



10.2013

Saint Paul

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Christ Helping People Through People: Stephen Ministry Continues to Grow at St. Paul

In chapter six of the Acts of the Apostles, Stephen was chosen to provide caring ministry to those in need. Ever since that time, caring ministry has been an important pillar of the Christian faith community. In 2007, St. Paul began its own chapter of Stephen Ministry, which follows the fulfillment of the second greatest commandment to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

Stephen Ministry exists in more than 11,000 congregations from more than 160 denominations all over the United States, Canada and 24 other countries.

“The ministry exists to help people during difficult times in their lives,” says Referral Coordinator Carmen Guttman. “Those in the parish who are in need can ask for a Stephen Minister who will walk alongside them in Christ. Our focus is always to serve others, who are referred to as ‘care receivers.’ Through compassionate listening, the Stephen Minister is the ‘caregiver’ whereas Christ is the ‘cure giver.’”

Care receivers can be individuals who are facing challenges and difficulties included but not limited to loneliness, grief, job loss, illness or loss of a loved one. Care receivers are paired individually with caregivers — men are paired with men and women and paired with women. What is shared with a Stephen Minister is held in strict confidence — confidentiality is an integral part of the ministry.

Since its inception, St. Paul’s Stephen Ministry has grown remarkably to the point where they number 10 Stephen Ministers. In addition to Carmen and Coordinating Leader Nick Thorpe, the Stephen Ministry Leadership Team also includes Jim Guttman, who is in charge of continuing education, and Helen Vulevich, who is in charge of bereavement



Attendees of the Stephen Ministers’ summer retreat. (From left) Helen Veluvich, Terry Kellen, Fran Viviano, Carmen Guttman, Jim Guttman, Nick Thorpe, Kathy Gebler, Denise Rosenbloum and Christi Eadler.

Rosary Group Shares in Beauty and Power of Prayer

The month of October is dedicated to our Blessed Mother, thus providing a wonderful opportunity to highlight the beauty and power of the Rosary. Longtime parishioner Dorothy Marshall believes in the power of prayer, particularly through devotion to the Rosary.

“Prayer is important in my life, as it is a dialogue with God,” Dorothy says. “And I know and feel his nearness.”

Indeed, Dorothy has been promoting devotion to the Rosary for 20 years. Inspired by the message of Our Lady of Fatima, which calls us to do penance and pray the Rosary to promote peace, Dorothy founded the weekly Rosary Group in March of 1993. Since then, the group has met continuously every Wednesday in her home to share in prayer and fellowship.

“The Blessed Mother comes instantly to our side and prays with us,” Dorothy says. “She does not come alone. As Queen of the Angels, she brings angels with her. Most of all, since Jesus and Mary are joined at the heart, she brings Jesus with her. Jesus is never separated from the Father and Holy Spirit, so all of Heaven is present when we pray the Rosary.”

While Dorothy believes strongly in the power of the Rosary, she believes it is even more efficacious when it is prayed with others.

“When one person prays the Rosary alone, you get the merits of one Rosary,” she says. “When 10 people pray

together, they get the merits of 10 Rosaries.”

The Rosary Group happily takes prayer requests, and Dorothy notes that many prayer intentions have been answered over the years.

“There was a teenage child who underwent a successful heart surgery, a tumor someone suffered had shrunk, employment has been found, many prayers for safe travel have been answered,” she says. “People have even successfully found spouses after our group prayed the Rosary for them!”

In addition to the beauty and power of the prayer itself, lasting bonds have formed among those in the group.

“Friendships have developed and there is much goodwill in our group,” Dorothy says. “We help each other and share each other’s burdens.”

The Rosary Group members meet at 9:15 a.m. every Wednesday — there are presently about 14 members, and the group welcomes anyone who is interested in joining them. The Rosary itself only takes about 25 minutes to pray — a small investment of time to join with Our Lord, our Blessed Mother, and all of Heaven in praying for ourselves and others, while also forming lasting friendships with fellow parishioners! If you would like more information about the Rosary Group or if you have a particular prayer request, please feel free to call Dorothy Marshall at 850-438-9188.



