

ST. FRANCIS *of* Assisi Catholic Church

*Our Roots and Wings
50 Years And Still Vibrant*



1969 – 2019

Dedication

This book is dedicated to furthering our mission of a Franciscan-formed family drawn together by Christ to worship and grow, sent forth by Him in joy to serve, inspire and share His gospel of love. It is that mission that became the basis for our parish vision of Christ calling us to a future of greater loving, lifting, listening, learning, and leading.

Introduction

This book begins with the background of St. Francis of Assisi, our parish patron saint followed by historical parish events in order to express our **ROOTS**.

This history is interspersed with the memories shared by our parishioners that were published in our parish bulletins throughout this jubilee year. Pictures with descriptions are provided for the sacramentals displayed throughout the worship and gathering spaces. Many of these were created by parishioners and donated to our parish.

There are also pictures of parishioners and staff involved in the abundance of ministries in our parish.

Wonderful events that involved much of our parish family are pictured throughout. All of these things illustrate the **WINGS** by which we are growing from our roots.

Finally, this book includes illustrations that reflect the joy of our parishioners as they celebrated this, **our fiftieth year**.

Every effort has been made to reflect our parish history. Being human, errors may have occurred. We trust that, in the spirit of St. Francis, any oversights will be understood and forgiven. Thank you for the opportunity to develop this memento.

The 50th Anniversary Committee

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PART ONE OUR ROOTS

The Background

John Bernardone, the son of a wealthy clothing merchant in Umbria, Italy, one day heard a voice while praying in front of a Byzantine cross. The voice directed him to repair God's house. Although John thought it meant to repair the church building in San Damiano, he later realized it meant his vocation was to repair the universal Church. He took the name Francis and founded what became known as the Order of Franciscans Minor.

St. Francis of Assisi, also known as "The Holy Fool," began a revolution in the Catholic church. But what made him so revered was his lifestyle of being a dedicated follower of Christ and even referred to by some as a fool for Christ. One can study the saints and find one commonality: They love Jesus and maintain their life focus on serving Him. Humility and travel to find those in most need of his help became the hallmarks of the ministry of St. Francis of Assisi. These hallmarks are the basis of our parish.

The 1960's were a time of discovery for a population filled with Baby Boomers born at the end of World War II. Many of us lived through active military operations in the Korean peninsula, fought in Viet Nam and survived the upheavals of the race riots. We wanted desperately to live and love in peace. All these events were the backdrop to our way of life as we moved away from the inner cities and into the suburbs. While the demographics of the geography evolved from farms or inner cities to homes with grass, trees, and pets, our spiritual lives also changed.

From 1962 to 1965 the **2nd Vatican Council** took place in Rome gathering all of the Bishops and Cardinals of the world. The hope of Pope St. John XXIII was to discern the call of the Holy Spirit for the Church to engage the modern world. At the opening of the Council Pope St. John XXIII addressed this to all present:

"There was no need to call a council merely to hold discussions of that nature [on one teaching]. What is needed at the present time is a new enthusiasm, a new joy and serenity of mind in the unreserved acceptance by all of the entire Christian faith, without forfeiting that accuracy and precision in its presentation which characterized the proceedings of the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council. What is needed, and what everyone imbued with a truly Christian, Catholic and apostolic spirit craves today, is that this doctrine shall be more widely known, more deeply understood, and more penetrating in its effects on men's moral lives. What is needed is that this certain and immutable doctrine, to which the faithful owe obedience, be studied afresh and reformulated in contemporary terms. For this deposit of faith, or truths which are contained in our time-honored teaching is one thing; the manner in which these truths are set forth (with their meaning preserved intact) is something else."

Our New Parish

The community of Friars Minor followed in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi through sacrifice, hard work and faith. They knew that serving others over self was of the greatest importance. It was in the undercroft of a Franciscan seminary in Centerville, Ohio, that a group coming from various parishes met to pray and plan for another community. The suburban area was growing rapidly, and they knew a new parish was needed. While they could pray, celebrate Mass, and receive the sacrament of reconciliation, the seminary was not part of the administrative body of a diocese. They knew the sacraments of marriage, baptism and confirmation were needed to develop and grow as a parish. They had to create an official structure.

One early development

My name is **Rita McLaughlin**. I was the first music minister at the newly formed St. Francis Parish. I have been asked to write a history of the Folk Choir's beginnings. I cherish the memories of those early days. I'll start at a time before there was a St. Francis church.

My family moved to Bellbrook in September 1968. We started attending Mass at St. Leonard. At that time St. Leonard was a Franciscan Seminary. The Masses were celebrated by the professors. The students handled the other ministries, including the music. There were some very talented young men there. I had been church organist from age 13, but the contemporary style of their groups won me over. I came to love the guitars, the horns, the drums, and the style and message of the hymns.

In 1969 the announcement came that the worshipping community at St. Leonard would become a parish. Well, the students, whose music we were enjoying so much, were asking a member of the parish to step up and take charge of forming our own music group. I resisted answering the call. I had never been "in charge" of anything in my life. At my husband's urging, I had a meeting with the young man in charge. He convinced me that, if I made it fun, it would be easy. And he was right, but there was much work to be done before the fun could start.

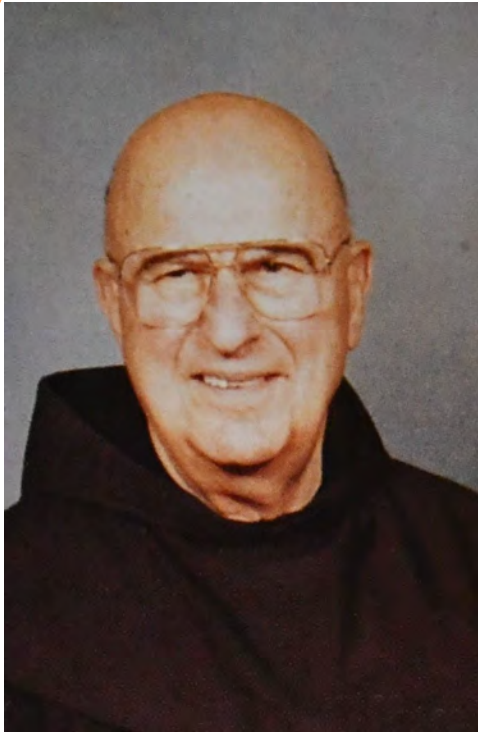
So, I stood there, just having agreed to direct a choir, but there was no choir. The teenagers, with the help of a couple of the students at St. Leonard, had started what they called "Teen Club." I found out when their meeting was, and I went and pleaded my case. When I finished, I looked around at a room full of blank looks. I wasn't too hopeful.

Practice night came, and I waited. At the appointed time, here they came. Not in large numbers, but word quickly spread and numbers grew. The musicians, some parishioners, and some of the students came and we were on our way. We just got better and better. We played and sang mostly contemporary hymns, but when a traditional hymn fit the liturgy, we played that too.

At the beginning there was just a single Mass, but as the parish grew, more Masses were added. Some very talented people came forward and worked hard to provide quality music at St. Francis church. I was, and still am proud to have been part of the first choir. We worked hard, we played hard (every practice night became a party) and our music was the best. All of a sudden my blank-faced teenagers were growing up, graduating from high school, going to college, even getting married. That's pretty much how our choir ended. Other very talented musicians in the parish took over.

I feel certain that there are many people out there, whether still in the parish or not, who still remember the early days of St. Francis church. Our folk choir was a big part of that beginning.

And like I said earlier, I am one of those. I cherish the memory.



Fr. Francis X. Hoffer, OFM
Our First Pastor

The establishing and administering of parishes for Franciscans had become the mission of serving the needs of others in the United States of America.

They needed to take certain steps to build our parish. The Franciscans chose Fr. Francis X. Hoffer, OFM, to be the first pastor. Next, our group of new parishioners voted on November 10, 1969, and the majority agreed, to name the parish St. Francis of Assisi Parish. They submitted the name to the Archdiocese and the bishop accepted it.

At this point we had no church building of our own and so the Friars at St. Leonard Seminary shared their facility, prayers, and support, while the new community formulated plans for a new church. We presented the concept and the archdiocese of Cincinnati accepted it.



St. Leonard Chapel



**St. Leonard Bell Tower
and Chapel**

Archbishop Karl J. Alter officially established the new parish on August 26, 1969. He formed it from two neighboring parishes: Incarnation and St. Charles. The Archdiocese had already purchased 19.168 acres of land on Wilmington Pike and so it was entrusted to our parish. The Archbishop asked the Franciscans of St. John the Baptist Province in Cincinnati to administer our new parish and they agreed. They understood that the tradition started by St. Francis was to travel throughout Europe to find those in need but their mission in the USA was different.



