



# PARISH NEWSLETTER

## SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

SUMMER 2016



### MESSAGE FROM FATHER RON

Dear Parishioners,

This past spring we have celebrated the gifts and grace of the Lord Jesus as members of our parish family have drawn closer to Jesus in their journey with Him. On February 20, Bishop Knestout and Bishop Mario Dorsonville celebrated the Confirmation for 129 of our young people. We welcomed three members of our RCIA class into the Church at the Easter Vigil on March 26, and 136 second graders received their First Holy Communion on May 7.

We will celebrate our parish feast day, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, on May 29. We will have our traditional Eucharistic Procession through the neighborhood at the conclusion of the 12:30 p.m. Mass and return to the church for Benediction. This celebration calls us to reflect on the gift of the Body and Blood of Jesus. He gives us the gift of Himself to be the source and summit of our lives. Jesus feeds and nourishes us as we make our journey through this world with our hearts set on our true and eternal home—the kingdom of heaven. As we believe with all our hearts that Jesus is present in the Eucharist, we ask Him to help us to readily recognize Him in the faces of those around us, especially our family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and even strangers. As we search out His face in those around us, we become the ambassadors

of His mercy as we serve the spiritual and corporal needs of our sisters and brothers.

In a special way, we pray for Deacon Ryan Pineda and Deacon Jack Berard as they prepare for their Priestly Ordination. Both of these deacons have served our parish during a summer assignment within the last few years. They will be ordained along with their classmates by Cardinal Wuerl at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC, on June 25th at 10 a.m. Deacon Ryan will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving in Tagalog here at Blessed Sacrament on June 26th at 3:30 p.m. A reception will follow in the school auditorium after the Mass. Please remember Deacon Sean McKinley and Deacon Cody Ford, both of whom served here at Blessed Sacrament while studying at Theological College as they prepare for their ordinations. Deacon Sean McKinley will be ordained a priest on May 25th for the Archdiocese of Louisville, Kentucky, and Deacon Cody Ford will be ordained a priest on June 4th for the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, West Virginia.

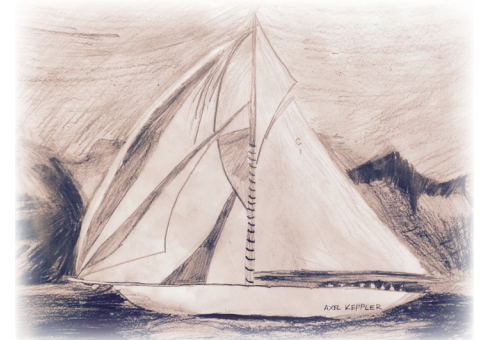
As was announced at the weekend Masses, Cardinal Wuerl is assigning Father Andy Gonzalo as administrator of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Benedict the Moor parishes effective July 6th. Father Alec Scott has been

assigned as our parochial vicar effective July 6th, having completed his studies in Rome. We are grateful for the time Father Andy has been with us and offer our prayers as he prepares for his new assignment.

Once again, thank you for all you do for our parish by sharing your time, talent, and treasure. Be assured of my daily prayers for you and your families, and have a blessed and safe summer. During this summer, continue to answer Jesus' invitation to deepen your relationship with Him by allowing some extra time for the renewal of your heart and soul. Along with attending Mass on the weekend, set some time aside for prayer, spiritual reading, daily Mass, and visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Peace,

*Father Ron*



Artwork by Axel Keppler, Seventh Grade

# BLESSED SACRAMENT SCOUT TROOP 90 CELEBRATES 95 YEARS



Artwork by Maisie Derlaga, Third Grade

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**Artwork:** Blessed Sacrament School students under the guidance of their art teacher, Judy Kearns

Not long after its establishment, one of the first activities sponsored by the new Blessed Sacrament Parish was the founding of Boy Scout Troop 90. Over the years, hundreds of boys have participated in Cub Scout and Boy Scouts, earning merit badges, developing their leadership abilities and having fun on outdoor adventures. Over the long history of the program, 95 scouts rose to Eagle status, and on April 30, 2016, three former Eagle Scouts returned to give inspirational talks at a Reunion Dinner in the Blessed Sacrament School auditorium.

