

St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church

Prayer Shawl Ministry Covering Parishioners in Prayer

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The phrase “cover you in prayer” is a figurative expression sometimes used to let a loved one know they will be prayed for continually. But one ministry at St. Margaret Mary wants to cover you in prayer in a literal sense.

Members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry knit shawls or small “pocket prayers” that can be given to parishioners or their loved ones in times of sorrow or joy.

“Maybe you’re going through a sad time, or your child has just completed First Holy Communion, or you’re post-partum or just need a hug,” explains ministry member Terry Nocchi. “That’s what these are supposed to be – a hug from God to help you through whatever you’re going through.”

The national Shawl Ministry was started by two women in 1998 as a nondenominational effort to combine a love of knitting and crocheting with a spiritual practice that reaches out to those in need.

“Their thinking was during trying times, it might be nice for people

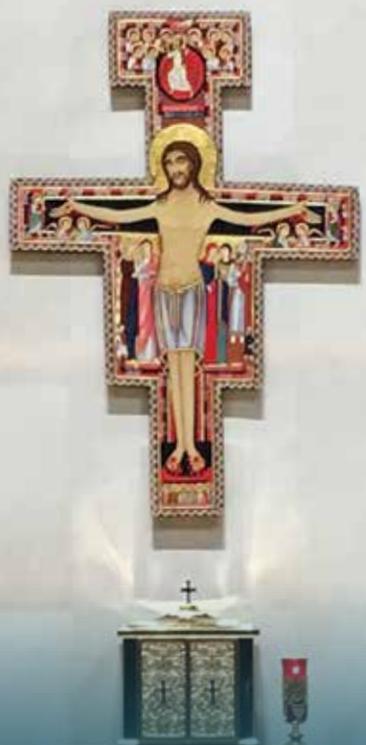


(From left) daughter and mother Katy and Sue Baert work together on prayer shawls that will go to comfort parish families during both times of joy and sorrow.

to receive a handmade item that’s been prayed over,” explains Prayer Shawl Ministry coordinator Pam Hirsch. “As we knit or crochet our shawls, we

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Prayer Shawl Ministry Covering Parishioners in Prayer

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pray over them. We don't necessarily need to know them, so we're praying for whomever will receive it. The whole concept of this is so that the person wearing the shawl can know that other people are thinking of them and praying for them, either in their time of need or their time of celebration."

Pam says shawls have traditionally been given when a parishioner is either very ill or coming into old age. However, the shawls can also be given during happy times, such as a wedding, baptism, graduation, or as a "just because" gift.

"Many people get them when they're in the hospital, which is wonderful because then they know they're being prayed over," Pam says. "We have a fairly young parish, so these can be received in times of joy, too. The thinking I would like to get out there is that this is for anybody. There's no charge for them. It is an offering."

Members of the group meet the second through fifth Wednesday of each month from 10 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. at Eastgate Manor. Meeting there enables residents at Eastgate who have a talent for fabric arts to participate and allows for fellowship across the generations.

"We help them with whatever they're working on," Terry says of the residents at Eastgate who join their meetings. "It's been very rewarding. I can't say enough about it."

Crafters are free to use any pattern they'd like for each shawl, and meetings consist of prayer, side-by-side work time, and plenty of fellowship.

Pam says the ministry is open to anyone who has an interest in crocheting or knitting, even those who have never knitted or crocheted before.

"We're more than willing to teach people," she says. "Some groups require the same pattern, but I don't want stifle people's creativity. We're more than willing to share patterns."

Being able to make it to meetings is also not required to contribute to the ministry. Pam says one member who works spends her train commute knitting, and comes to meetings when she can with an armload of shawls.

"If someone has stay-at-home-mom duties or can't come because of work, they're more than welcome to make them at home and donate them," Pam says. "I've opened this to all crafters. If someone weaves or does quilting, that's OK too. It doesn't have to be strictly knitting or crocheting."

"As we knit or crochet our shawls, we pray over them. We don't necessarily need to know them, so we're praying for whomever will receive it. The whole concept of this is so that the person wearing the shawl can know that other people are thinking of them and praying for them, either in their time of need or their time of celebration."

— Pam Hirsch



Prayer Shawl Ministry coordinator Pam Hirsch models a beautiful pink and purple shawl created by members of the ministry. Like "getting a hug from God," the shawls are meant to let others know they're being prayed for.