Celebrating Memories

From the Memory Board submitted by an anonymous parishioner: One of my favorite memories is of Michael and Mary Ann Monseur.

Mary Ann directed the youth Religious Education Program (RE). I had volunteered to teach 1st grade RE on Sunday mornings. Mary Ann held a workshop for all the teachers before classes began. During the workshop, she explained that if, as a teacher, you have any trouble with a student's difficult behavior, you can just send them to her and she would take care of it. Well, as a new teacher, that was a great comfort to me. When I got home, I told my husband what Mary Ann said and how happy I was with that. Well, my husband just started laughing! He said, "Mary Ann is so kind, that if the children find that out, they will all do something so they can get to go visit Mary Ann!"

Mary Ann was a treasure to our parish, truly embodying the love and kindness of Jesus.

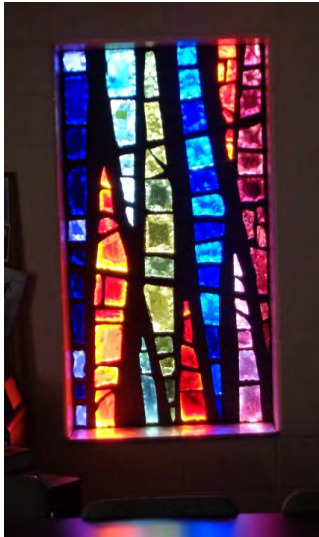
She and Mike, her wonderful husband, touched so many of our lives! We are thankful!



Buildings

According to a report in the Dayton Daily News of February 28, 1958, a farm property located on Wilmington Pike was the scene of the worst plane crash in the history of Wright Patterson Air Force Base. The Archdiocese was able to acquire this property through an estate settlement after the owner had died. It entrusted this property to our infant parish.

Each parish has a single seat of worship, the parish church. The time had come to create a Building Committee to work on the building plans for our new church. This committee used open forum meetings and invited all parishioners in order to ascertain the majority thoughts. The committee commissioned an architect on May 18, 1973, and bids for the actual building were opened on April 19, 1974, and accepted on May 18, 1974. They chose the builder, and construction began



**Stained glass window
donated by the Friars
of St. Leonard**

immediately. The builder completed our first church building nine months later. Fr. Francis Hoffer, OFM, celebrated our first eucharistic liturgy at Saturday 5:00 P.M. Mass on January 4, 1975. Archbishop Joseph L. Bernadine officially blessed and dedicated our building on January 26, 1975.

The need for a building did not end with the church. Until 1978 our pastor resided in a small apartment in the church. Ground was broken that year for a Friary to house our pastor. A new wing was added to the church in 1983. It is used today for classrooms and a room dedicated to our Blessed Mother.



Friary/Rectory



**New wing for classrooms
and chapel**

The New Worship Space

The parish continued growing to the point where many parishioners had to stand or sit on folding chairs in the Narthex, peering through glass windows along the wall, while listening to the Mass through a speaker system. It became apparent that more worship space was needed. Long range planning and steering committees were formed to consider all options and decided to extend the existing church. Father John Turnbull, our pastor at the time, selected Liturgical Consultant, Benedictine Brother Frank Kacmarcik, O.S.B., who had completed similar projects in the area.

The planning for the new worship space developed and word of our need reached the archdiocese. The study done by the archdiocese indicated that the need for the new worship space meant more parishioners and so, in 1998 it purchased additional property bordering our existing property line. The extended property allowed access on Clyo Road. This new access created the three entrances to our campus we now have. Our campaign to finance our new worship space began the following year.

The year was 2002 when pastoral care was turned over to the diocese and Father Tom Schmidt became our first non-Franciscan pastor. Building began on our new worship space, including a new gathering space and library. Two years later on March 27, 2004, the Rite of Dedication and Blessing was celebrated by Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Fr. Schmidt and Deacon Mark Stasiak. A relic of St. Francis of Assisi was placed inside the altar.



Dedication Plaque

Religious Education

Religious education was immediately addressed during the first months of our existence. Mary Winslow and Cathie Zipfel combined efforts to get the project off the ground. Within a year, two former mission helpers of the Sacred Heart, Nadine Brown and Mary Ziegler, were hired. The service of Sr. Mary Ellen Murphy was secured in 1972. She was joined two years later by Sr. Carol Bauer. Together they all grew the program from its infancy. Sr. Augusta Barry, a Dominican sister, later took over the education duties until she moved to a parish outside Columbus, Ohio in 1982. Her duties as Religious Education Coordinator were assumed by Judith Dunlap. In 1992 Judith left to begin work at St. Agnes and Resurrection parishes. Kathleen Kammer succeeded her as Director of Religious Education, then Mary Ellen Singer took over in 1996.

Currently Sylvia Carmody is our Elementary Faith Formation Coordinator, Phyllis Wilemaitis is our Junior High Youth Minister, and Marty McClain is our Senior High Youth Minister. Mary Ellen Singer is also our Adult Faith Formation Minister and RCIA Coordinator. Our Faith Formation Commission coordinates all catechetical programs, implementing policies of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Commission on Education at the local level. All programs are under the authority of the Pastor.

(See page 17 for details.)



Celebrating Memories



The Great Rosary Launches

By Judith Dunlap

Back in the eighties the RE staff, Mary Ann Monseur, Frances Obringer and myself, had ***much fun creating “hands-on” ways to pass on the faith to the children of the parish.*** One favorite project was launching our helium balloon rosaries (before launched balloons were declared unsafe for the environment). We filled 53 balloons for the Hail Marys and six red Our Father balloons. We made a giant cross from cardboard and attached the balloons with braided dissolvable toilet paper. I called the Air Force base to get clearance for our project. I didn't want to see a headline reading “Giant Rosary Downs Jet.” We had the children attach their prayers to the balloons. Then came the great launch. One time the wind sent the balloons flying towards Wilmington Pike with the children running after them; their teachers were fast behind.

My adult children still remember the launches. Fun times at St. Francis!

Parish Clubs

While this important work of establishing the parish was being accomplished, new clubs began to form. The Teen Club was formed, attracting teens from several parishes in the area. It was not just a social club since as a group they contributed their talents to helping with the nursery, Easter egg hunt and many other activities. The club held its 50th Anniversary Reunion in September 2019. The St. Francis Women's Club held its first meeting on September 30, 1970. Norine Powers led the club and by-laws were written. All the women of the parish were invited to join. The first year of the parish saw the establishment of a nursery, a pre-school, involvement with Catholic Charities to sponsor a picnic for underprivileged children, a bowling group, blood bank contributions, Thanksgiving food and clothing drive, and a Christmas Bazaar.

The parish Men's Club was formed, contributing toys and clothing to Appalachia residents, sponsoring fish fries, providing activities and food for an annual picnic, and often contributing funds to the parish for general use. The Men's Club also built the picnic shelter in 1980 that we currently enjoy for many parish activities.

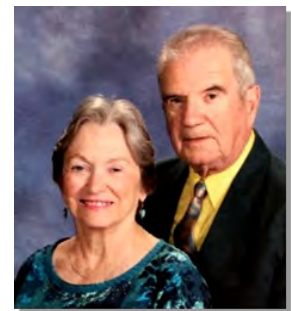


Celebrating Memories



In 1963 my wife Gloria and I, and two daughters were happy with our life at a Franciscan parish in Oakland, California. My employer asked if I would relocate my family to Dayton, Ohio. We were delighted to find the Franciscans at St. Leonard's Seminary. While at St. Leonard's we added three more children to our family including boy/girl twins. I became an Usher and Eucharistic Minister. In 1969 Fr. Hoffer announced we were to form a Franciscan Parish. By the time our parish moved to Wilmington Pike, Gloria was teaching CCD held in parishioners' homes except one year a family CCD program was held in Friendship Hall followed by a 4 P.M. Mass.

Our family has grown to ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren. About 30 years ago we joined a small Christian Community of 11 adults here at St. Francis and it has contributed to our spiritual life in more ways than I can begin to list.



**Bob & Gloria
Gregory**

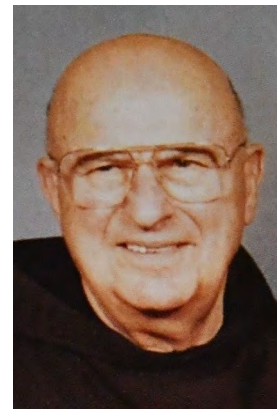
Pastoral Care

Any dynamic organization finds that in its early years many staffing changes occur. Our parish certainly was no exception. Jesus calls each of us to be a Gospel witness and for many it becomes expressed outwardly by a religious vocation. We read in St. Luke's Gospel (Lk 9:23), "*And he said to all, If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*" We are fortunate to have had many clergy as well as dedicated laity who believe these words of our Lord.

