

The Canticle of St. Francis

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Parish Newsletter: Volume 11, Issue 4

Winter 2006-2007

Celebrating our Children's Growth in the Faith



Above: The 6th grade youth gathered around the sanctuary in readiness to receive the Word of God last November 5. Traditionally, youth are presented with their own bible during Mass.

Pictured in the oval: During classes, Victoria Emch leads an assembly on the bible in preparation for the Bible Mass.



Above: After the Mass with bible presentation, families gathered for pizza and friendship. Altogether, 107 sixth graders registered in parish programs received the bibles.

For More Information:

St. Francis offers religious education classes, sacramental preparation, and formational events to children in grades preK—8. Please call Rita Kieras, secretary (821-2130) or Ellen Ward, DRE (821-2132).



Pictured left: Candidates spent a weekend away on retreat in preparation to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit conferred during the Sacrament of Confirmation. This year, Confirmation is scheduled on Sunday, April 22, 2007 at 2 p.m. in Church.

Youth in seventh grade and older desiring to receive the Sacrament in 2008 begin preparation in January 2007. Meetings are scheduled for: Tuesday, January 23 and Wednesday, January 24 at 7 p.m. in the Parish Activities Center (PAC).



Winter 2006-07



December 9/10: **Catholic Bookstore** in the PAC after masses.

December 12: **SENIOR Citizens' Christmas in Mexico Party & Lunch** – on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. 10AM in the PAC. RSVP: Lloyd St Antoine 769-5341.

December 12: **"Do you really know why God became Human?"** Adult Education Workshops for Advent, 7:00 to 9:00 PM Music Room. Dcn Michael Sullivan 821-2122

Now until Sun, December 17: **Giving Tree Gift Sharing**, help after weekend masses. Susanna Brown 222-0057.

Dec. 19: **St. Francis School Christmas Program**, 7:00 p.m. in the church. 734.821.2200 for more information



Advent Communal Penance Service

Thursday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m. in church

CHRISTMAS 2005 MASSES

Sunday, December 24

5:00 p.m. Children's Liturgy

5:15 p.m. (in PAC)

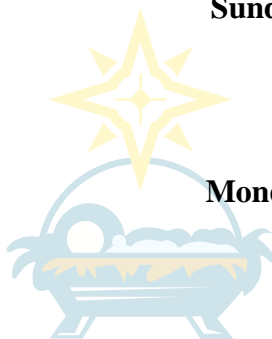
7:00 p.m.

10:30 p.m. (*caroling at 10 pm*)

Monday, December 25

9:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m.



Friday, January 19: **Serve A Meal for the Hungry** on 3rd Friday of month. 3PM or 5PM shift at Delonis Center Shelter, Ann Arbor. Bridget McGillicuddy / 665-9549.

Saturday January 20: Second annual Parish Common Conference will be an all-day event. There will be over 32 one-hour workshops on a wide variety of topics to help us learn more about our Catholic faith. There will also be special programs for children and high school teens. Watch for more details. Call 821-2122.

January 29: 7-8:30pm **Eucharistic Minister Training Session** in church; also on **Feb 3: 9:30-11:00am**. Contact: Barbara Schutzgruber 821-2123

January 30: **St. Francis School Open House** 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in the Parish Activities Center, 734.821.2200.

February 3: **Lector Inquiry Session** 11:30am-12 noon in church. Contact: Barbara Schutzgruber 821-2123

Saturdays, February 3 - April 14, 2007: **Tax Assistance Program** (Volunteer to prepare a tax return for a low income person) 10:30AM to 12:30PM in the Parish Office. To volunteer, call Julie Soyer 734-547-7164.

February 6: **St. Francis School Open House**, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. in the Parish Activities Center, 734.821.2200.

February 9-11: **High School Youth Retreat:** "Crossroads of the World." Contact Jen 821-2126 or jen@stfrancisa2.org

February 11: **St Francis School Open House**, 1:15-3:00 in the Parish Activities Center, 734.821.2200

February 19-26: **Rotating Shelter for Homeless Persons.** Overnight in School Gym. Scott Wright / 821-2121.

