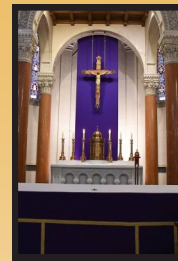
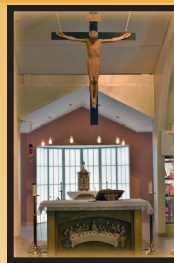


Our Catholic Community

ST. JEROME † ST. JOSEPH † ST. PHILIP
BATTLE CREEK AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Fall 2019

Vol. 1, No. 3

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Our Catholic Community Committee

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PROFILE: John and Vita Sajtár

by John Grap, Photos by John Grap

Sitting five rows back on the Blessed Mother's side of St. Philip - praying, clutching their rosaries, on their knees - is a quiet couple. Every day they are at Mass, surrounded by a group of long-time friends. Often they are seen enjoying breakfast at Barista Blues.

John and Vita Sajtár are dependable.

They both grew up Catholic; he at St. Jerome, where his parents were founding members; she at St. Philip. He was a public school kid, who attended CCD with the nuns on Sunday. She went to Catholic school, St. Philip all the way. "Every sacrament I've received has been there. Every part of my life has been at St. Philip," Vita says.

They both reflect their deep Catholic heritage, sometimes laughing, joking about memories of their fear of the nuns. They raised their children Catholic because they were raised that way.

He is a lector, both for daily Masses and on Sunday. Reading sacred scripture is a privilege he takes seriously. You can tell by the way he does it.

While they can be seen serving meals following funerals, arguably the most important duty they have is taking Jesus Christ to the homebound, which is something they've been doing for some 25 years. "Taking the Eucharist to people isn't just distributing Holy Communion, it's a holistic thing that I learned as nurse. It's taking care of their minds, their bodies, the spiritual parts of their lives. We get so much out of it - it is very rewarding for us," she says. They converse with people and listen to them.



When they got married they asked Fr. Fitz if they could distribute the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ at their wedding and he agreed.

"The day we got married, following the reception at the church, we took Holy Communion and wedding cake to the six people we'd been taking Communion to. They each gave us some money and we used it to buy a pix. A friend engraved their names on the back," she says.

Why do they do what they do? John says, "Faith without works is

Ministry Fairs

By Missy Skutt, Photos by Angie Cheng

St. Joseph held a Ministry Fair hosted by the Evangelization Commission on October 12th and 13th. Thank you to all who participated in the Ministry Fair: Ministries who offered information at the display tables, the Knights and volunteers who assisted with set-up and clean-up, members who staffed the display tables and parishioners who took time to visit and learn about St. Joseph Community in Action. If you did not pick-up a new, updated Ministry Guide, please check the display boxes located at the doors of St. Joseph Church.

St. Joseph Ministries:

Adoration
 All Saints Superfest
 Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools and Foundation
 Boy Scouts
 Burmese Ministry
 Catholic Men's Fellowship
 Coffee & Catholicism
 Communications and Social Media
 Connecting with Mercy
 Council of Catholic Women
 Daily Mass Breakfast
 Eucharistic Adoration
 Evangelization Commission
 Family Ministry
 Formed
 Hispanic Ministry
 Home School Group
 Jail Ministry
 Knights of Columbus Queen City Council #575
 Lakeview Food Pantry
 Legion of Mary
 Natural Family Planning with Couple to Couple League
 Newcomers Welcoming and Hospitality Committee
 Parents in Prayer
 Prayerline
 Read Between the Wines Book Club
 Religious Education
 Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
 Small Christian Communities
 School Cost Reduction Incentive Program
 Spiritual Library
 St. Vincent de Paul
 Summer, Faith and Fun!
 Tri-Parish Pro-Life Ministry
 Tri-Parish Youth Ministry



Along with the Ministry Fair, Fr. Chris celebrated "Slow Motion Teaching Masses" on Saturday and Sunday. He paused at various points in the Mass and a narrator explained what was happening. This was a great tool to learn more about the Mass and gain a greater appreciation of it.



