



The Belltower Beacon

A publication to inform, welcome and inspire the spirited community of St. Christopher.

Volume 19: Issue 74

June 2019

WELCOME BACK ROBERT MCMURRAY

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On July 1 we welcome back our new Music Director, Bob McMurray. It is a sort of homecoming for Bob who previously served as our Music Director from 1998-2004. He is replacing Richard Gullion who completed his ministry here at St. Christopher at the end of April.

Robert P. McMurray, CAGO, M. Mus., is a native of Columbiana, Ohio. He graduated from the Ohio State University with a degree in accounting in 1987. By 1997 Robert completed his Master's in Music degree program at Cleveland State University while serving as an organist at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Also in 1997 he passed the required examinations of the American Guild of Organists to receive the designation of Colleague. He has been a presenter for the National Pastoral Musicians organization and can be heard on several recordings from the Cathedral as well as

the archives from the syndicated radio program, PIPEDREAMS.

After leaving St. Christopher in 2004 Bob accepted a "dream" position at a parish in Florida. The warm and sunny weather was a plus, but Bob's heart was in Ohio, and he returned to work as a musician in the Diocese of Cleveland. For the past 13 years he has been the Music Director at St. Rita Parish in Solon, Ohio. While at St. Rita, Bob built a very large eclectic music program of well over 100 volunteers. To his delight, many of the young people he has mentored there have gone on to pursue careers in music. While the program has become large, the focus always has remained on the participation of the congregation.

Bob manages several rental properties in the area and is a licensed realtor. He also enjoys classic cars, trips to the gym, visiting his mom in Columbiana and time with his beloved cocker spaniel Lulu (pictured here).

As Bob returns to St. Christopher Parish, he is dedicated to the recruitment and encouragement of talent and to the full and active participation of the congregation. We are very excited to have him back on the Westside of Cleveland where he still lives and he is truly looking forward to this return to his old home in our choir loft. Welcome back Bob!!!

Fr. John Chlebo

ST. CHRISTOPHER ALUMNI *Golf Outing*
SUNDAY, JUNE 23 AT BOB-O-LINK GOLF COURSE

9-hole, shotgun start beginning at 2 p.m.!

WALKING THE SACRED PATH WITH MUSIC COMPOSER DAN SCHUTTE



One of the best-known and most influential composers of Catholic liturgical music in the English-speaking world, Dan Schutte visited us on March 18 and 19 as one of our Lenten faith events. After more than 40 years of composing countless Catholic worship songs, Dan Schutte admits that his favorite line remains the short but powerful “Yahweh, I know you are near.” It is taken from one of his earliest songs written in 1971 (You are Near) and is based upon Psalm 139, which emphasizes “the holiest name of God.” He described Lent as Catholics’ annual retreat where we step away from the ordinary. He stays busy each Lent sharing his faith, his music and his message: “We can’t explain God but we can experience God.” Using his beautifully written songs, Schutte adds personal tales and Scripture verses to draw his audience into the experience of Lent, insisting that only total surrender to God will make us whole. Starting with Ash Wednesday, when more people come to church than most other days, Lent reminds us of our mortality and that God has done wondrous things with dust (man was formed from dust, Genesis 2:7). Hence, we as Christians begin Lent with a reminder that we are dust and to dust we shall return.

It was an unprecedented honor to welcome singer, songwriter and musician Dan Schutte to our church. We owe the credit in large part to former music director Richard Gullion. Our pastoral staff can also be thanked for such an amazing opportunity. Schutte (pronounced with long u and long e) started his career as a Jesuit priest. During that time he sang with the St. Louis Jesuits where his musical path took shape and soared. Writing some of the most beloved Catholic worship songs of all time, Schutte presents as a humble, God-centered disciple of Christ. After 20 years as a Jesuit, he found that his calling was really in sharing his love of Christ through his music. He remains loyal to the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Ignatian exercises. Accompanied by a guitar, a keyboard and a stool to sit on, Schutte brings the profound message of salvation to churches and groups around the world. Here at

St. Christopher, the event was well attended both nights to hear this famous artist whose countless songs we sing frequently at Mass and are contained in song books everywhere, including our Gather Book. The simplicity of his presence defies the tremendous influence he has had upon modern Christian worship for over 40 years. To Schutte it’s all about doing the work God called him to do, plain and simple. He sang with us, to us and for us with joy and conviction.