The Rosary Group meets every Wednesday in Dorothy Marshall's home for prayer and fellowship.



Rosary Group members with a statue of our Lady of Fatima. (From left) Dorothy Marshall, Bob Cortez, Lillian Epley (seated), Pat Hanley (seated), Sam Villanueva, Jim Marshall, Jane Kickham (seated), Roseann Wahl, and Aziz Rastgo.

A Letter From Our Pastor

Love is More Than an Emotion

Dear Parishioners,

Our Holy Father Francis was elected Pope more than six months ago — March 13 to be exact. He was inaugurated on the Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, appropriately enough. What an impact he has had on our Church and on our world!

We recognize him as the shepherd of our Church. As the shepherd he is also the steward of the Church, and he seems to understand that completely. The two words I hear most often in relation to him are “simple” and “humble.” What he has done since becoming Pope has reinforced that perception. Were you aware that on the night he was elected, the papal limousine was there to transport him back to his hotel, but he opted to ride on the bus with some of the Cardinals who had elected him? You are no doubt aware that he has chosen to live in the Guest House at the Vatican rather than in the papal apartments. He truly seems to be a man of the people, someone with whom we can personally identify.

Isn't that what stewardship calls us to be? Stewardship is not about wants, but about needs. It is a challenge for all of us, including me, to keep life in proper perspective as it relates to how we live and how we interact with those around us. Being a steward is not necessarily comfortable.

Our Holy Father released his first papal encyclical, *Lumen Fidei* (*The Light of Faith*) at the end of June. He makes some exceptional stewardship points in his letter. At the very beginning he says, “Those who believe, see; they see with a light that illumines their entire journey, for it comes from the risen Christ, the morning star which never sets.” A stewardship way of life, a stew-



ardship journey is a Christ-centered life which recognizes the Lord as the light of the world and then summons us to provide that light to others — a light of faith if you will.

He goes on to describe the love we are called to give as “faith in action.” That too is precisely what stewardship is: faith in action. One of the most important observations he makes in his encyclical is that “Love is more than an emotion.” He clarifies that by stating, “Loving others is taking the first steps toward faith.” Love is more than a feeling; it is how we live our lives, how we relate to everyone we encounter. For us here at St. Paul, it manifests itself in our efforts to practice good stewardship.

My prayer is that we can approach our life as a parish and our lives as individuals as the kind of stewards exemplified by Pope Francis. The Pope's motto as a Bishop, and it remains the

same as Holy Father, is *Miserando atque eligendo* (“Lowly and yet chosen”). That accurately describes what we need to be, humble enough to accept our call, and yet realizing that we are called to discipleship, to stewardship.

One of the Pope's most comforting messages in *Lumen Fidei* occurs in his closing. He closes with a prayer to our Blessed Mother Mary, and he invokes her in that prayer to “Remind us that those who believe are never alone.” May we walk with God and with one another.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Doug Halsema
Pastor

Florida Teens for Life: Standing up for Life Together

About two years ago, a group of young people from Florida Teens for Life was praying in front of the American Family Planning abortion clinic in Pensacola when a young lady and her boyfriend stopped by.

“They came up to the teens and told them a beautiful story,” says Rosa Langevin, coordinator of Florida Teens for Life. “They said they had come to see if someone was outside of the abortion clinic praying, so that they could thank them. The young lady said that a while back, she and her boyfriend had come to this clinic because her mother was trying to force her to have an abortion. She told her mother that she could not have an abortion in sight of the people that were peacefully praying there.”

In the end, this young lady gave birth to their child, who was then a healthy 18 months old.

“Since the young lady had her child, the couple had experienced a great conversion,” Rosa says. “They turned their lives around, and began to live for God. In fact, at one point, the young couple even came to our youth group and told their pro-life testimony.”

