

Our Catholic Community

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



Winter 2020

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PROFILE: Ruby Briones On the Road with Christ

by Frank M. Skeltis, Photos by Tammy Allington

Every person at some point must choose a career path to follow. Many, if not most, of us start in a general direction and see where life takes us. But some are lucky enough to know early what they want to *do with their life*. Ruby Briones, St. Joseph parish ECHO intern, is one of those who has a clear-eyed focus of the path she will follow and is taking steps to reach her goal.

Ruby grew up in Los Angeles, California, the second of four children. She and her older sister are on their own while a younger brother and sister still live at home. Ruby graduated in 2018 from Holy Cross College at Notre Dame, Indiana, with a degree in Theology and Liberal Studies. Like many young people these days, she returned home for a year after graduation. She was hired at a local parish and also worked as a teacher's aide at the parish school.

"I realized that I wanted to dive deeper into the parish side and to do it better. After a lot of discernment, I applied to Notre Dame in the ECHO Master's program."

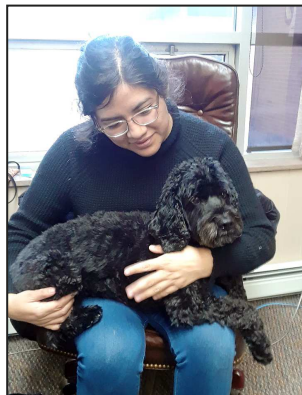
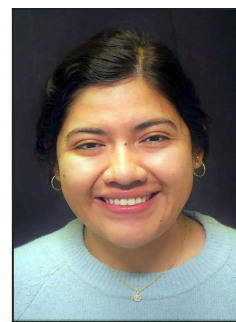
She explains that the word "echo" and the word "catechesis" (think of the word catechism) have a common Greek root meaning to resound. ECHO means to Resound the Good News. The program at Notre Dame is intended to train ecclesial lay ministers for parish work. She applied, was accepted, and was assigned to St. Joseph in Battle Creek.

Ruby will be here for two years, working in the parish, and taking online course work during the school year as well as on-campus classes during the summer. She and two fellow ECHO interns who are assigned to parishes in Kalamazoo live in the Cenacle, the home next to the parish center. They are collectively known as *The ECHO Girls*.

When asked what her duties are at St. Joseph, her answer is simple: "Whatever I am told to do." Fr. Ankley is her mentor who guides her in her assignments and she has plenty to keep her busy. She assists Barbara Kincaid with Religious Education and Andrea Perry in Youth Ministry. Plus, she teaches Spanish every day at St. Joseph Elementary school and helps Sarah Meyers, school principal.

The glue that holds all this together is what she calls living in the "intentional community" with her fellow ECHO interns. Interns are distributed all across the country and their individual parish responsibilities are similar. But she and her two companions come together at the end of each day to share meals together and pray with one another. They are learning to be the lay church ministers of tomorrow.

See PROFILE, page 2



When asked about her experiences here at St. Joseph, she has an eager and ready response. "The community here has been very tight knit and strong. It has been a better surprise than in my other parish experiences. I see a community that wants to grow in faith and is very open to grow as a community. It has been inspiring and makes me want to give more. It has helped me want to grow deeper in my faith."

"My previous experience was a job. Here, Fr. Chris has been a mentor and everyone teaches me as an apprentice. I am here not just to work but to learn. People are willing to teach me and I am happy to learn. They are just so supportive here. The parish staff go through their thought processes showing me what and why they do what they do. It has been helpful to learn from them."

But Ruby feels she has learned not only from the designated leaders in the parish but also from the parishioners with whom she has come in contact. She says, "The parishioners are so helpful and answer my questions. I think it has only deepened my desire to work in parish ministry. I want to learn how to do it well. I especially want to work in a school as well as a parish."

She has received some words of wisdom in her growth process. "The most helpful advice I have received is that 'this is how we do it here.' I know each place has its own different personality but the essential goal is consistent: How can we bring people to Christ? The goal is the same, though the means may be different."

She attends daily Mass and has learned this about herself through ECHO at St. Joseph: "I have to be grounded in the Faith that I'm bringing others to. I won't be successful if I don't do well what I am teaching. Christ is my focus. I have had to deepen my own spiritual growth to bring Christ to others. I hope to come out of this with a deeper love of God and his people and a better grasp of how I can contribute to the Church....to get a better hold of my role in the Church and get a deeper love of God and His Church."

Her final words to the people of St. Joseph are of thanks. "I am very grateful with how welcoming everyone has been. I am filled with gratitude. Please pray for me." †

St. Jerome Lenten Luncheons

by Flow and Steve Marinch

The annual Lenten luncheons program will again be held at St. Jerome Parish Hall, 229 Collier Avenue, Battle Creek on the five Wednesdays of Lent – February 26th, March 4th, March 11th, March 25th, and April 1st. There will be no luncheon on March 18th because Bishop Bradley will be at St. Jerome for "Lunch with the Bishop" on March 19th.

This program began around 2006 with the help of Sr. Therese Mary and Sr. Electa. The luncheons originally were held on Thursdays but were later moved to Wednesdays when Fr. Mathew Manalel was Pastor of St. Jerome.

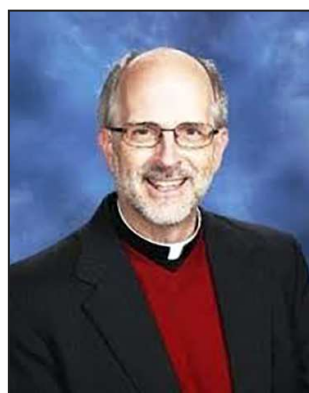
The program consists of three parts: Mass in the church; a Lenten presentation in the social hall; and a light lunch consisting of soup and bread or crackers

The first program will begin with a 10:30 am Mass celebrated in the church on Ash Wednesday with the distribution of ashes. Subsequent programs will begin with a 10:45 am Mass followed by an 11:30 am Lenten talk of about twenty to thirty minutes and a luncheon with a variety of soup choices. There will be a different presenter each week.