Parishioners interested in joining the ministry or requesting a prayer shawl for a loved one may contact Pam Hirsch at 847.658.2364 or pamstern@gmail.com. You can find out more about the Prayer Shawl's national initiative at www.shawlministry.com.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

We Are Blessed as a Church and a Nation

Dear Parishioners,

The month of July may seem like a bit of an “in-between” month. Of course, it sits in the middle of summer. During this last month of June, we shared in a number of solemnities and celebrations – these served to remind us of the incredible gifts we have received as Catholics, from the Holy Trinity to the Body and Blood of Christ.

Now, a look at the calendar shows us that all of the Sundays this month are in Ordinary Time. We know that Ordinary Time is anything but “ordinary,” even though it might seem that way – especially after a month of celebrations.

However, one thing happens this month that is certainly unique to us as Americans – Independence Day. We are Catholics, but we also are also Americans, and we should be proud to be both – grateful for the gift of faith, and equally grateful for the gift of liberty we receive as American citizens.

Yet, to be Catholic and American should not mean choosing one over the other. These allegiances should be complementary. Our Catholic faith states that we need to work together as fellow citizens for the common good of everyone in this great country. Through the Constitution, our Founding Fathers guaranteed us religious rights to contribute to our common life together.

Freedom is a special inheritance we have received, fought for by many at a great price, and it is a heritage that must be guarded – we are truly stewards of the gifts of freedom.

In 1886, just over 140 years ago, Bishop James Gibbons of Baltimore was made the second American Cardi-



nal. He attributed the progress of the Church in America to the “civil liberty we enjoy in our enlightened republic.” He continued to say that “in the genial atmosphere of liberty, the Church blossoms like a rose.”

July is not just a time for us to celebrate – it is also a time for us to blossom. It is not a time to cease praying or working to build the Kingdom of Christ. Rather, it is a time to work even more diligently to express our appreciation for our many gifts, and to share them with others. We are blessed – by the gifts of our faith and the gifts of freedom – and we must always remember to thank God for that.

Peace and Goodness,

P Sarnicki

Fr. Peter Sarnicki OFM, Conv.

You Are *Light* for

“Salt and Light” was the theme for the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on May 6. Fr. Peter, our pastor, used the event as an opportunity to thank our generous volunteers. The special evening kicked off with Holy Mass, and then over 230 guests were treated to a delicious dinner, free beverages, dancing to the tunes of a DJ, fellowship, joy and laughter in the Education Center gym.

What is a ministry, you may ask? Professor Graham Buxton explains the theological heart of ministry: “Christian ministry is fundamentally about participation in the ongoing ministry of Christ Himself, who invites us into all that He is doing today by the power of the Spirit.”

Ministry, then, is not the activity we do but, rather, our call as steward disciples to build up the people of God in holiness and joy through works of love. So, two guys playing basketball can be a ministry!

The Joyful Stewards hosted the event, with ministry members serving as the Master of Ceremonies, and providing captains for food, drink, welcoming, decorations, advertising and signage, and serving. In the spirit of collaboration, the team captains enlisted help from other ministries, which made the evening flow smoothly.

Anyone who has served in a ministry over the past year – whether it be once, or on an ongoing basis – along with their family, was invited to attend. We are grateful for our parish family. Whether you are involved in a ministry or not, there is a place here for you.

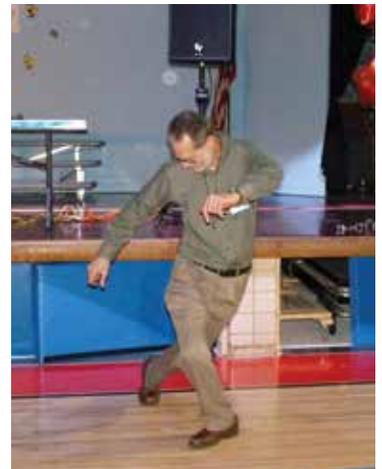
You may enjoy more Volunteer Appreciation Dinner photos on the parish website.



the Whole World



“You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” – Matthew 5:13-16



Stewardship of Treasure

Giving to God First

Have you ever wondered why no one really becomes uneasy when someone brings up the first two “Ts” of stewardship – giving of your time or talents – but when the third “T” comes up, many of us become uncomfortable?

That third “T” is treasure, and some people simply become so annoyed by the subject, they tune out the words from the pulpit.

Why is there seemingly such an adverse reaction?

Our finances are such a personal subject. Discussing money issues with others is not easy, and having someone tell us what to do with our finances is even worse. We earn the money, after all. So shouldn't we decide what to do with it?