The couple’s story had a tremendous impact on many.

“It was very encouraging for the youth to hear their story,” Rosa says. “It was wonderful for them to see that a life had been saved from the presence of young people praying at the clinic, just like they were doing. God must have really wanted them to see what an effect prayer can have!”



In fact, their story even helped cultivate a desire for a young woman to discern a vocation to the religious life.

“One of the Florida Teens for Life members who was hugged by the couple really took their story to heart,” Rosa says. “She was so touched by being part of Teens for Life. Shortly after she joined our ministry, she entered the Little Sisters of the Poor in Queens, New York. Another member of Teens for Life also entered the diocesan seminary. Our ministry is permeated by a spirit of prayerfulness and reparation, and I believe that this spirit leads young people to being open to God’s call for their lives.”

The Florida Teens for Life is an energetic, powerful pro-life ministry that includes youth from different parishes

in the Pensacola area, including our own. They meet on the second Friday of the month from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Palafox Street. After praying the Rosary for pro-life intentions, they cover business and plan future events. Afterwards, they enjoy some fellowship time, and often go swing dancing. The teens also practice the First Saturday Devotion, which is dedicated to making reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the sins of the world. After attending the 9 a.m. Mass at St. Mary’s Parish on the first Saturday of each month, the group goes to the American Family Planning abortion clinic at 1615 Village Oak Drive to make a 15-minute meditation in honor

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“We have some very wonderful, talented, faithful teenagers in our group who love to work for the cause of life together. We are also trying to encourage other groups from area parishes to come and pray with us. There is strength and safety in numbers!” — Rosa Langevin

Florida Teens for Life *continued from page 4*

of the Blessed Mother and pray the Rosary. To complete the devotion, they each try to go to Confession within 24 hours. They are currently working on making up a pro-life music video to sing at the abortion clinic and post on YouTube.

“We have some very wonderful, talented, faithful teenagers in our group who love to work for the cause of life together,” Rosa says. “We are also trying to encourage other groups from area parishes to come and pray with us. There is strength and safety in numbers!”

In addition, Florida Teens for Life assists the Emerald Coast Coalition for Life in any way they can. This vibrant coalition runs the local 40 Days for Life campaign, and also hosts pro-life rallies, galas, conventions and presentations by pro-life guest speakers.

For more information on how you can stand up bravely for the cause of life by working with the Florida Teens for Life, please contact Triana Ernede at 850-512-6792. Please note that the Florida Teens for Life will not be getting together on the first Saturday of November.



Please Return Your Commitment Card!

Don't Forget!

The 2013 Stewardship Renewal is ongoing. Please remember to turn in your commitment cards to the parish as soon as possible. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this year's renewal. The more we grow to embrace and understand the stewardship way of life, the more our parish will flourish and grow!

Lift Up Your Hearts!

2013 Commitment Card
My Offering of Time, Talent & Treasure

Up Your Hearts!

Commitment Card
Saint Paul Catholic Church
2013 Stewardship Renewal

After completion, please bring this card to Mass on October 12th or 13th, or mail using the envelope provided. Thank you and God bless you!