February 19-23: **St. Francis School Scholastic Book Fair**, Contact Laurie Ruselowski, 734.821.2293

February 21: Ash Wednesday Masses:
7:00 am, 9:15 am, 5:15 pm & 7:00 pm
in church

Feb. 22: **St. Francis School Science Fair** in the Parish Activities Center, call 734.821.2200.

March 10-11: **Young Adult Retreat—single or married 20-30's.** Contact Jen 821-2126 or jen@stfrancisa2.org



All Young Adults, single or married:

We've been busy, but we only have more things to come in the future. If you are in your 20s or 30s, married or single, why not join us? *Mark your calendars for the young adult RETREAT: March 10-11, 2007*

St. Francis
²
yaachclub
 Young Adult Catholics in their 20s-30s

Ya2acht Club's Latest Happenings...

- Open Gym Basketball
- There's a Saint for that?!?
- Are they a Saint or Not?
- Halloween at Conor O'Neil's
- Dodge Ball
- To Change the World—*Stewardship for Young Adults*
- Faithful Citizens & Coffee
- Ask a Priest Night
- Open Gym Volleyball
- Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner
- Tough Call—Moral Dilemmas
- Why the Mass? and Breakdown of the Mass



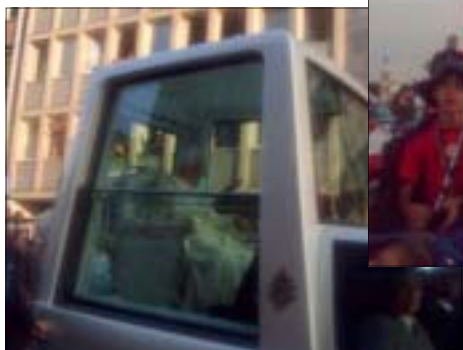
G'day!

In late October, a group of youth and young adults gathered with one purpose—to journey *down under* for the 2008 World Youth Day held in Sydney Australia.



You are welcome to join in: the trip is **open to any young Catholic, age 16-35 years old** and it isn't too late to register.

This group is excited and already preparing spiritually, physically, and even financially to head to Australia in July 2008.



To give you a taste of what to expect, check out these photos from the pilgrimage to World Youth Day 2005 in Köln Germany! If you would like more information, contact

Jen Delvaux at
 734-821-2126 or
jen@stfrancisa2.org

The **EDGE** is about service, fun & the Spirit!



Monday Meetings

The Edge has been very busy this Fall!! We started our **Monday meetings** with a bang! We talked about such issues as 'who we are as children of God', and Friends. We also took a closer look at the sacraments and why they are important to us. We had great fun playing games and other team-building activities.

Fun Nights

We continued with the fun by having a **Pizza & Movie Night** in September. We watched "High School Musical."

The movie is not only fun to watch, but it also shows the struggles of peer pressure from others, both good and bad.

We finished the month of October with a **Fun Night!!!** We had lots of fun playing games in the gym, having pizza and hanging out with our friends. We also had great activities to help with communication and teamwork! One of the favorite activities of the evening was to make structures out of toothpicks and miniature marshmallows. The challenge of this task...no one was allowed to talk. This led to a great discussion on communication with each other, as well as with God.

Service

Service to others is also important which is why we went and did yard work for Emmanuel House in Ypsilanti. It was a lot of fun to get the yard cleaned up! Luckily, the bees stayed away as we got all of the apples picked up! In December, we plan on helping make the ornaments that will be used for the Giving Tree, as well as helping with the Living Nativity Procession.



For More Information

Please read the weekly Forum for details on these and other great events and activities planned! Contact: Victoria Emch at 821-2133, or e-mail at emch@stfrancisa2.org



CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

**Edge events are open to all
6th, 7th & 8th graders!**

High School YOUTH



Oh, the Places We Went

The high school youth group went on retreat in October and had a wonderful time.