Of course, the answer is “yes” – we decide every day how to spend our hard-earned dollars. Indeed, the monetary choices we make will either keep our finances in check, or put us into the red. The average American family has about \$7,000 in credit card debt – so finances certainly represent a challenge to our current society. Tight budgets, trying to “keep up with the Joneses” or poor financial

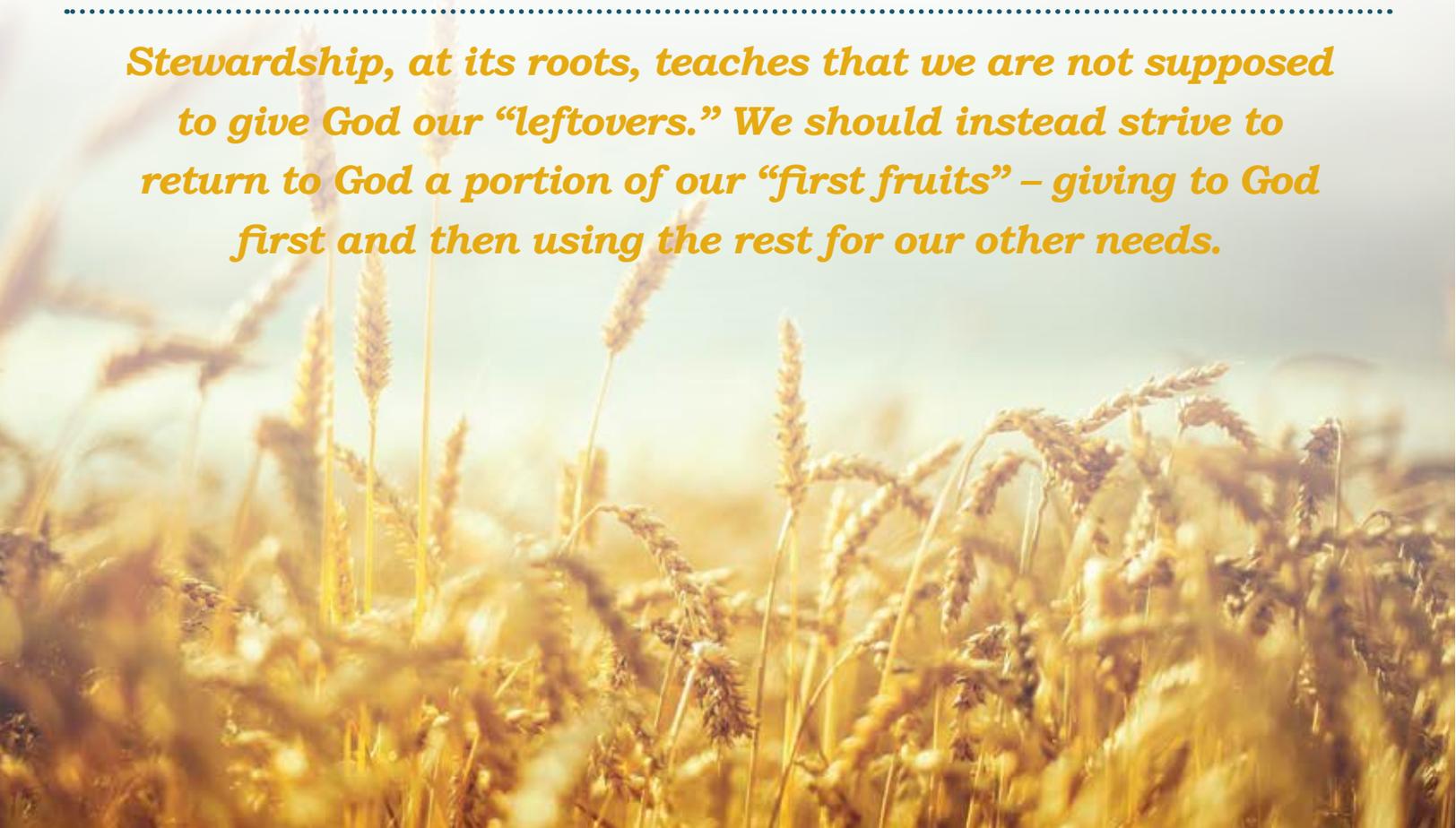
management may be to blame for our tight resources. Does this mean we do not have anything left over for God?

Stewardship, at its roots, teaches that we are not supposed to give God our “leftovers.” We should instead strive to return to God a portion of our “first fruits” – giving to God first and then using the rest for our other needs. God gave us our talents that help us earn a living, after all. He should come first.