There is no charge for these programs, but a free will offering would be truly appreciated.

So, if you are looking for something to do on a Wednesday during Lent, set your GPS to go to St. Jerome. You will be enlightened if you've never been to this program before. If you have and enjoyed it, bring a friend. Church bulletins will have a current list of presenters and dates. †

A few of this year's speakers



Fr. Ken Schmidt



Fr. Max Nightingale



Fr. Andrew Raczkowski

Lenten Schedule

St. Jerome

Ash Wednesday

February 26th, 10:30 am

Lenten Luncheons with Mass and Speaker

Wednesdays during Lent,
10:45 am

Bishop Pastoral Visit

March 19th, Lunch with the
Bishop (time TBA)

Palm Sunday

April 5th, 10:00 am

Holy Thursday

April 9th, 4:00 pm
(Adoration: 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm)

Good Friday

April 10th, 3:00 pm Liturgy of the
Passion and Death of the Lord

Easter

April 12th, 10:00 am



St. Joseph

Ash Wednesday

February 26th, 8:00 am, 6:00 pm,
7:30 pm (Spanish)

Bishop Pastoral Visit

March 19th, 7:00 pm

Tri-Parish Communal Penance Service

April 2nd, 6:30 pm

Palm Sunday

April 4th, 5:00 pm Vigil
April 5th, 8:00 am, 10:00 am,
12:00 pm, 5:00 pm (Spanish)

Holy Thursday

April 9th, 7:00 pm
(Adoration in the Parish Center
from 8:00 pm - 12:00 am)

Good Friday

April 10th,
12:30 pm, Prelude Music
1:00 pm, Liturgy of the Passion
and Death of Our Lord,
3:00 pm Divine Mercy,
6:00 pm Live Stations of the
Cross (Spanish)

Holy Saturday

April 11th, 1:00 pm Blessing of
Food (Parish Center Chapel)
9:00 pm Easter Vigil

Easter

April 12th, 8:00 am, 10:00 am,
12:00 pm, 2:00 pm (Burmese),
5:00 pm (Spanish)

St. Philip

Ash Wednesday

February 26th, 8:00 am, 12:00 pm,
5:30 pm

Bishop Pastoral Visit

March 18th (more information to
come)

Palm Sunday

April 4th, 4:30 pm Vigil;
April 5th, 9:00 am and 11:30 am

Holy Thursday

April 9th, 7:00 pm

Good Friday

April 10th, 3:00 pm
Liturgy of the Passion and Death
of Our Lord

Holy Saturday

April 11th, 9:00 pm, Easter Vigil

Easter

April 12th, 7:00 am, 9:00 am,
11:30 am



Fr. John's Lenten Series

Topic: Church History

Where: St. Philip Parish Center

When: Wednesdays during Lent, 6:00 – 7:30 pm



Stations of the Cross, Photos by John Grap



St. Jerome

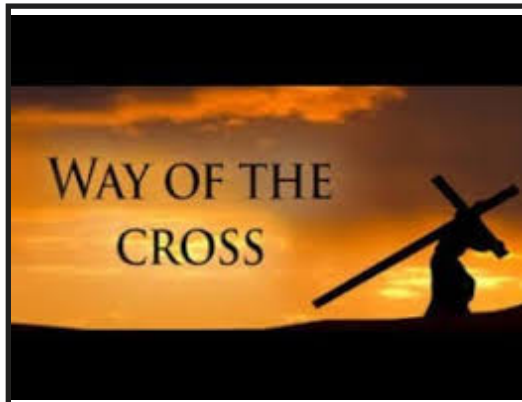
Fridays, 5:00 pm

St. Joseph

Fridays, 6:00 pm (Spanish), 7:00 pm (English)

St. Philip

Fridays, 5:00 pm



Have you ever lived
the Way of the Cross
through Mary's eyes?

You are invited to experience the
Stations of the Cross in a new way on

Friday, April 3rd, at 7:00 pm

in St. Joseph Church.

Everyone is invited!



Our Priests

*All parishioners are invited to **PRAY FOR PRIESTS***

St. Philip Adoration Chapel, First Saturday of each month, 9:00 – 10:00 am



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.

**Happy 13th
Anniversary of
your ordination,
Fr. Raj!!!**



Fr. Pius, Our Blessing from Burma

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



In recent years, Battle Creek has become home to an ever increasing number of new immigrants, many of whom have come from Burma. Our city has benefited greatly by having many Burmese families as our neighbors and has been enriched by opportunities to experience Burmese culture. St. Joseph Parish is fortunate to have a vibrant, devout community of Burmese families who participate in all of the church liturgy and worship. For most of the youngsters, assimilating into American culture is a smooth transition because of opportunities in school and in social activities.

However willing and eager the new Burmese citizens are to fit into their new homeland, one important aspect of their lives has been difficult: being able to worship in their own language and customs. Through the efforts of the Burmese Catholics of Battle Creek and the Diocese of Kalamazoo, St. Joseph Parish has been greatly blessed by our new assistant pastor, Fr. Pius Keilian Cung. He has come to us from Burma on Oct. 16, 2019.

Fr. Pius is from a small, rural town in the Chin state. He is the youngest in his family. Both of his parents are deceased. Educated by priests and nuns from the age of fourteen in a Catholic co-education boarding school, he attended daily Mass and recited the rosary every night. As he got older, he would assist the parish priests as they

made their rounds from village to village. Daily worship and prayer became a habit.

After high school, he was invited by his parish priest to attend seminary. He liked the life he was leading and felt the call. He studied for ten years and was ordained on Nov. 17, 2002.

