

Attention all High School Teens!

We finished the school year with our

LAST Sunday Youth Night on May 18: *"The Challenge of Christian Living"* We met in the PAC after the 5 PM Mass for a Spaghetti Dinner and an end-of-the-year "wrap-up" discussion on what to do with all the Christian youth group service, Catechesis, social, and hot topic discussions you experienced this past year.



High School Graduation Mass & Brunch: Sunday, June 1, 10:30 AM

Mass with brunch following in the PAC for all graduating Seniors and their families.

CedarPoint DAY TRIP – June 18th!

All high school youth & friends rode a motor-coach bus to CedarPoint



Watch the Forum for Summer dates . . .

"FRANK'S PLACE" meets Wednesday nights from 7-9 PM in student homes! For location call 821-2126.

All Young Adults & Singles are invited to get out and play!



Want to meet some GREAT people at St. Francis! If you're a young adult (21-35 married or single) or single (divorced, widowed, or never-married 35-up) and haven't checked out our "First & Third Friday Open Gym Nights" you're missing meeting a lot of active and fun people! Grab a friend or come alone to the St. Francis Elementary School gym for basketball and volleyball from 7-9pm on the first and third Fridays of the month!



Want something more? Then check out our other social, service, Catechesis and hot topic discussion activities!

For more info on either the "Ya'acht Club Young Adult Group" or "St. Francis' Singles Group" – please contact Jennifer Delvaux at (734) 821-2126.



May, the Month of Mary

Mothers and their daughters celebrated in a special way this past May, by gathering in the chapel to pray the rosary using the new *Mysteries of Light* and by praying the litany of Mary. Afterwards all participated in a potluck supper that offered moms and daughters a special evening together.

The new mysteries that were introduced by Pope John Paul II this past October are based on events in the life of Christ. They include: The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, the wedding at Cana, the proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God, the Transfiguration, and the institution of the Eucharist. . Pope John Paul II states that *"The rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christ-centered prayer."* October 2002 to October 2003 has been declared the Year of the Rosary by the pope. The pope has encouraged Catholics everywhere to pray the rosary for peace, especially in these troubled times.



Mysteries of Light

- * *Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River*
- * *Wedding at Cana*
- * *Proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God*
- * *Transfiguration of our Lord*
- * *Institution of the Eucharist*

- Pope John Paul II

September 7th Parish Picnic to Feature ~

50 Years of Scouting at St. Francis

A celebration of the 50th anniversary of scouting at St. Francis of Assisi Parish will take place Sunday, September 7, 2003 at the St. Francis Parish Picnic. Featured will be exhibits presented by the boy scouts and girl scouts of the parish. There will be awards, a guest speaker, food, music, games, bingo, and friends!



Parishioners are requested to invite past and present boy, girl, Eagle, and cub scouts, and adult leaders of Troop 27 at St. Francis of Assisi in Ann Arbor – plus anyone who wants to join in the festivities!

The celebration begins with an outdoor mass at 12:15

PM on the parish grounds, and continues through 5:00 p.m. For further information, please contact: Ann Mitchell Damon (734-761-9392), Michele Thomas (997-9084), or Dorothy Spencer at <areyouwelsh@earthlink.net>.

ATTENTION ALL

MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL MUSICIANS!

This fall, as in the past, the Sunday 5pm Mass will utilize the talents of our youth.

WE NEED YOU!

Now is your opportunity to use your musician-ship skills you've so diligently worked at in your school band, orchestra, choir and individual lessons and recitals. Come share your musical talent in worship and praise at St. Francis! The music will be contemporary, inviting and encouraging participation of the entire assembly.



The scope of music is not limited to one specific style. Contemporary music ensembles for worship consist of several different instruments such as winds, brass, strings, piano, organ, voices as well as percussion, (drums, bells, chimes).

Rehearsals will be on Thursday evenings in church starting in September, we will . Watch the weekly FORUM for the first rehearsal date. The ensemble will be directed by Mrs. Carol Fedewa. Contact: Janelle O'Malley (821-2124 or omalleyj@catholicWeb.com)

St. Francis of Assisi School

There are openings available in grades 2-8 at St. Francis School for the 2003-04 school year. For registration information or to set up an appointment to visit our classrooms and tour the school, please call the school office 734-821-2200.



Senior Citizens @ St. Francis

We sure are an active bunch! Can you help me remember what we have done this year?

In January, we had The Underground Railroad;

February, Henri Nouwen: Life of the Beloved;

March, Funeral Planning Has Grown Up;

April, The Dead Sea Scrolls-a day trip to Grand Rapids;

May, Michigan Facts & Fables: Story

Telling; and for our meeting in

June, A Picnic at Gallup Park for "Mad Hatters" to show off decorated hobby hats.