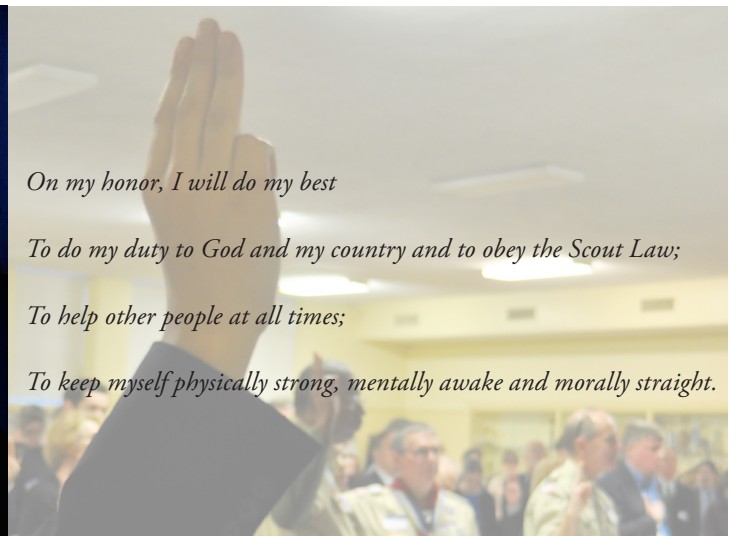
The celebratory audience included 125 former Troop members and their families. At the dinner, the Troop honored three dedicated volunteer leaders: Troop Chairman, John Higgins, for over 35 years of service; Scoutmaster Keith Morrison; and, Assistant Scoutmaster Catherine Hall. Three past Troop 90 Eagle Scouts: Andrew Byrd, Martin Mullen, and John Gillis spoke, recounting

their scouting experiences and testifying to the impact of scouting on their lives.

Troop 90 is the oldest continuous Scout Troop in the District of Columbia, and several representatives from the local Scouting Council were present to honor that history.

The Troop prides itself on its active Outdoor Adventure Program. Scouts go on an overnight camping trip each month, spend a week at Camp Goshen each summer, and take High Adventure Camping trips to Maine, Florida, Philmont Ranch in New Mexico, and Minnesota (canoeing).

Leaders, parents, and the scouts themselves have created the enduring 95-year history and success of Troop 90 at Blessed Sacrament. They have truly lived up to the Scout's oath, worthy of emulation by all.



*On my honor, I will do my best*

*To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law;*

*To help other people at all times;*

*To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.*

Photos courtesy of Sharon Talbott

# THE GIFT OF DISABILITY

By David Byers, DisAbilities Ministry Chair

It takes commitment for a parish, especially one as large and complex as Blessed Sacrament, to open doors and hearts to folks with disabilities. There is a cost issue. Why devote scarce resources to so few parishioners? There is a personnel issue. Where are the willing volunteers?

There is also what you might call “the invisible curtain.” The bishops of the United States noticed it in their 1979 Pastoral Statement on Persons with Disabilities: “Yet people with disabilities are visibly, sometimes bluntly different from the norm.... Even if we do not look down upon them, we tend all too often to think of them as somehow apart —not completely one of us” (p.3).

The bishops’ response: “What individuals with disabilities need, first of all, is acceptance in this difference that can neither be denied nor overlooked. No acts of charity or justice can be of lasting value unless our actions are informed by a sincere and understanding love that penetrates the wall of strangeness and affirms the common humanity underlying all distinction” (p.3).

Monsignor John Enzler understood this vision. He invited Francesca Pellegrino and Peg Kolm, both mothers of children with disabilities, to establish a new ministry in 2003. In 2011, he hired Emma Voelzke as part-time staff. These days, Blessed Sacrament has the best-established and most active DisAbilities Ministry (spelling quite intentional) in the Archdiocese of Wash-

ington. Since becoming pastor, Father Ron Potts has maintained this critical support.