For more information on these ministries, visit:
www.CatholicBC.org

Ministry Fairs (Continued)

By Todd Greenman, Photos by Cathy Hirzel

The Volunteer Fair at St. Philip took place on September 14th and 15th and was hosted by the Parish Council. 115 new volunteers were recruited by the 23 organizations that participated. Those included:

St. Philip Ministries:

- Adoration Chapel
- All Saints Superfest
- Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools and Foundation
- Council of Catholic Women
- Church Ministries (EMHC, Lectors, Servers, Ushers)
- Financial Peace University
- Franklin Food Pantry
- Funeral Dinners
- Gardeners
- Knights of Columbus
- Liturgical Environment
- Mid-Week Faith Lift
- Music Ministry
- Prayer Shawl Ministry
- RCIA/Tuesday Morning Bible Study
- Religious Education
- Sacred Heart of Jesus Praise and Worship
- St. Vincent dePaul
- Spiritual Directors
- Sunday Suppers
- Thrift Shop
- Tri-Parish Pro-Life Ministry
- Tri-Parish Youth Ministry

For more information on these ministries, visit: www.CatholicBC.org †



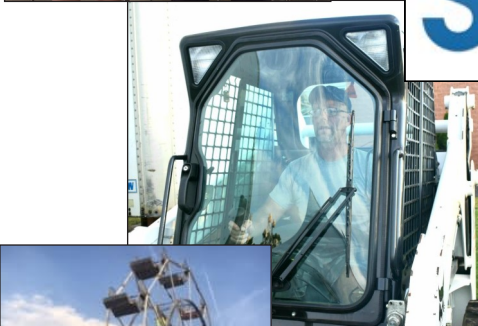
Superfest Spelling Bee

by Andrew Kincaid, Photos by Andrew Kincaid

The Queen City Knights of Columbus Council #575 sponsored their annual Spelling Bee at Superfest. There were 13 participants from six grades. Congratulations to the winners: Jennitzy Talavera, Solara Thomas, Greg Garfield, and Gavin Thomas! †



HARD WORK = FUN FOR ALL



This quarterly newsletter includes articles and stories about people within the tri-parish area and about tri-parish activities and ministries. It also contains information from the Catholic schools as they are an important part of our Catholic community.

We welcome ideas and articles from all parishioners. All submissions are subject to editing for content, clarity, and length. It may be determined by the editors that their newsletter is not the appropriate channel for your article, and they reserve the right to determine whether an article is included in the newsletter. Submissions may be e-mailed to OurCatholicCommunity@bcacs.org or dropped in the collection basket (Attention: Our Catholic Community).

Thank you to Diocesan Publications (St. Joseph/St. Jerome bulletin company) for printing this newsletter free of charge for the people of the Battle Creek Area Catholic Community.

Our next publication is planned for February 2020 with a submission deadline of January 9th.



Advent

Adapted from www.mercyhome.org



Advent, which begins the Church's liturgical year, begins on Sunday, December 1st. Advent encompasses the four Sundays and weekdays leading up to the celebration of Christmas.

The Advent season is a time of preparation for our hearts and minds for the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas.

One way you can celebrate Advent is by putting up an Advent Wreath and lighting candles each week. Put your Advent Wreath in a central place in your home so both adults and kids will be encouraged to look at it and contemplate the meaning of Advent.

The use of the wreath and candles during Advent are a longstanding Catholic tradition that was originally adopted by Christians in the Middle Ages as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas.

The wreath and candles are full of symbolism tied to the Christmas season. The wreath itself, which is made of various evergreens, signifies continuous life. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life we find in Christ.

Even the individual evergreens that make up the wreath have their own meanings that can be adapted to our faith. The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering. The pine, holly, and yew signify immortality and the cedar signifies strength and healing. The pine cones that decorate the wreath symbolize life and resurrection. The wreath as a whole is meant to remind us of both the immortality of our souls and God's promise of everlasting life to us through Christ.

The candles also have their own special significance. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the color violet is a liturgical color that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice.

The first candle, which is purple, symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.



The second candle, also purple, represents faith. It is called the "Bethlehem Candle" as a reminder of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The third candle is pink and symbolizes joy. It is called the "Shepherd's Candle," and is pink because rose is a liturgical color for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This final candle, the "Angel's Candle," symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

Some traditions add a white candle, which is placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the life of Christ. The color white is for purity—because Christ is our sinless, pure Savior.

If you do not yet have an Advent Wreath, there will be a chance to make one at the *Preparing for Advent* potluck dinner. This will be held at St. Joseph School Cafeteria on November 22nd from 6:00 - 9:00 pm.