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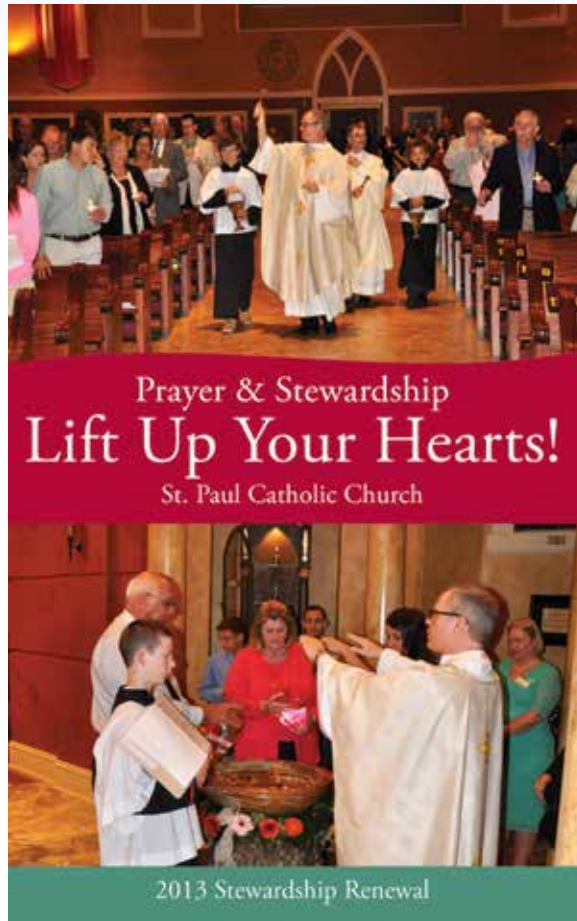
Questions and Answers about Our Annual Stewardship Renewal

Once again, it's time for our Annual Stewardship Renewal. Every year, someone asks, as you may have asked yourself, "Didn't we just have a Stewardship Renewal? Aren't we sufficiently 'renewed' by now?" Yes, we had a Stewardship Renewal last year, and we're going to have one next year, too! This is an annual occurrence — part of the rhythm of parish life at St. Paul. Just as the Church proposes a time of spiritual renewal each Lent, we believe in the importance of a yearly examination of commitment. Is the Lord asking you to give more time, talent, or treasure to our parish this year? The following Q&A about our Stewardship Renewal should help you discern your commitments to St. Paul this year.

I feel like my life is already too full with family obligations and work obligations. I barely even have time to relax. How can I possibly share my time and talents with St. Paul?

We all have many obligations to our families, jobs, schools, and other endeavors. But we also all have the same number of hours in the day with which to accomplish these things. The issue is not how much time we have, but how we prioritize that time.

Before you fill out your Commitment Card, take some time to reflect on your priorities, and where God fits into your day-to-day life. Remember, living as true stewards of God's gifts involves giving back the first fruits of what He has given to us in thanksgiving, not the "leftovers."



Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" in the mail that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your commitment card.

Commitment Card is a simple step through which you can immediately re-enter the life of the parish. Our parish community is not here to judge you, but to welcome and nourish you in your faith journey. Begin by checking the box that says,

I am happy with my current level of parish participation. Why do I need to keep filling out a Commitment Card every year?

As part of the renewal process, it is important that we consider our current level of participation in parish life at St. Paul. Sometimes, the call to stewardship involves the quality of service in addition to its quantity. In looking through the opportunities for ministry available at the parish, you may find yourself drawn to a new ministry you haven't tried before, or new ways to share of your time with God to enrich and enlighten your prayer life. So even though your current level of parish participation might not change drastically, the ways in which you participate may evolve as you grow in living the stewardship way of life.

Even if you end up continuing to participate in the exact same ministries as you have in the past, marking and turning in a commitment card means you have reviewed your present ministries and recommitted yourself to them.

I'm not very active in the Church and, frankly, feel like it may be too late to get involved. Why should I fill out a Commitment Card?

It's never too late to renew your faith life, and filling out a Commitment Card is a simple step through which you can immediately re-enter the life of the parish. Our parish community is not here to judge you, but to welcome and nourish you in your faith journey. Begin by checking the box that says,

Questions and Answers *continued from previous page*

“Attend weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation,” and take some time to discern additional ways in which God is calling you from that starting point.

I’m physically unable to attend Mass or be active in parish life at St. Paul. Is there any reason for me to submit a Commitment Card?

Of course! Your prayers are just as important to the success of our parish community in carrying out its mission as ministry participation and financial contributions. Take a moment to look over some of the opportunities to spend quiet time with God listed in the “Stewardship of Time” section of the Commitment Card, and take a step towards growing in your relationship with Christ and His Church.

