

Melissa Fasano

From: mail@flocknote.com on behalf of Notre Dame of Mount Carmel Church
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The Hospitality of Advent

An excerpt from a Reflection by Rev. Msgr. Joseph Reilly, S.T.L., Ph.D.

"When he was a young priest, Fr. Jimmy had a life-changing encounter with Jesus amidst the darkness of his own struggles and sufferings. This experience of Jesus' light amidst the darkness of his situation made him a new man in the Lord. And his life would never be the same. Each night, this encounter would be recollected and renewed. At the end of every day, Fr. Jimmy would spend an hour in the darkened chapel before the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist. In silence and stillness, amidst the darkness, he would be taken up and into the Light of his life, Jesus Christ."



"The truth is: God knows where welcome waits. The human heart – Fr. Jimmy's and yours and mine as well – becomes the place of hospitality where Jesus longs to dwell – in the midst of our messy lives, in and through our weakness and vulnerability. Jesus longs to heal us – all of us. Jesus wants to shine his light – gently, subtly, and with power – into whatever darkness we are dwelling."

Rev. Msgr. Joseph Reilly, S.T.L., Ph.D.

Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology Advent Reflection Series

Food Rescue Christmas Celebration

This past Friday evening, Food Rescue ministers, donors, and representatives of recipient organizations gathered for their annual Christmas Celebration! It was clear much love went into preparing for the festivities, which were planned and organized by Ministry Chair Beth Vecchio and a team of core leaders.

The evening opened with this inspiring reflection in song, "You Can Be Kind," which was produced by Robert Long, using images and video from our Diocesan Father English Food Pantry ministry.



Father English Center in Paterson is one of the key recipients of the fruits of our Food Rescue Ministry. Unfortunately, Carlos Roldan, Director of the Father English Food Pantry and the driving force behind this vital Catholic Charities ministry, could not attend the celebration. However, Carlos shared a message in advance of the gathering: powerful sentiments of both gratitude and hope as we collaborate in Christ to love and serve one another as beloved children of God.





Representing our long-term partner, The Interfaith Food Pantry Network (IFPN), Joanne Brashier (Grant Manager) and Carolyn Lake (Executive Director) shared an equally powerful message of gratitude for our continuing support, not only through the Monthly Food Collection and the annual Turkey and Ham drives but also through the new and creative ways which have significantly expanded the breadth and depth of support in our joint mission of bringing food and hope to those in need.

Those involved in ministry know that while nothing is expected in return, it is indeed in giving that we receive. What do we receive? **A joy in our hearts, the gift of friendship and community, a deeper relationship with our Lord, and countless graces from above!**



Men: Do you want to be healed?



This past weekend, the Men's Cornerstone ministry officially opened registration for the upcoming Men's Cornerstone Retreat. Congregants at all Masses listened to witness speakers share how the Cornerstone Retreat has impacted their lives.

Click [HERE](#) to find out more and register today!



Very Special Blessings for our Homebound Parishioners

By Mary Malone, Special Needs Family Faith Formation

Our special needs faith formation children showcased their kindness and creativity by assembling Christmas gift bags filled with sweet treats for the homebound members of our parish. The children really got in the Christmas spirit while singing Christmas carols, accompanied by a variety of musical instruments!



*"I absolutely adore being a part of the Special Needs Family Faith ministry!
Working with the children on their faith journey makes my heart so happy. Every*

child is made in the image and likeness of God, and I am so blessed to be able to help teach them the love of Jesus." Erica Jackson

Preparing for First Reconciliation

By Diane Byrne, Elementary Family Faith Coordinator

Our new Pathways program, "Mend" for families with a child preparing for First Holy Communion, brings families together in that journey of preparation both at home and, on occasion, as a larger community in the church. This past Saturday morning, families participating in the program gathered for a special First Reconciliation preparation retreat themed ***The Heart of the Father***, which focused on God's love for us.



The families watched as the parable of the Prodigal Son was acted out and were reminded of God's understanding and mercy. They discovered that there is weight to sin because when we do something wrong, it remains with us in our heads and

hearts. But we can give our sins to Jesus through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and when we do, we receive God's love.



The children also had an opportunity to practice the sacrament through mock reconciliations.

Our time together allowed parents and children to enjoy each other's company while experiencing God's love.

Shoutout to our Leaders!!