Celebrating Advent is an excellent way to prepare your mind and heart for Christmas. For more ideas on celebrating Advent, check out www.CatholicBC.org/advent. †

Rosary at Friendship Park —

by Jim Hazdra

On October 12th, two dozen people met at Friendship Park to pray the rosary. Since 2007, America Needs Fatima holds Public Square Rosary Crusades each year with thousands of rosary rallies in cities across our country. There is a spiritual war going on across the nation and, as Our Lady of Fatima said, the only way to fight this is using the rosary as a weapon to defend our country. †



Advent 2019

2019 Tree of Love

Our Tree of Love Christmas project has brought joy to many families over the years. Last year, St. Joseph Parish served 120 families with gifts and food boxes!! We invite everyone to help us spread the Joy and Love of Christmas again this year. After all, Christ is Love and our LOVE is making someone's Christmas happy and Christ-like.

All gifts must be returned BEFORE December 16.

After you take a tag, return your wrapped gift with the tag securely attached.
Do not wrap hams or turkeys!

If you return your gift or food on a weekday, bring it to the Parish Center.

Also please do not take a tag unless you can return it with a gift.


Please do not drop packages at the rectory.

You can place your gifts under the tree during weekend Mass hours.

If you lose a tag, please call 969-5606 and we will try to help you.

We ask that you please be prompt in returning your gifts.

All gifts must be returned BEFORE December 16




Preparing for a family Advent

take home devotionals and activities

Friday, NOVEMBER 22nd 6PM TO 9PM

Come and discover ways to draw closer to Christ as a family this Advent!

POTLUCK DINNER | CRAFTS | PRAYER IDEAS
ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL CAFETERIA



For more information on this or other Family Activity Night events, visit:
WWW.CATHOLICBC.ORG/FAMILY-MINISTRY

Made with PosterMyWall.com

FATHER JOHN'S ADVENT LECTURES
Wednesday's 6:00 - 7:30 pm
(during Mid-Week Faith Lift)
St. Philip Parish Center
Dinner available from 5:00 - 5:45 pm
(Donation appreciated)
See the bulletin for details!

Advent



Spirit of Giving

by Sharon Ohm

"As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me." Matthew 25:40

The St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Philip Parish works with Santa's Helper in Battle Creek by collecting gifts for families in need. We contact the families, asking what gifts they could use, then fill out request cards, hanging them on the parish Giving Tree, in front of Church from Thanksgiving weekend through most of December.



Parish members have been generous in providing clothes and toys for the children and household items for older adults, as well as funds to provide bountiful Christmas meals.

We can always use help packing and delivering food and gift boxes. For Christmas 2019, we will be packing boxes in the Tiger Room from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on December 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, and 20.

We especially need drivers to help us deliver the food, toys, and gifts to homes in our parish area from 9:00 a.m. until noon on Saturday, December 21st.

Please join us in the spirit of Christmas – the spirit of giving.

If you have any questions, please call Sharon Ohm at 269-967-4976 or the St. Philip parish office and leave your name and phone number.

Thank you for being Christmas angels. †

St. Jerome Men's Club

by Michael Kelley

The St. Jerome Men's Club is a social organization at St. Jerome Church. While it supplies the manpower for parish functions, its main goal is to keep alive the close-knit family values that have kept the parish together for so many years.



Pancake Breakfast

Originally, the men got together once a month in the parish social hall and played penny poker for fun. The main fundraiser was a pancake breakfast on the third Sunday of the month during the school year that featured pancakes, sausage, and Fr. Palmer's famous "egg toast", giving the children taking catechism, their parents, as well as the whole parish community, a time to get together as a parish family.

Since then, the Club has added a variety of other items to entice the parishioners down to the social hall, including biscuits and gravy, an egg casserole and pigs in a blanket. To further its cause, "Sundaes on Sunday" was also added on the second Sunday of the month offering donuts and coffee to go along with the sundaes.



Sister Therese Mary gave the club a shot in the arm during a lean period when the number of parishioners dwindled, adding rib dinners during the summer months. Somehow, as only she could do, she got the manager of Damon's restaurant to cater the meal making it a huge success. She was instrumental in keeping the Men's Club alive during that time.

The Club meets once a month on the first Tuesday at 6:30 pm for dinner to discuss any business and welcomes anyone who wants to join. (The president buys the first dinner!) Contact Mike Kelley at (269) 317-0382 if you are interested.

With God's help and blessings, the Men's Club will continue on for many more years to come. †



Besides the monthly breakfasts, the Men's Club also spearheads the holiday gift baskets for both Thanksgiving and Christmas for twenty families in need, through Darlene Williams (Santa's Helper). With help from the CCW and the generous parishioners willing to donate their time and money, the Club purchases the food, boxes it

up, arranges for its distribution, and offers a warm meal for the families who pick up their baskets. At Christmas, gifts for the family members are given as well.

