new Stephen Leaders were commissioned in June to serve as good listeners and companions on the journey for parish members who ask. New Stephen Ministers are: **Denise Fisher, Neil Galbraith, Melinda Niemann, and John Shaheen.** New Stephen Leaders are: **Bob Ferris and Karen Shellie.** These 4 new Stephen Ministers have been through 50 hours of specialized training in Christian care giving and join a team of 16 Stephen Ministers at St. Francis Parish. The training process involves the organization work of our Stephen Leaders, who facilitate the series of courses from January to June each year.

**Learn more** (821-2121) [stfrancisa2.com/stephen/](http://stfrancisa2.com/stephen/)

## St. Francis Tax Assistance Program

It is such an incredible honor to work with, and to serve such an important need in our community. This year we saw many different types of people come through our site seeking assistance. We saw young newlyweds, retirees, students, single people and new parents. We saw people who continue to do well in their chosen path of life (for example - Joe our young musician whose got a great new CD out and is now doing so well that we had to counsel him out of our program!) while others struggle as a result of the economy. We also met people who have been undergoing some tremendous challenges due to physical and emotional disabilities. Every one of these people was met with kindness and compassion. Our clients are very appreciative of your work.

During the 10 weeks of the program, we saw over 60 clients and helped return well over \$50,000 (net) in tax refunds to our community. In addition, as a result of your efforts, many of these people will also receive tax stimulus payments from the federal government because we assisted them in filing their tax returns this year. This could add upwards of \$10,000 in additional refunds to our



community. These do not seem like large amounts but many of our clients are low-income or have fixed incomes and many times the tax refunds, which include the earned income credit and property tax credit, can be more than 10% of their annual household income. Both the tax refunds and stimulus payments will hopefully have a ripple effect through the community, therefore making our program important to all who are served by it.

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to this years Tax Assistance Program at St. Francis of Assisi: Michelle Eiden, Sylvia Garcia-Al-Rawas, Deborah Kloska, Gregory McConville, Greg Ruselowski, Jim Russo, Lynn Sohacki, & Julie M. Soyer, Volunteer VITA coordinator for St. Francis Parish.

## St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School

## Seventh Annual Educational Trust Fund Benefit

*"Come Fly with Me"*

Once again, the St. Francis community shared an outpouring of support for the school's Educational Trust Fund. After months of preparations by Debra Hermann, Chairperson, and her dedicated team of volunteers, a record number of guests attended the 7<sup>th</sup> annual ETF Benefit on Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. The 329 enthusiastic attendees filled the Kensington Court Ballroom in their attractive cocktail attire to celebrate and affirm Catholic education.

Upon arrival, guests strolled through a hallway decorated with hundreds of pictures of smiling St. Francis School students. The artistic display reminded everyone present about the important purpose of the evening - **to provide for God's children.**

The benefit was memorable and successful, raising \$70,000 in projected net proceeds (through mid-May.) Many individuals exemplified faithful stewardship by supporting the event at "Angelic" levels of giving. Special thanks are extended to these generous benefactors listed below.



A variety of activities contributed to the event's positive outcome, including a silent and live auction as well as a few "games of chance." The auctioneer and Master of Ceremonies, Lucy Ann Lance encouraged generous bidding throughout the evening. In the live auction, several One-of-a-Kind Treasures climbed to \$1,000 or more such as the Indianapolis 500 Get-Away Package (\$1,700); University of Michigan Season Football Tickets (\$1,350); the adorable, longhaired miniature dachshund (\$1,300); and the Gourmet Pizza Night (\$1,000 ... times two!). The kindness of donors was awe-inspiring.

During the "Click to Win" game of chance, guests had an opportunity to purchase a TV remote control for \$100. Only one, of 120 total remotes, was programmed to turn on a plasma TV. When it worked, the lucky winner selected a fabulous prize – tuition credit for the 2008-2009 school year - from a selection of many special items.