Next Retreat:
It was such a great time, we're all looking forward to the next retreat February 9-11, 2007.



Jamboree!

Just two weeks after the retreat we headed to the Lansing Center for the Diocesan Jamboree. We joined with 1,000 other teens for a great day ~ 9AM to 8:30 PM: three sessions with 14 workshop choices, lunch & a mini-concert, mass with the bishop, dinner, a dance & games.



St. Francis of Assisi School

Ken Butman and Family Honored at All-School Mass

On Friday, September 8, 2006 at the first all-school Mass of the year, the Butman family received special recognition for generously supporting St. Francis School in the past. Since 1997, they have donated a new Ford vehicle, every year, for the annual car raffle. In 2006, the event raised \$81,305; since its inception, it has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for our school!

After communion, students from the Leadership Council, together with Fr. Jim, presented a plaque to the Butman family as a token of appreciation. It read:



*In Grateful Recognition Of
Ken Butman & Gene Butman Ford
For exemplary philanthropic leadership
on behalf of Catholic education*

Ken Butman graciously accepted the plaque for the family and the Gene Butman Ford dealership. The congregation expressed their appreciation to Ken and his family with an enthusiastic standing ovation.

St. Francis School is blessed to have such kind and charitable benefactors working on behalf of its students to significantly improve their educational experience. As Principal, Ms. Sara Collins said, “*Gene Butman Ford’s generosity helps the faculty and staff carry out their important work. I’m sincerely grateful to Mr. Butman for all he has done for our school children for so many years.*”

Thank you and God bless Ken Butman and family, and the employees of Gene Butman Ford!

Pssst ... watch for 2007 Car Raffle news ~ Mr. Butman and family plan to help our school again!

St. Francis of Assisi School

Second Graders' Hands-on Study of Plant Life



What a great time the second graders had at Matthaei Botanical Gardens! Our docents there were wonderful. They gave us a great LOOK and FEEL to all of the unique plants they have. We even saw a Venus Flytrap close up as if to catch a fly! It was very warm in the inside tour, as if we were in the tropics.



The outside however was a different story. It was a very cold day! It snowed, and even rained that morning. We lucked out and just got the cold during our field trip. Outside, we saw all kinds of interesting plants and the students saw how the wind scatters seeds. Just like we explained in class. It was so much easier to understand when you can see it. What a great way to wrap up our unit on plants!

Fourth Graders Travel To Lansing

The fourth graders of St. Francis School took a field trip in September to Lansing to visit the Michigan History Museum and the Capitol Building. Among the highlights was the one-room schoolhouse showing the children what it was like to be a student in the 19th century.

The classes read diaries from the students. They were amazed to discover that they had handwriting for an hour a day, and that the teacher took turns living at each student's house!



SOCIAL MINISTRY

Summer Camp Alabaré

God lead a team of friends & other volunteers to coordinate & assist with a Catholic Summer camp for inner-city families from New York, and families from Michigan. Through the organization of **Holy Family Ministries** the weeklong retreat program, now called Camp Alabaré, has served as an outreach for Latinos since 1994. See the web site at:

www.stfrancisa2.com/holyfamilycamp/

For more information, contact: Karen Stein (734-677-6659)



Pro-LIFE Presentations on Pornography, Human Trafficking and Abortion

continue to expose some of the ways that women and children are exploited.

The St. Francis of Assisi Pro-LIFE Committee in partnership with other area Catholic Churches and organizations, sponsored a booth at the **Women's Expo**



in September in the Eastern Michigan University Convocation Center.

Enthusiasm for the presentation, hard work putting it together, and the positive interest in the material from people who visited the Expo, are all reasons that the display will now go "on the road" out into the community so the message can continue to spread far and wide. Awareness is the first step in Fighting Evil. Thanks to all of you for your enthusiasm, your sacrifice (time and money) and your faithful witness.

