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# *The Canticle of St. Francis*

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Parish Newsletter: Volume 7, Issue 3

Fall 2002

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*Coming This Fall To St. Francis!*

## RENEW

When World Youth Day took place in Toronto recently, it was edifying to see the faith and joy of those in attendance. It was exciting to have the pope present, and rally participants together. The real celebration however was that of Faith. It was an opportunity for those present to come closer to the experience of Christ in their lives. Not everyone has the chance to go to such an event. However, opportunities for spiritual connection and revitalization can take place right here at home.

One of the proven ways is through RENEW. Preparations have been under way for quite some time now for the implementation of this exciting parish renewal program at St. Francis. *The core element of RENEW is participation by the people of our community, in the home-based six-week small group faith sharing that will take place five times over the next 2 ½ years. Each of these six week periods is called a "Season". The seasons move progressively forward, beginning with "God, a Community of Love" which delves into the search for meaning present in our lives.*

Then, the parish RENEW Mission will take place in February 2003. The mission will provide an opportunity for the entire parish to reflect together on subjects pertinent to the lives of people of all ages. It will also set the stage for the next season focusing on conversion and entitled, "Finding God."

Additional opportunities for involvement in RENEW will take place each season. **Reflection booklets** will be available for general use. A **Family Page** will be included the six Sundays of each season. Our **liturgy and homilies** will support what is taking place in the small group gatherings. There will be **religious education, school, youth, young adult, business place and senior residential components** in order that as many people as possible may be included. **Homebound** persons and those unable to par-



*We live in a hurried world.*

*We may feel pulled in many directions.*

*We have little time ... to think*

*... to reflect*

*... to BE.*

That opportunity awaits you this fall at St. Francis.

Let participation in a small faith-sharing group satisfy the search for meaning that is present in your life.

Make the promise to yourself. Participate in ...

## RENEW

- ✓ **A time to grow into deeper relationship with Jesus and with His Body, the Church**
- ✓ **A time to help each other to connect everyday life and faith**
- ✓ **An opportunity to get to know others at St. Francis on a personal level**

### Sign-up Sundays:

September 7/8 and September 14/15

A variety of meeting days and times will be offered.

*RENEW – (Continued on page 2)*

## Renovation Construction Moving Along

Anyone beginning a renovation project expects a few trials and tribulations. Since old blue prints don't always show what hides beneath those walls or that cement, pipes and problems sometimes surface as one rips down to re-build.



Before we could begin to build we needed to tear down the old plaza and install new foundations

We are happy to report that our discoveries have been surprisingly few and we are only a few weeks behind schedule.

As you can see, this summer has been a time of tearing down. We are now in the next stage --rebuilding. Foundations have been poured and walls rise upward.

We are very happy with the progress. Thanks again to all of you who provided financial support to make our church more user-friendly for the handicapped, those who are grieving, and families with young children.



One of our first goals was to install a support system for underneath the new baptismal

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**You don't want to miss these events!**

- September 16/17: Parent/child prep meet for Confirmation
- September 17/18: T/Th/W Preschool begins (*one week delay from Sept. 10 due to construction*)
- September 22/23/24/25 Religious Education classes begin (PreK—8)
- September 25: YES<sup>2</sup> Service Project
- September 29: Family Religious Education (grades PreK—7) begins.
- September 29: "AIDS WALK - Ann Arbor"
- October 6: "CROP Walk"
- October 8: "Nutrition for Senior Citizens"-2nd Tue meeting & lunch
- October 10: "Senior Appreciation" Mass & Lunch
- October 12: Anointing of the Sick
- October 17 & 19: Eucharistic Minister Training
- October 13: "LIFE CHAIN" at State & Eisenhower.
- October 20-27: "Family Shelter" at IHN Alpha House.
- October 3: Foster Parenting Information Night
- October 6: RENEW Season I begins
- October 27 or 28: Parent/Child prep meet for First Reconciliation (Penance/Confession).
- November 14: "Hospice & Advanced Directives"
- November 16/17: Fall Food Drive & Delivery
- November 23 Saturday Retreat for Married Couples  
"The Three Intimacies of Marriage"
- November 24 Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration

*RENEW* – (Continued from page 1)

participate in small groups will be asked to pray in a particular way for the success of RENEW. Reflective connection through the **parish website** and **parishioner email** will round out the program.