Fr. Pius was an assistant pastor at a local parish for four years, followed by two more years as an assistant at St. Joseph Cathedral Parish. It was during his time at the cathedral that the bishop noticed his extraordinary gift for both wood carving and painting. Impressed with his talent, the bishop sent him to the Philippines for four years to further his education. He studied painting and carving for two years followed by Biblical Studies, receiving a Master's Degree.

Fr. Pius has created incredibly beautiful life size cement carvings of the Blessed Mother, St. Michael the Archangel, and a detailed corpus for a crucifix that he is carving. His talent even extends to architecture, since he has designed a parish rectory for St. Charbel's Parish using only Catholic carpenters and artisans to complete the project.



From there, his assignments greatly escalated. For three years, he was a spiritual director at the Little Way Missionary Priests of St. Therese Seminary. Next, he was rector of the Padre Pio Minor Seminary for two years.

It was then that he answered the call from the Burmese community of Battle Creek. For three years, he will be here to minister specifically to the Burmese families but he is an assistant to Fr. Ankley and also has St. Joseph Parish responsibilities such as daily Mass.

When asked what his expectations are, Fr. Pius answers simply: "My first priority is the assignments of the diocese. I am here to help the Burmese community by hearing confessions, offering a weekly Burmese Mass, and sometimes combining with ministers of other denominations in Burmese funerals."

But he doesn't feel that he is overworked. "Up to now, I don't feel it is a burden. People need a basic religious life and sacraments to hear in their own language. Everybody has a job and is busy with work so it is easy to forget about God when we are busy with our work lives. Whenever I have an opportunity, I encourage people to be strong in their faith. I want to bring blessings to them. My number one purpose is to encourage people to remember God."

As for his message to the people of St. Joseph, "I feel at home because Fr. Chris and Fr. Andrew are friendly and accept me. All the people are friendly."

May you have the joy and peace and success of Christmas and the New Year. Peace and joy to everyone." ✠



Fr. Pius, Our Blessing from Burma (Burmese Translation) —

by Dolly Vumzathang and Fr. Pius

ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အတွက်မြန်မာပြည်မှကောင်းချီးတော်၊ ဖါသာရ်ပိုင်အားစ်
ရေး၊ ဖရင့်ခ်အမ် စကာလ်

မကြာသေးသောနှစ်တွေမှစပြီး၊ ဘဲတာလ်ခရိတ်သည် အခြားနိုင်ငံပြောင်းရွှေ့လာသူများ၊
အများစုကမြန်မာပြည်မှရောက်လာသောသူများနေထိုင်ရာဒေသဖြစ်လာပါသည်။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏
မြို့သည် မြန်မာမိသားစုများ၏ဝတ်ပြုကိုးကွယ်မှု၌စိတ်အားထက်သန်စွာပါဝင်မှုကြောင့်
စိန်ဂျိုးဇက်စီရင်စုသည်ကောင်းချီးမင်္ဂလာရရှိသည်။ လူငယ်လေးများသည် အမေရိကရိုးရာ
ယဉ်ကျေးမှုကို စာသင်ကျောင်းနှင့်လူမှုသွားလာရေးတို့ကြောင့်လွယ်ကူစွာလက်ခံနိုင်ကြပါ
သည်။ သို့သော်လည်း၊ မြန်မာပြည်သူပြည်သားများအတွက်နေရာသစ်၊ အခြေအနေသစ်များနှင့်
လိုက်လျောညီထွေစွာနေထိုင်ဖို့၊ မိမိရိုးရာ၊ ဒေသစကားများဖြင့်ဘုရားရှိခိုးဝတ်ပြုဖို့၊ အရေးကြီး
လိုအပ်လှပေသည်။

ဘဲတာလ်ခရိတ်ရှိမြန်မာကက်သလစ်ဘာသာဝင်များ၏ကြိုးစားအားထုတ်မှုနှင့်ကလာမဇိုးသာ
သနာ၏ဆောင်ရွက်မှုကြောင့်လက်ထောက်သိုးထိန်းအသစ် ဖါသာရ်ပိုင်အားစ်ရောက်ရှိလာပြီး၊ စိန်ဂျိုး
ဇက်စီရင်စုသည်အလွန်ကျေးဇူးပြည့်ဝလျက်ရှိနေပါသည်။ သူသည် အောက်တိုဘာ (၁၆)၊ ၂၀၁၉
ခုနှစ်တွင် မြန်မာပြည်မှ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့ထံသို့ရောက်ရှိလာကာ သူ့ဘဝအကြောင်းအနည်းငယ်ကိုကျွန်ုပ်တို့ကို
ဝေမျှပေးပါသည်။

ဖါသာရ်ပိုင်အားစ်သည် ချင်းပြည်နယ်၊ ကျေးလက်ဒေသမှဖြစ်ပါသည်။ မိသားစုမှာသားအ
ငယ်ဆုံးဖြစ်ပါသည်။ မိဘနှစ်ပါးစလုံးမရှိတော့ပါ။ အသက်(၁၄)နှစ်မှစ၍ ဘုန်းကြီးများနှင့်သီလ
ရှင်များဖွင့်ထားသောကက်သလစ်ဘော်ဒါကျောင်းတွင်နေထိုင်ကာ နေ့စဉ်မဏ္ဍားတရားနှင့်ညစ်ပုတီး
စိတ်ခြင်းတို့၌ပါဝင်လုပ်ဆောင်လေ့ရှိပါသည်။ အရွယ်ရောက်လာသောအခါ သူသည် ဘုန်းတော်ကြီး
တို့နှင့်တကွ နယ်လှည့်ခရီးစဉ်များလိုက်ကာနေ့စဉ်ဘုရားရှိခိုးခြင်းနှင့်ဆုတောင်းခြင်းများသည်နေ့
စဉ်လုပ်ဆောင်သောအကျင့်ဖြစ်လာသည်။