Pastors, Assistants and Deacons

The staffing process actually began with the wonderful friars of St. John Province of the Friars Minor.

First Pastor: Fr. Francis X. Hoffer, OFM, 1969 to 1978
Assisted by: Fr. Faren Boyle, OFM, 1975 to 1976; Fr. Max Lannert, OFM, 1976 to 1977; Fr. Elliot Davidson, OFM, 1977 to 1981; additional assistants: Deacon Friar Ray Chappa, Deacon Friar Gino Correa, OFM, and Deacon Bill Fortener



Second Pastor: Fr. Edward Fueglein, OFM, 1978 to 1988
Assisted by: Fr. Ric Schneider, OFM, 1979 to 1980; Fr. Elliott Davidson, OFM, 1977 to 1981; Fr. Art Espelage, OFM, 1981 to 1982; Fr. Greg Petri, OFM, 1982 to 1984; Fr. Roch Farland, OFM, 1984 to 1985; Bro. Bill Ollendick, OFM, 1985 to 1992



Third Pastor: Fr. Bruce Hausfield, OFM, 1988 to 1993
Assisted by: Fr. Knute Kinross, OFM, 1989 to 1997; Bro. Mike Montgomery, OFM, 1992 to 1996; Deacon Friar Dennis Bosse, OFM, 1988 to 1990 (left to enter the priesthood)



Fourth Pastor: Fr. John Turnbull, OFM, 1993 to 2002
Assisted by: Fr. Knute Kinross, OFM, 1989 to 1997;
Fr. Melvin Hotel, OFM, 1997 to 1998; Bro. Mike
Montgomery, OFM, 1992 to 1996; Deacon Mark Stasiak,
2001 to 2013



Fifth Pastor: Fr. Tom Schmidt 2002 to 2018

Assisted by: Rev. Tom Dorenbusch 2003 to 2006;
Fr. Joe Rigali, OFM 2006 to 2009; Fr. Joe Kindel;
Deacon Jack Pitts (retired), Deacon Mark Stasiak (retired),
Fr. Tom Gaeke (retired), and Deacon Chris Rauch 2013
to present



Celebrating Memories

Ann and Jim Deime

This is a photo of St. Francis of Assisi Church in the 1970's when our pastor Fr. Francis Hoffer, OFM, lived in the north end of the building before the rectory was built. In the front of the building is a dog house for Max, Father's dog. Max would get loose once in a while and roam our neighborhoods. Father would have to chase him down. Wilmington Pike was just a two lane road. Many people didn't know where our church was located until the Walmart store came into being across the street.



The new worship space
building begins



Fr. Tom Schmidt placing
a relic of St. Francis in
the base of the altar in the
new worship space.

PART TWO OUR WINGS

Present Staff

Sixth Pastor: Fr. Brian Phelps 2018 to present
Assisted by: Deacon Chris Rauch 2013 to present and
Deacon Ralph Gutman 2019 to present



My dear Friends,

"As I came to St. Francis Parish, I really didn't know what to expect. I was following a beloved pastor who had been pastor for 16 years. My hope was not to change anything, but to stay the course and allow the Holy Spirit to guide. I had moments of trying to trust, and I am sure many people had that with me as well. I think having the 50th anniversary helped me to get to know more people and have some fun as well. The videos that I made in preparation for the events were at times things I would never do in front of people. I am not a dancer or singer, or entertainer. I just asked the Holy Spirit and prayed to the Blessed Mother for guidance in how to lead. Thank you for the love and support you have shown me. I pray that I may always allow the Holy Spirit to guide us here at St. Francis."

Fr. Brian Phelps



**Deacon Chris Rauch
Business Manager**



Fr. Brian's Chalice

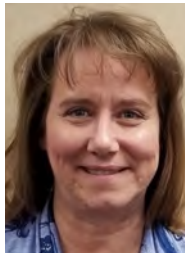


Deacon Ralph Gutman

Present Staff (Continued)



Mary Ellen Singer
Pastoral Associate



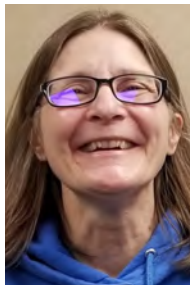
Vicki Hume
**Communications
Director**



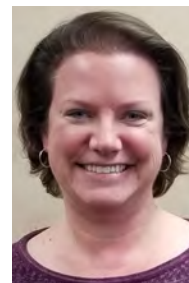
Michelle Nehrbass
**Music Ministry
Director**



Marty McClain
**Sr. High Youth Ministry
Coordinator**



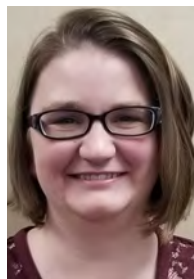
Sylvia Carmody
**Faith Formation
Education Coordinator**



Heidi Petre
Bookkeeping



Phyllis Wilemaitis
**Jr. High Youth Ministry
Coordinator**



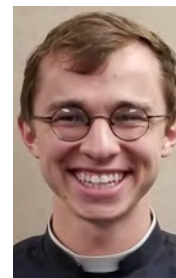
Samantha Larochelle
**Faith Formation
Administrative Assistant**



John Van Hook
Maintenance



Jeanne Sheppard
**Receptionist and
Administrative Assistant**



Jacob Lindle
Seminarian Intern

Parish Councils and Commissions

Parish Council

The parish elected Bud Koverman to chair the Steering Committee with the mandate to study the relatively new concept of parish councils. This committee wrote a constitution that was ultimately approved by a referendum of the entire parish. In 1972 the parish elected Mary Winslow president of our parish council.

We follow this concept and refer to it today as the Pastoral Advisory Council.

Pastoral Advisory Council (2019)

The Pastoral Advisory Council (PAC) advises the Pastor. The PAC represents the people and collective voices of our parish community, serves as a source of dialogue, counsel and support for the Pastor and staff and makes recommendations for the improvements to the quality of parish life. The PAC brings the mission of the parish to life.



Seated: Fr. Brian Phelps, (Chairperson) Anna Monnett, Joseph (Skip) Fromm, Mary Ellen Singer (ex officio), Ruth Addison

Standing: Mira Wilson (Youth Ministry), Jacob Lindle (ex officio seminarian), Dan Driskell, Chris Gardner, Dan Sprouse, Lisa Barhorst, Melissa Bennett, Jill Raison, Cathy Frank.

Not pictured: Deb Franz, Tom Kwest, Deacon Chris Rauch (ex officio)

Finance Council

Canon law requires each parish to have a Finance Council which advises the pastor and Parish Council in matters of finance and the administration of parish goods in adherence with diocesan financial policies.



Front row: Fred Wootan, Jim Baumann,
Deacon Chris Rauch, Lori Everitt

Back row: John Tesar, Ann Garcia,
Kim Avery

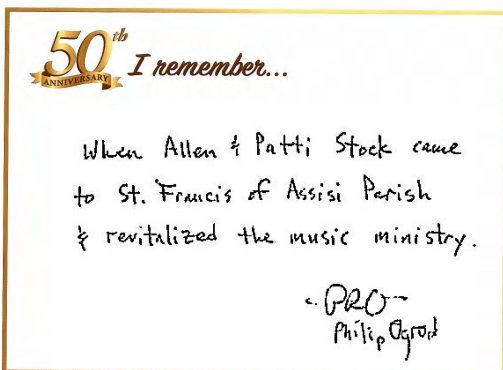
Not pictured: Christina Riemer

Worship Commission

The Worship Commission exists to serve the parish through the evaluation and strategic improvement of our Liturgy. The goal is nurturing and deepening the faith of our community by actively engaging hearts and minds more fully in the meaning and experience of the Liturgy.

Jeannette Fromm, Karla Orr,
Charlotte Novak, Barb Komoff

Not Pictured: Jan Turala, Justin Orr



Faith Formation Commission

This commission commits to initiate, evaluate, and recommend life-long faith formation that promotes the gospel way of life. (*see picture below*)

Activities

Acting as liaison body for education related activities.

Interpreting policies of the Archdiocese for staff.

Recommending policies under which administration shall operate as needed.

Evaluating the adequacy of its policies and the effectiveness of their implementation.

Studying and implementing all directives given to the commission by the Pastor.

Levels of Faith Formation

Elementary Faith Formation (Grades 1-5): Committed to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in the Catholic tradition through education and formation, by celebrating liturgy and prayer, experiencing community, and reaching out in service.