**Benefit**—(Continued on page 11)

*2008 Angels*

**Seraphim** \$5,001 +  
Marc & Julianna Feeney

**Cherubim** \$3,001-\$5,000  
Tim & Shann Patton

**Principalities** \$2,001-\$3,000  
Steve & Debra Hermann  
The Pollock Family

**Archangels** \$1,001-\$2,000  
Bill & Mary Claire Anhut

Patti Dobbs  
David & Karen Kowal  
Mike & Diane Leoni  
Lou & Kathy Magagna  
Jack & Marilyn Palazzolo  
Bob & Michelle Stager  
Kevin & Lisa Vasconi

**Angels** \$501-\$1,000  
David & Tammy Blaha  
Bill & Ehren Dirksen  
William & Angela Giannobile

Florence Kruzas  
E. James Murphy  
Michael & Kimm Sarosi  
George & Judi Schwartz

**Angelets** \$251-\$500  
Bruce & Richelle Babcock  
Mario & Ami Ciricola  
Christopher & Traci Coffman  
Michael & Laura DeBacker  
Roy & Patrice Deutschmann  
Bill & Kathy Gabriel

Sebastian & Narmeen Gaeta  
Peter & Heather Goethals  
Scott & Linda Hinshaw  
Brandon & Stacey Kubitz  
Kevin & Patty Moore  
Steve & Lisa Morris  
Cathy Pietrasiuk  
Don & Rose Sherry  
Thomas Sidlik &  
Rebecca Boylan  
Andy & Melissa Zamora



## Seniors @ St. Francis

In March at our LENT EVENT Fr. Terry Dumas was wearing the green while he escorted us down the path of his spiritual journey and enjoyed the extensive repertoire of live traditional Irish music on the Celtic harp played by Jamie Lutz an eighth grader at St. Francis.



During Lent at St. Francis Parish our Lenten Rice Bowl pilgrimage took us to learn about access to clean water. We also got to know about the thirst for clean water Buthiana Hassan had in the country of Sudan in Africa. During Easter time Buthiana Hassan presented her story in the PAC with about 40 seniors @ St. Francis. What a delight! We pray for Buthiana and for the people of Sudan, Africa. "With your help the door is open for me to further my education. With you and your people I have hope that one day it will be peace and justice all over the world. Once more thank you and God bless you." *Buthiana Hassan.*



### Benefit—(Continued from page 10)

After dinner, Three Men and a Tenor entertained guests with their spirited voices, and at the end of the evening a DJ played lively music for everyone to dance to. ***"Come Fly with Me"*** was a wonderful, all-inclusive night of fun.

Proceeds from this annual benefit contribute to the principal of the Educational Trust Fund, which St. Francis of Assisi Parish established in 1987 to help ensure the future of Catholic education at St. Francis School. As of April 30, 2008 the Fund's balance totaled \$1,155,009. The principal is invested to generate interest, and each year a percentage of the interest is deposited in the school's operating budget to assist with a variety of needs. In the 2008-2009 school year, the award will total \$48,000.

## Christian Meditation

Three months ago parishioner Paul Thompson began a weekly Christian meditation group here at St. Francis. An avid meditator, Paul longed to share this form of prayer with others and envisioned a group that would gather to meditate together on a regular basis. Each week participants receive a short instruction leading them through a process of relaxing their body, clearing their mind and opening their hearts to God. Next they are given some Scripture readings to reflect on and then meditate in silence for about 30 minutes. After the quiet, people are invited to share their thoughts and experiences.



Paul Thompson leads a group in Christian meditation every Monday.

There are new people each time and some that return regularly. Some are experienced in meditation; others have never tried it before. Many are surprised at the peacefulness of the experience and the freedom of a time to just "be" with God away from all the distractions of daily life. If you'd like to try it out, come to the chapel in the lower level of the church any Monday evening at 7:00pm. If you have questions, feel free to contact Paul at 734-665-6802,

## Rosary Group

A group of about 30 people gathered after the 9:15am mass for the first three Mondays in May to pray the rosary. Volunteers came forward to lead the rosary and participants of all ages joined in this long-established devotion. Olivia Baude shows us that no one is too young to say the rosary.



# Lenten Taizé 2008:

Lenten Taizé during February and March this year provided a wonderful opportunity for reflection and prayer. Brother Roger, the founder of Taizé, said, *"Since my youth, I think that I have never lost the intuition that community life could be a sign that God is love, and love alone."* People coming together with a sense of community in song, silence, and prayer is at the heart of what Taizé is about. Where they are gathered there is love, and God is love. God speaks to us in the silence. Musicians came together to rehearse for three weeks preceding the series of Taizé services and many members of our community came to worship and pray. The next set of Taizé services will be during Advent.



St. Francis of Assisi Parish  
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John 15:1