



Holy Cross Connections

Easter Blessings

By Father Jerry Stluka

Our Catholic-Christian Faith is full of signs, wonders and mysteries. The Lenten season prepares us for the three day (triduum) celebration of Easter when we wholeheartedly embrace these mysteries, signs and wonders.

HOLY THURSDAY begins our Easter observance with the washing of feet - a powerful expression of Christ serving us and challenging us to serve one another in His name. The Mass of the Lord's Supper celebrates the first Eucharist, the sacramental realization of the death/resurrection of Christ. This prayerful evening concludes with quiet adoration until 11:00. This is an opportune time to pray the priestly prayer of Christ in the Gospel of John, chapters 13 to 17.

GOOD FRIDAY begins in solemn silence with the priest lying prostrate before the altar, humbly expressing his union with Christ, the suffering servant, on the cross. The Passion is proclaimed. Solemn prayers are offered for believers and non believers, for church and civil leaders, for those preparing for Baptism and for all who have special needs. The cross is venerated as we bring our personal suffering and that of all people to be united with the redemptive suffering of Christ on the cross. This simple and solemn liturgy concludes with Holy Communion.

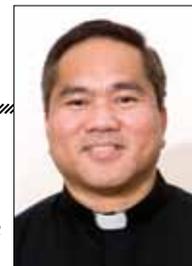
EASTER VIGIL begins in darkness which is overcome with the Light of the Risen Christ, wonderfully symbolized by the Easter Candle. The solemn Easter Proclamation is sung. Scriptures relating powerful moments of our salvation history are read. The Elect receive the Sacraments of Initiation and we all renew our Baptismal Promises. With Christ, we die and rise to new and everlasting life.

During this season of economic hardship and anxiety, we gather to celebrate the central mystery of our common faith, the death/resurrection of Christ. We are born again as we share the victory of life over death, love over hate, forgiveness over vengeance, peace over war and generosity over greed. I pray that this Easter will bring new life and hope to our families, our parish and our world. I hope that you can join us here at Holy Cross to experience these three days of wonder, prayer and mystery.



Easter in the Philippines

By Father Ramon Owera



According to the latest census, the Philippines have an estimated population of 94 million people. It is the world's 12th most populous country. More than 90% of the population is Christian: about 80% belong to the Roman Catholic Church. On Sundays, which is the day of the Lord's Resurrection, churches are always filled with people, many of those are standing in and outside because the pews and space are not always enough.

This situation is complicated with the celebration of the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday. Actually, these people are already in the churches beginning with Holy Thursday, with the celebration of the Lord's Last Supper, and the Good Friday liturgy. Thursday and Friday of Holy Week are holidays for the entire Philippines. Most of the people working in the capital, which is Manila, and other major cities, are going home to their provinces to celebrate Holy Week and Easter with their families.

During Easter Vigil, I remember in my hometown parish, there are so many people outside the church because inside there is no more space even to stand. The Easter Vigil celebration begins with the blessing of the fire in front of the church. The lighting of the fire is being done in a dramatic way with a lighted fire tied to a string from the bell tower going down to light the firewood. Then the priest will bless the fire and then light the Easter

Candle and continues with the Liturgy of the Easter Vigil.

The Easter Vigil Liturgy begins at different times in the parishes in the Philippines. It usually begins after 8:00 in the evening. Some churches will begin at 11:00 in the evening and they will continue with the "Salubong" or "Domingo Encuentro" which literally means the meeting of the image of the Risen Christ and his Mother Mary in long procession, meeting in an intersection. The procession is divided into two groups. One with the men who follow the image of the Risen Christ and the women who follow the image of the Blessed Mother. Some churches will do this early at 5:00 a.m. in the morning.

The meeting of the Risen Christ and the Blessed Mother is done in a dramatic way. A tower is built at the intersection and it is deco-

rated with flowers and coconut leaves. Children are dressed as angels and trained to sing the Alleluia when the Risen Christ and his Mother Mary meet. One of the children as an angel will remove the black veil on the head of the Sorrowful Mother and start to sing the Alleluia and would be answered by all the other children. After this meeting, all will walk to the church for the Easter Sunday liturgy.

After Mass each parish will prepare an Easter egg hunt especially for children with prizes written on the eggs. After the Easter Sunday Mass, families will go for swimming in the different beach resorts nearby and also in the rivers. Native foods are prepared and there is a great reunion for the families and relatives celebrating Easter.



The meeting of the Risen Christ and the Blessed Mother.