အထက်တန်းပြီးပြီးနောက်၊ ကျောင်းထိုင်ဘုန်းတော်ကြီးမှ သူ့အား ရဟန်းဖြစ်သင်ကျောင်း
ဝင်ရန်ဖိတ်ခေါ်ခဲ့သည်။ ဘုရား၏ဖိတ်ခေါ်သံကို စိတ်အားထက်သန်စွာဖြင့်ခံယူခဲ့ပါသည်။ ဆယ်နှစ်တာ
ပညာသင်ယူပြီးနောက်၊ နိုဝင်ဘာ (၁၇)၊ ၂၀၀၂ ခုနှစ်တွင် ရဟန်းသိက္ခာခံယူခဲ့ပါသည်။

ဖါသာရ်ပိုင်အားစ်သည် စီရင်စုတခုတွင်(၄)နှစ်တာလက်ထောက်ဘုန်းတော်ကြီးအဖြစ်တာ
ဝန်ထမ်းကာ၊ စိန်ဂျိုးဇက်ကာသီဒြယ်စီရင်စုမှာလည်း(၂)နှစ်တာကူညီတာဝန်ထမ်းခဲ့ပါသည်။ ထိုသို့
ကာသီဒြယ်မှာတာဝန်ထမ်းဆောင်နေစဉ်မှာ ပန်းချီ၊ ပန်းပု ပညာသူမှာရှိနေကြောင်း ဆရာတော်က
သိရှိခဲ့သည်။ သူ့အရည်အချင်းကိုချီးကျူးဂုဏ်ပြုသောအားဖြင့်ဖိလိပိုင်နိုင်ငံသို့ပညာတော်သင်ယူရန်(၄)
နှစ်စေလွှတ်လိုက်ပါသည်။ ပထမ(၂)နှစ်ကိုပန်းချီ၊ ပန်းပုသင်ယူပြီး၊ ကျမ်းစာကို ဆက်လက်သင်ယူကာ၊
မာစတာဘွဲ့ရရှိခဲ့သည်။

လူ့အရွယ်ရှိ မယ်တော်ဆင်တု၊ သိကြားမင်းစိန်မိုင်ကယ်နှင့်ခရုစူးကားတိုင်တို့ကိုလည်ဖန်တီး
ပြုလုပ်ခဲ့ပါသည်။ စိန်ချာဘာလ်စီရင်စု၊ ဘုန်းတော်ကြီးများနေအိမ်ကိုလည်းသူကိုယ်တိုင်ပုံစံရေးဆွဲ

See Burmese, page 27

Fr. Pius, Our Blessing from Burma (Burmese Translation)

Continued from page 6

သည်အထိ ကက်သလစ်လက်သမားများနှင့်ဆောက်လုပ်ခဲ့သည်။

ထိုအချိန်မှစပြီး လုပ်ငန်းတာဝန်များပြားလာသည်။ စိန်ထရေဇာလမ်းစဉ်သွယ်သာသနာပြုရဟန်းဖြစ်သင်ကျောင်းတွင် ဝိညာဉ်ရေးလမ်းညွှန်တာဝန်ကို (၃)နှစ်ထမ်းဆောင်ခဲ့ပါသည်။ ထို့နောက်၊ စိန်ပါဒြေပီအိုရဟန်းဖြစ်သင်ကျောင်းမှာ ကျောင်းအုပ် (၂)နှစ်လုပ်ဆောင်ခဲ့ပါသည်။

ဘဲတာလ်ခရိတ်ရှိမြန်မာကက်သလစ်အဖွဲ့ စည်းမှတ်ခေါ်ခြင်းကို သူလက်ခံပေးခဲ့ပါသည်။ (၃)နှစ်တာမြန်မာကက်သလစ်မိသားစုများအတွက်နှင့်စိန်ဂျိုးဇက်စီရင်စုရှိဘာသာသူများအားလုံးအတွက် မစ္စားပူဇော်ခြင်းများဆောင်ရွက်ရင်းနဲ့ ကျောင်းထိုင်ဝါသာရ်အိမ်လီအားကူညီပေးမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သူ၏မျှော်လင့်ချက်များမေးရာတွင် သာသနာမှချမှတ်ပေးသောအလုပ်တာဝန်ကိုပထမဦးစားပေးလုပ်မယ်ဟု ရိုးရှင်းစွာ သူကဖြေပါသည်။ မြန်မာကက်သလစ်အဖွဲ့များအတွက်အာပတ်ဖြေခြင်းနှင့်မစ္စားဟောပေးခြင်းများ၌ပါဝင်ပြီး အခြားသောခရစ်ယာန်ညီအစ်ကိုများနှင့်လည်းနာရေးကိစ္စများပူပေါင်းလုပ်ဆောင်သွားပါမည်။

အလုပ်များသည်ဟု သူမခံစားရပေ။ လက်ရှိအချိန်ထိဝန်ထုပ်ဝန်ပိုလိုမခံစားရပါ။ ဘာသာသူများသည်အခြေခံဘာသာရေးအကြောင်းနှင့်စက္ကရမင်းတူးများကို မိမိဘာသာစကားဖြင့်ကြားနာလိုကြသည်။ ကိုယ်စီအလုပ်ကြောင့်ဘုရားအကြောင်းမေ့လျော့ဖို့လွယ်ကူသဖြင့် အခွင့်အခါကောင်းကြိုသည်နှင့်အမျှကျွန်တော်အားဖြင့်ယုံကြည်ခြင်း၌ပိုမိုခိုင်မြဲလာဖို့ရန်တိုက်တွန်းအားပေးလေ့ရှိပါသည်။ သူတို့အတွက်ကောင်းချီးများယူဆောင်ပေးလိုပါသည်။ ကျွန်တော်၏အဓိကရည်ရွယ်ချက်သည်ဘာသာသူများအားဘုရားသခင်ကိုတောင့်တသတိရနေကြဖို့ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