During each of these events we enjoyed getting to know one another better. And, our leadership team members especially had fun growing in friendship, while at the same time planning our educational, devotional, & entertaining events for the St. Francis Parish senior citizens. We especially give our thanks to: Lois Gage, Marianne Jacquez, Jane Jones, Jane Kulpinski, Elizabeth McMullan, Neil Mueller, Lloyd St. Antoine, Bill Zager, and Betty Zurawski, for serving with our senior leadership during the past year.



Of course, all senior citizens are invited to our monthly meetings for a time of socializing, a presentation and, a light lunch. We're looking forward to:



July 8, The Huron River: History & Narrative;

August 12, Health Concerns;

September 15, SENIOR APPRECIATION Mass;

October 14, Today's Movies & How they Got That Way;

November 11, A Surprise;

December 9, Christmas Singing & Story telling with our School Children.

We want to meet you. Come join us! For more

information contact Scott Wright (821-2121) in the parish office, or visit our website at:

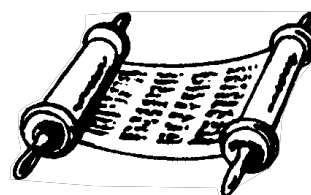
www.stfrancisa2.com/seniors/



✂ Cut & Save Calendar!

A Tour of Biblical Proportions Takes Place

The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the middle of the 20th century. It was a marvelous find that had a huge bearing on the Bible. The scrolls have created a good deal of controversy. The story of the scrolls was made accessible to the people of Michigan through a recent exhibit at the Van Andel Museum Center in Grand Rapids.



Fifty-five people from St. Francis participated in a tour on April 8th, the day after the big ice storm that staggered most of the state. However, it didn't stop our people from getting on the bus. They had been looking forward to this day. A little weather was not going to get in the way of this opportunity to see for themselves the scrolls that they had heard so much about.

The exhibit did not disappoint. Through an introductory movie and self-guided tour with individual listening devices, participants were able to immerse themselves into the climate, culture and history of the era when Judaism as we know it today was formed; the time when Christianity was born, and the time when the seeds of Islam were sown.

Books on the Dead Sea Scrolls have been purchased for the parish library. The new location in the church is expected to be up and running this fall. Parishioners will soon be able to borrow these books for study or personal enrichment.

Elizabeth Ministry: ***Helping Parishoners in Need***

People often ask me what it's like to belong to a parish as big as St. Francis. *"Don't you feel anonymous?" "Do people even recognize one another?" "Does your priest know who you are?"* ... are just a few of the questions that I hear. My answers are always the same. St. Francis is the most wonderful parish that a person could belong to. It is our numbers that allow us to reach out and give a personal touch to parishioners in need, and to serve others in our community.



A First Hand Experience

The Elizabeth Ministry is a wonderful example of how the many parishioners at St. Francis work together. In October this year, my daughter Briona was born with Hypo Plastic Left Heart Syndrome - a very rare, and very serious congenital heart defect. A family friend tipped off the Elizabeth Ministry even before my daughter was born, and our family was provided with laundry help and meals. When my daughter was born, it was very difficult to balance being with her at the hospital and taking care of my husband and three other children at home. For more than three months the wonderful, selfless women of this ministry came to the aid of my family. Their wonderful meals, friendly smiles, and notes of prayer were a beacon of light to me during one of the darkest times in my life. I was often so sad and confused that I never even got to thank each of them personally, yet the meals still came, the laundry was folded, and I knew that I had many wonderful women and their families praying for my little girl.

Sadly, my little Briona never got to come home. After three open heart surgeries, and a long wait for a new heart that never came, she was called back to God. During the long and painful weeks of grief, the Elizabeth Ministry was there to comfort and provide for my family when I couldn't. I will never be able to thank these wonderful women (and men) enough, so as a start I decided to join the Elizabeth Ministry myself. My family and I look forward to the day when we can help someone else in the way which we were helped.

If you have any questions or would like to be involved in this ministry, please contact Mrs. Therese Rhein at 434-5262. And, visit:

www.stfrancisa2.com/socialministry/elizabeth.htm

Social Ministry

St. Francis Parish Helps the Poor!

[Call Scott Wright 821-2121]

Bike Ride Across U.S.A. to highlight **"Poverty in America"** **St. Francis stop is July 18**

The group of about 20 bicyclists riding from San Francisco to Washington DC will stop at St. Francis on Friday, July 18th. Arriving in the early evening, they will do a presentation on the issue of "Poverty in America" at the St. Francis School Gym, and stay over night there.



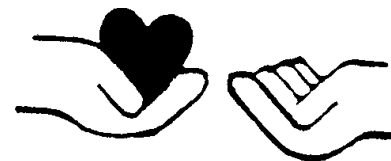
You can get involved! See their website at:

www.brakethecycle.org

<www.povertyusa.org>

Event is sponsored by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Call Barb at (517) 342-2470 or email at bpott@dioceseoflansing.org

St. Vincent de Paul Fund



Our Parish, through the St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) Fund, offers financial assistance to persons in need. During the last six months, January – June 2003, this fund has been used to help more than 33 struggling persons & families with: Car Repairs, Housing Rent, Budget Counseling, Groceries, Funeral Burial, Medical Prescriptions, Dental Work, Electric Bill, etc...

Our Parish, St. Vincent de Paul Society Members, work hard to meet face to face with real people struggling, by making visits to the home of persons in need with real HOPE. Thank you for your prayers for this ministry & for your contribution to the SVDP Fund!

Since my last report to you in November of 2002, the number of capital projects undertaken has continued to diminish, largely as a result of a slowing of Sunday donations. Our major project, the renovation of the Church, is nearing completion, with only a few items left to finish. Principal among these are some electrical issues, such as light fixtures which had to be back-ordered, and a new handrail on the lower front stairs. We have had some difficulty with the heating element on the new Baptismal font, and a minor piping change has been specified by the architect and engineer to address the problem. In addition, the artist carving the Holy Family sculpture has fallen behind schedule, but we hope to have the sculpture installed before the end of the summer as well. The cost of the renovation continues to be on target, with the only appreciable add-on for unanticipated asbestos ceiling removal. Comments that I have received about the appearance of the rear of the Church and the new entryway and vestibule have been almost unanimously favorable, and we hope that you agree that the changes make the Church more functional and welcoming than ever before!

We were forced to replace the over-20-year-old heating/air-conditioning system in the PAC in late December, and the new system has run very reliably since. We also added air-conditioning in the Science Lab and an adjacent classroom of the School, thanks to a designated donation of one of our School parents. Although the weather this spring has not been hot enough to use it on many days, early reports are that it, too, has made a hit with our students and faculty.

The only other projects of note were the addition, just before Easter, of another 160 new brown folding chairs for the PAC, representing a significant increase in number of chairs available for use there, and the replacement of the principal hot water heater for the PAC and School, which died unexpectedly during the winter.

We have contracted for the installation of new, energy-efficient windows throughout the remainder of our School during summer vacation; these will be paid for entirely from School Development efforts. For years, our parents and staff have talked about replacing the old, drafty, single-pane windows in our School buildings which dated back 40-50 years; by the time classes resume in late August, we expect that this will finally have been accomplished!

Projects which remain on our "to-do list" include improved lighting in the Middle School, repair of the Bell Tower, upgrading of the Choir Room on the lower level of the Church, continuing roof replacement (including some necessary repairs to the Church roof), demolition of the house next to the West Parking Lot on Stadium Boulevard and re-grading of that property, and the eventual addition of air conditioning throughout our School buildings. Aside from the Church roof repair work, which should be covered by the manufacturer's warranty, the remaining projects continue to be on "hold," pending improvement in parish revenues.

Perhaps a comment is appropriate on the subject of Church offering envelopes. Many of you have experienced difficulty lately in receiving your quarterly envelope packets in a timely manner. We have worked with our printer and with the Postal Service to resolve the problem, and every time we think that it has been solved, another problem with the Postal Service pops up. Most recently, envelopes which were to have been delivered to you in April, and were delivered by the printer to the Postal Service in Detroit on April 17th, took as much as five weeks to reach our parishioners! We have not given up, however. We will be making another change in the distribution of our next packet of quarterly envelopes, which will go out in July for the months of August, September, and October, and we remain hopeful that this change will result in more timely delivery to parishioners. In the meantime, should you not have your regular envelopes, please feel free to use the Visitor envelopes in the pews; we review each and every one received in order to properly credit donations to each donor's account.

Business Manager's Report to the Parish May 2003

Finally, a brief word is in order on the subject of Church revenues. Through the end of May, our Sunday donations were down almost 4% from last year's level, which appears, from the historical records we have been able to locate, to be unprecedented in the history of this parish. No one knows for

sure why this is occurring, although there are many possible explanations. Compounding the difficulty is the continuing rapid escalation in the cost of health-care insurance for our employees, which, of course, is a problem for all employers throughout Michigan and the nation. We have responded to it, as a parish, by reducing some staff positions, eliminating almost all salary raises for the next fiscal year, taking still another hard look at each of our programs, and putting capital projects on the back burner for the time being. That is not to say that such projects will not be done, but we shall be overly cautious in assessing our ability to fund them, which will, in all likelihood, mean that they will proceed much more slowly than in the past six years that I have been here.

We are hopeful that, as our Capital Fund Drive and the Building Fund Drive for the new Fr. Gabriel Richard High School are now ending, many of you will take this opportunity to examine the level of your support to our Parish. Know that we continue to manage the financial affairs of the parish in a careful and prudent manner, for we are truly trying to accomplish God's work with your dollars. We hope and pray that you will find an opportunity for increased support of the parish in the future, and we remain thankful for the support that you have provided us in the past.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or comments.

- Dave Barera, Parish Business Manager
[821-2111 or email at dsbarera@catholicweb.com]