

THE JOURNEY

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David Swenson

Spring
2022

Pelican Valley Catholic Community Newsletter
Our Lady of Victory, St. Elizabeth, St. Leonard



Our Lent to Easter Journey

BY FATHER ALAN

Our Lenten season this year takes place in the midst of the suffering of the people in Ukraine. Jesus is crucified through the atrocities of this unjust war including the targeting of innocent civilians in residential and business areas, hospitals and schools. The exodus of refugees from Ukraine to Poland and other bordering countries has been a Living Way of the Cross.

There are so many reasons that this particular war has received global attention and captured our rapt interest. Newsmakers have called President Zelenskyy an icon as he rallied his citizens to take such a strong stance for democracy and their country. He is a true leader for not abandoning his people, but walking alongside them in their darkest hours.

We need to allow this experience to remind us that the same story of suffering and death happens again and again in so many corners of the world. The merciful, Sacred Heart of Jesus continues to burn with love for all who suffer. Jesus Himself is crucified again and again.

Still, He lives as the Risen One. All the destruction brought by sin and death do not have the final word. As real as the suffering is in our world, so even more real is our journey to Easter. The Risen Lord is our hope and our joy and the source of the peace that the world cannot give.

May the courage of Zelenskyy, and all those in Ukraine who have shown such bravery, be encouragement and an example for us: an example of perseverance in the midst of whatever kind of difficulty, an example of strong faith, of remaining true to our hope in God's mercy and love. Their journey is ours: the light shines on through the darkness....it is the light of the first dawning rays of Christ's resurrection.

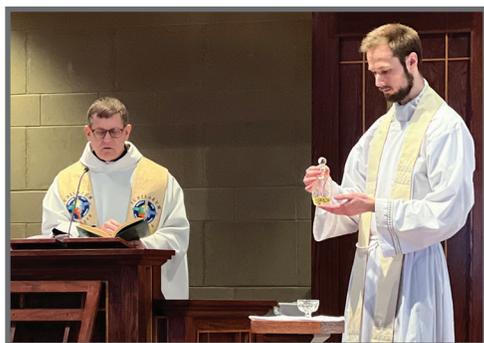


WORLD DAY OF THE SICK 2022

By Deb Forstner



Fr. Lucho visiting parishioner Jean Butler at Pioneer Care.

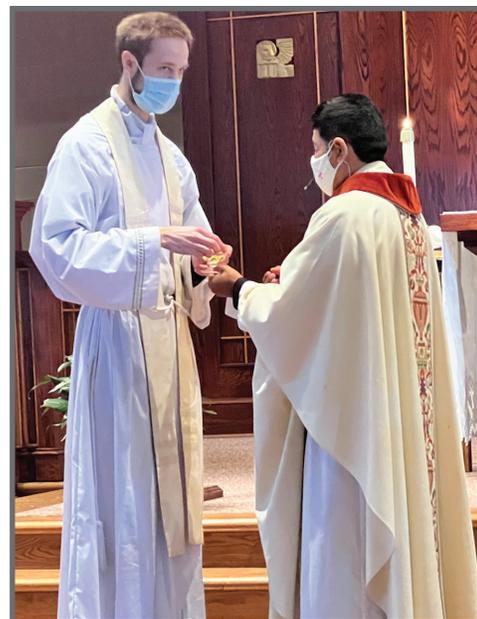


Fr. Alan praying a blessing while Fr. Patrick holds a vessel of oil for the Sacrament of Anointing.

Friday February 11th this year was the World Day of the Sick. The idea for having this yearly World Day observance was introduced by Pope John Paul II as a way for believers to offer prayers for those suffering from illnesses. The day coincides with the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and is important to those serving in Catholic health ministry. In fact, the National Association of Catholic Chaplains each year asks members to submit their written prayers both for the sick and for those who care for them.

At the February 11 daily morning Mass at OLV, people were invited to stay after and receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick from the three priests present: Fr. Alan, Fr. Patrick, and Fr. Lucho. After that, our priests went out to care facilities and to homebound Catholics to administer this sacrament to those who wanted it. People are encouraged to request a priest to come for this beautiful sacrament

of forgiveness and healing prior to surgery, when seriously physically or mentally ill, or for families/friends to request if someone is near death.



Fr. Patrick preparing to anoint Fr. Lucho.

The Pillars of Stewardship

By Fr. Patrick

Last August, Pat Tuel and I took a ten-and-a-half-hour road trip to Wichita, Kansas for the summer stewardship conference. Unsure of what to expect from this conference, by the end of it I found myself walking away with a sense of enthusiasm, energy, and (maybe more than anything) a better understanding of what stewardship is. I was impressed and pleased to learn that, at its root, stewardship is about discipleship. It's about forming disciples who are gratefully receiving from the Lord and using what they've been given to build up God's kingdom on earth. This flows from our call to holiness which is the purpose of our lives—to glorify God by reflecting his goodness and glory to the world. When a parish is doing stewardship well, it is forming disciples of Christ who are growing, both individually and communally, as disciples of Christ.

