

The Net Worker

Christmas 2010



A Day at the Races – A Winner!

The most recent St. Peter's fundraiser, A Day at the Races, took place in October. It was quite successful – raising more than \$6000 for the parish.

Jane Daly, the Chairperson of the Event Planning Committee, says “from the moment the horse racing began, I knew it was going to be a success. People were cheering for their horses, they were engaged in conversation, people were really having a good time. We purposely picked a more low-key type event, keeping ticket prices down in line with the slow economy – but the evening was first-class fun.

The night featured horse racing using “funny money” -- prizes being the ultimate gain. Some of the prizes included tickets to Jets and Giants games and spa packages. They also had a few silent auction items including a dinner for six cooked by Father Mike at the rectory. This prize is very popular and has now become a favorite of St. Peter's fundraisers.

Fundraisers are essential to the bottom line of St. Peter's. A brief glance of the balance sheet shows that the extra money earned from these events keep St. Peter's from going into the red. Fundraisers are not just a fun “extra”, they are an important part of the financial picture.

We thank all those who attended A Day at the Races and look forward to seeing you at our next fundraiser which will take place in March. Our “Cabbage and Cannoli” night will be a combination of a St. Patrick's and a St. Joseph's celebration. The evening will feature dinner and a live band, with Irish dancers and Italian desserts. Look for more information in upcoming bulletins.



The Miracle of Christmas

THE NET WORKER
The Newsletter of
St. Peter the Apostle Parish
River Edge, New Jersey

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*Wishing all of you a very
Merry Christmas!
May God bless you!*

The Staff of The Networker

Christian Foundations for Ministry

By Ed Bowen

Christian Foundations for Ministry is a small Christian community based on prayer and education that will start at St. Peter's on January 6th at 7:30 in the Parish Center. The program is sponsored by the Ministerial Development Center of the Archdiocese, and offers foundational courses for those who would like to enrich their understanding of the Catholic faith, deepen their own spiritual life, become involved in parish or Archdiocesan ministries, and enhance their current involvement and understanding of ministry in the Church and in the world.

The courses are in Catholic theology, spirituality, scripture, sacraments, evangelization, and ministerial skill development. There are nine courses, each offered in eight week cycles, which meet Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00. Each eight week cycle includes a one-day retreat on a Saturday or Sunday. Our First Course is Old Testament and Spirituality: Israel's Journey/Our Journey.

The entire program is completed over a three year period, meeting during the fall, winter and spring. This year we are beginning in January and will finish the program by early June with a break in between each of the eight week sessions.

The program is tailored to the needs of today's active lay person. We begin with Evening Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours to familiarize the participants with the official daily prayer of the Church. Then there is a shared experience followed by a learning component.

A Certificate of Completion is awarded after each course. To complete the program, all nine courses must be taken. Those who complete the program are recognized in a prayer service and a rite of commissioning.

CHRISTIAN Foundations *for* MINISTRY



For more information
or to register contact
Deacon Ed Bowen
during the business day at
201-599-3112
or by e-mail

ebowen@saint-peter.org
or just join us on

January 6th at 7:30
in the parish center for the first
session and see
if you like it.

Here are some comments by those who have completed Christian Foundations for Ministry

I chose to attend CFM because I was curious. Like many others, I've been involved in church ministry for several years. But why do we do it? Of course, there's an immediate good feeling from helping someone or accomplishing a job, but there has to be a deeper reason. And if I understood the reason, couldn't I then become a more effective Steward of my God given gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasure? So I chose to attend CFM. In each of the three years, our group read and discussed church teachings, both historic and contemporary. We learned why and how the church has changed in its attempt to stay meaningful to the people it serves while remaining true to the Christ's teachings. In short, it challenged us to think about our church and the world in a different way. And Ed Bowen, as a Deacon and attorney, offers valuable insight on the church and on today's moral issues.

Jim Cockefair

comments continued...

It was a very spiritual experience taking the CFM Course and learning about Catholicism from its inception.