Schutte confirmed that God created us with a deep down hunger that will not be satisfied here on earth, because this is not our home. “Real joy,” he explained, “comes from our union with God and is beyond our moon and stars.” Our original purpose is to come closer to God by doing His work here on earth. This is impacted by how we see God – as a good father or punisher, as forgiving or vengeful? Once we see that God wants only what is best for us, forgives us every time and loves us unconditionally, we can move closer to that holy relationship. Most importantly, Schutte assures us that “there is nothing that will stop God from loving us.” At the same time, we are given freedom of choice and immense power to choose God or to be deaf to His love.



An overriding theme in Schutte’s message is the topic of forgiveness. He states that “mercy is hard and we are called to forgive radically; it is a consummate act of kindness to take the attention off the sinner in order to set her/him free.” He gave the example of Jesus forgiving the adulterous woman and letting her go

unharmful by her accusers (John 8:1-11). Not only did Jesus forgive the woman, but He also confronted the sinfulness of her accusers. How often do we cast verbal stones at others without considering our own sinfulness? God’s forgiveness is extended to all of us and we are to do likewise to others. During the retreat, he took apart a few of his songs and shared why he wrote them and where he was spiritually at the time. In his most popular song, City of God, he explained that such a city can only be built if we awake from our slumber and walk in God’s light, one and all. Only then will there be no darkness and will our tears be turned into dancing. All of his lyrics have deep meaning based on scripture and are applicable to leading Godly lives every day.

During the afternoon of the second day, Mr. Schutte performed for and spoke to the day school students. He was impressed immediately that our students knew the songs and could sing them so enthusiastically. They confidently sang “Though the Mountains May Fall” and “Glory and Praise to Our God.” They asked great questions and were quite curious as to how one becomes a famous composer and singer. Schutte, who confessed that he had no intention of ever becoming a musician, used the opportunity to teach the youth about tempo, dynamics and style, while the entire time keeping the focus on developing an intimate relationship with the Risen Christ. He challenged the students to consider the following – if we had 24 hours to live, what would we pray for; who and what do I want to become; what reminds me of the immensity of God (i.e., a starry sky). Mr. Schutte complimented the teachers for doing such a good job of teaching the youngsters his liturgical songs.

Dan Schutte’s retreat topic was mostly uplifting and encouraging, but he also confided that he sometimes experiences moments of darkness, as we all do, “moments in life that break our hearts.” At those times, he goes to “the foot of the cross” and asks God “why the awful things?” God says in response, “trust me and I will tell you what to do and say.” It is a good reminder, according to Schutte, that it’s not about us, it’s about the face and voice of God. Just like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, we don’t always recognize that Jesus is right next to us. We are to see the face and body of Christ in every person we encounter, and we are to answer God’s call to serve using the words of Schutte’s 1981 song, “Here I am, Lord ... Is it I, Lord ... I will go, Lord ... I will hold your people in my heart.”

Carmen Everett DeHaan



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Three years from now, May 14, 2022, our parish will be 100 years old! As we look ahead to that occasion we have much for which to be grateful. Msgr. Patterson and those who started our parish so long ago worked hard to lay the foundation of the parish that we have today. Those founding members are all gone now but we owe them and others since those early days a debt of gratitude for the sacrifices they made. Our large suburban parish is very different from the small rural parish of those early days. However, the spirit of sacrifice and dedication has continued. It was especially evident in 1954 when Msgr. Ahern led the effort to build our current church. In the 1980s Fr. Prendergast experienced the same dedication in building our Gymnasium and remodeling the Church. I, too, was blessed to witness your generous sacrifice as we built our Parish Center and renovated much of our campus in 2000 and again as you responded to the Diocesan Rooted in Faith Campaign in 2011.

As we approach our centennial celebration I once again appeal to that generous, sacrificial spirit. Since last summer we have shared the need to replace our playground equipment. The project was expanded to include a pavilion, meditation garden and improved green space in the area adjacent to the playground. It has come to be known as St. Christopher Centennial Park and the goal for completion is the summer of 2020.

The Parish Finance Council and Pastoral Council have come to recognize that the “new” Parish Center is nearly 20 years old. As any homeowner knows, roofs and HVAC units age and need to be replaced. We are also accessing parking lot needs, outdoor lighting in the lot and around the buildings, and improved signage around the church among other things. The diocese is helping us in the assessment of our buildings and property to project a timeline for capital needs over the next several years.