Behind The Scenes by Jack Kustron



Brotherly Love

Jim Houk is the kind of guy that you would like to have for a brother. He's kind, thoughtful, helpful, and has a good sense of humor, but he wasn't always that way.

Born and raised on the north end, Jim attended Holy Name School and earned an Associate Degree from DeVry University. He moved to Dallas to work for Texas Instruments on radar circuit boards. It was there that his struggle with depression - that had been going on for years - got to the point that he could no longer work. "I quit and was just hoping that I would get better," he said. "I decided that all things are in God's hands and that I would put my faith in Him and just wait for the day that I got to feeling better, but I didn't."

Jim moved back to Columbus to be with his parents, who were getting old and he wanted to help them. His mother Patricia and father Walter lived at the Jaycee Arms and attended Holy Cross, where his dad worked cleaning the church. It was here that Jim returned to Catholicism, after spending some time as a Methodist. Now he has received treatment for his depression, but is open about it and when asked if this was something that he wanted to share with our readers, he replied, "Yes, that's a big part of who I am."

After reading at his Mother's funeral, and then again at his Aunt's, Sr. Pat asked if he would like to lector and Jim said yes. "I never presumed that I would be consistently good or decent at it. The truth is I probably wouldn't have presumed myself fit to do it anyway, but I found that after I started, the Spirit of God was available to provide me with the passion and insight to say the Word, in a decent sort of fashion."

Jim's feelings for the Holy Cross community run deep. He enjoys attending daily Mass and seems to always have room in his van for those who need a ride. He also uses his technical knowledge to assist those at Nazareth Towers with setting up their television remotes and other technical tasks that can frustrate some folks. And he's constantly lending a helping hand to his brother Bobby, who suffers from motion disorder, and his friend Lora, aka Squirt, who has been a family friend for many years.

Jim is also a Greeter and Usher. He says hello with a smile and we're thankful that he is a member of our Holy Cross family.

Dates to Remember



- Palm Sunday, April 1** 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. Masses
- Holy Thursday, April 5** 6:00 p.m. Liturgy followed by Adoration until 11:00 p.m.
- Good Friday, April 6** 2:00 p.m. Liturgy preceded by Stations of the Cross at 1:00 p.m.
- Easter Vigil, April 7** 8:30 p.m. Liturgy
- Easter Sunday, April 8** 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. Masses



RCIA RCIA RCIA

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

On Saturday, April 7, 2012 at the Easter Vigil, Brandon Haywood will be baptized and will also receive the other sacraments of Initiation, Eucharist and Confirmation. At the same Easter Vigil service Joyce Elliott, Brian Gibson and Nancy White will become full members of the Catholic Church with the reception of Eucharist and Confirmation.

Brandon Lee Haywood

I am a Dayton native who graduated from Ohio Dominican University in 2009 with a degree in business administration and marketing. I was recently engaged and will be getting married in July. I'm an employee of Ricart Automotive and in my free time I like to go to movies and attend sporting events. I am currently going through the RCIA process. I really enjoy being able to learn more about the Catholic Church in a group setting and having the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered from many angles.



Joyce Elliott

I was born and raised in Columbus and was baptized a Catholic as an infant. I have been attending Holy Cross Church for the last nine years. All of my family has received Confirmation and Holy Communion, and after much prayer and discernment I decided that now was the time for me to prepare to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. The two people who inspired me to go to RCIA classes were Fr. Jerry Stluka and Sister Pat Pieper. Receiving the sacraments at the Easter Vigil will be the high point of my faith journey.



Nancy White

I was born and raised in Columbus and have also spent my adult years working in Ohio. My first contact with the Catholic Church was through my mother's family who were Catholics but we did not regularly attend the Catholic Church. I did attend and was baptized in the Presbyterian Church. As an adult I became interested in the Catholic faith and God's blessings to me and through his grace I started the RCIA classes at Holy Cross. One thing I enjoy about the classes is the collaboration of the parishes in the Deanery. It is enjoyable to meet other people from different parishes who are on the same journey as I am and it also adds variety to our discussions. I am looking forward to Easter when I will become a full member of the Catholic Church.



Brian Gibson

I was born in Harker Heights, Texas and grew up in Temple, Texas in the central area of the state. I have spent many years discerning my faith before deciding to continue my journey of faith by seeking full membership in the Catholic Church. After years of participation in other traditions of the Christian faith, I attempted to undertake the RCIA process unsuccessfully for several years. After more time discerning my faith, I felt particularly drawn to the sacraments of the Catholic Church, particularly to the Eucharist and to its meaning in the Catholic church. I am also drawn to the Church by the connectedness I feel to my family, especially my grandparents, who were both strong believers in the Catholic faith. I enjoy the RCIA process through Holy Cross because the consortium of churches that participate bring a diverse set of views to the weekly discussions and because it has provided me with the knowledge to understand the true meaning of the sacraments and of the beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church.