SUNDAY SUPPERS



by Steve Lewis, Photos by Kim Lewis

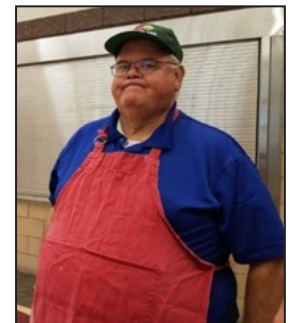
For the past 30 years, volunteers have provided a nutritious meal to anyone who shows up hungry on Sunday afternoons from 4:00 to 5:00 pm at St. Philip Catholic Church.



Between 100 and 160 diners sign in at the door each week and sit down to a hot meal. The group is very diverse in age, race and family make up; most arrive on foot.

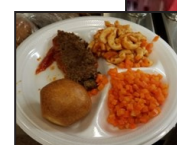


We need an active volunteer staff to handle our God-given mission to feed His people. There are five different crews of volunteers who are responsible for their assigned Sunday. Each crew needs 8-12 people. The team coordinates their meal including: ordering and picking up the food from the Food Bank, preparing and serving the meal, and cleanup of the space. In addition, many students from various high schools and colleges volunteer throughout the year. There is always a need for more happy volunteers.



Sunday Suppers are funded by donations which go directly to the Food Bank of South Central Michigan and to the St. Vincent de Paul Society, which provides supplies and consumable goods which are not available at the Food Bank. If you are interested in contributing funds to this important work, you may send a

check directly to the Food Bank indicating St. Philip Sunday Suppers as the beneficiary or send a check to the parish office labeled Sunday Suppers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Steve Lewis at slewis@stphilipbc.org.



- John 21:17
Jesus said,
Feed my sheep. †

October Pro-Life Happenings

by Cathy Hirzel, Photos by Mary Culp, Cathy Hirzel, and Phil Stewart

The Tri-Parish Pro-Life Ministry had a busy Fall. During the last few months, we have been collecting signatures for the Dismemberment Abortion Petitions. The Michigan bishops asked all churches to have this petition available for parishioners to sign. It is hoped that enough signatures will be collected to return this proposal to the Michigan legislature and have them approve it again. It will then become law without the governor's signature and end this terrible practice of ripping the baby apart in the womb. If you have not yet signed this petition, please stop by your parish office and add your name to the list of fellow pro-life parishioners.

The Life Chain on October 6th was small in numbers but big on heart for the unborn. This national event happens on the first Sunday of October every year all over the United States as well as Canada. We would like to encourage all parishioners to join us in this hour of prayer for the unborn next year. It is our witness to Battle Creek of the culture of LIFE.

Our sixth annual dinner was very successful this year. The delicious dinner was prepared by Mary Ann Angelo from Barista Blues. Dr. Janet Smith, a well-known speaker and author and recently retired from Sacred Heart Seminary, was our speaker. She also spoke to our high school students in the afternoon on "Why Pre-Marital Sex is Wrong". The students enjoyed her presentation and learned how it is important to do what God wants you to do, love yourself, and think carefully about decisions that will affect the rest of your life. Her evening presentation to more than 80 people from nine parishes was titled "A Culture of Life vs. A Culture of Death". Dr. Smith commented on how such things as

the destruction of the family, contraception, abortion, gay marriage, and euthanasia have contributed to the culture of death in our lives today. It is important to turn back to God and follow His commandments to promote the culture of LIFE. It is vital that we constantly remind our children and grandchildren how to live a good moral life. We thank all of those who attended the dinner. \$1,350 was collected in donations to benefit Alternatives of Battle Creek.

We also participated with Kalamazoo's 40 Days for Life this Fall. People from around the diocese prayed in front of Planned Parenthood from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Monday through Saturday. This will also be going on during the season of Lent, so please prayerfully consider joining in this powerful prayer ministry. If you would like to participate for an hour, please contact Brenda Sinkovitz at 40dayskalamazoo@gmail.com or 269-491-0377.

Our next activity will be the annual January Prayer Service for the Unborn at the Beckley Cemetery on January 19th at 3:00 pm. Fr. Andrew will be leading the brief prayer service. We also hope to have a free showing of the movie *Unplanned* in January or February. All Catholics should see this movie. Watch the bulletin for details.