This idea can be worrisome for many. If our finances are already strained, how will we ever find enough to give back to God? Or, if we do try to give God our “first fruits,” will there be enough left over to cover our required expenses?

Taking the correct financial steps toward good stewardship simply boils down to trust – believing that God, who takes care of all of His creation, will take care of us. Trust that in giving to God first, we are both acknowledging that our multitude of blessings come from Him, and that we are thankful He chose to give them to us. And finally, trust that if we give to Him first, that all else will fall into place – because He is in ultimate control.

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Meeting People Where They Are... Online

As Chris Cimaglio points out, Jesus went to where the people were – in turn, that is what He instructed His disciples and the Church to do. And that’s exactly what St. Margaret Mary’s Creative Arts and Web Ministry has aimed to do in our community.

“We find, especially with millennials, they get all their information online – through social media, and a variety of sources where the Church has traditionally not been so strong,” says Chris, who has served as part of the ministry for the past 15 years. “We have to adapt to the new medium and go where the people are and where the need is.”

Modern culture is constantly changing, and while there are certainly areas in which the Church will not always be able to follow the cultural tide, there are other ways in which we must adjust in order to more effectively share our mission and message.

“Not everybody gets their information from a paper bulletin, so we’re trying to reach out to the parish and community,” Chris says, explaining the purpose of this ministry. “Our mission and goal is evangelization through a new medium – the Internet, social media, and communicating with the parish community at large.”

The parish’s online presence was established around the year 2000, with a website that provided general information on parish ministries and events. Over the years, the parish has developed a more extensive online presence, both through the website, as well as on various social media platforms – such as Facebook and Twitter – all with the purpose of sharing the Gospel.

The Creative Arts and Web Ministry team – which, in addition to Chris, includes Bob Armstrong, Cindy Tobolski, and John Schneider – is passionate about making sure that the parish is



able to use the technology available to support the mission of the whole parish.

“We still have our traditional outreach,” Chris says. “This is just another way to [go out to the community]. The Web ministry is about being a complement to the Church’s mission at large.”

Chris encourages those who may

have an interest in this area to become involved in the Creative Arts and Web Ministry.

“We have a need for more volunteers, our doors are always open,” Chris says. “You don’t need to be an expert. We’re looking for people who want to help us get the message out and use this

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You can find our parish and school’s online presence at:

Parish Web Sites:

Church: <http://saintmargaretmary.org>

School: <http://stmmschool.org>

Religious Education: <http://saintmargaretmary.org/gather/>

Liturgical Ministries: <http://smmliturgym.org>

St. Vincent de Paul: <http://svdpalgonquin.org>

Youth Ministry: <http://smmym.org>

Parish Social Media:

Parish Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/saintmargaretmary>

School Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/st.margaretmarycatholicschool.Algonquin>

Parish Twitter: <https://twitter.com/smmnext100>

School Twitter: <https://twitter.com/StMMSchoolAlg>

Youth Ministry Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/smmym>

Youth Ministry Twitter: <https://www.facebook.com/smmym>

Youth Ministry Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/smmym/>

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new medium. We're ready, willing and able to train!"

"We need people who wish to contribute their time and talent to helping keep this ministry fulfilling our mission in the Church," he adds.

Chris also hopes that the Creative Arts and Web Ministry will be able to assist various parish ministries in publicizing and sharing their events.

It is the hope of those involved with this ministry that their efforts will empower the parish to reach a broader audience, especially those who would have previously been outside of the Church's sphere of influence. By going to people where they are, this team hopes to fulfill Christ's call.

"[Social media and our website] is a way to reach those disaffected people who may be going to another church, or may not be doing anything spiritual at all – we're trying to use this to break through," says Chris, "We can sit back, as the Church, and bury our heads in the sand and say to people, 'You just come to us.' But there's a hunger, there's a curiosity, and we need to be able to answer that – either at the Church door, or online, where they're at."

For more information on becoming part of this ministry, or if your ministry would like to get the word out through our online presence, please contact Webmaster@Stmargaretmary.org or call the parish office at 847-658-7625.



Variation of the new logo used for parish ministries, 2016.



Our new school logo.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Monday - Thursday: 7:00 & 8:30 a.m. | **Friday:** 7:00 & 9:15 a.m. | **First Friday:** 7:30 p.m. in Polish

Saturday: 8:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. (6:30 p.m. in Polish)

Sunday: 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m. & 4:30 p.m. (1:00 p.m. in Polish)