LIFE CHAIN October 2006

St. Francis Parish Pro-LIFE Committee members stood for one and a half hours with hundreds of others at the intersection of State and Eisenhower (near Briarwood Mall, Ann Arbor) in a visual statement against abortion. We held family friendly signs with statements such as, "Adoption the Loving Option", "Jesus Forgives and Heals", "Abortion Kills Children", and other pro-life messages.

The Life Chain was a powerful testimony to all who drove by, that many local residents believe that abortion is wrong.

"Rescue those unjustly sentenced to death, don't stand back and let them die."

~ Proverbs 24:11

**St. Francis Parish Social Ministry:
821-2121**



Learning about DARFUR

Dinner & Movie: “Hotel Rwanda”

It has been said that the international community could have responded better, if we had known sooner about Rwanda. We are keenly aware of the devastation in Darfur today, and have been for years, yet the death toll mounts - what do you think is the actual reason for the inaction of the international community?

In November, we had a great discussion on the gripping story of the Rwandan genocide as seen through the eyes and experiences of Paul Rusesabagina; a hotel manager who sheltered and protected more than 1,000 Tutsi refugees from the Hutu militia in the movie, “Hotel Rwanda.”



Photo Exhibit to Raise Awareness



We showed this particular movie because our St. Francis parish Peace and Justice Committee is in the process of developing a year-long project to increase awareness about genocide and the Darfur region of the Sudan. The project will culminate in an exhibit of photos taken by Michigan resident, Ryan Reid. The photos will be displayed at the Mallets Creek Branch of the Ann Arbor library next May-June 2007. If you are interested in being part of this work in any small or big way, please contact Patti Yonka (461-2964) <patyonka@sbcglobal.net>, or Jim Varani (995-2597) <varani@umich.edu> And, visit: www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/darfur.htm

Immigration Reform

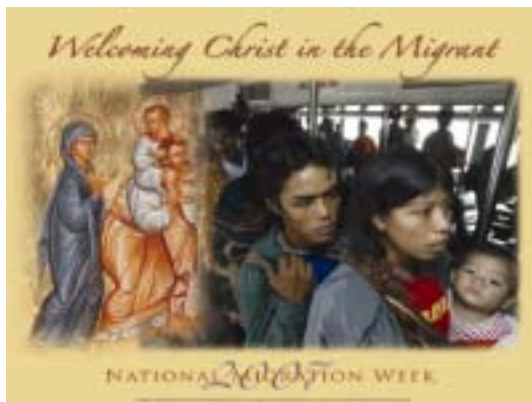
Do we have too many illegal immigrants?

Should we completely close our borders?

“IMMIGRANTS” also known as “PILGRIMS” gave thanks for God’s blessings of diversity—with a dinner, panel discussion on immigration, and personal stories on November 7 at St. Francis Parish.



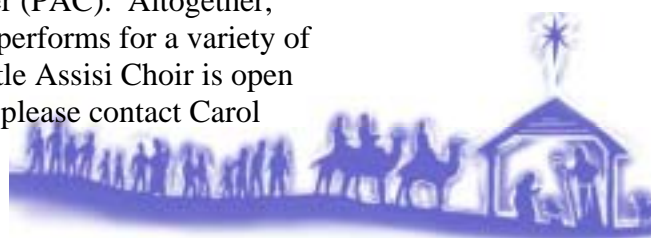
Our discussion promoted the cause for seeking justice for immigrants. Visit www.justiceforimmigrants.org to learn more about “The Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform”. This thorny and contentious issue will not easily be solved, so we need educated and experienced voices within the debate. Thank you to the three volunteers that organized the evening: Sam DiNicolo, Susan Jacobson, Mary Wakefield.



The Sounds of Christmas: Little Assisi Choir Rehearses

Children began practicing to sing in the Living Nativity Procession. Adults and children come together to re-enact the Nativity story through narration, song, light drama, and living scenes to inspire and delight the imagination.