*Do you belong to St. Francis but really don't participate in mass or parish activities? Do you go to mass but don't feel like you know anyone...or that anybody cares about you? Do you know someone in your family, neighborhood or at work that is Catholic but is not connected to a parish? RENEW offers the opportunity to change that. Sign-up Sundays are*

September 7/8 and  
September 14/15.

Make the promise to yourself to participate in RENEW.

**RENEW** is not being offered to put another layer onto already busy lives. It is meant to be a time for us to **stand back and take stock**, and to **see Christ's action in our lives**. It will be an opportunity to find an oasis in the hustle and bustle that is so much a part of contemporary life. Since September 11<sup>th</sup> many people have expressed the need for more spirituality, to redefine priorities and to simply appreciate the gifts of family and faith. Let RENEW be the way for us, the parish family of St. Francis!

## CHRISTIAN INITIATION



Throughout the Christian Initiation process of conversion those who sought entrance into the Catholic Church last year had the opportunity to share prayer, rituals and faith experiences. They reached out to others through service, reflected on and discussed Scriptures, and learned about the doctrines of the Church, the lives of the saints and our mission as Catholic Christians as followers of Jesus Christ.

It is through the Christian Initiation process that we as parishioners are not only given the opportunity to invite adults and children of catechetical age (age 7 or older) to journey with us in faith but also to participate in the liturgical rites of initiation that usually happen at our Sunday liturgies.

RCIA begins on Tuesday, September 17 at 7:00 p.m. for adults and children, Wednesday, September 18 for youth and Friday, September 20 at 10:00 a.m. for adults. If you know of someone who might be interested in the Catholic Church and would like the opportunity to grow in his or her relationship with God, please encourage him or her to call Pattie Scherer at 821-2122.

THANK YOU! This quarterly newsletter was printed as a courtesy by Parish Publishing Solutions – our weekly bulletin publisher (800-521-4486) or [www.pariishpublications.com](http://www.pariishpublications.com)



## MY OPINION COUNTS!

What: Gallup SE-25 Spiritual Engagement Survey

When: Beginning Friday, September 13  
Ending Monday, October 14th

How can we best accomplish what God has in mind for us? How can we best use the gifts and talents of the people who are part of this parish? These are important questions, and the Pastoral Council and staff has been wrestling with them for quite some time at St. Francis. To this end, we will be conducting the Gallup SE-25 survey, a census of all adult members of our parish.

The survey, done by phone or by using the Web only takes a few minutes. It will be administered by the Gallup Organization, an independent research company known for its understanding of people and their opinions. Although most of us know them for their polling work, they have been listening to people and studying successful religious organizations for more than 30 years.

Your opinions will be completely confidential; Gallup will not reveal any individual responses to anyone. After the Pastoral Council has received the results back from Gallup, we will use them to help form our new Pastoral Strategic Plan.

Special thanks to the anonymous parishioner for underwriting the cost of doing this work with Gallup.

Watch your mail for complete instructions on how to do this survey. The success of this effort hinges on the completion of the survey by everyone who is at least 18 years of age.

**EVERY VOICE IS NEEDED.**

**PLEASE PARTICIPATE!!!**

## Helping the Poor here in Southeast Michigan ~



### *~ food for the poor of our Sister Parish*

I (Tom McGuire) wish to thank all the people of St. Francis who contributed to the food drive in June. Food has been identified as one of the greatest needs of those who are poor in the Detroit area. From the food gifts you donated, both St Benedict Food Pantry and the Wellness House Pantry will be able to help many who otherwise would not have been helped.

For those of us with enough to eat, a day of fasting is good for our spirit and body. We can choose to do fast with confidence that if necessary food is available to quickly recover from the pain of hunger. Not so for poor people. People without resources to purchase food are frequently forced to go without meals sometimes for more than one day at a time. This is not voluntary fasting, and seldom contributes to the health of the person.