Stewardship is broken down into four pillars: hospitality, prayer, formation, and service. Hospitality is important because discipleship is relational. When hospitality is done well, it makes people feel welcome and invited into the mission of the Church. It reminds us of God's goodness and that we all have a role to play in the building up of God's kingdom. Prayer and formation were the two pillars that stuck out to me the most, and they go hand-in-hand. Being a disciple of Christ implies a relationship with the Lord. We come to know and love God more and more when we spend time in prayer with Him and learning about Him. You can't love someone you don't know, and you can't be in a real relationship with someone you never talk to. If we intentionally focus our efforts on learning how to pray and learning our faith, our souls are

enflamed with love and knowledge of God and the desire to pursue a life of great holiness. The final pillar, service, naturally flows from a person who recognizes how much God has given them. Every person has God-given gifts and talents which are to be nurtured, cultivated, and put to use for God's glory and the building up of His kingdom. As we have received much from God, so we give much back to God and His people through lives of service.

There is much more that could be said about stewardship, but the bird's-eye-view of it is that we are called to be disciples of Christ. Practicing the four pillars will form and shape us as disciples who gratefully receive from the Lord, and, in turn, give back to the Lord and others. If we live stewardship well, our parish will blossom and we will fulfill the purpose of our lives—to be great and holy saints who glorify God with our lives.



Wishing All the Best for Rosemary

By Deb Forstner

Rosemary Griffin has been the friendly, welcoming face and voice of the Our Lady of Victory Office, serving as parish secretary for the past five years. The Parish Secretary role is truly a ministry, and Rosemary was a very special coworker in Christ's vineyard. The role involves juggling many things, and Rosemary did so with patience and kindness. She was officially retired at the end of 2021, but stayed on for a time in January to train in our new "Juggler for Christ": Administrative Assistant Craig Hebert.

On January 16th, a reception was held between Sunday Masses in the Fellowship Hall to thank Rosemary for her service and to welcome her officially to the world of retirement. She was given a special statue of St. Benedict, as Rosemary was taught by Benedictine sisters, and is an Oblate of the Benedictine Community in Crookston. Rosemary stated, "During my five years as the OLV parish secretary, I have been so fortunate to have been able to work in a great place with great people. I treasure the friendships I have made here." Rosemary, the feeling is mutual. Congratulations!



RYAN & ANNALISE SMITH, AND DAUGHTER CHARLOTTE

Ryan and Annalise Smith have been married for 1 ½ years. They recently welcomed their daughter, Charlotte, to the world. In the summer, they can be found at the golf course or on the lake! Welcome Ryan, Annalise, and Charlotte!

TOM & MARY McGOVERN



Natives of Northfield, MN Tom and Mary McGovern moved to Fergus Falls to be closer to their kids and grandkids. Daughter, Moriya, is married to Sam Rufer. They live in Detroit Lakes and have two children: Marielle and Bastian. Son, Matt, and his wife Kelli (Stewart) live and work in Fergus Falls. They have two children: Riley and Simon. Tom and Mary celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this past September. Welcome, Tom and Mary!

MARGARET HANSON

Margaret is a returning member of Our Lady of Victory Church. In the 1980s, Margaret was an assistant organist for Mary Fran Ebersviller and then was the organist for the choir for several years. Fun fact: She attended Father Alan's ordination to the priesthood. Margaret's son, Craig, and his wife, Stacie, and their children, Emily and Luke are parishioners at OLV. Margaret currently resides in Brainerd with daughter, Tina, and her husband, Brad, and grandson, Nicklaus. She attends OLV regularly and desired to be part of the OLV family and the Fergus Falls community. Margaret's other daughter, Lynnette, and her husband, Craig (yes, another Craig), and their triplets, Catherine, Austin, and Isabelle live nearby in rural Underwood. Welcome, Margaret!



ETHAN WILLOUGHBY

Ethan is originally from Holdingford. He recently started a job as a 4-H Extension Educator for West Otter Tail County in Fergus Falls. Welcome, Ethan!

MARK LUTGEN

Mark recently moved to Fergus Falls from St. Paul. His mother was born in Rothsay, and he has many cousins in the area. His son, Kane, and grandson, Austin as well as his mother and four siblings reside in St. Paul. One sibling lives in Texas. They have a family lake cabin on Big McDonald Lake near Dent. Mark is retired from Ensono, a global IT company. He enjoys biking, hiking, and has participated in 8- and 4-man rowing with the MN Boat Club. Welcome, Mark!