As I write this article, we are in the process of hiring a professional fund raising company to assist us with a capital campaign beginning this year to address the above needs as they arise. Over the summer and early fall, we will be meeting with parishioners to share our needs and to receive feedback and input regarding the campaign. I will share developments and a timeline for the campaign as they become available. In the meantime, I invite your prayerful consideration as well as your comments. It is now our turn to lay the foundation for the next century of service for St. Christopher Parish and its future parishioners.

Fr. John Chlebo

CENTENNIAL PARK UPDATE

The Centennial Park project has been rolled into a larger capital campaign for the parish. The park will be part of this campaign. With this change, the timeline for the park has changed.

The current playground structures have been taken down recently. The open field will be made fun and functional for the kids. Construction of the park will commence in March 2020 with the goal of its completion by the start of the 2020-2021 school year. The change of the timing will allow us to complete the entire project at once as opposed to having it done in phases.

There are ongoing opportunities to donate. If you would like to, please contact the parish office. Centennial Park will serve all members of the St. Christopher Community!

Jackie Wojnar

SUPER SOUP SUPPER SUCCESS FOR ST. COLMAN

An estimated crowd of nearly 90 people attended the annual Lenten soup supper on April 3 at St. Christopher Parish Center. The evening was sponsored by the Social Concerns Committee to raise funds for our designated “church in the city” partner, St. Colman and their many outreach programs that serve those in need. Over \$5,600 was raised through donations and basket raffle. Attendees and parishioners also donated cleaning supplies to replenish dwindling supplies kept on hand for those with limited resources.

Ladies Guild members coordinated a new effort this year with children’s activities, adding to a fun and fulfilling family event. Pizza was served to children. Young helping hands created Easter cards for Colman Court residents living in the senior low income housing next door to St. Colman church. Children happily assembled art and school supply bags donated by Ladies Guild members.

As with many previous soup events, Chef Pete Mayer cooked and donated two crowd pleasing delicious soups, which were graciously served by the several Parish School of Religion (PSR) confirmation students. While attendees enjoyed the simple Lenten meal, Sr. Marilyn Nickol, St. Colman Outreach Minister, highlighted the outreach programs and stories of some of her visitors in need over the years. She thanked St. Christopher for their past generosity through the Christmas Gift program and relayed personal stories of several people like Bill, Claude and Loretta helped by that generosity.

Sr. Marilyn recalled that Bill, newly released from prison, knocked on St. Colman’s door over a year ago in a snow storm and asked for gloves and socks and bus passes to see his parole officer. “Thanks to St. Christopher donations, Bill received his warm gloves, socks and financial support,” stated Sr. Marilyn.

Bill eventually found an apartment and part-time job, stays in touch and helps out to give back at St. Colman when he can.

Claude, referred to St. Colman by the Catholic Charities Migration Services, was injured on the job and unable to work until the injury healed. Sr. Marilyn said he had a heart for helping others and one summer day brought

two Congolese sisters, Olivia and Lucy, who recently settled in the neighborhood. Olivia was suffering from many injuries sustained in the Congo conflict before fleeing the violence. She could only manage to walk by holding on to her sister, Lucy. “Surprisingly, we had just received a donated wheelchair, which we offered to her. Tears of joy filled their eyes as Lucy pushed Olivia homeward that summer afternoon in her new wheelchair. God’s providence provides,” proclaimed Sr. Marilyn.

And then there was Loretta who worked two minimum wage jobs with no benefits. When she had to miss work due to the flu, she fell behind in her rent. Loretta was facing eviction until St. Colman’s ministry was able to provide help.

“We are thankful for the many ways you bring hope to the people of St. Colman,” says Sr. Marilyn. She quoted Pope Francis, “Let the Church always be a place of mercy and hope where everyone is welcomed and loved.” The people of St. Christopher are living by these words in being that church to so many people.

Sharon Hosek



HOLY THURSDAY RETREAT DAY

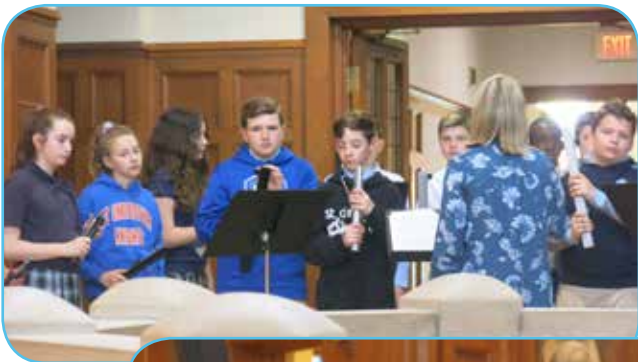
For many students throughout Northeast Ohio, Thursday April 18 was an eagerly anticipated day, it being the last day of school prior to the start of Spring Break. Students at St. Christopher School eagerly anticipated the day as well as they would be making their annual Holy Thursday retreat. Over the last three years, SCS students, in all grades, have commemorated Holy Thursday by participating in an all day retreat. This year's retreat was prayerful, engaging, and fun.