Mary Davis

Christian Foundations for Ministry has provided me with an historical understanding of my faith proving most of the New Testament. It reinforced the faith tenets with fact thus enabling me to evangelize in daily life with confidence.

Dan Daly

Throughout our lives, we have seen so many changes and advancements in science, technology, lifestyles, and societal and family values. The television was initially in black and white, then color, now high definition. It was easy to deal with all the changes, we just turned it on. Then computers and cell phones arrived. We needed some basic knowledge of what they could do and how we could get them to do it. We needed to update our skills and understanding to communicate and function effectively.

Most of our religious education and training came from our parents and our Catholic school education at a young age. Back then reading scripture (the Bible) was discouraged by the Church, lest we misinterpret some dogma. We also accepted things -- as children do.

Now, we were parents and grandparents and teaching and guidance were some of the responsibilities required of us in these roles. We needed to update our understanding of Church teachings and enhance our biblical knowledge in order to stand on a firm footing in a time when moral equivalency was the status quo and our neighbor's values and our values were in diametric opposition.

When the Christian Foundations for Ministry ("CFM") course was first offered at St. Peter's, we saw this as the opportunity we were looking for to bring ourselves up to date on the scriptures, theology, morality, the sacraments, and what they bestow on us as "priest, prophet, and king," and as an opportunity to share our understanding of the Bible, the Church, religion, social mores, and moral equivalency, among other things.

We came to realize that being a Catholic is not about sitting in church and simply absorbing, but rather, taking what we have seen and heard and passing it on to others, much as we would do by showing someone how to use a computer or cell phone.

We recommend attending the CFM program and putting God on your speed dial.

Brian & Eileen Hammel

FINANCIAL SEMINARS

GOOD STEWARDSHIP

by Jim Cockefair

Am I being a good Steward? That word applies to many things in our lives. Not only does Jesus call us to be good Stewards of His gifts of Time, Talent and Treasure, but for the greater good, we have to be Stewards of our planet, our water, and all our natural resources. You've heard all these topics over recent years, but recently, St. Peter's Stewardship Council has been focusing on the Stewardship of Treasure.

The economy hasn't been good over the past few years. Our friends and family were losing jobs, houses, savings and in many cases they were losing hope. Last year about 60 people attended seminars on dealing with the housing crisis. Parishioners who were attorneys, real estate agents, financial planners, mortgage loan officers, and other professionals gave of their gifts of Talent to offer guidance and answer questions from the community in a public forum. In September and October, Stewardship hosted seminars on dealing with 'Life and Financial Events' that we need to plan for. Again, a wide range of professionals from our parish community offered their Talent to answer questions. The seminars were age based – Near or Into Retirement, Mid-Career, and Young Adults. Over 70 people attend the sessions. In December, a final session was held offering advice on 2010 Year End Tax Planning.

The sessions were offered to help our community understand the importance of managing their gifts of Treasure. Would an increase in donations to the church be appreciated? Certainly. But equally important was the goal of giving people knowledge of the tools and resources available to help them provide for their physical and financial health and future of their families, aging parents, and children.

ALWAYS
by Mary Anne Patterson

The dark blue house with the maroon shutters seemed bright against the darkened sky. A café style curtain blew delicately through a slightly opened window. Set back from the busy roadway with no neighbors on either side, the house seemed peaceful.

Intrigued by the stillness and quietness of the house, she wondered about who might live there, and if there might be a story to be told. Slowly, she walked up to the front door, hearing each piece of gravel crunch beneath her feet. A faint knock and a soft hello brought no one to the door. She knocked a little louder.

A small aged woman with hair of grey opened the door. The smell of chocolate chip cookies baking immediately filled the air. "Hello?"

"Hi there. My name is Marie Windsor. I'm a Human Interest Writer at 'Your Town Today'. It's my job to write about people in our town. I pass your home everyday, and for whatever reason, I felt compelled to stop."