Vacation Bible Camp (preschool to grade 5): A week long summer camp where kids learn about the theme of the day and the daily Bible story through science, crafts, games, and classroom.

Junior High Youth Ministry: Committed to Faith Formation and community building grounded in Jesus Christ through Catholic tradition, prayer, education, topical exercises, opportunities to serve in the Junior High Core Team and Kids for Christ events.

Senior High Youth Ministry: Utilizing the perspective of the Youth Ministry Model and Comprehensive Youth Ministry, the IGNITE (formerly known as FOCUS) engages students through activities and events and conversations about faith and faith issues.

Adult Faith Formation: Develops opportunities for adults to continue to grow in their knowledge and love of God.



Front row: Sylvia Carmody,
Cheri Rotterman, Maureen Goble

Back row: John Hoffman,
Matt Grismer, Mary Ellen Singer

Social Action Commission

This commission engages parishioners in vibrant and effective ministry, helping them to follow Jesus' example and mandate to care for the poor, powerless, and marginalized of both local and world-wide communities.



Front row: Mira Wilson, Mary Ellen Singer, Meghann Naveau

Back row: Skip Fromm, Charles Martinson, Jim Widner, Shawn Norris

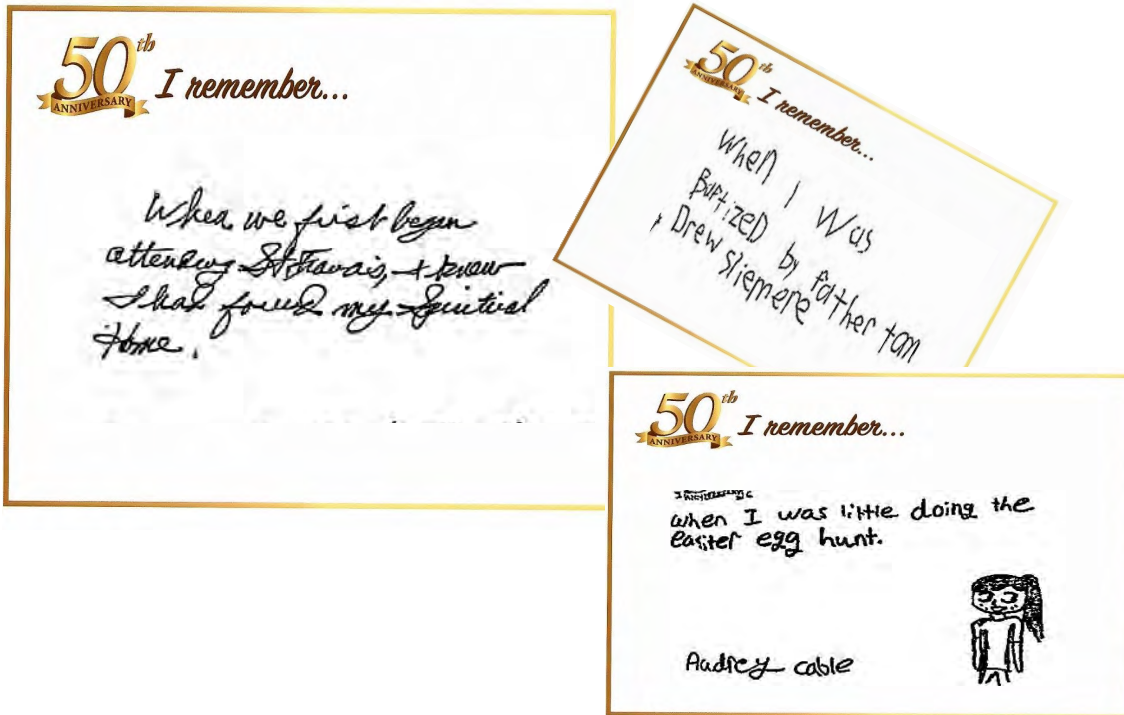
Prayer Shawl Ministry

As a part of the Social Action Commission, members create and help distribute knitted and crocheted prayer shawls to offer comfort to others because of illness, bereavement and other transitional life situations.



Sue Ladue, Janice Maddux, Kay Mancuso, Ellen McEwan, Joanne Prinz, Karen Freyvogel

Not pictured: Jeannette Fromm, Lori Everitt



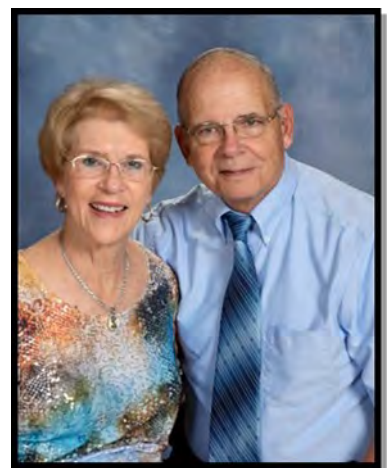
Celebrating Memories

“I remember our wonderful work with the refugees.”

Our first experience was the couple from Kosovo. Our next big experience was our two Sudanese families who occupied Fr. John's house and drew the whole parish to help them settle into life in the U.S.A. The parish really came through as a community.

Today one of the Sudanese women has purchased a home.

She is so excited to have achieved an American Dream!



**Don & Kathleen
Kammer**

Sacramentals

St. Francis of Assisi Statue

The bronze statue was sculpted by Linda Dabeau. Installed in the St. Francis garden off the library in February 2008, it was dedicated on May 18, 2008.



Statue of Our Blessed Mother

The statue of Mary was sculpted by Linda Dabeau. It was dedicated on March 25, 2007. It is mounted on a platform of wood made from a pew from the old church. The devotional candle sits on the platform just in front of the statue. It is intended to help us when we call upon her as healer, intercessor, and a gentle woman who is mother, comforter, nurturer, counselor, friend. Mary is the perfect friend and mother for us.





The Sanctuary Candle

The sanctuary or tabernacle candle hangs on the wall behind the altar. It is a special candle fueled by oil or wax. It should shine permanently to indicate the presence of Christ and to honor it. (Red candle cover designed and created by Deacon Mark Stasiak.)



Celebrating Memories



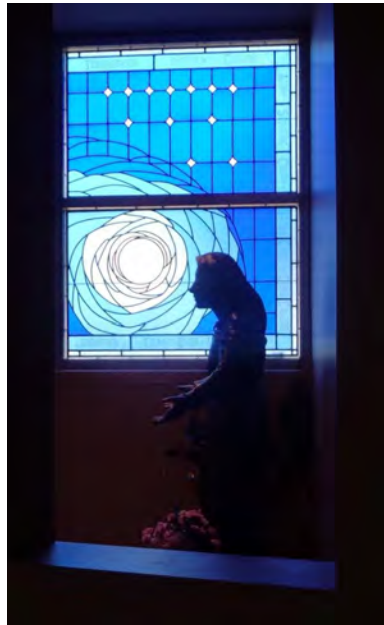
The McManamy Family: Shawn, Andria, Michael and Donna

When we first moved to Ohio, we were looking for a church. We first tried St. Francis of Assisi. On our first day an usher asked our family to take up the gifts. We told him we were new and not members of the church. He looked at us and asked if that meant we didn't want to do it. Needless to say, we did take the gifts! We felt so welcomed that we stayed and became members!

The McManamy family continues to be very active in many ministries to include RCIA, Knights of Columbus, Usher and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

Annunciation Window

The Annunciation window in the Mary Shrine area was designed by Deacon Mark and Regina Stasiak. The glass work was completed by Mary Flodder with the assistance of Glass Work, Bob McHenry, Gene Schwiederman, Anne Wolf, and Deacon Mark Stasiak. The framing was done by Dave Laurash. The glass etchings and images were done by Tracy Ahern.



Celebrating Memories



Bill and Dorathea Fortener

“I thank God that I am still able to work with the job my wife said God has given me. I am now a full time Prayer Warrior!”