- **Patty Strunck, Eileen Stock, Paola Hall, and Dina Kaytor** helped lead the retreat; each was responsible for presenting a segment of the retreat to the families and portraying the priest during our mock reconciliations.
- **Angelo Pecoraro and his son Christian** volunteered to play the roles of the father and son during the Prodigal Son skit.

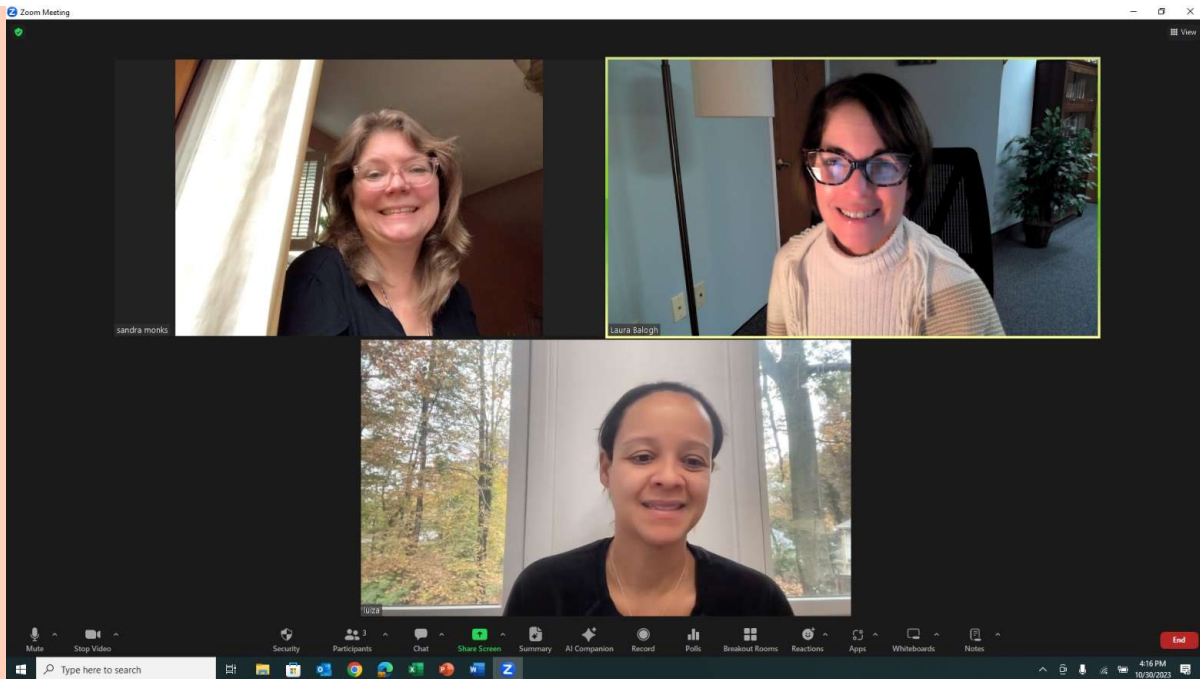


Fall 2023 Discipleship Groups:

"Where two or three are gathered in my name..."

Our Discipleship Groups open an excellent opportunity for the Holy Spirit to move in our parish community, inspiring leaders to facilitate a group or nudging parishioners and friends to sign up for a journey! We see, season after season, that whether a particular journey calls many or just a few to participate, the Spirit is very much present, and the discipleship journey of all present moves forward...

Escape from Evil's Darkness: Facilitator Laura Balogh



*"We recently ended our fall Discipleship journey exploring the book, "Escape from Evil's Darkness" by Fr. Robert Spitzer. This book is the second in the **Called Out of Darkness** series, and we covered the first book in a previous Discipleship Group last year. Our small group had wonderful discussions about Fr. Spitzer's practical advice on living out Jesus's teachings in our busy lives. This experience helped me to draw closer to God in prayer and overcome the obstacles that tend to get in my way."*

Laura Balogh

"This Fall, I joined a Discipleship Group led by Laura Balogh, where we read and discussed "Escape from Evil's Darkness" by Robert Spitzer. I thoroughly enjoyed the spiritual discussion and the sharings and insights the group offered. It is so important to support each other as we grow in Christ. I look forward to joining future groups to strengthen our community and faith in God." Sandy Monks

Parish Pastoral Council Seeking Nominations!