The Ministry began with a Teen Club, a special one for parish children with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The members, about a dozen in all, would gather monthly for Mass and then an outing: a movie, bowling, an arts class, a stage show, whatever. Friendships formed, isolation faded, a place within the parish community took shape. Where there was need, catechists offered the members’ sacramental preparation.

Thirteen years later, the teens are adults in their 20s and the Teen Club has energetically morphed into Young Catholics with Disabilities (YCWD). Early in May, the group hosted a dance in the Blessed Sacrament gym for about 50 participants with disabilities from area parishes. A loud, good time was had by all.

While YCWD is the DisAbilities Ministry’s flagship program, it is hardly the only one. An annual Inclusion Mass features ministry members as greeters, lectors, altar servers and bearers of the Offertory gifts. Eli Lewis and Johnny Koeppen regularly serve as lectors, and other parishioners with disabilities occasionally play liturgical roles as well. Thanks to Director of Music and Liturgy Jay Rader, ministry members were particularly visible last Holy Thursday, including having their feet washed before the assembly.

The Ministry has tried various ways to make Blessed Sacrament an evermore welcoming Catholic community. Some have worked well, others not so much. We created and maintain a highly visible Facebook page. We recently started an exercise program for people with disabilities and anyone else who wants to come. On the other hand, our effort to start a chapter of Faith and Light, a spiritual/social program for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities, failed. We hosted special prayer services on several occasions, but hardly anyone came. We hosted symposia on housing for people who are transitioning from home to independent living. Forty-five people from parishes in DC and Maryland attended one such gathering in October, but the effort lost momentum and needs to be recharged.

A new chairperson assumes leadership in the fall, and 2016-17 promises to be a great year. Ministry members will co-sponsor the School Supplies Drive to benefit St. Thomas More Parish in September, and will help sell baked goods at the Sodality Bazaar. We will continue developing a collaborative relationship with parishioners at St. Raphael’s. They will share their expertise in special religious education, while we will advise them on starting their own broad-based ministry. There are new pew signs on the way, a ministry logo, maybe even a banner. Thanks to wise and generous pastoral leadership, Emma’s dedicated service, and a core of faithful volunteers, the DisAbilities Ministry’s future looks bright.



Artwork by Penelope Koutrouvelis, Kindergarten



Artwork by Arianna Lindenberg, Fourth Grade



Artwork by Miles McNair, Sixth Grade

# SPRING JOURNEY TO CHURCHES HISTORIC

Poem and Photos by Joe Bozik



Sacred Heart Church

Recipe for a perfect Faith Journey:  
Mindful of a lovely springtime day –  
Take a faith group of fifty-two,  
And mix in skies very, very blue.

Add a dash of Rita Killian  
To flavor a great destination:  
To Maryland historic Churches  
In Anne Arundel and Prince Georges.

With a pinch of Fr. Ron's prayers  
Away we go on our bus charter,  
To historic Sacred Heart Chapel,  
In Bowie – our first arrival.

Mass in this historic Church was said;  
Remembering all those persecuted,  
In the young Maryland colony,  
Of the early eighteenth century.

Praying in the pews of this old Church,  
One realizes it's a way to teach,  
How blest we are, but take for granted,  
Our freedom to pray, since eighteen hundred.

And notice how blest we are to be  
Witness to a touching homily –

Father Ron speaks of Father Tom Wells -  
Of how our visit comes full circle.

You see, Tommy Wells was a server  
Once at Blessed Sacrament's altar,  
Then called to priesthood and ordained,  
A priest deeply loving and beloved.

Yes, Sacred Heart Church was Father Wells' once,  
As pastor back in nineteen seventy-one,  
Now Father Ron at Father Wells' lectern,  
As was Father Ron at Mother Seton;

After Father Tommy Wells died,  
Father Ron went to Mother Seton.  
We come as friends and parishioners,  
To offer sympathies and prayers,

Under a large unknown historic tree,  
Respectfully, at his graveside we pray.  
So many coincidences you see,  
As we continue our journey.