We are so very thankful for Bill’s dedication to serve God. He shared his thoughts with us:

“I am a Charter member of St. Francis since 1969, served as 2nd President of the Parish Council ‘70, maintained parish financial records ’70-’74, and was Men’s Club treasurer ’78-’90. I was ordained in the first permanent diaconate class in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in 1976. I am blessed to have started and scheduled the first 12 Eucharistic ministers in ’71, the first lectors in ’72 and then in ’73 established the Eucharistic Ministry for shut-ins! While working as a volunteer (spiritual advisor) I enjoyed my experience with 19 Cursillo four-day weekends and 27 Kairos (prison ministry) four-day weekends! From 1978-2010 I coordinated 33 St. Francis Men’s three-day Retreat Weekends. I participated in Group 5 Family Forum (Winslow, Monseur, Michaud, Milnac, McLaughlin and Haiold). From 2010-2013 (before being diagnosed with cancer) I was Pastoral Associate at Mary Help of Christians in Fairborn. For the past 5+years, I have been battling multiple cancers. I thank God and friends and relatives for their love and on-going prayers.” **(Note: Bill lost his battle and went on to God’s reward this December 2019.)**

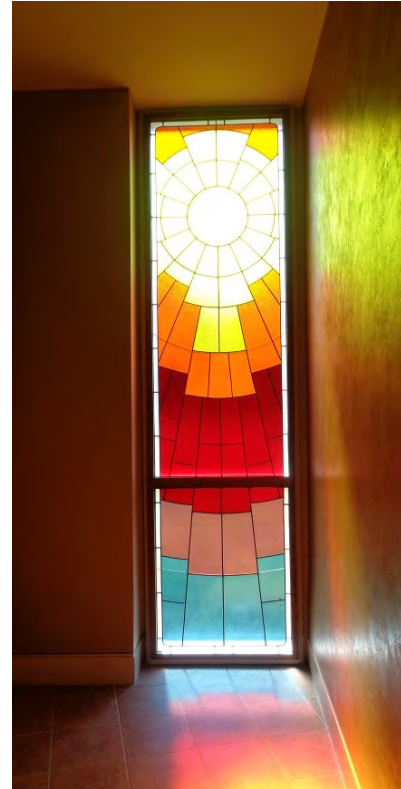
Bill was also honored to have served in Korea (1953-1955), donated 186 pints of blood and was especially honored to see, in person, Mother Teresa in 1981 and Pope John Paul II in 1987. It is unbelievable that Bill had time to be part of a triple play while on the St. Francis softball team (with Tim Quinlan and Bill Bligh) in 1985!

Reservation Chapel Stained Glass Window

The window was designed and built by Deacon Mark Stasiak. Parishioner Ray Hutter built the mounting frame and it was installed in 2013.



Deacon Mark Stasiak



Celebrating Memories

Eric (Rick) Abell

I grew up in St. Bernard, Ohio and attended Franciscan schools within St. Clement Parish. My dad was in charge of installing equipment in the St. Leonard Seminary library. I was a high school student and we would drive up from Cincinnati every day (I-75) and I would clean up and do other odd jobs on site. Later, after I graduated from the University of Cincinnati, got married and moved to Kettering to work at WPAFB, our first parish was Holy Angels. Later we moved and became parishioners at St. Francis. Masses were held at St. Leonard! After the first parish church was built, we moved with it and I still am a parishioner although my wife of almost 50 years passed away 5 years ago. Myself, I may return to St. Leonard again one day as a retirement resident going full circle, but until then I'll likely remain a parishioner.





Celebrating Memories

Mary and Perry Yaney

When I first joined St. Francis of Assisi Parish, I met Phyllis and Mike Wilemaitis who asked me what my interests were. Well, I'm a teacher, an artist, I love children, and I enjoy singing. So I taught CCD, I helped to start the first choir and I joined the Woman's Club. I enjoyed being at St. Francis, but my husband, Perry, wanted to stay with nearby St. Charles Borromeo. But once he came to St. Francis, he never left! We celebrated our 25th Wedding Anniversary at St. Francis

renewing our wedding vows with relatives and friends. Then we celebrated our 50th Anniversary with a Mass followed by a big party, which had dinner, live music and dancing. Perry is a lector and was on the New Church Design Committee. After the church was completed, we had a new audio system and the offices needed computers and internet. Perry offered to take care of these technologies, which he did for 10 years. He also joined me in the choir, which he enjoyed for more than 15 years. The people here are wonderful and we love them all.



God Bless our church and all of us!



Wood Carving of Pope Francis

This beautiful framed carving hanging on the wall between the Gathering Space and the Narthex was carved by a parishioner using purple heart, an exotic wood from Africa, for accenting the cape and frame. The background is maple and the frame is oak.

Jesus Loves the Children: The Smiling Christ Statue

March 4, 2012, saw the addition in bronze of, “Jesus Loves the Children: The Smiling Christ Statue,” by artist Carlo Bronti. It graces the John Paul II room and the nursery where many activities with our children and many other groups are held. It is also appropriate as this was our original church, where we celebrated the first Eucharistic Liturgy at 5 P.M. on January 4, 1975. It was donated by an unnamed parishioner.



Children going to learn about the Word in the John Paul II Room during Mass.

LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH CHILDREN AFFECTS ADULTS AS WELL

(17 Sep 97)

(The following text is a portion of an article written by **Jim Gruden** who helped coordinate our Liturgy of the Word with Children ministry for almost three decades.)

I used to think the Liturgy of the Word with Children ministry was “done” once the usher politely knocked on the door and let us know the priest had finished his homily. Such was my position until last year, October 1996 to be exact.

As the children were returning to their parents in the congregation during the offertory, I noticed a little girl struggling to find her mom and dad. She made it down the center aisle and attached herself to the usher who was in the process of collecting the offertory. Recognizing the little girl was almost to the point of tears, I greeted her at the front of church, picked her up in my arms and together we peered out into the seated congregation to find her parents. A short time later her father saw the two of us, stood up, and they were reunited in the back of the church. Another happy ending and the end of the story, I thought.

Who would ever think that helping a young little girl find her father after our ministry would have such a dramatic effect on a parishioner? I’ve also come to learn that several other individuals experienced the same sensation of God’s presence to the point of tears. It’s difficult to dispute the fact that God’s timing is always perfect.

The following letter was received at St. Francis. Wow!

“Yesterday during the 9:00 Mass the Men’s Choir started singing ‘Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place.’ As they got to the chorus a little girl started walking down the center aisle looking for her parents after Liturgy of the Word. She was almost to the very front of Church when a person from Liturgy of the Word appeared behind her and he said to her, ‘Stay with me.’ Then he lifted her up so she could see above the crowd. They started walking toward the back of Church, looking through the crowd for her Dad.”

“All this happened in an instant and it was at the exact same time that the men sang, ‘Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place.’ At the same instant a realization came over me that I had just witnessed a beautiful parable played out before my eyes. Jesus anticipates our needs before we even ask Him to help. He is right there when we need Him. He says to us ‘Stay with Me’ and then He lifts us above our problems so we can see clearly.”

“Yes, surely the presence of the Lord is in all places. I will never hear that song in the same way again.”

Jim Gruden



Outdoor Stations of the Cross

Several parishioners built the outdoor stations of the cross and placed them on March 1994. These stations were designed by Brother Mike Montgomery, Director of Worship, to give thanks to our Lord for His love and great sacrifice and are in keeping with St. Francis' love of nature. At the time of this writing replacement of the crosses that have reached the end of their life is planned for an Eagle Scout project .



Celebrating Memories



Joyce Neuhauser

One of my favorite memories is the day I joined the folk group!

Mike Monseur and Eileen Bruns came up to me after the 10 o'clock Mass one Sunday and said they heard me singing and asked if I would be interested in joining the folk group. I said, "Yes!" Well the next Sunday was Palm Sunday. The year was 1975. We had a procession through the parking lot led by a red truck with a speaker on it. Everyone was waving palms, and we were singing "The King of Glory." It was a pleasant warm day and I am sure everyone that attended remembers that day.

San Damiano Cross



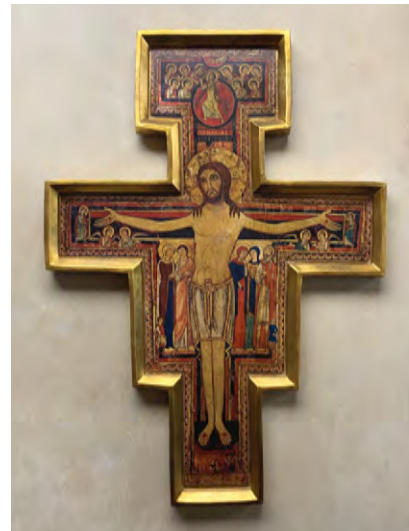
The year 2018 saw the arrival of the San Damiano Cross. It was made in Italy by Demetz Studios. Since it is in icon form, the actual sculptor/painter is unknown. One parishioner, upon seeing the cross on the floor awaiting installation, commented how moving it was to see the life-size figure of our Lord lying there. It represents the cross St. Francis was praying before when he received the commission from God to rebuild the church. The original cross hangs in Santa Chiarra Church in Assisi, Italy. It is cherished

as the symbol of the Franciscan mission from God and reminds us of our connection to St. Francis and Franciscan spirituality.