Our Lady of Victory Welcomes You!

Welcoming Spring at OLV School

By Rachel Cox

There is a lot to be excited about at OLV School this spring. We are so happy to bring back the Spring Gala and Kindergarten Round Up. These events are times for new families and old friends to gather and celebrate the many blessings at OLV school. We're also wrapping up the Schulze Family Foundation Grant Challenge, a new funding opportunity to help the school grow and achieve.

After a two-year hiatus, the Spring Gala is back live and in person on Saturday, April 23rd. The gala is a wonderful night full of food, fellowship, and fundraising. Tickets are on sale now through the school office, 736-6661, or online using the QR code. You can purchase a single ticket for \$40, a pair for \$75, or a table of 8 for \$250. Social hour and the silent auction start at 5:30pm with dinner and live auction to follow. Reserve your seats today!

This spring we welcomed prospective OLV students to kindergarten

round up. New kindergarten students and parents met on February 28th to find out all that OLV School has to offer. If you are interested in signing your child up for kindergarten for the 2022-23 school year, please contact the school office for more information.

In March, we are wrapping up the Schulze Family Foundation Challenge Grant. This grant is being offered to Catholic elementary schools to help them grow and strive toward excellence. The Schulze Family Foundation will award OLV School \$25,000 if we can first raise \$25,000.

We began fundraising in December and will wrap up this drive on March 20th. We are just over halfway toward meeting our goal. Donations can be mailed or dropped off at the school office. Or you can donate online using the QR code.



MARIACHI NUEVO GUACHINANGO AT SAN LEONARDO

By Nancy Hilber

On December 12, 2021, St. Leonard Parish celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. While this is mostly near and dear to Latinos, the non-Spanish speakers of the congregation are slowly learning to appreciate this Feast Day. After all, Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patron saint of all the Americas. Juan Diego, now a saint, experienced five apparitions of the Virgin Mary on Tepeyac Hill (located in the north side of Mexico City) in 1531. Mary asked Juan Diego to go to the bishop and tell him what he had seen and heard, and ask him to build a church on the site. However, proof to the bishop at that time was difficult, and Juan was poor and uneducated. Finally, at the Virgin Mother's request, Juan Diego filled his tilma (which is simple cloak made of cactus fiber) with flowers. Upon presenting it to the bishop, the tilma was seen to have gained an amazing image of the Holy Mother herself. A basilica was built on the spot



Photo taken at Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City by Deb Forstner

of the visions, and when structural difficulties happened years later, a new basilica was built where the tilma is enshrined. Despite 490 years

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Youth Ministry Update

By Emily Hebert - ACC Youth Minister

Greetings from the Youth Ministry office! We have had many fun and exciting events this year. Last fall, a team of 10 college-aged young adults came and put on a retreat for high schoolers from the ACC. Engaging talks, lively games, and meaningful small group time were all highlights of the retreat. The retreat concluded with Mass and a meal with the families of the retreatants. The team members were impressed by the youth in their respectfulness of everyone around for the retreat and their openness to hearing what was said and letting it touch them. Another large event youth from the ACC participated in was the Middle School and High School Youth Rally at Cathedral High School in St. Cloud. Our keynote speaker was Connor Flanagan, a Catholic hip-hop artist and full-time dreamer. Connor's message was to use our God-given talents and interests to glorify Him. We also were invited to participate in a session for the Synod on Synodality. This opportunity gave our youth a place to share their perspective and let their voices be heard. Fr. Doug Liebsch, the vocations director for the diocese, also joined us for a Vocations Night. Fr. Doug spoke on how he heard God's call to the priesthood and what his journey to ordination looked like. Fr. Alan and Fr. Patrick joined for a question and answer session to round out the evening.

We have a few more exciting events coming up! The biggest one is the Steubenville Youth Conference. This year's theme, Fearless, is based on John 16:33. Every summer, thousands of Catholic teens across the country gather to celebrate and grow in their faith. It is a life-changing experience for both youth and chaperones alike. The conference is open to all current 8-12th graders. We will be going to Steubenville St. Paul at the University of St. Thomas from July 29-31. We have a limited number of spots available. Registration information is available at all three parishes and online at bit.ly/fearless_2022.

Follow us on Facebook (Pelican Valley Youth Ministry) and Instagram (@pelicanvalleyyg) to stay updated on what we are up to. Thank you!



MARIACHI NUEVO GUACHINANGO AT SAN LEONARDO *Continued from Page 4.*

passing since the original miracle of Our Lady's image, it remains vibrant, intact, and unfaded. This is truly a painting of Mary made by God through supernatural means; scientific testing shows it could not have been made by painting or human technique.