During the course of the day students rotated through seven stations each themed to one or more of the Fruits of the Spirit. The stations were: 1) Kindness and Goodness 2) Gentleness and Patience 3) Joy 4) Self-Control 5) Peace 6) Faithfulness and 7) Love. At each station, students learned what the Fruit entailed and then listened to a bible verse relating to it. Students then participated in an activity that demonstrated the Fruit of the Spirit in a unique way. Some of the activities included meditation and movement (Peace), creating a rainbow (Faithfulness) and working collaboratively to relay a marble across the room, without it hitting the floor, through paper towel tubes (Self-Control). Afterwards, the students journaled about the activity they participated in, creating a commemorative journal of the day that they could look back and reflect on.

Two of the stations also gave the students the opportunity to support the wider community. At the Kindness and Goodness station, students packed Totes of Hope for the residents of the Laura's Home Women's Crisis Center. The center, which is part of the City Mission, provides emergency housing for women and children. Each tote contained much needed personal care and hygiene items. Over 130 totes were later delivered to the center.

After a break for lunch and classroom reflection time, all of the students and faculty, as well as many parish families, gathered in the church to watch and pray the Living Stations of the Cross; the last station of the retreat. The Stations of the Cross were narrated and performed by our 8th grade students. The stations were tied to the "Fruit" of Love, as we could think of no better example of God's love for us than the passion of our Lord. The Living Stations were a powerful and prayerful conclusion to our school's retreat day, a day that helped our students grow in their understanding of the Fruits of the Spirit and prepared them for the celebration of Easter.

Scott Raiff



THE LIVING STATIONS

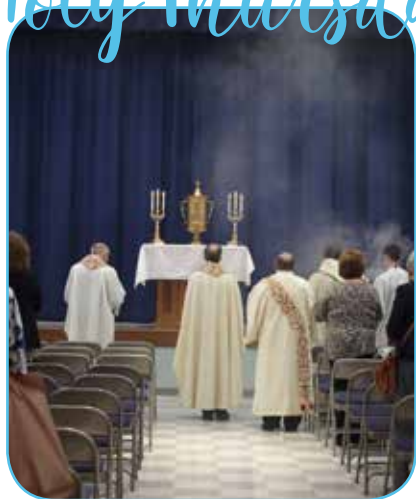
On March 31, our parish had the privilege of welcoming the Living Stations of the Cross written and performed by the St. Mark (of Cleveland) Youth Group. We were fortunate to host the performance as they travel to only a few churches each year. The group brings its own stage, props and costumes; they act out each Station imitating the trials and tribulations of Christ on the road to Calvary. They then add a prayer petition and music from different genres to each stop. The final product is a powerful prayer service that left us speechless. In their own words: "Each scene is a visual display of humanity and humility, clearly demonstrating the painful journey Jesus had to endure." The group used a combination of the 14 traditional Stations of the Cross and the Scriptural Interpretations introduced in 1991 by Saint John Paul II. The majority of the actors are high school teens with a few adult advisors. As such, the members change from year to year as seniors graduate and ninth graders join in. Regardless, they have been living and sharing their faith in this manner for many years. They have undoubtedly touched countless lives in the process. The play is directed and produced by the teens themselves. Attendance is free of charge and there is a compilation of songs available for purchase at the end. The group is able to continue this unique evangelization only through private donations.

Setting the stage for a powerful spiritual experience, the play starts out with the ever popular "Mary did you know" (lyrics by Mark Lowry 1984). It continues with classic songs as well as new renditions by young artists, touching all age groups. The words and melodies range from soothing to sorrowful to joyful as we realize the true meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ. The songs were carefully chosen to connect the meaning of each Station of the Cross to our desired relationship with God. The students wrote a prayer and petition for each Station acknowledging the ultimate price Jesus paid and asking that He help us continue to grow as Christians by being an instrument of peace and compassion; through forgiveness; by uplifting those who are suffering and grieving; and by treating each other with dignity, compassion and respect. As a community we asked that the Lord open our eyes to follow in His footsteps and to make this world a better place. For our St. Christopher families, the well attended event was a new and different Lenten opportunity, one that we will not soon forget. Christ is Risen, Alleluia!