The paintings on the cross have many spiritual meanings. The right hand of God at its very top symbolizing His power to raise His Son from the dead. The resurrected Jesus is depicted surrounded by ten angels as He climbs out of the tomb. Three angels at each end of the crossbar marvel at the saving work of Christ. The rooster standing next to the left calf of Christ symbolizes Peter's betrayal. Jesus is represented both wounded and strong. All other figures on the cross are small in stature compared to Christ, drawing the viewer's attention to Himself as the One to be worshipped.

Prayer that St. Francis recited in front of this crucifix:

“Great God, full of glory and Thou, my Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech Thee to illuminate me and to dissipate the darkness of my spirit, to give me a pure faith, firm hope and perfect charity. Oh my God, grant me to know Thee well and to do all things according to Thy light and in conformity with Thy most holy will. – Amen”



Gift from Order of Franciscans Minor when we became a diocesan parish.



Celebrating Memories

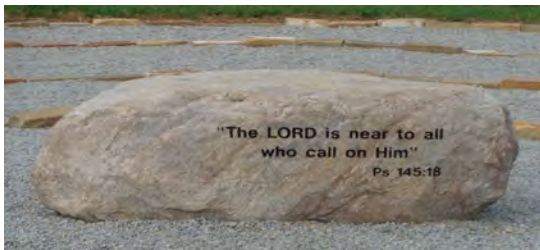
Noelle Collis-DeVito

I was 18 and in college the first time I stepped foot in St. Francis of Assisi Catholic

Church. I had agreed to volunteer with the Youth Ministry Program, but little did I know that this parish would play such a significant role in my life.

A few weeks later, I met my husband Andy in the Social Hall when he came to pick up his younger siblings from FOCUS. We married five years later. When the previous Youth Minister left, I had the privilege of being on staff for three and a half years. It was the best work experience I have ever had.

We have baptized four children at St. Francis and buried a parent. The community has become family and the church has become home. That one simple "yes" when I was 18 has led me to a place where God was able to work wonders in my life, and I am incredibly grateful for St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church.



Prayer Labyrinth

The Prayer Labyrinth was dedicated on August 18, 2019. A prayer labyrinth is a place to walk and pray in a quiet space that allows you to focus yourself toward God. The concept for a prayer labyrinth came from Zach Haller, a member of St. Francis of Assisi, for his Eagle Scout Service Project. The labyrinth came to fruition through the efforts and contributions of many volunteers and workers and the donations of the Knights of Columbus, Women's Bazaar, the Men's Club, and the church itself. One beautiful contribution that truly helped bring God into the center of this space was interring the shards of the pottery chalices that had held the sacred body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. These chalices and bowls could no longer be used and were lovingly placed under the boulder at the center of the labyrinth with a blessing by Fr. Brian Phelps.

The Rebirth of Christ

During 2019 a new sacramental appeared on the window beside the northwest door of the gathering space. It is a beautiful stained-glass piece titled, "The Rebirth of Christ."

The position of this window allows its beautiful colors to be enhanced by the natural light. It was created and donated by parishioner, John Tesar.



Tabernacle



**Tabernacle in
Reservation Chapel**

Tabernacle comes from the Latin *tabernaculum* (meaning *tent*) because the **Ark of the Covenant**, carrying God's sacred law, was carried by the Israelites through the desert. This sacred law is now fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Our tabernacle holds the Eucharist which is reserved inside our tabernacle located in the Reservation Chapel.

Moses was given very specific instructions in Exodus 25, on how the tabernacle was to be built. It originally was to contain God's Commandments and was referred to as the Ark of the Commandments.



Previous Tabernacle



Celebrating Memories

“I used to think the sanctuary was only for Mass.”

Larry & Dona Pierce, Grand Canyon 2019

Nearly a decade ago, my participation with Martha’s Ministry moved me to look closer at my prayer life. I would drop off a casserole, dessert or other item and think to myself...gosh it only took me a minute to do that, what else can I do while I’m here? Ultimately, I made my way to the sanctuary and started to pray.

One day while praying, a voice deep inside me said you must find a way to be in this sacred place more.

That revelation led me to becoming the Liturgical Environment Director for seasonal decorations in the church. Since then, I have come to learn that there is an abundance of people in this wonderful St. Francis of Assisi community spending time praying, meditating or just sitting with our Lord... and not just on Sundays!



Jan Turala

“I remember my first Triduum at St. Francis”

These special days have always been very prayerful for me. I found that so for Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Then, there was Holy Saturday, the Old Testament readings provided a powerful journey. Here at St. Francis, the Exodus readings/singing was so full of spirit! It vibrated in my soul.

Thanks to Jeff Cutlip and all the Choir!



Stations of the Cross

The Way of the Cross grew out of imitation of Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem, which is believed to be the actual path Jesus walked to Mount Calvary. St. Francis founded the Custody of the Holy Land to guard and promote the devotion of holy places in 1217. The Franciscans were officially proclaimed custodians of holy places by Pope Clement VI in 1342.

The original stations placed in the sanctuary of the new church in 2002 were found to be too small and so hard to see from any distance. Fr. Tom Schmidt began to search for replacement stations in 2017 as the sanctuary and other areas were undergoing major repairs. These were completed in 2019. Fr. Tom searched both locally and in Italy for suitable station replacements while attempting to keep the price in line with the charism of St. Francis. A “Holy Spirit Moment” occurred on August 8, 2017 at Our Lady of Immaculate Conception parish prior to the Golden Jubilee Mass. While Deacon Chris Rauch and Deacon Michael Montgomery, the chaplain at Good Samaritan Hospital, were sharing their ministries and deacon duties, Deacon Chris shared with Deacon Michael the search for replacement stations. Deacon Michael indicated that Sister Carol Bauer was looking for a home for all the sacramentals within the hospital due to its closing. (It is interesting to note that both Deacon Michael and Sr. Carol served in various capacities at St. Francis in the past. It is through this contact that we became the beneficiary of the oil on copper stations that we now have. Our parish donated \$15,000 in thanks to the Sisters of Charity.

The beautiful stations were acquired and dedicated on December 9, 2018. They were painted between 1930 and 1931 by an unknown art student studying at the Dayton Art Institute. They are uniquely invaluable because they are oil painted on copper. We had them framed and installed by House of 10,000 Picture Frames. We are eternally grateful for the generosity of the Sisters of Charity and Good Samaritan Hospital for these stations of the cross. Thousands of people used these stations in the chapel of the hospital for inspiration and strength.

May God bless the Sisters of Charity and the good people who spent their lives serving at the Good Samaritan Hospital for over 86 years. The stations have found a welcoming home at St. Francis of Assisi Church. May all who served at Good Samaritan Hospital consider St. Francis their home and a comforting place to recall not only Christ’s Paschal Mystery, but also those paschal mysteries we all experience throughout our lives.