St. Francis Parish now helps with two "Shelter Programs" each year and has three "Food Drives" each year. Along with many other various service projects these would not be possible without the work and leadership of Allen Sherzer (Christian Service Committee Chair 2000-2002) and Marty Javornisky (Christian Service Committee Chair 2002-2004).

We look forward to continuing the sister parish relationship with St. Benedict and St Francis. Much good has come from this relationship and more will come as we grow in that relationship.

In Christ, *Tom McGuire*, Evangelization Coordinator  
St Benedict Church, Highland Park, MI



### *~ meals for the hungry, transportation . . .*

Along with dozens of other St. Francis of Assisi parishioners in the last few months, I have served hot meals to the hungry, helped people without transportation get back on the road, and delivered food to a food bank for distribution. All the people helped were right here in Southeast Michigan, and I was able to meet many of them personally. I'm grateful that our parish St. Vincent de Paul Society has directed me to such opportunities.

*By Chris Kempton, 2002 parish SVDP chairperson*



### *~ a garden of fresh produce*

Usually, little or no fresh produce makes its way to the local food pantries because most food banks cannot handle perishables. A Sustainable Garden Project is part of our parish community support for the hungry at Perry Nursery School – which benefits the struggling single parent families of our area. Thanks to the leadership of Grace Potts, and the help of many volunteers, we have two gardens this year. One is here at St. Francis and the new second garden is on the Perry Nursery School grounds.

We give a "Thank You" to the members of our parish St. Vincent de Paul Society, our Christian Service Committee, and our Peace & Justice Committee whom have organized these and other service projects.

See our pictures and other information at:

[www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/)

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPAND THEIR HORIZONS THROUGH SERVICE**

Over the summer a group of middle school students from St. Francis parish participated in the *Expanding Horizons* program through the YMCA. This summer program is offered through the Youth Volunteer Corp which sets up community service learning projects for middle and high school students. Our students formed one of the HELP Teams and participated in a variety of service projects during the week-long camp. Some of the ways they helped the community included:

- ☺ Preparing lunch for the homeless shelter,
- ☺ Playing games with the children at Bryant Community Center,
- ☺ Assembling information packets for the Ann Arbor Art Fair,
- ☺ Collecting and returning bottles & cans,
- ☺ Working in the community garden at Leslie Science Center,
- ☺ Ushering for a play at WCC, and
- ☺ Assisting younger children in the YMCA pool.

When asked to sum up her experience with the *Expanding Horizons* program Charlotte Spencer stated enthusiastically and without hesitation, "FUN!"

The Y.E.S. Middle School Youth Ministry here at St. Francis plans to continue the fun and the service this fall as we kick off the Youth Enjoying the Spirit through Service or YES<sup>2</sup> group. Working in conjunction with Kelly Whitney of the YMCA Youth Volunteer Corp, the YES<sup>2</sup> group will meet monthly to plan and implement service projects. One of the exciting aspects of this program will be the opportunity for the middle school students to be part of the planning process.

*The first YES<sup>2</sup> planning meeting will be  
Wednesday, September 18  
from 3 to 4 p.m. in the library.*

*Please join us and find out  
just how much fun service can be.*



## Habitat for Humanity~Catholic House

*"For every house is built by someone,  
but the builder of all things is God."*

(Hebrews 3:3-5)

### Notes from the House Leader's Log book . . .

After the rain on Good Friday, we had a very productive Saturday. The weather was perfect all day and with the help of our Catholic Habitat House volunteers and many volunteers from the other 2 houses we were able to clear all 3 lots. John Kelly and his crew (from Dexter) brought chain saws and industrial chipper/shredders and many volunteers had chain saws and hand saws. We all had good exercise and everyone seemed to enjoy the work and meeting new people.

On Saturday, May 18 the basement walls for our Catholic Habitat House at 1265 Highland Court, were delivered and set in place with a crane (see pictures at: [www.stfrancisa2.com/habitat/](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/habitat/)).