Carmen Everett DeHaan



Holy Thursday



Good Friday



Easter Vigil



WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP



One of the goals of the new Ladies Guild this year was to encourage fellowship and faith sharing among women through a book discussion group. During Lent, more than 20 women gathered weekly after the Thursday 11 a.m. Mass to pray and reflect on the book, *Walk in Her Sandals: Experiencing Christ's Passion Through the Eyes of Women*, edited by Kelly Whalquist. The events of Holy Week and Easter came to life through the book's use of such tools as lectio divina, imaginative prayer through fiction, entering the scripture, and contemplating the universal gifts of women as defined by St. John Paul II. The group discussed such gifts as generosity, receptivity, prayer, and maternity in the context of women's lives and as they relate to Christ's Passion. A wonderful camaraderie developed over the weeks as the women shared life stories, laughs and tears, faith experiences, and insights about the women of scripture who followed Jesus and witnessed the Passion firsthand. The discussions led to an enriched experience of Lent and a deepening of faith and friendship for those involved. The Ladies Guild looks

forward to hosting another book discussion this fall in the evenings to accommodate working women.

Nancy Sullivan

A KNIGHT AT THE RACES

On behalf of the Parents and Teachers Helping Students (PATHS) we would like to express our sincere gratitude and thanks to the St. Christopher School and Parish community for your generous support of A Knight at the Races. The event sold out at 300 attendees and raised \$55,000! The Parish Center was transformed as guests dressed in derby attire sipped on signature cocktails, enjoyed delicious food, perused silent auction and raffle baskets, purchased sideboard tickets, placed their bets and cheered on their horse to victory!

We are grateful for your generosity, volunteer time, sponsorships, and donations. Through your support PATHS provides valuable dollars to continue educational offerings and improvements at St. Christopher School, including the St. Christopher Centennial Park. This event is responsible for over half of the PATHS funding annually.



EAGLE SCOUT SEAN BERGQUIST AND ST. CHRISTOPHER 9TH GRADE BSA RECOGNITIONS



For 9th grade parishioner Sean Bergquist, 2019 has already been a year of reaping the harvest of his hard work: on March 11, the Boy Scouts' highest honor, the rank of Eagle Scout, was conferred upon him; and on April 9, he received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Interestingly enough, these journeys were occurring simultaneously long before Sean even realized the significance

of these incremental steps. Thanks to Sean's parents, Jim and Aimee, he began the quest for both of these at a very young age. In infancy, the Sacrament of Baptism started Sean on his way to this year's Confirmation. In first grade, he began his many years of earning badges by becoming a Tiger Cub in Central Florida, then continuing at St. Christopher upon moving here in 2012. Make no mistake about it, both of these high honors come after years of training, sacrificing, giving back, living a solid Christian life and obeying the BSA promise:

**Duty to God and country,
Duty to other people, and
Duty to self.**

In addition to working on his own scouting goals, he held leadership positions, earned 12 required merit badges and an additional 21 elective merit badges. He has accumulated at least 20 hours of service activities in and outside of our parish community. For his Eagle Scout requirements, Sean spent 100 hours completing a 3D Printer Education Program for the Rocky River Public Library. Did we mention that Sean is only in the 9th grade? Well, there's more to celebrate about this young man – he has completed the Boy Scouts' National Youth Leadership Training, is on the RRHS freshman High Honor Roll, and is a member of our High School Marching Concert Band. Sean plans to study computer science and programming in college. There is no doubt he is on track to accomplish with distinction whatever he sets out to do. Most importantly, Sean and his parents make sure that his relationship with God and church continues to grow. He is a regular server at our weekend Masses and volunteers to help at parish events. He just completed an intense nine months of study, community giving, and special events before he could be confirmed. His commitment and demeanor both confirm that he lives out his BSA oath each and every day. Not only is he

a role model for other youth (including his brother making his First Communion soon), but for those of us much older who can learn a lesson or two from Sean's dedication and selfless giving. Our St. Christopher community, our 2019 Confirmation Team, and Troop 605 Scout Master (and parishioner) Brian Fehrenbach congratulate Sean and his entire family.