စိန်ဂျိုးဇက် ဘာသာသူများအတွက်ရင်တွင်းစကားမှာ၊ ဝါသာရ်နှစ်ပါးတို့ရဲ့ဖော်ရွေပျူငှာမှုနှင့်ကြိုဆိုမှုကြောင့်နေသားတကျအဆင်ပြေပါသည်။ ခရစ်မတ်နှင့်နှစ်သစ်ကူး၏ငြိမ်းချမ်းခြင်း၊ အောင်မြင်ခြင်းနှင့်ပျော်ရွှင်ခြင်းမင်္ဂလာအရောက်တိုင်းပေါ် သို့သက်ရောက်ပါစေ။

The Birth is Celebrated in Battle Creek

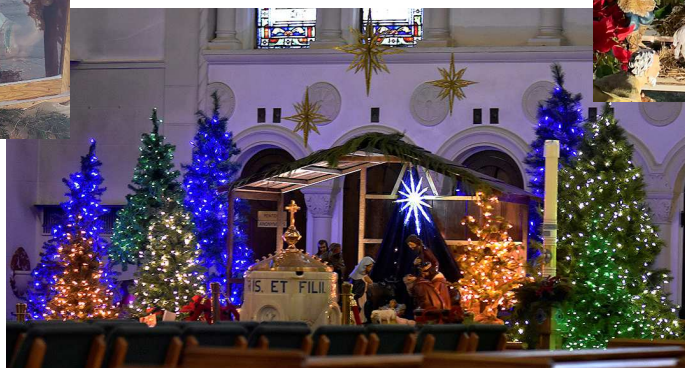
For God so loved the world that He gave His only son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life. John 3:16



St. Jerome,
courtesy of Jackie Stefanski



St. Joseph,
courtesy of Nancy Haack



St. Philip, courtesy of John Grap

A Christmas Act of Charity

by Mark Barry

The St. Joseph/St. Jerome Conference of St. Vincent de Paul Society provided Christmas gifts and food to 120 families, including 330 children, during this year's annual Tree of Love project.

Over 650 gifts, and 120 hams and turkeys, were purchased by parishioners from tags hung on our Tree of Love. We are thankful for all parishioners, school children, and friends who donated their time, talents, and financial support.

We also want to give special thanks to college student Kathleen Wilmanski, daughter of Dr. Charles and Nuala Wilmanski.

Kathleen was put in contact with us because of her special personal project. For the past three years she has been purchasing toys and games with her own money, to give to needy children. She did jobs to earn money to buy presents at sales and closeouts, and asked relatives to give her money instead of gifts for her birthday, etc. so she could use the funds to buy gifts for others. "Since she was 12, she's been a bargain shopper," said mom Nuala. "She wanted to use this talent to be a good steward and help others who were less fortunate."

After filling up her brother's room with gifts after he moved out, it was time to concentrate on giving. So Kathleen and her family joined us on December 21st our Parish Center, as families came in to pick up gifts and food.

Three long tables were loaded with gifts and all the families were invited to come by and select one extra gift for each of their children from Kathleen's amazing collection. Throughout the morning, the joy and surprise shown by the children and parents towards Kathleen's generous project was very evident. Some parents even left with tears of joy and thankfulness in their eyes.

As she purchased these items other the years, Kathleen considered them "her" birthday and Christmas gifts. And what she wanted to do with "her" gifts was to give them to other children to make them happy.

God bless you, Kathleen, for this great project of charity. †



St. Philip Parish Giving Tree and Christmas Baskets

by Sharon Ohm

Once again, St. Philip Parish, through the St. Vincent de Paul Society, helped 346 individuals in 86 families to have a Happy and Blessed Christmas.

Receiving local family names from Santa's Helper before Thanksgiving, members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society contacted the families to identify toys and clothes needed, especially for the children. We filled out tags to cover the Giving Tree week after week. And the gifts appeared under the tree and at the office daily. This year, we were given the names of eight large families the week before delivery, many late tags. Father John made a special request at all Masses for gifts to be returned in one day. All the tags were taken and more gifts appeared in time for packing and delivery! Truly the Christmas Spirit at work!

Dozens of parishioners came several nights to pack the baskets with canned goods, including vegetables and potatoes donated by Consumers Professional Credit Union and peanut butter donated by St. Philip High School students. During the busy weeks before Christmas, volunteers also tagged and packed gifts into the baskets



There was a flurry of activity on the morning of December 21, delivery day. After a blessing of volunteers and gifts by Deacon Al Bell, members of the parish packed additional dairy, meats, fruit and delivered food baskets to the families. Several high school students did much of the heavy lifting both inside the Tiger Room and packing the cars and trucks.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society relies on St. Philip parish volunteers who donate gifts, money, and time during a hectic Christmas season. Thank you. †

St. Philip CCW Christmas Dinner at Clara's



St. Joseph CCW Christmas Potluck



Laura Miller with 100 cans of chili the St. Joseph CCW collected for the Share Center



Photos by Monica Vasquez, St Philip, and Angie Cheng, St. Joseph

The Kalamazoo Diocesan Council of Catholic Women will hold their annual Lenten Retreat on Wednesday, March 11th, at St. Catherine's Parish in Portage. Please watch the bulletin for more details or contact Colleen Vitale at 517-256-9162. †

Sacrament Schedule

First Communion

St. Joseph Elementary School
Sunday, April 26th, Time TBD
St. Joseph Religious Education
Sunday, May 3rd, at Noon
St. Philip Religious Education
Sunday, May 3rd, at 11:30 am



Confirmation

St. Joseph Middle School and Religious Education
Sunday, May 10th, at Noon
St. Philip Religious Education
Thursday, May 14th, at 7:00 pm



OUR CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Vacation Bible School

*"Marvelous Mystery:
The Mass Comes Alive!"*

St. Joseph Church

Either the week of
June 15th or June 22nd
(watch the bulletins for details)

VBS will be for children 4 years old to those entering sixth grade in the fall.