A Mass was celebrated in the evening of December 12th this year at St. Leonard Parish, followed with a traditional Mexican feast afterward. At around 9 PM, the first mariachi band to be in this parish, at least in my memory, showed up. Facing the altar in reverence of our Lady of Guadalupe who was enshrined there,

they entertained the congregation with a pastiche of traditional songs.

They left quickly afterwards as they had to go to Sioux City to stay and then play very early the next day. A quick conversation with the spokesman for the group, Miguel Grima, revealed that the group is a mix of lifelong players many of whom are related, along with relative newcomers. Miguel himself has been with the band for four years. Along with two other violinists they have two trumpets, two guitars, and of course the huge guitar, actually a six-string bass. Hopefully this will not be their last appearance here.

What Is Caritas?

By Rhonda Petersen and Gerry Leonard



Rhonda Antrim Petersen
and Gerry Leonard

Two pilgrims from OLV, Gerry Leonard and Rhonda Antrim Petersen, traveled to the Caritas Community outside of Birmingham, Alabama last summer. When preparing for the journey, the number one question they were asked was, "What is Caritas?"

Caritas, which means "love and charity" in Latin, is a community of Catholics who celebrate Mary, Queen of Peace. It was started by Terry Colafrancesco, Friend of Medjugorje. Terry, the founder, was a devout Italian Catholic and excavator/landscaper by trade. He read a book on Fatima when he was in high school, and was so moved by the story that he asked Our Lady if she ever came again to the world, he wanted to go there. In 1982, he heard about six children in a village called Medjugorje, located in Yugoslavia (Bosnia today), who reported seeing the Virgin Mary on a hillside. The six children have received messages from Mary, through visions, since that time, recorded in the book, Words from Heaven. (A copy of this book has been donated to OLV to check out through their lending library.)

In 1986, Terry made a pilgrimage to Medjugorje, and his life was

forever changed. So moved was Terry by his experience in Medjugorje, he started to lead pilgrimages there. He met and then befriended the visionaries and their families, and in particular, the visionary Marija, who is known for receiving a special message on the 25th of each month. Seeing the deep conversions that were taking place in Medjugorje, Terry wanted to seek from the Virgin Mary a similar grace for the United States. He was given permission to ask a question of the Virgin Mary through Marija in an apparition. He asked if the same conversion taking place in Medjugorje could take place in the area he was living and spread from there. Our Lady answered his question on October 6, 1986, saying, **"Pray and by your life witness, not with words but rather through prayer, will you attain what your desire is. Therefore, pray more and live in humility."** Mary's message wasn't fully understood until November 18, 1988 when Marija came to Birmingham, AL, and Our Lady prayed, blessed, and converted tens of thousands of people who traveled there from as far away as South America, the Caribbean, and even Russia.

Marija has been to Caritas many times since then. While there, she receives her apparitions from Mary. Mary has appeared over 200 times in Terry and his wife's bedroom. Mary has also appeared in a field near the house on many occasions, and twice at a cross on a mountain 1.2 miles above Caritas which was built by Terry and the Caritas community, an exact replica of the cross on Cross Mountain in Medjugorje. The significance of these three spots is a sign which illuminates the purpose of Mary's apparitions at Caritas. She chose the bedroom because it represents the family, and Mary has come to bring healing to today's families and lead them back to God. The field was first sanctified by Mary when she

appeared there, on Thanksgiving Day in 1988. Because Thanksgiving is America's feast day to remember our nation was established on biblical principles and religious freedom, the field represents the prayer for the conversion of our nation. On Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1988, Mary appeared in the field and said, **"I invite you to live my messages. I am here to help you! I will intercede for you to God for all your intentions."** The Cross at the top of the mountain was built specifically, 'For the Soul of America,' which was consecrated to Mary that through her intercession, she would lead the United States back to the cross of her Son, Jesus, the source of our salvation.

Over four separate years, the apparitions of Mary came to Caritas for the birthday of our nation, July 3rd and 4th. When Mary appeared on July 3, 2012, she gave a message that would bring healing and conversion to our nation, she said, **"Form and make prayer groups through which we will pray for your healing and the healing of this nation to draw closer to God and to me."**

Some take-aways from Gerry and Rhonda's pilgrimage and the messages from Mary are:

- Mary desires us to pray what is called the 7-7-7 Prayer: The Creed followed by 7 Our Fathers, 7 Hail Marys, and 7 Glory Bes. This prayer is offered for peace.
- Mary indicated there are four

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What is Caritas? *Continued from Page 6.*

things necessary for everlasting life—pray, read scripture, go to confession, and fast. She desires fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, and bread and water is the best kind of fast.

