

On Eagle's Wings

December '11/January '12



St. John
the Evangelist
Catholic Church



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"For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:5) These words are taken from the first reading at the Midnight Mass. We find ourselves in the Christmas season. It is a time of great joy. It is a time when we gather with family and friends. It is a time for giving and receiving gifts. But it is more than that. The Christmas season reminds us of what happened over two thousand years ago. Christ broke through the darkness of sin and brought God to live among us. Isaiah speaks with lofty words about the newborn child: Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Prince of Peace!

In our world we need someone like Jesus. We need a hero, a prince of peace to bring order into the world. There is so much unrest in our world today. It makes it hard to find peace. If we look among ourselves we will fall short of finding what we need. Discovering what we need is no further away than the Lord is. It is the time of year that we find hope. When we find that hope, we can begin to experience the peace that we are longing for. It is important that we take time to see Christ among us and to realize we are nothing without Jesus being a part of our life. He is more than a little baby lying in a manger. He is Emmanuel, God among us. We celebrate what was but we also look to what is yet to come. We become aware of Jesus now dwelling among us.

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year. It is a time when we seem to look out for our neighbors. We seem to recognize the good in one another. We give from our hearts and the air is filled with love and peace. Wouldn't it be great to bottle up this time of the year so we could have it always? If we believe that Jesus dwells among us, do we not know that feeling at all times? Jesus reveals himself to us in many different ways. When we become aware of his presence around us our lives are filled with hope. Jesus is not just present in the Christmas season. He is present in the Eucharist. He is present in you and me.

As we come to the end of the year during this Christmas time let us make a home for Jesus in our hearts. As our hearts fill with Jesus and our lives are enriched by that presence may it give us hope for the New Year. God wants us to be with him not only in this joyous season but throughout the entire year. Let us embrace Jesus and make him the center of our lives. Let us work harder at seeing Jesus in one another and in the breaking of the bread. Merry Christmas and Happy Year to you and your family. God bless each of you!

C h r i s t m a s !

St. John Church, 9080 Cincinnati-Dayton Road, West Chester, OH 45069



From the Business Manager

If you haven't returned your Commitment Intention Card with any change to your weekly giving, you can drop it into the collection basket, drop it at the parish office or mail it to us. If you didn't receive a Commitment Card and want to make a change, please contact the parish office at 777-6433.

We will be starting our annual "Split the Pot" Fundraiser in January! The drawing will take place on Valentine's Day and the grand prize will be one-half of the amount raised. Second prize will be \$500 and third prize will be \$250. Tickets and information will be mailed in early January. Please purchase your tickets for a chance to win and to help raise money for our Debt Reduction! Our goal is to raise \$30,000!



Want to make your donations electronically? Simply visit our web site, www.stjohnwc.org, to take advantage of our donation program Pledge Connect. Donate confidentially and with ease to Sunday Offerings, Debt Reduction, Tanzania Promise, and Saint Vincent de Paul. Click on the DONATE ONLINE button at the bottom of the homepage and you will be taken to a page that provides a drop-down menu that will offer you various opportunities to give. You can use your credit card, checking or savings account to give one time or on a recurring basis. If you do not have access to a computer, call the Parish Office (777-6433) for more information.

As you consider your end of the year gifts to St. John, please note that donations of stock to St. John are processed through our custodial account at Fifth Third Bank. A custodial account through the Archdiocese of Cincinnati was established for each parish. Through the custodial account, stock will be sold within 48 business hours of receipt. To donate stock to our parish, please make sure to include the information below in your communication: COMPANY NAME: FIFTH THIRD BANK, DTC NUMBER: 2116, ACCOUNT NUMBER: 0104471751BV, ACCOUNT NAME: ST. JOHN WEST CHESTER. Please note that it is imperative that your broker identify your donation by including your name in the delivery instructions. If you have any questions, please contact Marianne Ball at mball@stjohnwc.org or 777-6433, ext.119.

Please help us keep our data base current and correct. If you have dropped your land line, moved to a new home, or changed your email, we would like to hear from you. Email Karen Hake at khake@stjohnwc.org or call the parish office to update your information.

Have a wonderful Christmas and a blessed New Year!

Catholicism 101: An Introduction to the Teachings of the Catholic Faith

Mondays, January 23, 30 and February 6 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. in the Chapel

Deacon Jerry Barney will give an overview of the major dogmas/doctrines of the Catholic faith. There will be time for question and answer at the end of each evening. Ideally participants come to all three nights, but each night can stand alone. Therefore, attend the nights you are able. Subjects for the evenings are: January 23: Revelation, Trinity, Church and Mary/Saints; January 30: Scripture, and the Sacraments; February 6: Morality, and the Last Things: Heaven, Hell, Purgatory, Limbo, etc. Contact Jerry for questions at jbarney@stjohnwc.org or 777-6433, ext. 121.



Journey the Road to Restoration and the Common Good

Monday, February 13, 7:30-9:00pm in the Chapel

An Archdiocesan program entitled The Dismas Journey: The Road to Restoration and the Common Good will be given in our Chapel on Monday, February 13, from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. At their February 2011 Congress, the Advocates for Justice Greater Cincinnati Parish Collaborative voted to promote ways that parishes can help citizens returning from prison reintegrate back into society. To accomplish this, the Criminal Justice Task Force has designed a guided-dialogue process, called The Dismas Journey: The Road to Restoration and the Common Good, that can be hosted by any parish community to facilitate interaction among parishioners, ex-offenders, and the agencies supporting them. Through these discussions, parishioners can learn more about some of the challenges returning citizens face, after having served their debt to society, to finding employment and self-sufficiency. Together, we can work to reduce recidivism and increase safety for all. These conversations are being developed by parishioners, including those active in prison ministry, the AMOS Project (a social justice, congregation-based coalition that includes nine Catholic parishes and religious communities), and the HELP Program (a ministry for ex-offenders directed by Marianist Brother Mike Murphy). The process includes prayer, reflections on Scripture and Church teaching, dialogue with those formerly incarcerated and the agencies supporting them, and possible next steps. The program is free. We hope you will join us and bring a friend. Dismas is the name Christian tradition has given to the forgiven, good thief crucified with Jesus, and it is a reference used by several ex-offender reentry programs throughout the country.



Women of the Word Join Us As We “PREPARE ME THE WAY”

**Come! Taste & See
the Goodness of the Lord!**

**Friday, February 17, 2012
6:30 - 10:00pm in Favret Hall**

**Light Dinner and Dessert Served
\$10 Per Person**

**We are saving a place for you!
However, space is limited, so please RSVP
ASAP**

**by Monday, February 13, 2012
JoKoch at 207-7749 or wow.rsvp@yahoo.com
Follow us on Facebook - WoW - Women of the Word**

Christmas Food Baskets

If you chose to take care of a family this Christmas with a basket of food, please remember that the drop-off/delivery date is **Saturday, December 10th between 9:00 and 10:00 AM**. If you have any questions, please contact Charlie or Karen Hake at (513) 779-1713 or 777-6433 or khake@stjohnwc.org.

Split the Pot Raffle



It is almost that time of year! Our 50/50 Split the Pot Valentine Day Raffle fundraiser for debt reduction will begin in January! The grand prize, as always, will be one-half the total amount raised. Our goal this year is to raise \$30,000! Second prize is \$500 and third prize is \$250. The cost of the tickets will be \$50 each or 5 for \$200. Watch the mail for your tickets and a letter from Fr. Don with more information coming in January. Tickets will be on sale after the Masses and will also be available in the Parish office. The drawing will take place on Tuesday, February 14, 2012!



The Advent Wreath - Hope and Resurrection

The symbolism of the Advent wreath is, without a doubt, beautiful. The wreath is made of various evergreens, signifying continuous life. Even these evergreens have a traditional meaning which can be adapted to our faith: The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering; pine, holly, and yew, immortality; and cedar, strength and healing. Holly also has a special Christian symbolism: The prickly leaves remind us of the crown of thorns. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the everlasting life found in Christ. Any pine cones, nuts, or seedpods used to decorate the wreath also symbolize life and resurrection. All together, the wreath of evergreens depicts the immortality of our soul and the new, everlasting life promised to us through Christ, who entered our world becoming true man and who was victorious over sin and death through His own passion, death, and resurrection.



Advent Wreath

The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. Three candles are purple and one is rose. The purple candles in particular symbolize the prayer, penance, and preparatory sacrifices and good works undertaken during this time. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, specifically known as Gaudete Sunday, when the priest also wears rose vestments at Mass; Gaudete Sunday is the Sunday of rejoicing, because the faithful have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when their preparation is now half over and they are close to Christmas. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord's first coming into the world, and the anticipation of His second coming with our hopes to raise us all up on the last day. And of course, the light signifies Christ, the Light of the world. Since Advent is a time to stir up our faith in the Lord, the wreath and its prayers provide us a way to augment this special preparation for Christmas. Moreover, this good tradition helps us to remain vigilant in our homes and not lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas.

Contributed by Scott Steinke, Pastoral Associate

Catholics Returning Home

Wednesdays, from 7 – 9 pm, January 4 through February 1 in the Staff Conference Room



Do you know someone who has drifted away from the Church? Most of us don't have to look very far to find non-practicing Catholics in our circle of family and friends. Many of us are concerned about these loved ones, but we don't know how to help them. Obviously, most of them are searching, but how can we help them find their way home? As baptized, practicing Catholics, we have a precious gift of faith and love from the Lord that needs to be shared with our non-practicing brothers and sisters. First, we need to pray for them. Next, we need to extend a personal invitation to them to come home to the Catholic Church. Most are just waiting for an invitation to return – mistakenly, they think they've been excommunicated or are not welcome to return for a variety of reasons. Are negative feelings toward the Church or its members keeping our brothers and sisters away? Many carry with them a tremendous amount of guilt and misinformation about the Church and are afraid of approaching the Church for fear of being rejected. You can make a dramatic difference in someone's life simply by reaching out to them and telling them that we miss them and want them to come home to our Church family. Please note: You do not have to attend each session. For more information contact Deacon Jerry Barney at 777-6433, ext 121 or jbarney@stjohnwc.org.



Sacrament Preparation at St. John

As part of our youth faith formation, we prepare our young people to celebrate their First Eucharist (2nd graders), First Reconciliation (2nd through 4th graders) and Confirmation (freshman) sacraments. We also prepare adults for these sacraments of initiation through our RCIA program. For more information on any of these programs, please call our parish office at 777-6433.

First Eucharist Preparation

Letters regarding the preparation process for First Communion will be mailed around the first week of December. First Eucharist preparation begins with a parent meeting on January 26, 2012. If you have a child that will be preparing for First Eucharist please mark your calendar for at least one parent to attend this meeting. All materials, dates and explanations of events, sign-ups for the necessary interviews, and choosing which First Eucharist date is best for your family will happen at the meeting on the 26th of January. If you have a child who will be preparing for this sacrament and do not receive a letter by December 15, or if you have any questions please contact Barb Conway at bconway@stjohnwc.org or 755-4974.

Confirmation Preparation for High Schoolers



Confirmation preparation begins in January, 2012 on Sunday evenings in Favret Hall. Registration forms and information booklets will be available at the Church and Parish Office and online by the first of December. Volunteers are needed as Catechists and Mentors (see the job descriptions in the booklet or online). The full preparation calendar will be included inside the Confirmation booklet.

St. Valentine Dinner Party

Saturday, February 11, from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. in - Favret Hall

Come enjoy a delicious, catered dinner. Afterwards, be enriched by a light hearted reflection on "marriage" (speaker(s) TBA). The cost is \$15.00 per couple, the rest of the expenses are covered by our parish. If you wish, bring a bottle of wine for your table. Pre-registration is required. The deadline is Monday, February 6. Call Jerry Barney at 777-6433, x121 to sign-up, or for further information.

Christ Renews His Parish

Men's Weekend - January 28-29, 2012



We are offering you an opportunity to increase your Christian Faith and contribute to the Spiritual Growth of the St. John community by attending an overnight (Saturday to Sunday) program called Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP). The Men's Weekend is held on Church grounds, mainly in Favret Center. The weekend begins at 8:30am Saturday and ends around 4:00pm Sunday. Men over 21 years old are invited to attend. All are welcome, no matter where you are on your spiritual journey. CRHP is an ongoing process for personal renewal that results in the renewal of the parish community. There are opportunities for private and communal prayer. A Reconciliation Service and Celebration of the Eucharist are included. Mostly, the entire weekend is very casual and relaxing. You will meet new people, reflect on your life, and have an opportunity to slow down and enjoy a bounty of delicious food (both for the stomach and the spirit!). There is no cost to participants for the weekend. The renewal weekend is a GIFT to you from the parish and the giving team. For more information you may contact Scott Steinke, the CRHP Coordinator, at 777-6433 or sssteinke@stjohnwc.org or Ron Beerman, the CRHP Team Coordinator at rmbeerma@hotmail.com or 779-9443.



2011 Advent and Christmas Events St. John the Evangelist Parish

The Season of Advent begins on the weekend of November 26/27 this year. Don't forget that this is the weekend that the New Roman Missal takes effect as well and that the prayers on the Mass will be changing.

- **St. John Christmas Craft Show**
Saturday, December 3, from 9am – 4pm in Favret Hall, the Pavilion, and in the Center
- **“St. Nick Toy Drive” for Campton Mission**
Held Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4 in the Gathering Space
- **Feast of the Immaculate Conception**
Thursday, December 8; Mass times are: 6:30am, 12:00pm, and 7:30pm in church
- **Christmas Baskets for the Needy**
Dropoff - Saturday, December 10, from 9-10:00am in St. John Parking Lot
- **Breakfast in Bethlehem**
Saturday, December 10, from 9am – 10:30am in Favret Hall
- **Youth Ministry Christmas Party**
Sunday, December 11, from 6:30 - 8:30pm in Favret Hall
- **Advent Penance Services**
 - Saturday, December 3, at 10:00am at St. Maximilian Kolbe
 - Tuesday, December 6, at 6:30pm at Good Shepherd (Children's)
 - Monday, December 12, at 7:00pm at St. John the Evangelist
 - Tuesday, December 13, at 6:30pm at Good Shepherd
 - Tuesday, December 13, at 7:00pm at St. Susanna
 - Thursday, December 15, at 7:00pm at St. Maximilian Kolbe
 - Every Saturday at 4pm at St. John the Evangelist
- **Christmas Eve Mass Schedule – Saturday, December 24**
 - 3:00pm Children's Mass
 - 5:30pm Christmas Eve Mass
 - 10:30pm Christmas Eve Mass w/ prelude music beginning at 10pm
- **Christmas Day Mass Schedule – Sunday, December 25**
 - 10:00am Mass (no other Masses)



**FIND US ON FACEBOOK! SEARCH FOR ST. JOHN THE
EVANGELIST CHURCH, WEST CHESTER.**



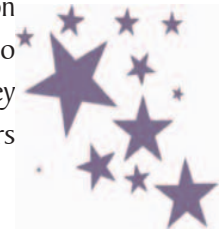
Advent
St. John Parish



News from St. Gabe School December, 2011 - January, 2012

"In the beginning God created the human and earth." How appropriate are these words from Genesis as St. Gabriel Consolidated School's students and staff celebrate a week of Space Exploration activities during the week of December 5th as part of our ongoing annual attempt to highlight a specific part of our curriculum. Did you know that Ohio is home to 24 astronauts? Why so many? Is it because of men such as John Glenn or Neil Armstrong? Is it because Ohio is considered the birthplace of Flight? We do not know the answers to these questions but we are proud as Ohioans and Americans for the dedication shown by these men and women to explore space. We celebrate this week of space exploration with the theme of "The Sky is the Limit". Students enter school each day through an entrance made to replicate a spaceship or will be greeted by an image of an astronaut. The week begins with an assembly featuring a space dome in which all students will have an opportunity to explore.

Through the efforts of all of our staff working together in a cross graded fashion, each of the remaining days of the week feature specific events. Events include the formation of a new galaxy on the top floor of the school, a timeline of space exploration, the ABC's of space and telescope activities and the opportunity to "Wish Upon a Star." This latter activity enables all students to share a specific wish for their future, attach it to a large star in the hallway and begin to realize the importance of the Christmas star as we journey through Advent. Stars are also placed in all the windows of the school to symbolize the many stars which make up our universe.



"Then God said, Let there be lights in the dome of the sky, to separate day from night . . . and serve as luminaries to shed light upon the earth" And so it happened!! We praise God for our universe and are thankful for the opportunity to study all that it holds.

Principal Joe Epplen - www.stgabeschool.org or 513-771-5220

K of C Free Throw Contest

January 23rd - 7pm in the Parish Center



Hey Kids! The Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship will be presented by the St. John Knights of Columbus Council on Monday, January 23, 2012 in the Parish Center from 7:00pm to 8:30pm. This event is open to Girls and Boys ages 10 - 14. You must be registered by 7:30pm to participate...no advanced sign up is needed. You also must be present for tiebreakers. Champions are announced by 8:30pm. The Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship is sponsored annually, with winners progressing through local, district, and state competitions. All boys and girls 10 to 14 years old (on Jan 1, 2012) are eligible to participate and will compete in their respective age divisions. Annually, more than 150,000 shooters participate in over 3,000 local competitions. All contestants on a local level are recognized for their participation in the event. The Knights of Columbus is an international Catholic family fraternal service organization with nearly 1.7 million members in over 12,500 local councils.



Our Prayers & Sympathy Go Out To ...

October

Bette Vorbroker on the death of her husband Ray

Jeremy Fauber on the death of his grandmother

The Chapel family on the death of Charlie Chapel

Barry Strasser on the death of his brother

Susan Manne on the death of her mother

November

Al Hamm on the death of his wife Sally

Bess Debbeler on the death of her husband Jim

John Schwarberger on the death of his cousin-in-law

Betty Cunningham on the death of her husband Jim

Lori Benedetti on the death of her father

Tim Cunningham on the death of his father

www.stjohnwc.org

(513) 777-6433



St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church

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Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year from St. John Parish!