The next meeting of the Tri-Parish Pro-Life Ministry will be held on Thursday, November 21st, at 7:00 pm in the basement of the St. Philip Parish Office. Please join us and get involved in this important work. For more information, contact Co-Presidents Karen Rabineau at karenrabineau@gmail.com or Julie Staab at juliems3@zoho.com.



Delight in the Lord Adoration

By Fr. Chris Ankley, Photos by Missy Skutt

Hello friends,

I hope this note finds you well. I'm writing to see if you'd like to attend a holy hour here at St. Joseph Church. We offer a tri-lingual holy hour on the first Wednesday of every month beginning at 7:00 pm. It's for families and they are encouraged to bring their children. We don't care if they are a bit noisy. We are done by 8:00 pm with refreshments to follow.



A breakdown of the evening:

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

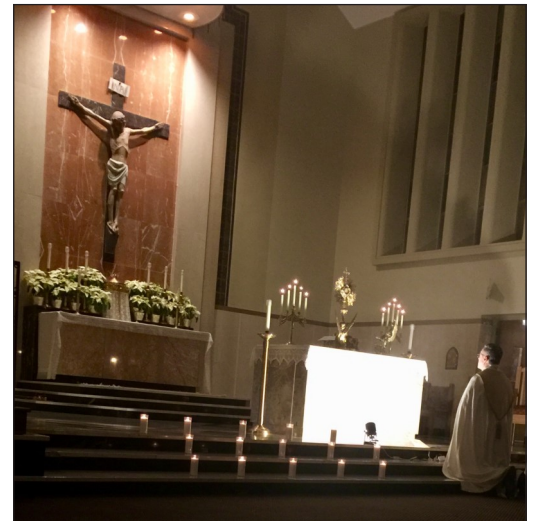
We sing *O Salutaris*.

A Scripture passage is read.

Music follows in the three languages.

We end the hour with singing *Tantum Ergo*, benediction, reposition, and the hymn *Holy God We Praise Thy Name*.

Is there a first Wednesday of the month that you'd be interested in joining us? Or come to them all! Jan. 8th, Feb. 5th, Mar. 4th, and so on.



Note: There is a special group coming on December 4th called, The 177 Project. For more information, visit www.CatholicBC.org/delight-in-the-lord-adoration.

Pax et Bonum,

Fr. Chris †

Media and Communications

Our Tri-Parish Community is blessed to have many communication and Social Media opportunities. For a full list of Media and Communication platforms, visit our website at www.CatholicBC.org or watch future newsletters for featured programs.

Facebook:

- †Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools
- †Council of Catholic Women - St. Joseph Church, Battle Creek, MI
- †St. Joseph Catholic Church
- †St. Philip Roman Catholic Church Battle Creek, MI
- †St. Philip Parish Council of Catholic Women

Websites:

- †www.bcacs.org
- †www.Catholicbc.org
- †www.stjeromebc.org
- †www.stjosephbc.org
- †www.stphilipbc.org



Our Priests and Religious Vocations



Beloved Mary, Mother of all priests, please wrap your mantle of grace around these chosen men of God as a blanket of protection. Beloved Jesus, may your Precious Blood form an impenetrable defense around them. Amen.

Prayer for Priests

O Jesus, eternal Priest,
 keep Your priests within the shelter of
 Your Sacred Heart,
 where none may touch them.
 Keep unstained their anointed hands,
 which daily touch Your Sacred Body.
 Keep unsullied their lips,
 daily purpled with Your Precious Blood.
 Keep pure and unearthly their hearts,
 sealed with the sublime mark
 of the priesthood.
 Let Your holy love surround them and
 shield them from the world's contagion.
 Bless their labours with abundant fruit
 and may the souls to whom they
 minister be their joy and
 consolation here and in
 Heaven their beautiful and
 everlasting crown. Amen.
 Mary Help of Christians, Mother of
 Priests - Pray for us.

Welcome Fr. Pius Cung

Fr. Pius Kei Lian Cung, born in Falam, Myanmar in 1970, was ordained a priest on November 17, 2002 into the Diocese of Hakha. Since then he has been serving the Church as Rector of St. Padre Pio's Pre-Minor Seminary, Hakha.

We welcome Fr. Pius to St. Joseph Parish. He is an answer to prayers by the Burmese Community and we are grateful to have him join our Parish.

On Saturday, October 19th at St. Joseph, there was a Mass and reception to welcome Fr. Pius Cung to our community.