"The PPC should be a microcosm of the total parish community. Its membership, then, will mirror the parish's diversity to whatever extent possible. Representation will be rooted in both structure and attitude.

Structure - The PPC will assess its membership beyond a person's basic qualifications for the role. An additional consideration is whether its members fairly reflect the parish population of adult men and women, youth, young adults, ethnicity, marital status, etc."

Parish Pastoral Council Foundational Principles and Guidelines



To nominate a parishioner for the PPC, please visit the Parish Pastoral Council page on our website [HERE](#) to submit a nomination form. Those nominated will be contacted and asked to submit an application to be considered for Parish Pastoral Council Membership. The Parish Pastoral Council will prayerfully review and consider all nominee applications and present recommendations to our Pastor, Fr. Paddy. Fr. Paddy will make the final decision and extend the invitation to those selected for the upcoming term.

Welcoming Our New Altar Servers!



We are so thankful for our new Altar Servers - for their gift of time and talent serving our liturgical celebrations! We appreciate wholeheartedly the support and encouragement their families offer them to serve our Lord and our parish community!



"We are so proud of Gracie. She has been wanting to be an Altar Server since before she was even tall enough to reach the altar! She was finally able to serve this weekend for the first time and loved it!" Kathy Colaco



Confirmation Level 2 teen Vitor Xavier was just also trained as an Altar Server this past weekend and served at the 6 pm Mass alongside fellow servers Kiana Brown and Dresdin Catania, who were confirmed last year. Vitor last served about two years ago and is back in this ministry!



Learning about the Feast of the Immaculate Conception

By Diane Byrne, Elementary Family Faith Coordinator

On Sunday, the Makowski family spoke to us about the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Using two glasses of water, they talked about Mary's purity and our sinfulness. One cup of water was clear demonstrating how Mary was born without sin because she was destined to become Jesus' mother. Food coloring was added to the second glass of water to show that due to sin, we are stained and will struggle always to follow God.



The Feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8, nine months before Mary's birth on September 8. Conception means the very start of a living being within its mother.



"I love that our daughters feel so comfortable and excited to stand up in front of a crowd and talk. We are blessed to be part of a church that has so many opportunities to help encourage kids and help them grow both in faith and in confidence." Marina Makowski



Family Faith: Mass Transit Conversations

(Comments reflect previous Sundays' celebrations)

What was one new insight the homily gave you?

"We have so many wonderful things in our life that we do not even realize."

"The things you provide the world might seem minuscule to you; it could mean everything to others."

"God gave us many gifts. We should use these gifts to help each other."

"Our goal in life is to help people get to heaven."

"Take time to believe in God and see the good in others. Have faith."

"The priest talked about the different images of Jesus we have – as a shepherd vs. as a King. Jesus also wants us to put on a mantle of love and reach out to those in need." (family attended a different church)

Was there something special you noticed at Mass today?

"The wine was back."

"Our cousins, aunt/uncle were there. The Mass was in Polish! There were many altar servers (only boys)." (family attended Mass in Poland)

"They were wearing white vestments instead of green."

"Father Paddy did the service. He also likes warm apple pie."

"Deacon Joe helped a couple celebrate their anniversary, and we blessed them."

"I handed out music sheets and went to church school."

"There was a new man playing the organ."

"The reminder to take a pause and check in to how we are living."

"Spread God's good word and make a difference to people around you. You don't need to buy beautiful things to have a wonderful life."

"The Lord can be anyone, so be kind to all."

"We must prepare ourselves and ask the Holy Spirit for help."

"Fr. Alex washed his hands with a jug,"

"Miss Patty made a game where we learned about Mary."

"Knights of Columbus collection. Fr. Alex's favorite Christmas movie is 'It's a Wonderful Life.'"

"We got special Mary necklaces and a blessing from Fr. Paddy."

This week's Mass & Lamp Intentions

Parishioner Announcements

Memories that share our story...

NDMC Creche/Nativity Exhibit



Special thanks to Carol Critchley and her team of helpers, Debbie White, Helen Krisiewicz, and Cathy Passarella, for planning and preparing this beautiful display and for their very gentle care of our family treasures!

Knights of Columbus Christmas Party







Widows Circle Christmas Potluck Celebration





Family Mass







11:30 am Mass



6 pm Mass



Sent by Cristina Folan - Communications

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