"Well dear, I don't think I'm all that interesting, but if you show me your credentials, perhaps we can chat."

Marie took her press pass from her purse, and started to hand it to the woman. "I'm awfully sorry, I didn't even ask you your name."

"It's Abigail Louise James, daughter of Irene and Frederick McHugh. I was born on June 20th, 1926, which will make me 84 years old this year."

"Mrs. James, may I call you Abigail?"

"Of course you may. I'm enjoying having someone to talk to. Come into the kitchen dear and I'll make us some tea."

Marie followed Abigail into the kitchen. As they walked through the living room, done in shades of blue, Marie couldn't help but notice the very large cat curled up on the seat of the rocking chair, or the handmade quilt which decorated the back of the couch. Against the far wall, a beautiful player piano stood longing to be played. A few old photographs adorned the top.

"Oh Abigail, what a beautiful piano. I've never seen one quite like it before."

"Ah, the piano. Yes, I spent many happy hours at the piano. My late husband Frank gave it to me on our first wedding anniversary. And every night he would play and serenade me with our 'courting song, Always'. 'I'll be loving you, always.....' He was a good man, my Frank. He was slightly older than me and he treated me like I was a fragile little flower. We were only married for six years when Frank died of pneumonia."

"I'm sorry. You never married again?"

"No dear. Frank was one-of-a-kind. I could never settle for another man, when Frank was my one true love."

"Do you have any children?"

"Sadly, no. Well, none of my own anyway. I used to teach piano, and I loved the little ones. I loved the joy I'd see on their faces as they played a song straight through. After I lost my Frank, the music in this house died with him. He made this house come alive with song.

"What do you do here all day Abigail?"

"Nothing too much dear. When the weather allows, I work in my garden. As the fall approaches, I start canning to take me through the winter. Other days, I just putter around this old house. Sometimes I do some quilting and enjoy donating the finished products when they're done."

"The quilt! The one on the back of your couch; I knew something about it looked familiar. Every year, two handmade quilts come to the paper anonymously with a simple note asking that they be donated to a charity. Abigail, are you the anonymous benefactor?"

"Marie, if I tell you it's me, will you please keep my identity a secret?"

"Of course I would Abigail, but why wouldn't you want to claim ownership? They are simply beautiful."

"You see dear, I make my quilts, and it brings me peace. I enjoy doing them. If I put my name on them, people may start to ask me to make one for them. It wouldn't be peaceful then; it would be a job. Each one would have to be perfect. This way, I donate them, hoping that it brings the recipient joy, even if it has imperfections. My Frank use to say, 'Abby, we are but a patch in Gods quilt, and He loves us imperfections and all'."

"And you've been alone ever since he died?" Marie asked.

"Well dear, not totally alone. I have old Sally over there curled up on the rocker. I have my Bible, and I have my memories. What about you Marie? What do you have?"

"I'm married to my husband, George for ten years. We have a beautiful eight year old daughter named Elizabeth, and a bulldog named Groucho."

Marie paused. "You know Abigail, my Elizabeth hasn't any grand-parents. There is no grandma to teach her how to bake cookies, or sew, or even play the piano. I bet she would love having an 'adopted' grandma to share these talents with her."

"There hasn't been a child in this house in fifty years. It might be nice to hear some music in this house again. You know, laughter can be music to an ear that hasn't heard."

"So Abigail, would you like to meet my daughter?"

"I would dear. I've been alone for so long now. It's time to dust off the old piano roles, and start the music again."

"I'm so glad I walked up your walk today Abigail. Whoever would have thought we had such a treasure in our little town."

"Oh dear me, a treasure? Certainly not. A very sad soul that lost the song in her heart and the music in her life is more like it. You are like an angel sent from Heaven above. I'm very grateful to you."

"I will bring my daughter tomorrow. Tomorrow you will have a new granddaughter, and she, a grandma."

"There will be baking, and patch working, and laughter, and fun." Abigail thought. "And there will be music.....always."