Next on to Annapolis' waterfront,  
For a great lunch at Pusser's Restaurant,  
Of soup, salad, turkey club or crab cakes,  
With views of sailing yachts making wakes.

Stepping further back into history,  
We tour wooden, gothic St. Mary's.  
Built on property of a great patriot,  
Charles Carroll, who spent life on this lot.

St. Mary's, opened in eighteen-sixty,  
By the Redemptorist community,  
Built on site of a smaller St. Mary's,  
Completed in eighteen twenty-three.

Strolling through the lush Mary's Garden,  
Passing herbs named for The Blessed Virgin,  
We arrive at famous Carroll House,  
Home of a wealthy Catholic class.

This Charles Carroll of Carrollton,  
Only Catholic signer of Declaration,  
So cherished freedom of religion,  
That he supported the Revolution.



St. Mary's Church

First Senator from new Maryland State,  
And only Catholic Chaplain of US Senate;  
He outlived all other Declaration signers,  
Even welcomed Washington as a visitor.

This Carroll House saw many additions  
During years before the Revolution:  
From adding side wings for the family,  
To bumping up the roof to add a story.

Still an elegant house to be sure,  
And donated to the Church by his heirs.  
The Redemptorists simplified the rooms,  
Keeping the historic essence of this heirloom.

One lesson one takes from this journey,  
Besides sacrifices of many,  
Is the steadfast faith of the settlers,  
And the Holiness that they shared.

Meditating on our day's event,  
As we arrive at Blessed Sacrament,  
We thankfully cherish another trip :  
Our spring Journey to Churches Historic.

CHECK UPCOMING PARISH BULLETINS FOR  
DETAILS ABOUT THE NEXT FAITH JOURNEY  
THIS AUTUMN, OR CONTACT RITA KILLIAN:  
R.KILLIAN@VERIZON.NET  
202.363.5069.

# FOR ADULTS ONLY: A DEEPER FAITH

By David Byers, Parish Council President

What's one of the complaints you hear all the time about parishes? It's that faith formation—learning what it means to be Catholic and committing to share that knowledge—ends with the Confirmation. The result in congregations can be folks with a child's view of Catholicism, ill-prepared to live the faith in the face of an indifferent, even hostile, popular culture.

Blessed Sacrament is truly blessed to have a range of adult-oriented programs: for example, Wednesday evening Scripture study; Bread, Book and Brethren; the RCIA; Faith on Tap; Brother Malachy's talks. Still, one hears the complaint. There is clearly room for growth.

## *CHRISTLIFE*

Father Ron, the Parish Council, and the Faith Formation Commission are very aware of the need. The Commission began a Lenten Neighborhood Churches program last spring, and Scripture study has prospered recently with a sound promotional campaign. Then, last fall, the archdiocese provided new impetus. The Office of Evangelization sponsored regional workshops—one of them held in our gym—to introduce adult formation programs that parishes might consider adopting.

The Council leadership was most impressed with ChristLife whose three components, "Discovering Christ," "Following Christ," and "Sharing Christ," make its orientation clear. ChristLife stands in a growing tradition. In 1976, Pope Paul VI issued an encyclical called *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: in English, "Proclaiming the Good News." The Holy Father feared that Christian nations of the West—in Europe especially, but the United States as well—were losing touch with their religious heritage and falling prey to an ever more aggressive secular culture. Fifteen years later, the bishops of the United States responded with their own statement, *Go and Make Disciples*. Both the encyclical and the episcopal statement stressed the importance of re-evangelizing cultures where the Gospel had been heard, assimilated, and to some extent forgotten.

Twenty-five years further on—the Church does think in terms of centuries, after all—Catholics have programs like ChristLife to strengthen their knowledge of the faith and their commitment to share it as a great gift. ChristLife is both educational and evangelistic. You deepen your relationship with Jesus, you understand the Catholic faith better, you spread the Gospel by word (where appropriate) and by the witness of a Christian life (always).