Sarah Robinson

Please keep Sarah Robinson in your prayers as she enters the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist. Sarah is a member of our Battle Creek Catholic Community. †

The Priesthood is No Game

by Frank M. Skeltis, Photos by Frank M. Skeltis

Fr. Andrew Raczkowski, Parochial Vicar of St. Joseph parish in Battle Creek, had a job that every teenager who has ever stared into an iPhone could only dream of. Before he became a priest, he was a computer game artist and designed those deliciously weird monsters and creatures who terrorize anyone daring enough to try to beat the computer. Needless to say, his arrival here at St. Joseph took an unusual route.

Born in Portage, Michigan, Fr. Andrew was the middle son between two sisters. He attended Portage schools, graduating in 2002 from Portage Central. Following his creative bent, he earned a degree in Interactive Design and Game Development/Computer Art from Savannah College of Art and Design in 2005. He modestly explained that his training was the graphics part of computer games such as the scary, grotesque creatures and not the actual mazes and hazards that the “rock stars” of game design produce. He calls himself a *game artist*.

Following his dream was a challenge in the highly competitive world of video game design. It was two years before he landed his first job in Los Angeles at 2K Sports in 2007. From there, he moved to Meteor Games, originator of NeoPets, well known in the world of gamers. However, it was shortly after his arrival that the 2008 recession hit and the company began to bleed money. Along with many other young comrades, he was let go with little hope for a future in the video game industry.

He sees the hand of God in this turn of fortune. Since the age of eight or nine he had thought he wanted to be a priest. Although he says he really did enjoy the work of a game artist, Fr. Andrew says, “I always had this nagging sense of doing something more.” Ironically, 2008 was the year that Pope Benedict declared the Year of the Priest.

He explains, “I had made a deal with God. I wanted quiet and simplicity in my life. I never liked the big city. But I had ten years of student loans. If I could pay off my loans, I would become a country priest.”

When the economy tanked, he immediately contacted the Los Angeles archdiocesan office as well as a Benedictine Abbey in the nearby countryside. When he visited the abbey, he says, “I had a very clear sense that God was NOT calling me here.” The seminary for the archdiocese was just a block or so from his home and when he visited, he knew that this was where he belonged.



But prudence prevailed when he realized coming back to Portage would allow him to pay off his debts and follow his mission to the priesthood. He says that the Spirit gave him a sign when he was asked within two weeks of coming home by three separate people without prior contact when he was going to the seminary. Shortly thereafter, he contacted the diocesan vocation office, entered Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit, and began his studies. Six years later, on May 21, 2016, he was ordained by Bishop Bradley in St. Augustine Cathedral in Kalamazoo.

Although he still considers himself a “newby,” he says he really enjoys being a priest. His favorite parts of ministry? “I didn’t know how much I would enjoy the Spanish ministry and family ministry. I enjoy helping couples get ready for marriage. I am a priest for their sake. I get to know families and have friendships with families with kids. I get to accompany families toward holiness and toward Christ.”

Fr. Andrew’s message is simple and straightforward: “Jesus is the reason for everything. He gives life meaning. Everything in life comes from Him and is directed to Him.”

He reflects on the path that brought him here. “I’m continually humbled by how God works. I am humbled by how he works despite my inadequacies. For young people and young adults, I’ve been down the road of questioning and doubt. I have come to the conclusion that Jesus is the answer for everything. Our peace and happiness are in Him.”

Fr. Andrew has found his way through the maze and has won the prize. †



Jesús nos invita a ser una comunidad unida y una sola familia en su nombre. Los hispanos somos muy alegres, nos gusta la fiesta la música y compartir y eso se demuestra en como celebramos nuestras fiestas religiosas. Nuestro primer encuentro grande es a principio del año en semana santa - El Viacrucis Viviente -, Le sigue en octubre la fiesta en honor a San Francisco de Asís, luego en diciembre la fiesta de Nuestra Sra. De Guadalupe y las posadas. Entre medio tenemos celebraciones más pequeñas como los convivios mensuales, la participación en el Superfest u alguna Kermese. En esta nota hablare sobre 3. Y en la próxima hablare sobre las demás.

Ntra. Sra. de Guadalupe

El novenario este año comienza el martes 3 de diciembre en la Iglesia (horario a confirmar, normalmente entre las 6:30pm o 7pm.) Hay un pequeño convivio en el Centro parroquial después de cada día de la novena. El 12 de diciembre día de Ntra. Sra. de Guadalupe se comienza el día cantándole a la Virgen las mañanitas en la Iglesia acompañados por el coro o una banda a las 5 de la mañana terminando con chocolate, atole, pan y/o donuts.