- Mary revealed in Medjugorje that her true birthday is August 5. While the Church celebrates Mary's birthday on September 8th, it is believed that once Mary's plans through Medjugorje are fulfilled, the Church will honor August 5th as Mary's true birthday.
- Mary desires us to be bold in our prayers, saying "demand boldly for the graces." Don't be afraid to ask for what you need.
- There will be a world-wide acceptance of Mary that will heal the division. Muslims pray on beads and honor Mary already.
- If you wish to pray during Mary's apparitions, the time is 11:40 Standard Time, which is 5:40 PM in Medjugorje.

From Rhonda, there were a few special messages received:

I prayed in the field by myself during some free-time. The next morning, the message for us pilgrims was about forgiveness. Sometimes we have a hard time letting go of our mistakes, despite prayer and

confession. We also climbed the mountain to the cross and while praying I looked up and saw a cross in the sky with no planes around. We were also encouraged to carry a rock with us representing what we need to let go. We were able to leave it at the foot of the cross. It was a very meaningful experience. Another message was after praying the rosary in the field of apparitions, a gentle breeze came up briefly. The community said this happens frequently after the rosary there. A final message was after asking Mary for a special sign that she was present. Later that day, after a discussion in the woods, a beautiful blue butterfly appeared before Gerry and me, turned and fluttered its wings, and flew away. When sharing this experience with a community member, they indicated there are no blue butterflies at Caritas.

From Gerry:

For me it was also one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. Caritas is a mostly self-sustaining community. They have a one room school and stick to the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. But mostly they include the love of the Lord and His Mother Mary in their curriculum.

A few incidents happened that especially touched my heart. At 3:00 each day they kneel down to say the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Since I've been home, I also pray the Divine Chaplet as close to 3:00 as possible. One of the evenings down in the field we saw many fireflies off in the woods which I hadn't seen in many years. Another meaningful experience in the field was on the eve before Mary's birthday. We celebrated her birthday that evening with a special ceremony. The community lit 40 lanterns and released them to the Blessed Mother. Forty was significant as Medjugorje was celebrating 40 years of apparitions with the Blessed Mother. They let me release one in my late husband Mike's honor. It so happened to be on the anniversary date of Mike's going to Heaven.

Climbing up to Penitential Mountain was not easy for me. It was 1.2 miles and without the help of Rhonda and a couple of other angels, I would never have made it. One of the angels who helped me up the mountain bought me a T-shirt that says, "I climbed to the cross on Penitential Mountain."

A few quotes from the founder, Terry, include: "Prayer is a conversation with God," "Prayer takes precedence over everything," "Only prayers and fasting can stop wars," "Prayer groups are important," "Read scripture," and "Pray the rosary." I highly recommend the pilgrimage to Caritas.

The Caritas Community is trying to purchase the land that the consecrated cross was built on. The owners are asking \$10,000 per acre despite an appraised value of \$1,500 per acre. They would appreciate prayers for the possession of that land. They have a website **savingthecross.com**, if interested in more information. And you can also read more on their website, **Medjugorje.com**.

Perpetual Light

By Connie Graff



JACKLITCH

"I believe at this time that human relationships is the most important... we really need to take care of each other and stop being selfish and deny the fact that we do love all different aspects of life... really look at yourself and most important, be yourself as often as you can be!! Especially when it's easier not to!!!"
Damien

Brother of Sherri - Kristi - Cory

Damien's grave site at St. Otto's Cemetery. The red light placed by the headstone was a gift from Damien's Grandma.

DAMIEN MICHAEL JACKLITCH

On September 18, 1980, a precious baby boy was born to Bruce and Pam Jacklitch. He remained nameless for a few days as his parents deliberated on a fitting name for their firstborn son. They settled upon Damien Michael. Son and father would share a middle name, and Damien being a unique name was a great choice, as Damien grew into a unique person! Two older sisters, Sherri and Kristi, were thrilled to welcome home their little brother, and several years later, Damien was thrilled to become a big brother to Cory. Damien attended OLV school and graduated from Fergus Falls High School in 1999. He then enrolled in the pre-dental program at the U of MN, Duluth campus. Tragically, Damien died on September 15, 2002, just three days short of his 22nd birthday, in a car/train collision near Dilworth. His parents admit Damien wasn't a perfect kid, but his life impacted a lot of people.

Have you ever met a kid who was described as a "people kid" and could relate to anyone from babies to the elderly? Well, Damien was one of those kids, who could easily have a conversation with the neighbor lady on her dock or a fellow student who needed a friend. Several of his friends contributed their thoughts and memories for this article. Their words articulate beautifully Damien's heart and soul.

LUKE: Damien was one of the kindest people I ever met. He was always thinking of others before



himself. That's what made Damien so special. He never had an agenda to serve himself; he always put other people's needs above his own. He was the best! He was caring, genuine, compassionate, empathetic, loving and had a great sense of humor. If Damien was your friend to any degree, you were blessed by him in some way, shape or form. We were the lucky ones. I remember a few occasions in high school when Damien spoke up for those being mistreated. He actually inspired me to help the "least of these," and I'm so grateful for that. He was a quiet leader with a humble heart and he made a meaningful and significant impact on so many people's lives. He will forever be missed.