If you would like to volunteer for VBS and have not participated in a "Protecting God's Children" workshop, please do so by May 15th.

Contact Barb Kincaid at bkinaid@bcacs.org for more information.

*This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.*

Luke 22:19



Nuestras tradiciones

Los Reyes Magos

En la víspera del 6 de enero o días antes, los niños suelen escribir la carta a los Reyes pidiéndoles juguetes, es tradicional poner un par de zapatos fuera de sus habitaciones o al alcance de la vista para que los Reyes dejen sus regalos.

Una tradición muy arraigada, igualmente, es la preparación de la Rosca de Reyes, un dulce típico que debe ser cortado por amigos de la persona que invita a comerla.

Dentro del pan se encuentran pequeños niños de juguete que generalmente son representaciones en miniatura del niño Jesús. Las personas que encuentren la imagen deberán ofrecer una fiesta o tamales en la próxima festividad religiosa que corresponde al Día de la Virgen de la Candelaria. En la parroquia San José de Battle Creek lo festejamos después de la misa de 5pm. el 5 de enero. Además de la rosca y chocolate se rifaron 3 bicicletas de niños y hubo una piñata.

El día de la Candelaria

Es festejado el 2 de febrero y se recuerda la presentación del Niño Jesús en el templo.

En México, se acostumbra que aquellos a quienes les tocó el muñeco de la rosca de reyes, son los que deberán presentar la imagen del niño, en el templo, el día de la Candelas.



Para esto, hay que vestirlo y engalanarlo. También, comprarle un trono para sentarlo. En esta celebración se bendicen las imágenes del Niño Dios que han llevado y recordando las palabras de Simeón las velas hechas de parafina pura, que representan la luz de Cristo en los hogares. De aquí viene el nombre de la "Fiesta de las candelas" o el "Día de la Candelaria". Las velas benditas se pueden prender cuando surjan las dificultades de la vida durante el año.

Esta fiesta termina con una merienda familiar y de amigos, en la cual se sirven tamales y atole de sabores y chocolate caliente. En San José esta tradición se celebrará el 2 de febrero con la misa de 5pm en español y habrá un convivio al terminar la misa. †

Our Hispanic Traditions

by Teresa Bello

The Three Kings

On the eve of January 6th or days before, children usually write a letter to the Kings asking for toys. It is traditional to put a pair of shoes outside their rooms or within sight so that the Kings leave their gifts. A deeply rooted tradition, likewise, is the preparation of the "Rosca de Reyes", a typical sweet bread that should be cut by friends of the person who are then invited to eat it. Inside the bread you can find small toy dolls that are usually miniature representations of the baby Jesus. People who find the image should offer a party or tamales at the next religious holiday that corresponds to the Day of the Virgin of the Candelaria.



In St. Joseph Parish in Battle Creek, we celebrated it after the 5:00 pm Mass on January 5th. In addition to the sweet bread "rosca" and chocolate, three children's bicycles were raffled and there was a piñata.

Candlemas Day

It is celebrated on February 2nd and the presentation of the Infant Jesus in the temple is remembered. In Mexico, it is customary that, those who found the doll in the sweet bread "Rosca" on the three Kings feast, are those who must present the image of the child, in the temple, the day of the Candlemas. For this, you have to dress and embellish the image of the child Jesus. Also, buy a throne to sit Him on. In this celebration, the images of the Child Jesus that people have presented are blessed and, remembering the words of Simeon also, the candles made of pure paraffin are blessed, which represent the light of Christ in the homes. From these candles comes the name of the "Fiesta de las Candelas" (Feast of Candles) or the "Candle Day". (Día de la Candelaria). The blessed candles can be lit when life's difficulties arise during the year. This feast ends with family and friends gathering together to eat tamales and drink atole (a warm Mexican beverage of different flavors) and hot chocolate. (At St. Joseph, this tradition was celebrated on February 2nd with the 5:00 pm Mass in Spanish and there was a gathering after Mass.) †



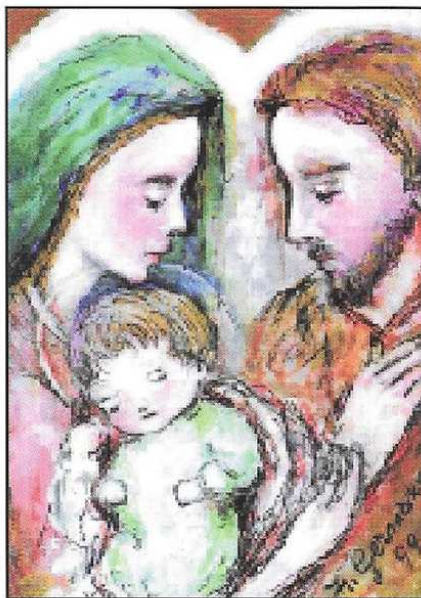
Pro Life News

by Cathy Hirzel

Spiritual Adoption Program

Over 40 years ago a court decision was rendered which legalized abortion throughout the entire nine months of pregnancy. This decision, Roe v. Wade, is the reason over 1,000,000 abortions have been committed in the U.S. each year. To help stop the anti-life push around the world, the late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen encouraged the spiritual adoption of an unborn child. This is done by praying that the one particular but unknown child's life be spared abortion and be allowed to continue to live. To help accomplish this, it was recommended an individual say the following daily prayer for a period of nine months.

Pray for Unborn Human Life



Bundle of Joy, Fr. G. Pegoraro, S.C.

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of [baby's name] the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion."

Your prayers CAN make a difference between whether a baby will be born...or aborted. Our prayers can also be a form of spiritual support for both of the parents. Please share the love of life given to you by the Lord of all life and join in spiritually adopting a baby.