Esa misma tarde (Horario a confirmar, quizá a las 6:00 pm) Se hace la procesión con la Virgen y se celebra la Santa Misa acompañados por una Banda y bailes típicos para la procesión de entrada y ofrendas. Al terminar la misa hay un gran festejo en la cafetería de la escuela a donde todos están invitados.



Posadas

Comienzan el 16 de diciembre son 9 días, Comienzan con una procesión desde la Iglesia hasta la cafetería de la escuela, con San José y María en el burrito, acompañados por el coro. Luego se pide posada y al entrar los peregrinos se cantan villancicos, hay un convivio y piñata para los niños. ¡No se lo pierdan!



Convivios mensuales

Una manera de conocernos y acercarnos más como comunidad son los convivios mensuales. El último viernes de cada mes a las 6:30, todos los grupos traen algo para compartir y toda la comunidad está invitada con sus familias a venir y pasar un rato agradable. ¡Los esperamos a todos! †

Jesus invites us to be a united community and family in his name. We Hispanics are very festive, we like to have gatherings with music, dance, and lots of food and that is also true in the way we celebrate our religious holidays. Our first big gathering takes place at the beginning of the year during Holy Week - The Live Way of the Cross. The feast in honor of St. Francis of Assisi follows in October, then in December we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and in Advent we do the Posadas (the inns). Also during the year, we have smaller celebrations such as monthly gatherings, participation in Superfest, or a Kermese. In this edition, I will talk about three of our festivities. And in the next newsletter I will talk about the others.

Our Lady of Guadalupe

The novena this year begins on Tuesday, December 3rd in the Church (time to be confirmed, usually between 6:30 or 7:00 pm.) There is a small gathering in the Parish Center after each day of the novena. On December 12th, the day of Our Lady of Guadalupe begins with singing to the Virgin, *Las Mañanitas* in the Church accompanied by the choir or a band at 5:00 in the morning (Yes, 5:00 am!!) ending with chocolate, atole, bread and/or donuts.

That same afternoon (time to be confirmed, maybe at 6:00 pm), we start with a procession with the Image of Our Lady and the Holy Mass is celebrated accompanied by a band and typical dances for the entrance procession and offerings. At the end of the Mass, there is a great celebration in the cafeteria of the school where everyone is invited.



The Posadas (Inns)

They begin on December 16th for nine days, starting with a procession from the Church to the school cafeteria, with a statue of St. Joseph and Mary sitting on the donkey, accompanied by the choir. The people are divided into two groups: one stays outside the school (pilgrims) and one is inside (the inn keepers). There is a long song where the pilgrims ask the inn keepers to let them in. Once they enter, everybody together sings carols, then there is a gathering with food and a piñata for the children.



Monthly gatherings

One way to get to know each other and get closer as a community is the monthly gatherings. On the last Friday of each month at 6:30 pm, all the groups bring something to share and the whole community is invited with their families to come and have a nice time. Please come. You are all invited. We would love to see you there!! †

BCACS Homecoming

by Cathy Erskine, Photos by Battle Creek Inquirer

The wonderful traditions of Homecoming celebrate our Fighting Tiger Pride and school spirit. The school-wide celebration included dress up days, competitive games, hallway decorating competitions, Homecoming court, and of course, football! Our BCACS Marching Tigers entertained and energized the crowd and the homecoming king and queen were chosen. Congratulations to court members Elsa Mullis, Abby Austin, Maddie Hallacy, Tiffany Adam, (Queen) Alexis Behnke, (King) Adam Sprague, Conor Gaussein, Charlie Harrington, Ben Rutherford, and Gus Strenge. The high school students completed the week with a dance, and alumni celebrated with a Pizza and Pints event. †



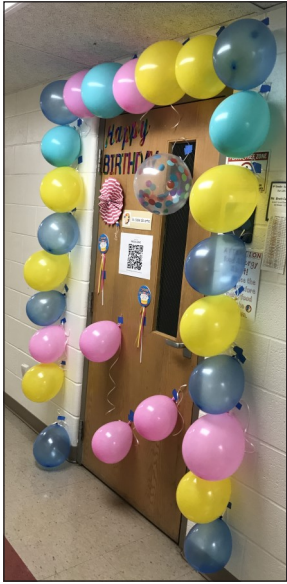
Upcoming BCACS events:

- *St. Philip Catholic Central's National Honor Society will sponsor a Thanksgiving Breakfast on November 28th for those in need in our community from 8:00am-10:00am.
- *The St. Joseph Schools Christmas Program will be held on December 20th at 10:00am in St. Joseph Church.
- *Band concert date/location are TBD, watch bulletin for updates.