**Jesus Is
Condemned**



**Jesus Carries
The Cross**



Jesus Falls The First Time



Jesus Meets His Mother



Simon Helps Jesus



Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face



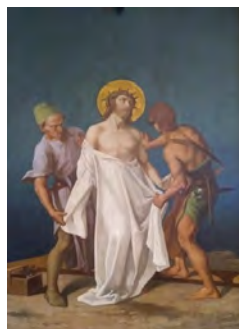
Jesus Falls A Second Time



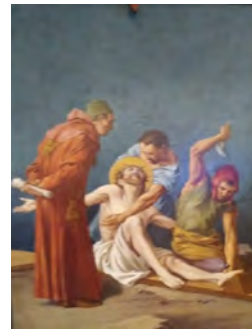
Jesus Meets The Women of Jerusalem



Jesus Falls A Third Time



Jesus Is Stripped Of Clothes



Jesus Is Nailed To The Cross



**Jesus Dies On
The Cross**

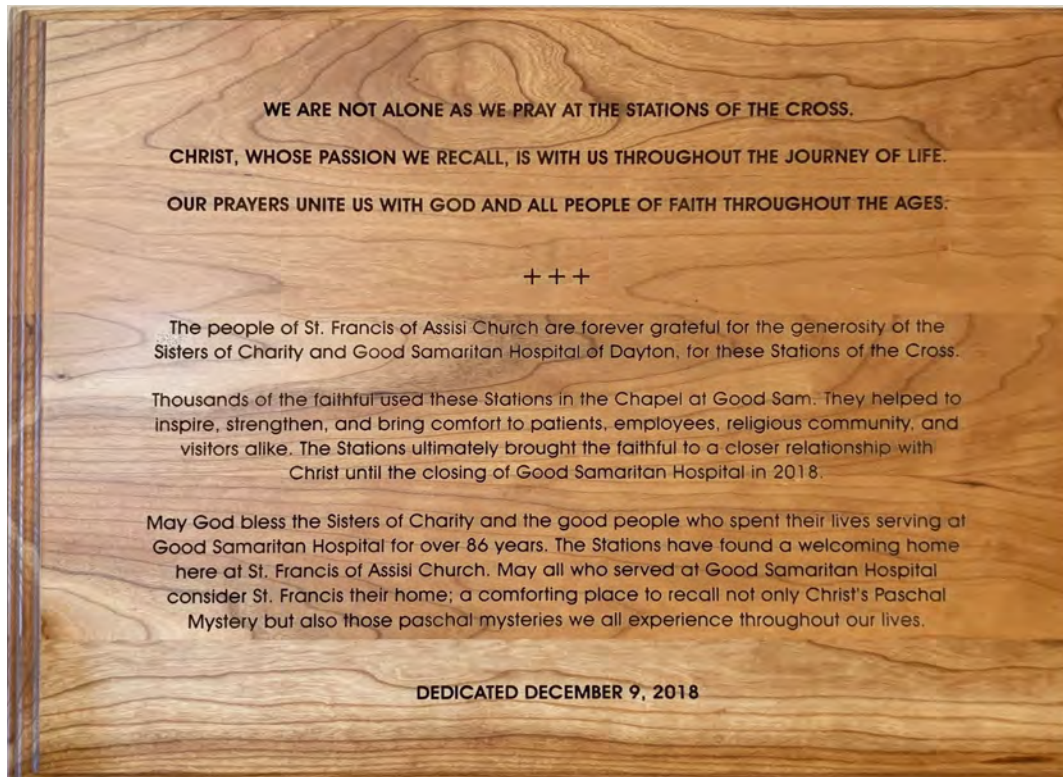


**Jesus Taken Down
From The Cross**



**Jesus Is Placed
In The Tomb**

STATIONS OF THE CROSS DEDICATION PLAQUE





Celebrating Memories

Faith Formation 6th Grade, Mrs. Connie Tschantz' Class, Wednesdays 2018-19



Connie Tschantz

"We learn how to deepen our relationship with God & others!"



We have many wonderful memories of St Francis of Assisi Parish!

Some of our favorite memories are, "Learning about The Old Testament... taking home the Prayer Tote to read the Gospel to let God speak to my heart... joining Core Team and all the fun events... making new friends... Bible Camp & my friend Grant... walking the Stations of the Cross outside one year... getting to wear my hoodie in class, Father Tom telling jokes and making me laugh in Mass... doing the Gospels & Patriarch dance in class... evangelizing with my cousins... going to Easter Sunday Mass!"

Rowan, Jaden, Adam, Julia, Catey, Connie, Riley & Eric

**Our Blessed Mother holding
baby Jesus adorns the wall of
The All Saints Room**





Celebrating Memories

Letter from:

Father Bruce Hausfield, OFM

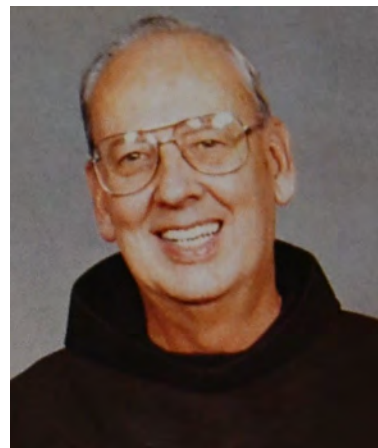
Pastor (1988—1993)

To all parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi, I am the last living Franciscan Pastor that you have left, but I know that the Franciscan spirit is alive and well among you, the people of St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

I have enjoyed and will always be grateful for my seven years of being your pastor. I will never forget your kindness and the help you all gave to me during the time I was privileged to live among you.

Congratulations on your 50th Anniversary of being a Christian community in the spirit of St. Francis.

With much love and prayers for all of you I am your old (85 years old) Franciscan Pastor, Fr. Bruce Hausfield, OFM



Divorce Care

This ministry is a 13 week program designed for those who are separated or divorced focusing on the different aspects of healing from this life trauma.

Front row: Rosemary D'Aloia, Marcelle Toma, Traci Oxley, Karen Ingraham

Back row: Rick Tangeman, Chuck Daley, Joe Ritzel



Celebrating Memories

From: Sister Mary Ellen Murphy

Three years after St. Francis of Assisi Parish was established I was hired as Religious Education Director and had the privilege of working with Fr. Francis Hoffer and ministering to the families there between 1972 and 1978. Those years hold delightful memories for me. Fr. Francis Hoffer had been charged with beginning a new parish and the parish offices were housed at St. Leonard Seminary. This was home base with only a plot of land waiting for a church to be built. Many a day we drove over to the plot of land on Wilmington Pike and only imagined what could be. And it did come to be with the construction of the first St. Francis Church which has evolved in so many ways since to meet the changing needs of the parishioners. The ministry you are celebrating today is the fruit of committed, faith-filled people, devoted families, generous catechists, dedicated leadership and God's lavish grace. There is every reason to celebrate 50 years of memories committed to the future!

ABUNDANT BLESSINGS!

Sister Mary Ellen Murphy, SC



**A wonderful example of simplicity of design
in keeping with the St. Francis tradition.**



Our Blessed Mother is always held in a place of honor by Catholics. We recognize what a great personal sacrifice it must have been to become pregnant when she was unwed during a time when that was more than unacceptable.

However, she accepted God's will and so we recognize the Nativity as one of our Joyful Mysteries and the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary as one of the Glorious Mysteries.

This **coronation statue** represents God's enmity towards evil by showing Mary crushing the serpent through her Son. It is located on the wall of the St. Mary Room.



Celebrating Memories

A letter from Tom Dorenbusch

My memories of St. Francis of Assisi Parish go back to 2002 when, as a recently retired priest, I came to help out with weekend and weekday masses. I remember a very welcoming, loving and caring parish. I remember a parish with a great spirit and a good sense of being Church to one another. I remember our liturgies being prayerful and reflective.

When I made the decision in 2006 to leave active ministry and enter into marriage, the parish was loving and supportive. I remember your goodness, kindness, love and generosity.

My wife Bonnie and I offer you our prayers and best wishes on your future parish life and ministry.



Celebrating Memories

By: Carol Albert

The power of prayer is real. When we minister we are being ministered to.

I know that God is present in many ways at Mass. When I joined the parish with my two kids in 1990 it was because we all felt something different here. St. Francis is nothing without its collection of parishioners and they touch my life constantly without even knowing it. I am passionate about St. Francis because this is where my children and I came after my husband, their dad, left us. We were so broken and this is where we healed. This is where I learned the grace that could come my way by joining ministries and meeting other parishioners, drawing on their power. This place is special.



Celebrating Memories

Barbara and Fred Wootan



**Have you ever entered a
place where it felt like home?**

Have you ever felt a community of unquestioned love and acceptance?

If not, then you haven't come into our parish, St. Francis of Assisi!

We have lived in many places throughout our lives due to many requirements of employment. We always sought the local Catholic church for prayer and worship. Some of these were accepting and contained a reverence for worshipping our Lord. Some of them had members with whom we became friends and shared our lives. But only St. Francis of Assisi Parish felt like home from the first day. We have since become friends with Father Tom and Father Brian as well as the deacons and some of the wonderful staff. We can't think of any place we would rather be.



Celebrating Memories

The following articles were submitted by Kathleen Kammer:

Celebrating our Humanity

In 1998, St. Francis partnered with Catholic Social Services to sponsor a couple from Kosovo. We had numerous committees consisting of people absolutely determined to find housing, furniture, health and dental care, education, tutoring and many other needs of these families.

It was a wonderful success and a learning experience of another culture. I think it got us ready for the biggest challenge ahead. In 2001, we took in two families from the Sudan. The two mothers with four children each, lived in Fr. John's Friary. Before taking these two families, which had not been done before in any parish, we presented it to the parish at the Sunday masses. Catholic Social Services would have to turn back the families unless they could get two parishes to take them. They were unable to get another parish at that time. St. Francis parishioners heard this plea and were willing to take this on. There were sixty-five people who signed up for committees. We had unusual luck in that a man in the parish spoke Arabic and volunteered to translate for the families. Parishioners of St. Francis always make the choice to reach out and help the poor. This was a monumental project which really united the whole parish to work together. Catholic Social Services gave us an outstanding award for this effort. With this wonderful assistance these families today are mostly American citizens, some have even gone through university. They remain our long time friends. One of the women just recently bought a home—the American dream.