Our Spiritual Adoption program will begin in all three parishes during March. Please look for more details in the bulletin and plan on signing up to be one of the prayer warriors for an unborn baby. †

"Unplanned" the movie

The Tri-Parish Catholic Community is invited to a free screening of the movie, **Unplanned**. This very moving and powerful movie shows how a Planned Parenthood director became pro-life after witnessing an actual abortion. It is a must see for all Catholics! The free showing will be at:

St. Philip Parish Center

Wednesday, February 19th

6:00-8:00 pm

Free childcare will be available, but reservations are needed by February 12th. Please contact Cathy Hirzel at 968-4639 or chirzel@aol.com to reserve your child's place.

We thank Alternatives of Battle Creek for making this available to us. Bring a friend and don't miss this movie! †



St. Philip Epiphany Party for Volunteers



Photos by
John Grap

Connecting with Mercy —

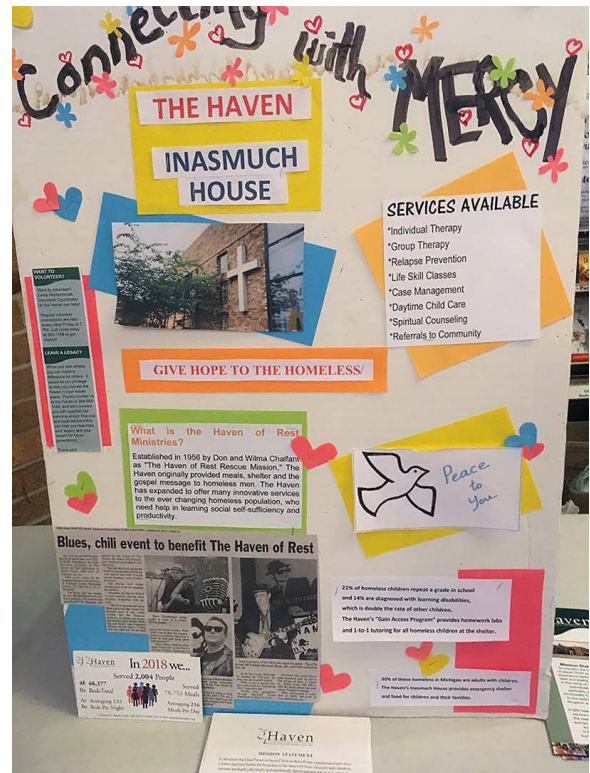
by Mary Sine

*"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."
Luke 36:6*

In 2016, Connecting with Mercy began as a way for St. Joseph Parish to honor the Pope's Jubilee Year of Mercy. Our goal was to offer every parishioner an opportunity to participate in the corporal works of mercy [Editor's Note: Matthew 25:35-46]. By shining a spotlight on local organizations serving those in need, we reached out with gifts of supplies that supported their mission. Now moving into its fifth year, this outreach to the community has grown in ways we never anticipated.

One weekend a month, February through November, is designated for gathering goods for an agency whose mission aligns with one of the corporal works of mercy. A list of suggested items is offered, with a range of options so everyone can participate at some level. A flyer describing the history and mission of the organization is distributed through the bulletin and posted online. Additional information and resources are available in a display at the church entrance. A prayer intention for the group receiving the donations is included in the petitions at Masses that week, and also published in the bulletin so those who are homebound can also support the effort with their prayers.

Beyond this core effort, Connecting with Mercy has since expanded to include an on-going outreach to women at SafePlace with "Care Cards". These are notes of support and encouragement to the victims of abuse. Another initiative, Jail Ministry, resulted from our connections with Calhoun County Jail and Coldwater Correctional Facility. This dedicated group of volunteers coordinates with our clergy to ensure that residents of the jail are offered a Communion Service each week. Our regular outreach now connects with sixteen programs supporting the corporal works of mercy. Connecting with Mercy has taken us down unexpected paths, giving us many opportunities to be ambassadors of God's mercy. We are grateful for the journey. †



Dan Boone, In Memoriam

by Frank Skeltis

On December 12, 2019, the Battle Creek Catholic community lost its chronicler with the death of Dan Boone of St. Joseph Parish. Whenever there was a St. Joseph Parish or Catholic community activity, from large open Masses in Kellogg Arena to St. Joseph Elementary Christmas pageants to Superfest to Holy Thursday washing of the feet, Dan was ever present with his camera recording events for posterity. He covered St. Philip class reunions, St. Joseph men's retreats, and the St. Jerome Lenten Luncheons. His pictures would appear in bulletins or on display boards; and he surprised many people with packets of pictures of significant events in their lives. But Dan never wanted recognition or acknowledgment for his contributions and often deflected requests to talk about his work. He was ever present yet ever humble. He will be missed. Rest in Peace, Dan. †

Tri-Parish Youth Ministry News

By Andrea Perry, Photos by Andrea Perry

Our Tri-Parish Youth Group had an exciting Fall! Here are some of the highlights!



*We kicked it off with the ALL SAINTS TEEN FEST!
Corn hole and karaoke were loads of fun!*



*We met weekly for Bible timeline and Journeying
through the Catechism.*



*The group had loads of fun at Gull Meadows Farms
in their Flashlight Corn Maze.*



*We celebrated Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast Day with our
Hispanic Community and hosted Las Posadas!*



*Each year, we take a pilgrimage to our nation's capital to join thousands
of others in the March for Life. We envision a world where every life is
celebrated, valued, and protected.*



Keynote: Fr. Patrick Schultz
New Music!
High School Youth!