The Living Nativity is scheduled for Sunday, December 17 at 6:30 p.m. beginning in Church and concluding with a candlelit walk outdoors. The Procession is followed by the Children's Christmas Festival in the Parish Activities Center (PAC). Altogether, 24 elementary children form the Little Assisi Choir, which performs for a variety of parish events under the direction of Carol Fedewa. The Little Assisi Choir is open to all children of the parish in grades 2-8. For information, please contact Carol Fedewa (at cbfedewa@yahoo.com or call 975-1374).



Adult Religious Education in a Family Context

Around 40-50 adults come together to study the faith through presentations, discussions, and social activities two Sundays a month. Experienced in leading retreats and workshops on the Faith, Cruz Juarez, Masters in Pastoral Counseling, presents each week on the recently released Adult Catechism of the Catholic Church. The Adult Catechism refers to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and has been developed to enhance discussions of the Faith.



Family Religious Education for families with children in grades preK-8 meets two Sundays a month during the school year. Families meet together with their children in grades PreK-5 in the Parish Activities Center (PAC) for formational activities usually centered around the Sunday readings. Youth in grades 6-8 meet in their own group in the music room. After about an hour of faith activities, the children attend grade appropriate classrooms and the adults are invited to learn more about the Faith in the adult session. For more information, please call Ellen Ward at 821-2132.

Homebound Ministry . . .

Did you know that St Francis has hundreds of active parishioners that you may have never seen? They are the parishioners who are in communion with us through our Homebound Ministry. The Homebound Ministry brings the Eucharist to those who are unable to attend Mass with us. These parishioners reside in nursing homes, assisted care facilities, senior citizen housing, or they may be living in their own homes or residing with family members. What they have in common is a love for the Lord and St Francis Parish. Many of our "homebound parishioners" actively pray for our Priests and for us, their fellow parishioners each day.



For more information about homebound ministries contact Fr. Jim McDougall (769-2550, frjim@rc.net).

A PYX is the container used to deliver the Eucharistic Host.



We Remember our Faithful Departed

Book of Eternal Life

During the month of November, we remembered all of our departed brothers and sisters by inscribing their names in the Book of Eternal Life. All enrolled were remembered at all the masses for the entire month.

All Souls Remembrance Mass

At this mass we remembered all those who were buried from our parish over the past year, as well as other friends and family members, as their names were spoken and candles lit.



Do You Know Someone Interested in the Catholic way of life ???

This year there are over forty-five people that have responded to Christ's invitation to "Come and follow me". They are fully participating in the RCIA. It is through this Catholic Initiation process that we, as parishioners at St. Francis are also given an opportunity: to warmly invite these adults and children into an intensive journey to understand the Catholic faith, and to learn to live the Good News in all times of their life.

We walk with them as sponsors throughout the time of conversion when we share with them in prayer, rituals and faith experiences: encourage questions, reach out to



others through service, and seek to challenge those participating through various forums. These forums examine Catholic teachings, the lives of the saints, and our mission as followers of Jesus Christ.

The Christian Initiation process takes place on Tuesday evenings, and there is also a daytime program held on Friday mornings.

While this year's program has already begun, if you know someone who might be interested in the Catholic Church and would like the opportunity to grow in a relationship with God,

please encourage them to call Deacon Michael Sullivan at 821-2122.

Senior Citizens @ St. Francis *visit Sri Lanka*

In October, our Senior Citizens' group enjoyed a visit to Sri Lanka without ever leaving the St. Francis Parish Activity Center. A local Sri Lankan family spoke on life in their country, showed pictures, and served a genuine Sri Lankan lunch. It was a



tasty experience for all. We also learned what it was like for this family to experience the Tsunami in Sri

Lanka, experience a family member's battle with Wilson's Disease and how the U of M Hospital helps, and then to evacuate from Mobile, Alabama during Hurricane Katrina. We are blessed to know this beautiful family. We want to thank parishioner Molly Mengebier for coordinating this event. For questions about our Senior activities, please contact Scott Wright in the parish office (at 821-2121 or swright@rc.net).



St. Francis of Assisi Parish
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