Father Ron commissioned a group of us to attend an archdiocesan training session on ChristLife in January, and invited Mike Owens of the archdiocesan staff to make a presentation to the whole Council a month later. Father Ron subsequently authorized a pilot program (Part I: "Discovering Christ") to be offered this spring.

The pilot program, led by Lisa McKinnon with Council support, is now complete. We planned for a group of about 35. A total of 42 parishioners, ranging in age from 23 to 75+ (and a baby), attended at least one session. There were seven evening sessions, plus a half-day retreat experience. Each session began with dinner and included prayer, a video teaching and small-group discussion. Enthusiasm grew throughout our time together, and the leadership will assemble a core team to offer "Discovering Christ" to the parish at large in September. Tune in; you will hear more in the coming months!

## *ON THE HORIZON: WALKING WITH PURPOSE AND THAT MAN IS YOU*



Artwork by Jacqueline Gimigliano, Second Grade

ChristLife is for all adults: committed Catholics, those who may have drifted away, those with no settled religious views. It begins with

few assumptions: the topic of the first video is not the Creed but rather "What Is the Meaning of Life?" The Faith Formation Commission is preparing to launch two additional programs with a somewhat narrower focus next fall, one for women and one for men.

The men's program, active now at St. Raphael's and Our Lady of Lourdes, is called *That Man Is You* (TMIY). It is similar in design to ChristLife, but meets in early morning so as not to disrupt the day's schedule. Where ChristLife consists of three parts with seven sessions each, the men of TMIY meet over thirteen weeks during the fall semester and thirteen more in spring. The program's focus is practical and commonsensical: How do I live as a faithful Catholic man, husband, father? What's the blueprint? Where's the support? John Mueller and the leadership of Faith in the Marketplace are taking responsibility for planning and management.

The women's program, *Walking with Purpose* (WWP), encourages a deeper personal relationship with Jesus Christ through Bible study and small group discussion. Readings in the WWP book, and the discussions they provoke, suggest solutions to women's everyday challenges and struggles based on the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church. Pam Kelly, a new member of the Parish Council and Co-Chair of the Community Life Commission, will organize and lead *Walking with Purpose*.

The word "evangelization" makes some people nervous, because it sounds too much like "evangelism." Indeed, there are connections, though evangelization has no political claims or aims. If these new formation programs for adults change the world and Blessed Sacrament just a little, it will be because they change lives.

For more information:

### *CHRISTLIFE:*

Lisa McKinnon, [clanmckinnon@yahoo.com](mailto:clanmckinnon@yahoo.com)

### *WALKING WITH PURPOSE:*

Pam Kelly, [pamelagkelly@gmail.com](mailto:pamelagkelly@gmail.com)

### *THAT MAN IS YOU:*

John Mueller, [muellerjd@aol.com](mailto:muellerjd@aol.com)

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# SCHOOL OF RELIGION PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

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*LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME, AND DO NOT HINDER THEM;  
FOR TO SUCH BELONGS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.  
—LUKE 18:15-17*

Involvement in a religious education program has always been considered vital to children's development as Catholics. Some readers may remember hearing about or participating in a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine program, commonly referred to by its abbreviation, CCD, that provided religious education to Catholic children attending secular schools.

Currently, at Blessed Sacrament, the School of Religion prepares students for the sacraments—First Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation, and in some cases, Baptism for students who were not baptized as infants—but also maintains a continuous, on-going religious formation through classes for students in kindergarten through eighth grade who attend secular schools.

All class sessions take place in Blessed Sacrament School on Sundays: 8:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. or on Tuesdays: 4:30 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. The school year begins in mid-September and continues until mid-May.

Parents are always considered the first and primary catechists, or teachers, of their children, but the Religious Education program can be a supportive complement to their efforts at home. For more information and/or to enroll students in the Blessed Sacrament program, visit the parish website: [blessedsacramentdc.org](http://blessedsacramentdc.org) and click on "School of Religion." To volunteer as a lay teacher or aide in the School of Religion, contact Michelle Balch, 202.449.3989; [mbalch@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:mbalch@blessedsacramentdc.org).