Even though the weather on Saturday, June 15 started cool with drizzling rain, the stairs to the basement were finished, the remaining interior and exterior walls were erected and plumbed, the top plates added, and the gable end trusses were sheathed with overhangs started. Laura Stimpson, Michelle Eiden, Annette Dentel and Thu Smith brought this week's lunch, thanks to all.

On Saturday, June 29th Pat Walters & Sons Heating and Cooling of Ypsilanti installed all the ductwork they donated to the Catholic House. Thank you Pat, a thousand times plus. Also, the shed is almost complete, roof OSB sheathing is in place and most of the windows were installed. The wrong color shingles were delivered so they were not installed as planned. Another great meal was delivered, this time by Christine Horn of St. Joseph's, Dexter. The afternoon work was ended earlier than planned for various reasons. Other Habitat houses ended their workday early because of the intense heat and humidity.

July 15, this was a busy week as professional trades and volunteer work was performed. A phenomenal amount was accomplished. On Monday and Tuesday, the rough plumbing was installed by the Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 190 of Ann Arbor (labor donated); thanks to Bruce Carson and his crew. On Wednesday and Thursday, the

electrical work was installed by B-Safe Electric of Northville and the employees from Advanced Manufacturing Engineering, Ford Motor Company of Redford (labor donated); McNaughton McKay of Ann Arbor donated all electrical materials. Thanks to Greg Mikol from B-Safe Electric for supervising the install, the Ford employees for their hard work and to Charlie Phibbs from McNaughton McKay for donating all electric materials and fixtures again this year. The Ford employees, fulfilling their required, annual community service work, also started the vinyl siding. On Thursday afternoon, our new Catholic House sign was delivered, acknowledging our sponsors and major donators.



On Saturday, July 13, youth groups from St. Francis (and others) installed almost all the roof shingles and hurricane clips, and the front and side porches were started. Asha Gubalan donated lunch, an Indian dish called: Vegetable Pulao or (Vegetable Fried Rice) was included, very tasty. Next Saturday, we will finish installing the shingles, ridge vents, porches and vinyl siding. We will also install basement windows. Thank you all, for donations and your hard work.

On Saturday, July 27, about 10 U of M students from the Ecumenical Center and International Residents (and others) installed most of the insulation and helped install more vinyl siding. The two large basement windows were also installed and finish framed. Sam and Mary Ann Tocco (from Canton area) delivered lunch, thank you very much.

On Thursday, August 1st a group from Pfizer, finished installing our insulation. With their generosity we were able to pass our insulation inspection and start our drywall installation on time.

Thanks to a wonderful group of volunteers, a lot of work was accomplished.

*Steve Polgar*, Catholic House Leader

See many more pictures at:  
[www.stfrancisa2.com/habitat/](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/habitat/)

# ~ What An AWESOME Youth Summer Service Adventure! ~

A while back I wrote a cover page in the Forum describing a High School Youth Summer Service Adventure that thirteen of our high school youth and three adults from St. Francis were going on from Sunday, July 21st-28th. Our theme was: "We're Helping To Build One Nation Under God."

The point is simply this – we had an **AWESOME TIME!** Thus, my hope is that we'll get to do all over again next year. So, if you haven't checked out our youth group yet – do you see now what you're missing?

*We're Helping To Build*



*One Nation Under God*



Well, it was all we could've hoped for and MORE! WOW – where to start? Should I start by telling you that we went to the world-famous "Cross in the Woods" for a beautiful Mass and made a pilgrimage of prayer up to the HUGE Crucifix on our knees? Or should I begin by telling you we were the opening story on an NBC affiliate news broadcast (Traverse City Channel 7&4), or that the whole Benzie

*We couldn't have done it without your prayers and support. Again, THANK YOU for helping make this all possible! Your prayers didn't go unanswered. As far as all involved are concerned – they were answered to the FULL!*

*Sincerely,  
Marty Rhein  
Director of Youth Ministry Young Adults, and Singles*

*P.S. ...we also had "Frank's Place" around a campfire, spent a whole day enjoying the sights, sounds, and treats of Mackinac Island and... You see? **There is so much to experience in our youth group activities – Please join us soon!***

community was abuzz with excitement about "this wonderfully generous youth group from Ann Arbor?" Oh, but then there was that incredible evening spent climbing a 450 foot sand dune and watching the sun set at Sleeping Bear Dunes! And there was the night we went to Traverse City for dinner, to ride go-carts, and then eat incredible home-made shakes at "Don's Drive-in!" Oh yeah and then there was... Ugh, I could go on and on!