MEGHAN: Damien gave me a monkey stuffed animal on my 18th birthday that has been in my car ever since. I can't bring myself to take it out because it's like Damo is in the car with me, too. Right before he died he told me he was proud of me for following my dreams and going to art school. There were times after that I

doubted my decision, but I heard his words in my head and kept going. We met in high school art class and sat at the same table. I don't even remember exactly what made us become friends. It's like we just had an instant friendship. We met when I was 17. He died when I was 22. That is such a short amount of time and yet I instantly loved him and in my heart I feel like we were friends forever. Damo had a way of making everyone feel loved, and he spread joy wherever he went. His death made the sun shine a little less brightly for me, for a long time. When I moved to Colorado after graduation, he was one of the few friends that came to visit me. He got me through a bad break up and was the best listener. HE GAVE THE BEST HUGS!

TREVOR: He changed my life by teaching me to choose to do the right thing.

BRADY: Damien was my best friend. I spent more time with him than anybody else from about the age of 12 to 20. There were stretches where I spent more time at the Jacklitch house than at my own. I was practically on the chore chart! I was there so often that if Damien had something going on and wasn't around, I would just stay and hang out with Cory. I was also a very energetic and hyperactive child, so God bless Bruce and Pam. Damien had a higher level of assurance and confidence as a 17 year old kid than most people ever get. At the time, making the varsity team in a high school sport was the pinnacle of most kid's athletic career. Damien did make the varsity soccer team as a junior; FFHS had a really good soccer program in

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Perpetual Light

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the late 90s, and competition was fierce for playing minutes. Damien wasn't seeing as much playing time as he would've liked, so he asked the coach to move him to the junior varsity in order to play the game he loved. I and many others thought he was crazy for giving up the clout that comes with being on the varsity team. He handled it all so easily and thought I was silly for making a big deal of it. He just wanted to play as much as he could the sport he loved. He was so genuine, thoughtful, respectful, honest and loyal; you really couldn't find a better guy. I love and miss my best friend so much.

ANONYMOUS: Five years after Damien's death, a letter from Texas, written simply on notebook paper with this message was sent to Bruce and Pam at Christmas time: "I was a freshman, a nobody, and Damien was an upperclassman who befriended me. I don't know why he chose me to be his friend. When he found out my favorite band, he bought me their CD and gave it to me." Pam recalls how that letter was such a gift and brought joy to their family that Christmas.

Sports were a big part of Damien's life. He loved playing tennis and worked for the City of Fergus Falls during the summer in his high school years as a tennis instructor. He easily related to his young tennis players and made learning the game of tennis fun. A mom of a young player shared with Pam how one day she arrived at the courts to pick up her child and Damien was ending the lesson by standing in front of the kids instructing them to hit him with as many tennis balls as they could. Another example was when a quiet boy, who kept to himself, was having his tenth birthday. Damien recognized how he could make this boy's birthday special. After getting permission from the boy's mother, Damien picked up the birthday boy in Bruce's '87 red Porsche, and they rode to McDonalds for a birthday lunch in style!

Music was another of Damien's loves. He developed his musical talent by starting out in band playing clarinet, switched to saxophone and could play piano by ear. By the eighth grade he was playing the guitar exclusively, devoting two hours a day to practicing. He LOVED music not only for the personal joy his music brought to him, but because it drew people to him.

"Rock'n For Damo" started out as a spontaneous gathering after his death, of kids who felt lost and missed him. Friends and family enjoyed being together, but that first year was somber. Subsequent annual gatherings held on the Friday after Thanksgiving became a true celebration of Damien's love for music and his friends. For 15 years friends and family came together to listen to Damien's band "Giving Back Jack" and other live music. Bruce and Pam recall how the event was heartwarming and provided healing, especially for Damien's siblings. Funds raised were donated to needy

local causes. A Dollars for Scholars scholarship fund was established in Damien's name from proceeds from a talent show at A Center for the Arts and other donations, and continues to be awarded today to a high school soccer player who loves the game and exhibits good sportsmanship.

Damien Michael Jacklitch may have lived a short time if you're measuring life only in years lived. In fact, Damien's life does continue due to the living legacy he left. Like many of you reading his story, I didn't personally know Damien, but I truly believe this "people kid" will continue to make an impact if we do what Damien would do: stand up for and support the "least among us," choose the right thing, surprise someone with a gift or a visit, play the game or favorite music just because you enjoy it, engage in conversation with people of all ages, GIVE A GOOD HUG, and if you're not the hugging type, give a genuine smile. In short, be like Damo.