Photos courtesy of Pat Watson

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## OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

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If you missed the 5:30 p.m. Mass of special celebration of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament and reception on May 13, mark your calendars for next year's annual event.

Patroness of the parish, this role of Our Lady has special meaning to parishioners at Blessed Sacrament who heard Father Martino Choi, former seminarian who assisted at liturgies during his years of study, now an ordained priest, preach about Mary's special role.

Special thanks to parishioner Monica Ludwig for the arrangements related to the Mass and reception afterwards. Even the 15-day rainy weather broke out in sunshine to salute the occasion!



Artwork by Everett Eckart, Second Grade

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# YEAR OF MERCY'S CORPORAL WORK

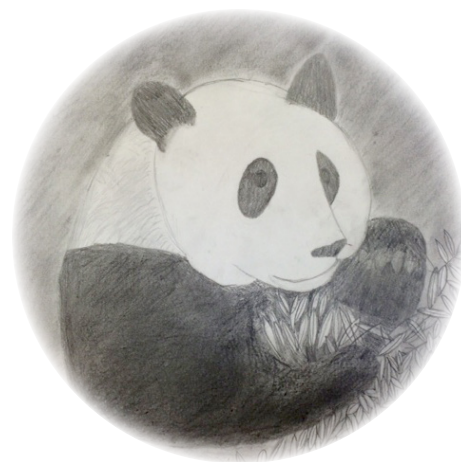
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Unless they have been touched personally by the death of a loved one or friend, many people are unaware of the profound impact that sincere concern and visible sympathy can provide to the family of the deceased.

A Divine command set forth by Christ (Matthew 25:41), one of the corporal works of mercy is to bury the dead, and the role of Arimathean provides a fitting circumstance and impressive opportunity to perform this work. The physical presence of volunteer members of the Church community gives evidence of the compassion and charity of others who give their time and talent in the performance of the liturgy for the deceased.

Blessed Sacrament's Arimatheans is a group of men and women of the parish who serve funeral Masses. The name "Arimathean" is a tribute to Joseph of Arimathea, who gave up his tomb for the burial of Our Lord (Mark 15:42-46). The duties are the same as those of altar servers at all other Eucharistic liturgies. When available, Arimatheans can also serve the daily 11 a.m. Mass.

A chairperson schedules members as funerals occur and volunteers are available. Simple training is required, but prior experience as an altar server is not necessary. Contact: John Vittone at 301.585.0592 or 301.580.8164 (cell); [vittone.john@gmail.com](mailto:vittone.john@gmail.com).



Artwork by Olivia Goodwin, Seventh Grade

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## STUDENT SUMMER ART STUDIES

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Sibling Student Artists Outside the Art Studio  
@ Blessed Sacrament School

The Art Camp, offered in four weekly sessions, meets from 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament art studio. The program's focus is on creativity and exploration. Students will learn about variety of art materials and artists while having fun and making new friends!

**Session 1:** June 27 - July 1

**Session 2:** July 5-8

**Session 3:** July 18-22

**Session 4:** July 25-29

Tuition is \$245 per week for Session 1, 3, and 4. Session 2, July 5-8, is \$196.

Students of all ages who attended past summers' camps have reported having great fun while learning and enjoying creative experiences developing their own art in various mediums. For more information, contact Judy Kearns: [jkearns@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:jkearns@blessedsacramentdc.org).

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*Thank you to those who made this year's newsletter possible: our authors, photographers, student artists (and their teachers), and especially to Father Ron who inspired us in each issue with his page one letters. The Blessed Sacrament newsletter would not be possible without your generous gifts of time and talent.*

*Special thanks to Delphine Clegg, our newsletter designer, who has worked tirelessly for many years to create graphically communicative and extremely attractive publications for our parish.*

*Pat Watson, Editor*



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