Also working toward Boy Scouts and Confirmation requirements are 9th graders Jake Fehrenbach, Aidan O'Neill and Paul Mediate. They, too, were confirmed by Bishop Amos on April 9. They have also been earning scouting badges along the way, holding leadership positions, participating in high school extracurriculars, and helping at parish events. Jake is a regular

altar server and is a member of Westshore Young Leaders (a law enforcement youth group which focuses on drug addiction education and prevention). In addition, Jake plays the trombone and is a member of our RRHS band. As a member of the high school fencing team, Jake is proud that they took first place in a statewide tournament in March of this year. Kudos to Jake and his parents, Brian and Christine, for his many accomplishments at such a young age.

Aidan O'Neill and Paul Mediate were also preparing for Confirmation this past year (not a small task indeed!) while meeting requirements for respective BSA badges and participating in high school extracurriculars. Aidan has completed the scouts' National Youth Leadership Training and is head of Troop 605's leadership team. He is also in the high school choir, plays guitar, and is a member of our award-winning high school fencing team. Paul is a percussionist in the high school band and is on the track team. These young men have all distinguished themselves and make our parish community proud of them. Their commitment to excellence in faith, community and others can serve as encouragement for all of us. They are blessed to be surrounded by loving, devoted parents as well as a community that supports them. We can expect continued involvement in activities that benefit those in greater need.

Carmen Everett DeHaan

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

Over 240 parishioners gathered in the parish center this March for our first-ever Family Game Night. Thanks to the efforts of Ladies Guild members Heather Burnett, Kelli Cogan, Michelle Hopkins, Julie Patton and Pastoral Associate Gayle Cilimburg, the evening was a huge success.

It began with 5 p.m. Mass followed by food trucks that were ready and waiting in the parking lot. River Dog Cafe and Rock and Roll Barbecue provided delectable meals and desserts. The night was complete with traditional board games including Scrabble, Twister, Connect Four, and Battleship. Ping pong tables, a giant Jenga and air hockey were also part of the fun.

Family Trivia was a big hit with the kids too. One young participant wanted to know if he would be quizzed on “catholicity” because he knew “a lot about being a Catholic.” What a wonderful time of fellowship and family fun. Best of all, there wasn’t a single kid staring at an iPhone! Thanks to all who attended and helped to orchestrate such a memorable night.

Cindy McDonough



#LUNCHBAG

On February 24 the Parish Center was bustling with over 120 volunteers packing lunches. Two of our PSR moms, Jen Sheridan and Melissa Walsh, led the charge in organizing this lunch packing service project. We were happy to have so many families from the school and PSR program, as well as senior citizens and Confirmation students. The volunteers even made special notes of support to be included in each bagged lunch. The beneficiaries of the lunches were the people from St. Malachi's Backdoor Ministry. The lunches were delivered the day after our event and were served over the next two days.

Monetary donations were collected to purchase the food and supplies for the lunches. Our goal was to collect \$500 to pack 300 lunches. To our amazement, we doubled our monetary goal and were able to pack 320 lunches and have a good start for our next #lunchbag project. We hope to sponsor two events next school year.

Thank you to our committee and volunteers for a job well done.

Sharon Armstrong

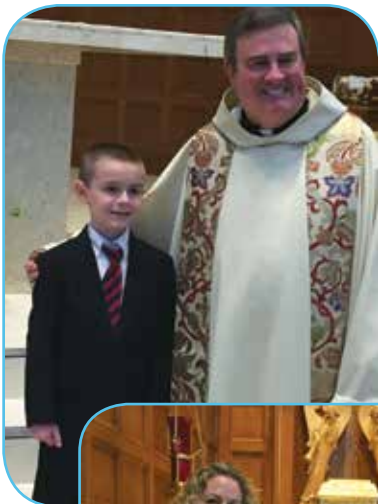




FIRST COMMUNION

Our Parish celebrated First Holy Communion with our 2nd graders at all the Masses the first two weekends of May. There were 86 children who received Jesus, witnessed by their parents, families, and parish community. Both St. Christopher School and the Parish School of Religion students made final preparations for First Communion at a day long Retreat on April 5 and 6 where they created their banners for their First Communion Mass, baked bread for their families, and learned how to get closer to Jesus through guided meditation. The Retreat days were full of great activities which helped them prepare for their special day. Thank you to all of the 2nd grade teachers (Robin Seedhouse, Shannon Gould, Aimee Bergquist, Bill Blough, and Stacey Clevenger) for preparing our young students for First Holy Communion. Thank you for all the parents who help prepare and helped with the Jesus Day Retreat.