OLV Parish Library

By
Connie Graff
&
Rosemary
Griffin

You're invited to visit the Parish Library located in the OLV Gathering Space, near the entrance to the coat room. You are welcome to take a book(s) or a music CD home with you. It's easy, you don't even need a library card; nor do you need to check out your books. Donated books and music CD's are accepted anytime in the box provided below the book shelf. Please donate only Catholic inspired material and donate only those items you are ok with not being returned to you.

A little history of this book shelf is in order. It was started 7 years ago by Rosemary Griffin as she noticed other churches had parish libraries. After approaching Fr. Alan, he approved the idea and appointed Rosemary as parish library coordinator. The book shelf was built by OLV parishioner, Leroy Thelen and books and CD's were soon being donated by parishioners. Rosemary is retiring from her parish library coordinator position and passing the reins to Connie. If you have any questions regarding the library, contact Connie by email at: connie.graff1206@gmail.com.

Homebound Ministry

By Jennifer Dummer, OLV Pastoral Assistant

For many elderly OLV parishioners or those parishioners with disabilities, attending Mass is not possible due to a variety of physical challenges or a lack of appropriate transportation. Although many of these individuals watch a televised Mass on Sunday, they do not have the opportunity to physically receive the Body and Blood of Jesus during Holy Communion. Since August 2019, I have been privileged to bring Jesus in the Eucharist to these homebound parishioners as my primary duty as Pastoral Assistant at Our Lady of Victory Church. I try to consistently make monthly Communion visits to approximately 15 homebound parishioners. There are an additional 30+ Catholic residents that reside in our local nursing homes and assisted living facilities, including Pioneer Care, Broen Home, Veterans

Home, Park Gardens, and Mill Street. Fortunately, these residents have the opportunity to attend Mass monthly or bimonthly. Fr. Alan or Fr. Patrick have Mass on Wednesday mornings at these facilities on a rotating basis. I accompany the presiding priest to these Masses to visit with the residents that attend Mass and deliver Holy Communion to those residents that are unable to attend Mass.

An important part of each Communion visit is the conversation we get to enjoy. I love learning about the parishioner's family, their spouse, their interests, where they grew up, and the important memories in their life. I listen as they share about the many joys and blessings they have experienced, but also the many losses and challenges they have faced. I am continually inspired

by each parishioner's strong faith, courage, and acceptance in the face of adversity and loss. I have been truly blessed with the opportunity to not only bring Jesus in the Eucharist to our homebound OLV parishioners, but to build lasting relationships with them as well. If you or someone you know is unable to attend Mass and would like to receive Communion in their home please contact me at 218-736-2429 Ext 15 or Jennifer@ffolvchurch.org.

NOTE: At St. Elizabeth and St. Leonard, currently volunteers help with outreach to the homebound. Their names are June Clark at St. Elizabeth, and Colleen Moerke and Maria Stokka at St. Leonard. You could reach June at 218-205-6899; Colleen at 218-329-2325; and Maria at 218-731-3796. Thanks for the service of these volunteers!

BILL WEDLL BRINGS US THE WORD OF GOD THROUGH MUSIC

By Susan Ward

At St. Elizabeth's we have been blessed with music at every Mass. And Bill Wedll is the one who delivers this blessing.

Bill was baptized at St Elizabeth's and Buster and Opal Blondeau were his Godparents. To Bill, this meant he had a free pass into Buster's Place, which was a family friendly tavern in town. This was just one of the fun memories of growing up in Elizabeth where he could spend lots of time with the Blondeaus and Bryon Kidder and others. Staying overnight with friends was common. Everyone was treated as family. Parents often did not even know they had a house guest.

When Bill was about 13 years old, he bought a guitar. Bill credits his mother with his interest and talent in music. Bill never had a music lesson. He taught himself a few chords and found a few easy songs and played them over and over again, especially his favorite Johnny Cash songs..

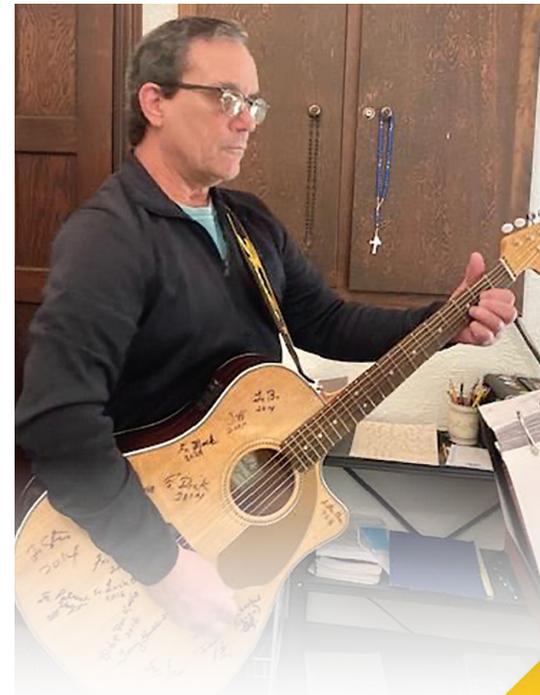
Bill's Mother, Bev, would listen and give him instructions on how to make

the music better. Bill accepted all of Bev's verbal instructions because they always did make the music better. Bill was amazed how Bev could play any song on her keyboard.