As I said in the Forum article, the goal of our Service Adventure was three-fold. First, to give our teens an opportunity **TO SERVE** the elderly, disabled, and those who cannot afford needed repairs. Second, **TO SPIRITUALLY ENRICH** the lives of the participants and provide them opportunities to experience God's love in a deeper manner. Thirdly, **TO TAKE IN AND ENJOY** our state's beautiful outdoors. Well, we did that and more!

We were **truly blessed** with a lot of beautiful weather, great moments of prayer, fun evening activities, and our work projects were completed in a safe and productive way for some very friendly and generous people.



**Group Participants:** (Front row L to R) Kevin Fay, Sean Sullivan, Sarah Pott, Chelsea Foster; (2nd row) Stephen Stepaniak, Alysson Lincoln, Andrew Varani, Tara Thomas, Ruth Jensen; (3rd row) Pat Falahee, Jessica Hungerford, Matt Bonarek, Julia Borders; (4th Row) Dorothy, Kevin Schnell, Mike Bonarek, [Not pictured: Marty Rhein]

## The Changing Face of Catholic School Funding

Because of so much prejudice against Catholics, the Church served as a complete community for our immigrant ancestors who were arriving in America at the turn of the century. Many Parishes included a school, some type of social service ministry, and a structure of support, which offered friendship, safety, love, and concern. Also, for the first 60 years of this century, men and women were entering religious life in unprecedented numbers; subsequently, new parishes began springing up all over our country. Churches operated schools at a fraction of the cost because religious lived at the church and were often paid with baskets of food--not salaries.

However, after WWII, education--both Catholic and public became a main concern for the country. Opportunities for second and third generation immigrants included many more choices, which past prejudice had prohibited. Younger Catholics entered the secular world; less entered religious orders.

*We are a Catholic School,  
and in order to keep our  
integrity, sense of values,  
and dedication to Christ  
we fund ourselves.*

The era of religious orders running our parishes and schools was soon a memory. But thanks to the dedication and ingenuity of Lay Catholics, the system did not collapse. Instead, parish leaders began filling the positions left by religious with professional teachers.

These Lay Catholics lived in a secular world, so the cost of Catholic Education began to rise. What once cost a bushel of fruit and four dollars a month rose to approximately \$6,000 at year per student! At first, the parish picked up the rising costs, but eventually tuition had to become the mainstay of school support. In the 1980s many Churches chose to close their schools because of the prohibitive cost.

There were other choices. Here at St. Francis, we decided to do something else. We began an Educational Trust Fund, which would guarantee the future of our school. (We are one of the few schools to have had the foresight to do this.) Our trust fund is invested, and only the interest is awarded to the school--but since the interest continues to flow with the economy, the original gift becomes a living tribute.

Many of you have wondered why we don't ask the greater community to help us. Some have suggested we invite the public and private businesses to help with the rising costs--and we do, but only in a limited capacity--such as with matching grants and promotional opportunities. As the ballot defeat of school vouchers proved last November, the general public is not interested in funding us. This serves as a two-edged sword because if we return to the reason that we began our school, we discover a deeper spiritual meaning in helping ourselves. We are a Catholic School, and in order to keep our integrity, sense of values, and dedication to Christ we fund ourselves.

This year we will begin to ask more of you in the parish who do not have children currently attending our school, to look at what we are offering and how we are funded. Like our immigrant relatives, we too want to assure that our Catholic community includes a school, some type of social service ministry, and a structure of support, which offered friendship, safety, love, and concern.





# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

This summer, 200 children, 75 middle and high school youth, and 46 adults took on the challenge to climb “Faith Mountain” during the week of July 15 in Vacation Bible School. The challenge was to grow by the way of Faith: Faith that is a gift from God and is nourished in community, Faith that trusts in Jesus Christ and endures in discipleship, Faith that listens to God’s Word and responds in action with special concern for the poor, and Faith that triumphs in a life of glory with God. “Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ (Romans 10:17),” but Faith without good works is useless (James 2:17).

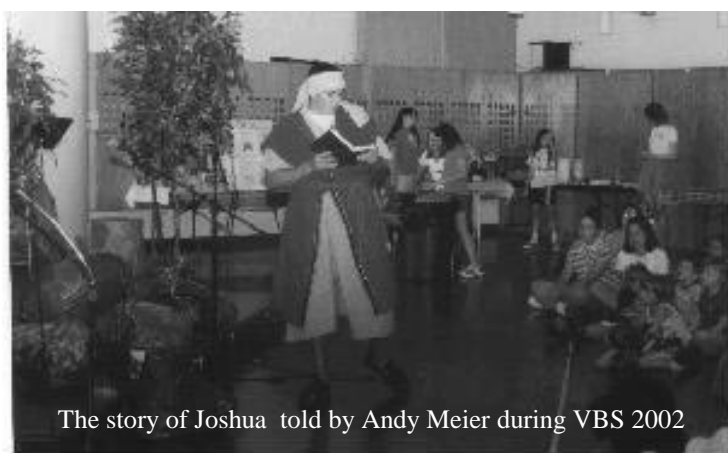
Thank you to the 121 volunteers—middle school, high school, and adults—for helping to create a community of Faith for the children. Thank you to the parishioners who donated the swimsuits and beach items to benefit inner city N.Y. children at their summer camp in Carrollton, Ohio the week of August 12. The camp is sponsored by Holy Family Ministries.



Taking on new challenges, children in grades 2 through high school climb “Faith Mountain.”



Preschool children bounce to new heights in VBS.



The story of Joshua told by Andy Meier during VBS 2002

## Keep the Flame of Faith Active and Growing:

**Registration for religious education classes for children in PreK—8 are being accepted now.**

- ♦ **Children’s Liturgy of the Word** begins August 25. Children in grades K—3 are invited to hear the Word at their own level during the 8:45 and 10:30 a.m. Masses. No pre-registration is needed.
- ♦ **T/Th and W Preschool** begins Sept. 17. (*This date includes a one week delay due to construction.*)
- ♦ **Sun Preschool** begins Sept. 22.
- ♦ **Religious Education classes** begin Sept. 23 (grades K—5)/ Sept. 24 (grades K—5)/Sept. 25 (grades 1—8).
- ♦ **Sunday Family Religious Education** begins Sept. 29. Family Religious Education brings parents and their children in grades PreK—7 together in sessions designed to learn, reflect, and grow in knowledge of the Catholic Faith.

For more information about our programs or for a registration form, check us out on the WEB at <http://www.stfrancisa2.com/rel-ed/> or call us: Nicki, secretary at 734-821-2130 <stfreled@rc.net>, Ellen Ward (PreK—5/Family) at 734-821-2132 <ward@rc.net>, Jill Diroff (Grades 6-8) at 734-821-2133 <jdiroff@catholicWeb.com>.



Children gather for the opening bible story of the day during Vacation Bible School 2002.

## SENIORS @ St. Francis!!!

Senior Citizens at St. Francis have been meeting monthly for about two and a half years. We want to create an environment to get to know each other, so there is time for plenty of socializing. It is amazing how many persons in our group have never met before, even though they have been parishioners at St. Francis for many years. This is a big parish and so we really enjoy our small group of about 50 seniors each month. Our Senior Citizen Leadership Team plans our gatherings & invites speakers to present on topics such as: humor, practical exercises, & interesting facts. We have lunch together, a little time of prayer, we love to play games and celebrate life! For more information see the weekly Forum, or call Scott Wright (821-2121) at the parish office.



See our pictures here: [www.stfrancisa2.com/seniors/](http://www.stfrancisa2.com/seniors/)

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