Sharon Armstrong



CONFIRMATION

Bishop Amos visited St. Christopher Church on April 9 to Confirm 76 ninth grade students and two adults. There was a reception in the Parish Center immediately following the Mass. Our ninth graders started preparing for this day back in September with the help of our Confirmation Team: Deacon Tom Long, Eric Perusek, Theresa Mystic, Carmen DeHaan, John Burke, and Kate Anderer-DiMichele. The preparation included monthly classes, a service day, a retreat, and various activities around the Parish. All the students worked very hard to make it to their special day. Congratulations!

Sharon Armstrong



SURVEY UPDATE

The Parish Pastoral Council and Pastoral Staff have spent several months reviewing the results of the parish survey that was conducted in October/November of last year. The focus has been on setting goals for the parish over the next three years as we approach our parish centennial in 2022. What follows is a summary of that discernment process identifying the following goals as components of the St. Christopher: A New Century of Service Three Year Pastoral Plan.

One goal that was clearly indicated in the survey was a strong desire to move the celebration of Confirmation at St. Christopher from ninth grade to eighth grade. The process to make this happen is already underway. The Religious Education Office, under the direction of Sharon Armstrong, is working on a plan to accomplish this goal over the next two years. Students and families that will be affected by this change will be kept informed of the progress as details become clearer.

The Council and Staff have identified six other goals as important to address over the next three years. These goals are believed to be consistent with our Parish Mission Statement (found at the bottom of this page). Detailed approaches in each area are still being determined at the time of the writing of this article. The six goals are:

- Improve welcoming and community building activities.
- Increase the percentage of parishioners who are highly active.
- Enhance the experience of liturgical music at Mass.

The arrival of our new Music Director, Bob McMurray, on July 1 will certainly impact this goal. Bob has read the survey results and is aware of the issues that need to be addressed in this area. He is anxious to work with us to achieve this goal.

- Articulate a clear sense of mission and purpose for the parish.
- Train and empower parishioners to receive electronic communication from the parish.
- Enhance the visibility and level of engagement in our Church in the City partnership with St. Colman.

A FINAL THOUGHT

In addition to these goals, there were a number of comments and/or questions that were raised as part of the survey by individuals. 80 indicated a desire to be contacted regarding their survey responses or comments. 69 others indicated an interest in becoming more involved or wish to pursue some way of serving the needs of the parish. Now that we have determined goals for the parish we will respond to these individuals. It is our plan that we will reach out to those who left their name either by phone or email during the summer months. If you are among those wishing to be contacted, we appreciate your patience as we reach out to listen to your concerns and respond to your needs.

Fr. John Chlebo

A SUCCESSFUL PSR YEAR!

Another PSR year has come to a close once again. It takes an army of volunteers to keep our 430-student PSR program running. Each Sunday from September through April we had 27 classrooms running. There are 39 Catechists and 18 teen helpers, as well as tutors to help students with special needs. Thank you to each of these special people who gave their time and talent this year.

Our Catechists are not necessarily professional teachers, but they all have one thing in common, a willingness to share their faith with the children of our Parish. We have four very special Catechists who are graduating seniors. Margaret Kilbane and Grace Thomas have taught 1st grade PSR for the past two years. This team had a very special connection to their 6-year old students who learned about Jesus in creative ways. Margaret will be graduating from Hathaway Brown and attending the University of Notre Dame studying Science Education. Grace will be graduating from St. Joseph Academy and studying teaching at Fordham University. Reilly Seikel has been teaching with us for two years, one year in second grade as a tutor for a student with special needs and his second year as a 7th grade teacher with Johna Graziani. Riley is graduating from St. Ignatius and going on to Dayton to study theology. Our most recent addition this year, Tess Smith, was a co-teacher with Meg Stadler in fifth grade, Tess is graduating from Holy Name and will be studying Biology at Loyola University of Chicago. These four High School students each shared their faith each week with the children of our Parish, each in their own unique way using their individual gifts and talents. Thank you and good luck in the future.

We are looking for someone like you to share your faith with our children. If you would like to help in any area of our religious education programs this Fall, please call Sharon Armstrong at (440) 331-6226 x402 or email me at sarmstrong@stchrisparish.com We can discuss what opportunity matches your time and talent. We welcome all ages from teens to seniors. We are especially in need of young adults to work with our Confirmation Team and Youth Group.

Sharon Armstrong

WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER CATHOLIC CHURCH,
A SPIRITED COMMUNITY OF FAITH DEDICATED TO ...

WELCOME, CELEBRATE, CARE & GROW

... IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF JESUS.