At one point while Bill was growing up, St. Elizabeth's no longer had anyone providing music for the Mass. The silence did not work for Bill so he decided, "I'll go to Augustana Church if there's no music here." Fortunately, we got some music.

Now Bill provides the music for all our Masses. In fact, he's always the first one at the church and ready to go. He also plays for many other events and does so much more for our parish. He helps the crew mow the lawn, checks on things in the Hall and fixes what is needed, makes the coffee for us, provides the music for the Pork Out and many other events.

Bill has a few good singers that add a great deal to the music, but they are not always there. He certainly welcomes more singers. When Isaac, Bill's great nephew, is home from college, he joins Bill in the



choir, which pleases Bill.

As Bev always said, "When you sing in the choir you are closer to heaven."

Music evokes emotions and our hearts are stirred as we listen to the spiritual power of music.

We give thanks and praise to God and are very grateful that we have such a wonderful musician. Thank you, Bill!



Reflections of an Old Man

Saint Lee?

I want to be a saint!

When you've stopped laughing, please read on.

I first considered that possibility several months ago. No, I wasn't feeling particularly holy, but I was seeing some things about myself that I didn't like.

Now, don't get me wrong. I don't see myself as an especially holy or prayerful person. Those of you who read my "Reflections" regularly know that I have more than a few doubts and questions about my faith. Just the same, I've tried to live my life in accordance with the Big Two Commandments: Love God and love your neighbor.

Not surprisingly, a little more thought caused me to give up the idea. It was just too far-fetched. But shortly after making that decision I came across the following sentences in the February issue of "U. S. Catholic":

You are the only you there has ever been. The only you there will ever be. God has been hoping to make you a saint, exactly as you are, and the world needs a saint just like you.

*Meg Hunter Kilmer in "Saints Around the World"
Emmaus Road Publishing*

Was it fate? Luck? Coincidence? Accident? God's will? I don't know. All I know is that those words caused me to reconsider my decision to give up.

So here I go. Step by step. For however long I may have left. In just a bit over a year I'll hit 90, but there's life in the old dog yet. I'll work to change those things I don't like about myself and try harder to do what God wants me to do and not do what He doesn't want me to do.

Don't expect to see a halo around my head next time you see me, and don't waste your time asking for my blessing. It's going to take a while. And it may not happen. But don't count me out. After all...

Nothing is impossible for God!

Lee Krogh

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH WANTS YOUR INPUT!

Our ACC has trained listeners for the Synod Process, who will give confidential, summarized feedback to our Diocese.

If you wish to be heard,
call the OLV Parish Office to be
scheduled with a member
of our listening team.



For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

**PELICAN VALLEY AREA
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

Our Lady of Victory, St. Elizabeth, St. Leonard

**C/O 207 North Vine Street
Fergus Falls, MN 56537**



WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday 4:30 pm Our Lady of Victory
Sunday 8:30 am St. Elizabeth
Sunday 8:30 am Our Lady of Victory
Sunday 10:30 am St. Leonard
Sunday 10:30 am Our Lady of Victory
Sunday 12:00 pm St. Leonard Spanish Mass

*Our Lady of Victory School
(K-6th grade)*

*Learning Ladder Preschool
(3-5 year olds, full and half day)*

218/736-6661

www.ffolvschool.org

Baptisms

TRISTEN JACOB KEEGAN
Jacob Keegan & Ashley Ramthun
10/9/2021

CLAYTON JOHN NEULEIB
Landen & Allison Neuleib
10/24/21

WALKER RICHARD LEHMANN
Cody & Hannah Lehmann
11/5/2021

MONROE ANN GREENWALDT
Chris & Meghan Greenwaldt
12/11/2021

GRANLAN WALTER GREENWALDT
Chris & Meghan Greenwaldt
12/11/2021

CAROLINE LOUISE DAOUST
Jacob & Megan Daoust
12/18/2021

NORA JEAN ARNTSON
Matthew & Kelly Arntson
1/8/2022

CHARLOTTE GRACE SMITH
Ryan & Annalise Smith
1/23/2022

LINCOLN FORREST KOEP
Chad & Jenna Koep
2/26/2022