FEB.
21-23
2020



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Personal Testimonies, and
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*"The Presence" is right around the corner! Pray for our youth as
they attend this 40 hour weekend of Adoration and immersion in
the Holy Spirit! February 21-23rd.*

The Traveling Shrine of the Pilgrim Queen

by Barb Kincaid

Behold, your mother... John 19:27 *The Shrine of the Pilgrim Queen of the Family* is an initiative that came from the Diocese of Kalamazoo, Secretariat of the Domestic Church. The Shrine is a means to help us have an encounter with Mary, who, as a good Mother, comes out in our path and visits us in our homes. It is a wonderful opportunity to approach her as a family, and thank her; placing ourselves in her hands, and offering her our sorrows and joys...asking her to protect us. Mary adopted us as one of her own and she accompanies us throughout our lives. St. Joseph Church has begun sharing the Shrine that will travel from household to household every two weeks. ***If anyone from the tri-parish community would be interested in hosting the Shrine for a two-week period, please contact Shirley Springer at sspringer@bcacs.org or call the St. Joseph Rectory at 962-0165 or Barb at Bkincaid@bcacs.org.***



The image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is located in the central part of the Shrine, on the right side is the Pilgrim Queen's ideology, and on the left side the mysteries of the Rosary and a Rosary. Since the image of the Virgin remained embodied in a canvas (St. Juan Diego's tilma), the Shrine represents it in the same way and the side panels serve as doors that open to us, her presence. The importance of praying together, especially the Holy Rosary, is paramount in our lives today. Our world and our lives need the intercessions of the Blessed Mother in a way that we have never known.

The Rosary is a powerful weapon in the spiritual warfare that our country's families are facing today. Mary made fifteen promises to those that faithfully recite the Rosary. The promises are:

1. Whoever shall faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary, shall **receive signal graces**.
2. I promise my **special protection** and the **greatest graces** to all those who shall recite the Rosary.
3. The Rosary is **powerful armor against hell**, it will **destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies**.
4. The Rosary will **cause virtue** and good works to flourish; it will obtain for souls the **abundant mercy of God**; it will **withdraw the hearts of men from the love of the world and its vanities**, and will **lift them to the desire for eternal things**. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means!
5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary **shall not perish**.
6. Whoever shall recite the Rosary devoutly, applying himself to the consideration of its sacred mysteries shall never be **conquered by misfortune**. God will not chastise him in His justice, he shall not perish by an unprovided death; if he be just he shall remain in the grace of God, and become **worthy of eternal life**.
7. Whoever shall have a true devotion for the Rosary **shall not die without the sacraments of the Church**.
8. Those who are faithful to recite the Rosary shall have **during their life and at their death the light of God and the plenitude of His graces**; at the moment of death they **shall participate in the merits of the saints in paradise**.
9. I shall **deliver from Purgatory** those **who have been devoted to the Rosary**.
10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall **merit a high degree of glory in Heaven**.
11. You shall **obtain all you ask** of me **by the recitation of the Rosary**.
12. All those who **propagate the Holy Rosary** shall be **aided by me in their necessities**.
13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the **advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of death**.
14. **All who recite the Rosary** are my sons and daughters, and brothers and sisters of my only Son Jesus Christ.
15. Devotion of my Rosary is a **great sign of predestination** to achieve salvation.

Please prayerfully consider taking part in this opportunity to say the Rosary as a family and become closer to Jesus and our Blessed Mother.

BCACS Information Programs

by Cathy Erskine

Learn about the 2020-2021 school year!

Families are invited to:

- † **Preschool** Picnic for families with students who are 3 and 4 years old (by December 1st) - Wednesday, March 18th, at 6:00 pm at St. Joseph Preschool
- † St. Joseph **Transitional Kindergarten** and **Kindergarten** programs - Thursday, March 19th, at 6:00pm at St. Joseph Elementary
- † St. Joseph **Middle School** Information Night (grades 6-8) - Thursday, March 5th, at 6:00 pm at St. Joseph Middle School
- † St. Philip Catholic Central Information Night (grades 9-12) - Thursday, February 27th, at 6:30 pm at St. Philip Catholic **Central High School**



Follow these simple steps to apply for admission to St. Joseph Catholic Elementary and Preschool (grades Preschool-fifth), St. Joseph Catholic Middle School (grades sixth-eighth), or St. Philip Catholic Central High School (grades 9-12).

- † Visit **bcacs.org**
- † Click *join our family*
- † Click *apply today*



Help BCACS Raise Money...With No Extra Cost to You

By Joy Finnila

The School Cost Reduction Incentive Program (SCRIP) is helping families raise money for tuition without the fuss of fundraising. The SCRIP program can be used by anyone! If you do not have a student enrolled at BCACS, your participation will benefit the school directly. You simply purchase gift cards at their face value from the SCRIP office for places you frequent. While you use your gift cards at Meijer, Sam's/Walmart, Griffin Grill & Pub, Visa cards, Red Lobster, Panera, Shell, Marathon, Menards, or any of the other 125 businesses, our schools earn a percentage of each card. It isn't costing you any more than you would usually spend, but it is a great benefit for BCACS and our students.

You can also order SCRIP without the trip to the SCRIP office. In fact, you can order electronic SCRIP in your pajamas, in your car, even in line at Target. It starts with going to www.ShopWithScrip.com, and creating an account. Please contact SCRIP coordinator, Joy Finnila, at 269-963-3034 for the enrollment code. She is happy to help you set up your account, and answer any questions you may have.

SCRIP Office Facts:

Location: St. Joseph Parish Center

Hours: Monday-Friday-- 9:00am-2:00pm

Phone: 269-963-3034

Email: scrip@bcacs.org †



St. Philip Catholic Church
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Volunteers Needed!!

Thank you to the people who have responded to our call for volunteers. Now we are in need of someone who knows Microsoft Publisher or who has newsletter layout experience. Contact **A n d r e a B o u g h t o n** at OurCatholicCommunity@bcacs.org for additional information.

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.

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 CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Our Catholic Community

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