With such a tough economy, I’m reluctant to make a financial pledge for the year, in case my circumstances change and I’m unable to fulfill it. Should I?

Your Commitment Card is not a legally binding contract; it is a pledge of intentions. Make your pledge based on what you are setting out to do to give back to God, and do your best to fulfill that pledge. If your financial circumstances change, your gift will likely change, as well, but it is still important to prioritize God first. Nobody is going to send the bill collector to your house if you can’t fulfill your pledge due to a change in your financial situation! But we’ve all got to start somewhere, and it’s important that we begin our commitment by writing down our goals for giving back of our gifts to God.

I’ve expressed interest in a ministry in the past through filling out a Commitment Card, but nobody from the parish ever followed up with me about it.

While we do our best to consistently follow up with everyone who has shown interest in the opportunities for ministry

at St. Paul, we are human, and we sometimes fall short in our follow-up. If this has happened to you in the past, we sincerely apologize, and we encourage you to renew your interest in any activities in which you might like to participate by filling out a Commitment Card this year. Every year, we go into the renewal with every intention of making sure that everyone who has expressed interest is contacted with more information, and we will do so again this year.

I don’t agree with everything that goes on at St. Paul. I feel like when I fill out a Commitment Card, it condones the things I disagree with.

In filling out a Commitment Card, you are not making a pledge between yourself and St. Paul; you are making a pledge between yourself and God. Disagreements occur in life. This is a part of being human, and we respect the opinions of each and every member of our parish family. But it is of utmost importance that each of us fulfills our discipleship of Christ by growing in our relationship with Him and utilizing the gifts He has given us to carry out His mission on Earth, regardless of disagreements or misunderstandings. Beyond helping the parish, filling out a Commitment Card expresses a devotion to spiritual growth and a strong belief in the Catholic faith.

Lift Up Your Hearts!

ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

2013 Commitment Card
My Offering of Time, Talent & Treasure

First & Last Name (She and he both)

Street Address

City State ZIP

Telephone (optional)

Email

After completion, please bring this card to Mass on October 12th or 13th, or mail using the envelope provided. Thank you and God bless you!

*Commitment Weekend
is October 12 and 13.*

*Don't forget to bring your
Commitment Card to Mass!*

Address Service Requested

Christ Helping People Through People continued from cover

outreach. Christi Eadler is in charge of media outreach, while Denise Rosenblum will join the leadership team as peer supervision facilitator after attending training in June 2014.

In order to become a Stephen Minister, individuals are specially trained over a period of four to five months after which they are commissioned by Fr. Doug Halsema. Training continues even after commissioning through peer supervision meetings that take place twice a month. One of the main tools of Stephen Ministry training is the Caregiver's Compass, which shows the qualities that Stephen Ministers must exhibit — compassion, faith-filled, skill and trustworthiness. Since Stephen Ministers offer distinctively Christian care, Christ is always at the very center of the compass.

Ministry members have found that they receive just as many spiritual blessings as those in their care.

“The call to the ministry is a gift that God gives to ordinary people to inspire them to take Stephen Ministry training,” says Stephen Minister Terry Kellen.

“It is also a gift to the person who profits from the care of a Stephen Minister for as long as he or she needs it,” adds Stephen Minister Fran Viviano.

A new training class for Stephen Ministers is expected to commence in January 2014. If you feel called to become a Stephen Minister, please contact Nick Thorpe at 850-484-4854, or Jim and Carmen Guttman at 850-475-2514. In addition to training new ministers, the ministry team is reaching out to increase parish and community awareness. If you or someone you know would be interested in being a care receiver, please call Carmen Guttman at 850-475-2514 for more information.

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m. | **Daily Mass:** Monday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Confessions: Saturdays, 9:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.,
most Sundays during 9:00, 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Mass, 1st Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., and by appointment

Eucharistic Adoration: Thursday 9:00 a.m. until Friday 7:30 a.m.