Newsnotes

Welcome!

Noah Brandon Henry, son of **Benjamin** and **Dora Henry** was baptized on January 22, 2012.

Congratulations!

On January 28, 2012 **Paul Sayre** and **Kristin Davidek** celebrated the holy sacrament of Matrimony at Holy Cross.

First Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, April 29, 2012 during the 11 o'clock Mass. First Communicants: **Anne Federer, Megan McKinney, Molly Mayzum, and Kaden Ruiz.**

May Crowning will occur at the 9 o'clock Mass on May 6, 2012.

The Catholic Foundation

We have been blessed to receive a 2012 Focus Grant in the Education Cycle distributed by The Catholic Foundation. Our project, Funding for Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Level 3, was awarded \$1280.00. We are proud that the value of this project is being acknowledged and supported.

We are grateful to the donors of our diocese, who contributed to The Catholic Foundation unrestricted funds which allow them to make grants like this available for the greatest needs of our diocese. Please remember that donations of any size may be given to these and other funds for the benefit of our parish at The Catholic Foundation any time.

The Catholic Foundation's mission is to inspire giving and assist donors to provide for the long-term needs of the 23-county Diocese of Columbus. It is one of the oldest and largest Catholic diocesan foundations in the country, distributing over \$59 million in the diocese since 1985. If you would like more information on contributing to existing funds that support our mission, or would like to work on a planned gift of your own, please contact Scott Hartman (shartman@catholic-foundation.org) or Amy Parker (aparker@catholic-foundation.org) at The Catholic Foundation, (614)443-8893.



The Christ Child Society

By Eileen Kiersh

The Christ Child Society is a national charitable organization of members dedicated to serving at risk children regardless of race or creed. This is an opportunity to meet wonderful women who have a heart for helping disadvantaged

children in a variety of ways. Christ Child members are required to volunteer 40 hours yearly. Possible volunteer opportunities:

1. All Saints Academy - help in the library and tutor students.
2. Columbus Public Health Department - assemble "goodie" bags and folders for nurses to take on home visits.
3. Crib Club - a store at the Kinder women's Care Center where clients shop with coupons that they earn by attending parenting classes, keeping doctor's appointments, counseling visits, etc. which help them and their babies. This program provides cribs, all new clothing and baby items to the mother under the incentive program.
4. Grant writing - training is available.
5. Layette Program - pack and distribute layettes to social service agencies and local hospitals to be used by mothers and infants chosen by social workers.
6. Ronald McDonald House - meals for families twice a month.
7. Rosemont Center - Christ Child members provide a two hour cooking class twice a month.
8. Run the Race Club - provides hot dinner for 50 children twice a week.
9. St. Mary's School - tutoring
10. St. Stephen's Community House - assist at day care center and library.
11. Back to School Back Pack - assist with gathering, sorting supplies and distribution to needy students.

Members of the Christ Child Society also participate in annual fund raising events.

1. Red Wagon - October luncheon, fashion show and crafts.
2. Baby Shower - baby items for crib club and layette program.

Christ Child Society meets monthly at St. Stephen's Community Center. We are always seeking new members. For more information or questions please contact Eileen Kiersh (614)890-8907 (h) or (614)440-6611(c).

Holy Cross Catholic Church
204 S. Fifth Street, Columbus, OH 43215

(614) 224-3416

www.holycrosscatholic.com

Parish Staff

Reverend Father Jerome D. Stluka, Pastor
Rev. Fr. Ramon Owera, in residence
Rev. Fr. Jose Manickathan, in residence
Sister Anne Keenan, OP, Pastoral Associate
Michael P. Agriesti, Administrative Assistant

Liturgy Schedule

Sunday: 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
11:30 a.m. Tuesday - Saturday

Reconciliation

Every Friday: 11:00 a.m.
Every Sunday: 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Holy Cross Connections

Editor: Fr. Jerry Stluka
Associate Editor: Sr. Anne Keenan OP
Managing Editor: Jack Kustron

Layout and Design: Jan Kustron
Photography: Jack Kustron
Printing: Dee Printing



Holy Cross Catholic Church
204 S. Fifth St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Columbus, OH 43218
Permit No. 293

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED