



on
EAGLE'S
wings

WE ARE
Chosen

September / October 2021

chosen TO SERVE OTHERS

And the king will say to them in reply, Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers or sisters of mine, you did for me.

These words are spoken to the righteous who are the right side of the judgment seat of the King. Jesus said they clothed him, gave him food and drink, visited and cared for him. They asked the Lord when did we see you hungry or naked or ill? They didn't realize that Jesus wasn't speaking of just himself. Where do we see Christ in the world today? Can we see him in the brothers and sisters who are in need?

We do many things in our parish that reach out to the least of our brothers and sisters. Twice a year we have a special time when we reach out to people who need our help. Our Generations of Faith event is when we help various agencies in our community with items they request from us for their clients. With COVID 19 we had to do things a little differently over that last year. Even during a pandemic, our response was amazing and we overwhelmed the agencies with the goods donated by the members of our parish family. I had the privilege to take items down to Pregnancy Center East. We took, each time, one pick-up and an SUV full of materials that were much needed. Each agency got similar donations given by our parishioners. What an awesome response to Jesus and to his brothers and sisters in need.

On October 5 and 6, we will be gathering items for another Generations of Faith, but this time we will be meeting in person once again to sort things out and prepare materials to be sent to the four agencies we are working with. We are truly working with the corporal works of mercy that Matthew speaks about in his final judgement scene. It is so meaningful to do the work of the Lord in this special way.

But it doesn't work without you. We need you to volunteer to purchase items that you will find listed on the website or

in the bulletin. The link will also be found in the ememo. That is one way we reach out to our brothers and sisters, but we still need more from you. Why not volunteer to join us one of the two nights? Take the time out of your busy days and join us for an evening of fellowship, a little pizza and salad and we will even throw in a nice chocolate cookie. When that gourmet meal is over, we will begin the work of the evening. We will learn about the agencies we are working with and put together packages of much needed items for the use of our brothers and sisters. All the wonderful things that we collect and assemble will then be delivered to the various agencies in our community.

I love to see our parish family join together for the night of service. We are *chosen* to be disciples of Jesus and are called to care for all of God's children. We are grateful for all of the support you have given in the past and look forward to your continued support of Generations of Faith. I have always admired the generosity of our parish. When a need comes before the parish, so many are willing to step up and help. Let us all get involved and come back together again to make this the best one yet. Whatever you did for the least of my brothers and sisters, you have done for me. God bless you all and thank you for being at service for the Kingdom of God. May Christ's peace be with you, for you are God's *chosen* ones.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fr. Don West'.

FR. DON WEST
PASTOR

UPCOMING DATES ON THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8: FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14: FEAST OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Print your own Liturgical Calendar here: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/2021cal.pdf>

chosen TO SERVE THE CHURCH

A few months ago, when we once again began using extraordinary ministers to distribute communion at Mass, I was out in the Gathering Space after one of the Masses handing out bulletins with some of the other hospitality ministers. I look over and one of the extraordinary ministers was smiling from ear to ear and looking at me as if to say, "I need to talk with you." My first thought was, "uh oh, what did I do?" I handed off my bulletins to another minister and went up to her. I said, "You look like you have something to say, I hope the smile on your face means it is something good."

Her smile got even bigger, and she said, "Scott, I can't even begin to tell you how much today meant to me. This was the first time since February of last year [2020] because of covid that I was able to distribute communion at Mass. I so missed this! Out of all the times I have distributed communion, this one today was just so special to me." She continued, "As Father Don handed me the bowl of hosts to distribute, I found myself become overwhelmed and my eyes welling up with tears. I think the people coming forward to receive communion from me thought I was nuts or something as I was shaking a little and choking up as I was getting the words, 'the Body of Christ', out of my mouth! I am just so grateful for being able to do this again." Some of the other extraordinary ministers of communion had gathered around her and were telling their experiences also. Every one of them felt so blessed to be part of this ministry once again.

Each weekend, for many weeks since, I heard different sto-

ries from different ministers (altar attendants, hospitality, lectors, sacristans, and other extraordinary ministers) about how much they had missed serving at Mass; how they felt a bit empty not being able to minister to their families, friends and community in this way. It was truly wonderful to hear, their stories. Yes, they all feel chosen and called to do what they do, and to serve our community in the most precious way at the source and summit of our faith: the Mass.

I know there are many more of you coming to Mass each weekend who have been thinking about how to be more active in the church. It isn't easy volunteering for something during the week or on a weeknight when life is busy. But, for the one hour you do come for Mass, there are plenty of opportunities as an individual, a couple or a family to participate and serve. Our current ministers (sacristans, altar attendants, extraordinary ministers of communion, hospitality ministers and lectors) wish to invite and welcome you to be part of the Mass ministry. We are all *chosen* to be fully active in our faith. If you feel called to be part of one of these ministries, pull aside one of the ministers you see at Mass and let them know. And while you have their attention, have them tell you their experiences and stories of what ministering at Mass means to them. They will be happy to tell you.



Scott
SCOTT STEINKE
DIRECTOR OF LITURGY

I remember when I was a kid, I loved to go to church. I'm sure you can guess that it was the music that pulled me in! I can remember vividly walking up to Communion and hearing the whole assembly singing, giving me a feeling of frisson. Frisson is that feeling of chills or goosebumps when you hear music. Scientists say that only about 50% of people experience it. When I became a member of the "guitar group" I loved the feeling of leading the people in song. I still get that feeling when everyone is singing to a beloved liturgical song like "Here I am Lord" or "Holy God We Praise Thy Name", also, when we have an ensemble of musicians playing together, I know that I was *chosen* by God to be a Pastoral musician.

Now that the Church is moving toward normality, we need to have musicians, singers and instrumentalists, to

join the music ministry. Are you *chosen* to be a church musician? We need you! All skill levels and ages are welcome, from choir members to cantors, guitars, piano, and band instruments. You may play at whatever is your usual Mass time. Right now, we practice a half hour before Mass. In the fall we will practice on Wednesday evenings if you would like to rehearse. If you are retired or have free time during the day, it would be nice to have a choir to sing at funerals.

It would be so nice to have a choir again for Christmas. Please discern if you feel chosen to lead God's people in song and join the music ministry! Email lmeisberger@st-johnwc.org, call the parish office or talk to me after Mass.



Lynn Meisberger
LYNN MEISBERGER
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

chosen TO SHARE YOUR GIFTS

*God has given a spiritual gift to the church
in you, and you dare not keep it to yourself.*

-Aaron Niequist



Fred

DEACON FRED MERRITT
DIRECTOR OF ADULT FAITH FORMATION

My twin brother, Ernie, and I were looking forward to starting the first grade at St. Anthony's School in Clarksville, Indiana. But, mom informed us that we would meet dad, who had been deployed to Korea the past couple of years, in Japan instead. So my four brothers and I flew with mom to Japan to meet dad.

The second year in Japan, we were informed that the bishop would be coming over from San Francisco. Ernie and I would receive our First Communion and be Confirmed (my first experience of RCIA). I remember I was supposed to kneel and open my mouth for Communion, stand for Confirmation and tell the bishop what the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are. I do remember wondering what "gift of the Holy Spirit" I got. I was seven years old.

"Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.
(Mark 10:14-16)

Twenty-one years later, I was approached and asked if I ever considered being a deacon in the Church. I responded, "No, and I have no idea what a deacon does." Seven years later, I was ordained; September 23, 1995.

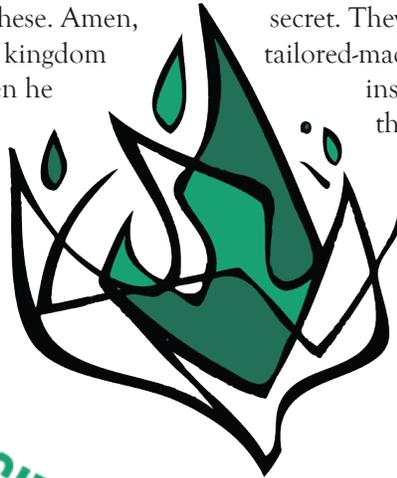
Through it all, I continued to wonder about the "Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit" and which one(s) I possessed. Then I read:

"Through the fear of the Lord, we rise to piety then to knowledge, from knowledge we derive strength, from strength counsel, with counsel we move toward understanding, and with intelligence toward wisdom and thus, by the sevenfold grace of the Spirit, there opens to us the end of the ascent the entrance to the life of Heaven. (Pope St. Gregory the Great, Homily on the Prophet Ezekiel, 2, 7,7)

This helps me better understand and appreciate how the "Gifts of the Holy Spirit" are at work in our lives.

The "Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit" are not genetically transmitted; they are not talents. They are not private or secret. They are God's free graces, innumerable, powerful, tailored-made for everyone. Everyone needs them not only inside of the Church but outside, in families, and the world. They are instruments, not ornaments.

The distribution of gifts of the Holy Spirit depends on the specific needs of people. So everyone must recognize their spiritual contributions for the good of all. Having spiritual gifts is a blessing, a gift that we receive at Baptism. They were *chosen* for you by God before you were even born.



WISDOM
UNDERSTANDING
COUNSEL
FORTITUDE
KNOWLEDGE
PIETY
FEAR OF THE LORD
GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

REVEL IN BEING *chosen*

Your faith is not the basis of God's choosing you, but the result of it.

This means that your faith is a wonder – more wonderful than any of the seven wonders of the world. Jesus said, “You did not choose me, but I chose you” (John 15:16). And there was a deeper choosing going on here than just the selection of the Twelve. We know this because Judas was part of the Twelve, and he was not “*chosen*.” Jesus said, “I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have *chosen*. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me’” (John 13:18).

If you have come to Jesus, the wonder is that you already belonged to the Father, and the Father gave you to Jesus. You were not *chosen* because you came; you came because you were *chosen*. That's what Jesus said: “All that the Father gives me will come to me. . . . Yours they were, and you gave them to me” (John 6:37; 17:6).

If you have believed in Jesus, the wonder is that you were first appointed to eternal life. You weren't appointed because you believed; you believed because you were appointed. When the Gentiles heard that the gospel actually included them, “they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed” (Acts 13:48).

Revel in the wonder that you are a Christian because God chose you to be one. Your roots, as a child of God, are in eternity – in the infinite mind and heart of God. Your faith, and all its fruits, are God's eternal gift.

Therefore, the basis of God choosing you is not in you, but in grace.

Take God's Old Testament people Israel, for example. Why did God set his favor on Israel above all the peoples of the earth? What was the basis of God's calling them “my chosen” (Isaiah 45:4)? Here's Moses's answer:

The Lord your God has *chosen* you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers. (Deuteronomy 7:6–8)

This is amazing: “The Lord set his love on you and chose you . . . because the Lord loves you.” He loves you because he loves you! That's the deepest, and ultimate, basis of God's choosing Israel.

Paul underlines the wonder. Why was Jacob, the father of the nation of Israel, *chosen* over his twin brother Esau? Paul answers, “Though they were not yet born, and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God's purpose to choose might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls – their mother was told, ‘The older will serve the younger’” (Romans 9:11–12).

And the principle holds today. Paul would say, “So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace” (Romans 11:5). So it is with every true Christian. Behind our believing – behind our coming to Jesus – is grace alone. There is no ground for our being *chosen* beneath the all-wise and incomprehensible love of God. Oh, the vastness of the repercussions of this unfathomable truth!

CELEBRATING OUR CATHOLIC FAITH

BAPTISM

Lucy Jeanne Sparks
Evelyn June Parsons
Penelope Monet Mallaley
Oliver Matthew Mallaley
Taylor Scott Morrissey
Matilda Jane Horn

MARRIAGE

Sarah Shoemaker & Joseph Elrod

Our Sympathies Go Out To...

Chuck Hanley
on the death of his mother

Larry Henkel
on the death of his aunt Marlene Henkel

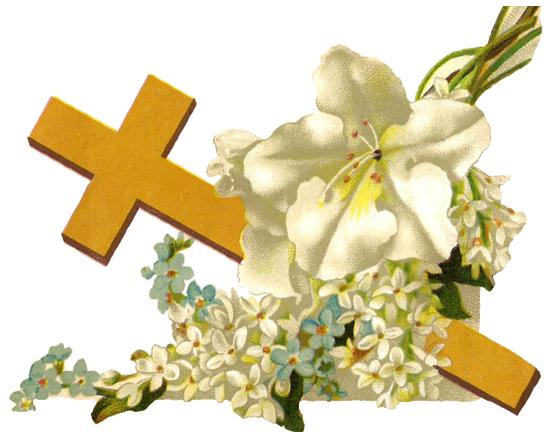
Bryan & Patrick Wallace
on the death of their parents John & Susan Wallace

Lisa Smith
on the death of her father

The family of Carol Ann Miller

David Miller
on the death of his wife Mary Jo Miller

Paul Loebig
on the death of his father



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

I want to sincerely thank everyone on our festival committee, office staff and volunteer crew who helped us to pull off a successful Mini Fest this year! We had Bid & Buy, Grand Raffle, Basket Bonanza and a wonderful Parish Festival. The team really scored points on flexibility and creativity! I could not be more thankful. Thank you to every volunteer, vendor and donor as well! We have been through so much over the past 18 months, and our parishioners and staff come through for us time and time again. We were able to earn funds to cover some of the wish list items that need to be completed on campus. Our two big items this fiscal year are going to involve repairing stained glass windows in Favret Hall and upgrading our HVAC electronics in the main church. We have really kept on top of things over these past five years and we hope to continue doing that. Thank you to our parish community for supporting us as we continue to make repairs and improvements across campus.

Even with a pandemic and limited spiritual, social and ministry activities, we were able to have a positive financial year in 2020-21. Thank you so much to our dedicated parishioners who were able to help us by continuing their giving, donating to our wishlist or helping with gifts of time and talent. You are all amazing! Our final total income was \$1,729,390 and total expenses were \$1,528,500. In those expenses were \$100,000 of capital improvements. This means that we were around \$200k ahead of our budget at the end of the fiscal year! This amount will go back into our reserves, so we are

able to complete the needed repairs and updates on campus.

If you contribute to our parish financially, we thank you! If you would like to begin giving and have any questions, please let me know. The easiest way to give is electronically! You can click on the "Donate/Purchase" button on our website to get started today. Our monthly bills didn't take the summer off, so if you did, please try to make up for that by increasing your next few donations or by setting up online giving. Thank you!

On October 5 and 6, we will be having our Generations of Faith Service Event again! Information on donating and attending will be posted on our parish website, facebook page and bulletin. The donations from this event are so important this year, as agencies everywhere are fighting to help those in need. Please consider donating from our Amazon wishlist or from the list on our website.

Have a blessed September and October. I am continually praying for all our parishioners. Please keep our entire staff in your prayers as well. You have been *chosen* to be parishioners here at St. John. We are thankful for that!



JOAN SEIBENICK
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

THE 2021 ST. JOHN FESTIVAL COMMITTEE

MATT BOLTON electric

DAN BRANKAMP finance

JULIE BRANKAMP bid & buy

TOM BRILL security

SARAH CHIVERS marketing

FRANCES DORSEY bid & buy

GARY EISER food

GARY ERA food

JEREMY FAUBER electric

JARED FIEHRER beverages

GINA KOHLS festival chair

KEVIN KOHLS festival chair

MATT BOLTON electric

HANK KORB maintenance/set-up

BRIGID LOEBIG prizes

RON PORTER entertainment

JANET RATERS basket bonanza

KIRT ROBB facilities

JOAN SEIBENICK booth captains

DICK SHOEMAKER finance

LISA WOLFF games



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