Parents in Prayer

By Missy Skutt, Photos by Vicki Groat

Parents in Prayer is a relatively new BCACS group. Parents in Prayer (PiP) will prayerfully support BCACS and provide opportunities to deepen faith, strengthen community and encounter Christ.



PiP has the following focus areas:

Prayer Warrior Wednesday. Gather at the schools and pray at the locker/doorway of every student/staff/priest. A weekly prayer email is sent to families/staff so they can join us from afar.

Faith and Community Classes. Abiding Joy meets after the 9:00 am school Mass at St. Joseph parish center on Thursdays to read, ponder, and discuss Sunday's readings. Snacks are provided. Children are welcome.

Special Prayers for Teachers/Priests/Staff during their birthday month. Individual prayers from parents and grandparents are gathered into a spiritual bouquet which is left on the specially decorated door of the teacher/priest/staff on his/her birthday!

Movie and Family Nights. Gathering with food and friends to build community and share our faith.

We would love to have you join us! For more information, visit: www.CatholicBC.org/parents-in-prayer or call JoEllen Campos 269-830-3792. †



By Abby Lumbar, Photo by Conway Photography



Allowing our children to grow and flourish in our shared faith is the greatest gift we can bestow upon them. From our many decades of experience, we know that Catholic education builds the best foundation for a purpose-fueled future.

We believe that the mission of the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools Foundation and our BCACS schools is similar to a garden. With the kind and generous support of our committed donors, we are able to provide financial assistance for our Catholic schools. This investment provides the “soil” and necessary supports to ensure a solid platform for the growth of our students. Our dedicated teachers plant the seeds of learning for our students to grow and prosper. Our pastors nurture our faith, which like water and sunlight, is essential for a healthy and vibrant garden.

As we launch the 2019-2020 Annual Fund Drive, we welcome you to support our schools. Your support is essential to ensuring the future growth of Catholic education in our community. Contributions to the Annual Fund Drive benefit many critical functions of our schools. With these gifts, the BCACS Foundation provides a subsidy to lower operating costs, supports families financially to attend the schools through tuition assistance, invests in technology to enrich the learning experiences for our staff and students, and provides for capital improvements and overall building security.



There are many ways you can support our annual fund drive. You can make a pledge or a one-time gift by mailing it to BCACS Foundation at 63 N. 24th Street, Battle Creek, MI 49015. You can also give online at www.bcacs.org. Contributing gifts of appreciated stock or donating a portion of your minimum distribution directly from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) are accepted and can positively impact your income tax situation. Contact your professional advisor to see if one of these options are best for you. For more information about this campaign, feel free to contact the BCACS Foundation at (269) 963-4771 or ALumbar@bcacs.org. †

St. Joseph Schools Celebrates 70 Years

by Cathy Erskine, Photos by John Grap

Current and former students and staff joyfully celebrated St. Joseph Elementary, Preschool and Middle School on October 16th, as we commemorated the dedication of the schools on that date in 1949. We are so proud of providing 70 years of quality, faith-based education to our community. The celebration began with a special Mass, followed by the creation of a time capsule, and concluded with a pep assembly with the band leading the school fight song and, of course, birthday cake. †



St. Philip Catholic Church
112 Capital Avenue, NE
Battle Creek, MI 49017

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Christmas and Holy Day Mass Schedule

St. Jerome

Christmas Vigil: Tuesday, December 24th, 4:00 pm

Christmas: Wednesday, December 25th, 10:00 am

Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God:

Wednesday, January 1st, 10:00 am

St. Joseph

Christmas Vigil: Tuesday, December 24th, 5:00 pm,
7:00 pm, 9:00 pm (Spanish)

Christmas: Wednesday, December 25th, Midnight,
8:00 am, 10:00 am, Noon (Spanish), 2:30 pm (Burmese)

Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God:

Tuesday, December 31st, 5:00 pm (Spanish), 7:00 pm
Wednesday, January 1st, 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 5:00 pm

St. Philip

Christmas Vigil: Tuesday, December 24th,
4:30 pm (Children's Mass) and 7:30 pm

Christmas: Wednesday, December 25th
Masses at Midnight, 9:00 am and 11:30 am

Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God:

Tuesday, December 31st, 5:30 pm
Wednesday, January 1st Mass at 8:00 am and Noon



Tri-Parish Penance Service will be at St. Philip this year. Please watch the bulletins for date and time.