CHURCH CHATTER

SUMMER CAMP

Summer is here and what better way to celebrate, than by staying at [CYO Camp Christopher](#) in Bath, Ohio. Youngsters, adults and families can get back to nature in this Catholic focused day, or overnight, camp. A special needs camp is also available. Call 1-800-296-CAMP or visit [campchris.org](#) for information.

SENIOR SERVERS

Thank you to our senior servers who are graduating this year: [Abby Allio](#), [Lauren Corrigan](#), [Nathaniel Goodman](#) and [Samantha Lyle](#).

ST. BALDRICK

Heads were shaved on March 17 for cancer research. Commander of the Bald Table, [Joe Kovach](#), knighted his son, [Keegan](#). Father and son have contributed to this cause for 14 and 7 years, respectively. Congratulations as they achieved their \$2,000 goal.

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Happy birthday to our Director of Religious Education, [Sharon Armstrong](#) (August 3) and business manager, [Joe Williams](#) (September 2).

BLOCK PARTY

The annual [Block Party](#) is on Saturday, August 24. It's always a great event to meet fellow parishioners and have lots of fun (not to mention the yummy food!). Better yet, be a part of the planning committee and learn the inside scoop of what makes the Block Party great. See the Church bulletin for details.

MAD SCIENTISTS

Rocky River Middle School Science Olympiad was held and two siblings came away winners. [Cora Mathewson](#) and partners took seventh place in "Water Quality" and twelfth place in "Herpetology." Her brother [Evan](#) and partners took thirteenth place in "Boomilever." Congratulations to these budding, non-mad, scientists.

POWER COUPLE

Judges [Brendan and Michelle Sheehan](#) were recognized in the April issue of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Journal. Brendan is a Cuyahoga County Common Pleas judge, while Michelle sits on the Eighth District Court of Appeals bench. Brendan serves our parish as a Eucharistic minister and Michelle is a lector.

HISTORY LIVES

Parishioners [John and Ginny Going](#) are the newest Board of Trustee Members of the Rocky River Historical Society. Ginny has been a parishioner since she was five.

AN APPLE A DAY

Congratulations to [Rosemary Holtz](#), a recent graduate from the University of Pittsburgh. Graduating with a degree in nutrition and dietetics, Rosemary has accepted an internship with UChicago Medicine Ingalls Memorial Hospital, before pursuing her master's degree. While attending Rocky River High School, she volunteered in the PSR office for four years. Matt and Mary Holtz are her proud parents.

GRANDPARENT PRIDE

Bonnie Twitchell is one proud grandma! Her granddaughter, [Natalie](#), graduated from Kenyon College in May. [Audrey Milligan](#), another granddaughter, a National Merit Scholar, will graduate from Copley High School in May and will enter OSU in the fall. Her grandson, [Sean McClaren](#), finished his sophomore year at Furman University in S.C. and is in ROTC. In May he will tour WWI battlefields with fellow Furman students and professors. His brother, [Ryan McClaren](#), is finishing his sophomore year at Slippery Rock University and is on the Dean's List.

Share your joyous events with us! Please forward submissions for Church Chatter to [Roberta Trutko](#) at 440-263-7894 or roberta32red@hotmail.com.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 31	8TH GRADE GRADUATION
June 4	KINDERGARTEN PROMOTION
June 5	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
June 10-14	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT ROCKY RIVER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
June 16	FATHER'S DAY
June 23	ALUMNI GOLF OUTING
July 21	BLOODMOBILE
July 25	ST. CHRISTOPHER FEAST DAY
August 15	FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION: HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION
August 21	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
August 24	BLOCK PARTY

CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES RICE BOWL PROJECT

Rice Bowl kick-off was March 3, the Sunday before Lent started. Again this year we handed out Rice Bowls to the PSR students, St. Christopher Day School, and the parish; 430 PSR students and 300 St. Christopher School students were given CRS Rice Bowls to take home to put their change in each week to collect for the needy around the world. The students were asked to earn money by doing chores throughout the week, saving money used for snacks, or have a meatless meal and putting the money saved into their rice bowl. Each week the teachers collected money from their classes. It wasn't how much each classroom collected, but the number of participants in each classroom each week that counted. We prayed weekly for the people in need all over the world. In the six weeks of Lent we hoped to top our collection from last year of over \$3,000 for Catholic Relief Services. Our final tally this Lenten season was \$4,302.27. We truly made a difference for the least of our brothers and sisters.

Sharon Armstrong