The Mission to Brothers and Sisters Beyond Our Borders

From 2002 to 2005 a group of parishioners traveled to various missions that we chose to help sponsor. Ten of our parishioners went to Bolivia to Sr. Gloria's Orphanage. Fr. Tom Schmidt went with that group. I accompanied eleven parishioners to Guatemala to help the Co-operative for Education deliver textbooks and inaugurate computer centers for the rural poor children. We have sponsored two schools and multiple programs in Guatemala that train the native teachers. We have a group of parishioners who work with Maya Tech in Guatemala, founded by Camillo and Karen Macario of this parish. This organization seeks to advance educational and technical opportunities for underdeveloped Mayan Communities.

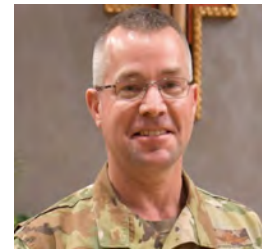


“7 Themes of Catholic Social Teaching”

Music Ministry

Choir members and musicians use their talents by serving the Lord and the community through music. It is with the assembly as the central focus that our goal is to create an atmosphere of full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgical celebrations.

Choirs



Drummer
Chuck Destefani

The Traditional Choir

Singing the 11a.m. Mass on Sunday mornings, this choir sings many styles of music ranging from traditional four-part songs to contemporary music.

Front: Beth Govan

Second row: Carole Wittman, Elaine Steiner, Marge Framme

Third row: Susan Hahn, Davina Gill, Michelle Nehrbass (Director), Calleen Moloney

Fourth row: Jim Baumann, Ray Wasky, Bill Bradfute, Jeff Cutlip, Paul Jasper, Mike Moell, Karla Orr

Not pictured: Matt Naveau, Jan Whitehouse



The Harmony Choir

This is a choir of women's voices that lead the 5 p.m. Saturday evening Mass.

Tony Ruscello (drummer), Pamela McCall, Michelle Nehrbass, Joanie Rauch, Traci Vogel, Holly Shields

Choirs (continued)



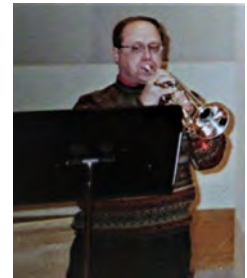
Men's Choir

This choir sings on the second Sunday of the month during the 8:30 a.m. Mass. Our men's choir is one of the largest Catholic men's choirs in the area.



8:30a.m. Mass Choir (pictured left)

Joe Kreis, Linh Bui, Mary Ann Chong, Mike Chong
Not Pictured: Cheyenne Anderson



Philip Ogrod

Celebrating Memories



Andy Ward

I was raised Episcopalian; I didn't become Catholic until 2018.

Mary and I bought our house in Bellbrook in 2007, but we didn't move until 2009. It was so heavily damaged. There had been bad things going on and our neighbors told us stories of juvenile delinquents, drugs and guns; and we had the bullet holes to prove it! I had priests over for visits before, but had never had one to bless our house. When Mary suggested it, I thought it was a really good idea. It was the first time I had really met Father Tom. ***His prayers and lots of Holy water and other recommendations really made us feel better!***



I guess I was high maintenance. I needed prayers and anointing when my knee was replaced and there were many, many meetings before my RCIA could be completed a year ago last Easter. It was all a very meaningful process and we're grateful for all the help. Father Brian, you already know you have big shoes to fill, and you are doing better than I would have imagined.



Grief Share Ministry

Seated: Beverly Hyman, Julie Weaver, Mary Fiely

Standing: Patrick Allan, Mary Gutman

Celebrating Memories



**We are so glad St. Francis is our parish.
The Petre Family**

I like playing
on the men's
softball team
- we don't
always win,
but we
always have
a good time.

My favorite
Sundays are Donut
Sundays!

Staying up until 1am
during a fun night at
the Jr. High Lock-in
is so cool!

We all love growing
our faith with God
and receiving His
blessings during
our time at
St. Francis!



I'm so glad
we've become
friends with so
many great
families.



Celebrating Memories

“St. Francis has truly been a home to me, which was something I had looked several years for and had been unsuccessful.”

Susan Hickey

We've only been members a few years but I have wonderful memories of many experiences here: My first Women's Retreat at Bergamo, where I met and connected with young moms like me, trying to find our place in all the busyness of motherhood... Volunteering at VBC and seeing the parish come together for a week on behalf of our youngest members... Having my children participate in the children's choir at Christmas... Leading Children's Liturgy of the Word for the 3-5 year olds and being amazed at some of the things they come up with... Teaching those same children in my first grade RE class - and then watching them make their First Holy Communion. That's been truly special. My family joined a small church community a year ago, and I look forward to building those relationships more deeply in the future. We've already had the fortune of witnessing one wedding within our group!



Man to Man Fellowship

We are men of integrity, with a commitment to the service of others — striving to excel in all that God has called us to be.



Chris Gardner
Facilitator



Mike Baltes
Facilitator



Celebrating Memories

Jessica June Tschantz

St. Francis of Assisi will forever remain in my heart! My faith journey began here. I am so grateful for my family, Fr. Tom, the people & the wonderful ministries that lead me to a deeper relationship with God. Sister Arlene as my 1st Communion teacher, seeing my mother become Catholic, all the Vacation Bible School fun, Jr. High Core Team, Kids for Christ events and Leadership Retreats with Phyllis, our amazing Senior High Focus mission trip to Cincinnati helping families coming out of homelessness get settled into homes, building a yard fence for a single mom with kids & serving food at an intercity shelter, all had huge impacts on my life. I loved the National Catholic Youth Conference with 25,000 high school Catholics worshiping our Lord! I am thankful for you all, my loving family and I am blessed to be a recipient of a four-year Christian Leadership Program scholarship at Corpus Christi University Parish in Toledo, Ohio.



**2018 Univ. of
Toledo**



**2008 1st Communion
with Father Tom
Schmidt**



A **memorial Mass** is celebrated each year on behalf of the parishioners who passed on to the loving arms of Jesus during that year. Lighted candles are placed on the wall located in the right front of the worship space. The names are also recorded in the memorial book.

The artwork of Jesus Christ “**Above All**” has been on exhibition at St. Francis since 2011 for several “40 Days of Lent,” prayer events, retreats, RCIA presentations and youth events. “Above All” was painted by artist Marc Eckel on stage while touring with Casting Crowns, award-winning Christian singing group! The artwork was purchased by Jim and Connie Tschantz for their wedding anniversary and they share it to evangelize.



Celebrating Memories

Bobbie Roland-Gorman

“St. Francis Changed My Life”

Knowing and having great respect for Fr. Tom, I joined St. Francis of Assisi Church and was welcomed with “open arms!” As a widow, I felt great comfort, encouragement and warmth from everyone. I decided to join the Church Dedication Committee to help where I could. The experience was incredible and I made lifelong friends. Daily Mass and Centering Prayer grounded me and gave me great solace. I became a Eucharistic Minister and Lector for the first time! I wanted to give back to my wonderful church family. As time moved on, I connected with **Dan Gorman**, whom I had known for over 30 years. The relationship obviously grew and Fr. Tom convinced us to be the first couple to be united in Christ at a regular mass. Thank you for this gift, Fr. Tom and St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Participating in many more committees, even as auctioneer, and sharing my faith and fellowship at the St. Francis Women’s Retreat has brought endless joy in my life and allowed me to open my heart to God.

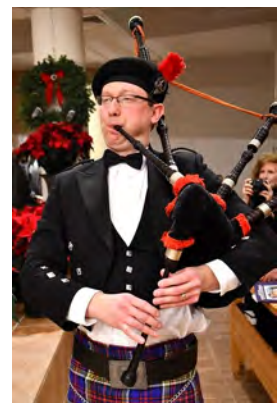


2019 Men's Retreat

The St. Francis Men's Retreat is held annually on the second weekend of January at the Bergamo Retreat Center in Beavercreek, Ohio. The theme changes each year but is selected to enhance our lives as examples of Catholic Christian men, fathers, husbands, sons, uncles, and grandfathers.

Attendees in alphabetic order:

Mel Arnold, Michael Baltes, George Becker, Bill Bradfute, Jim Baumann, Aaron Burke, Mike Chong, Tom Cobey, Virgil Cruz, Jeff Cutlip, Jasson Cwiekalo, Edmond Dandeneau, Chuck Destefani, Andy Devito, Donald Drake, Roger Dunlap, Denis Egan, Gene Fehskens, Andrew Folfas, Thomas Forsthoefel, Cal Frank, Joseph (Skip) Fromm, John Gallagher, Chris Gardner, Anthony Giambrone, Manual Gomez, Greg Hahn, Dana Harrod, Chris Heider, Mark Heft, Bill Hunt, Dan Hutcheson, Dennis Kall, James Kracus, Richard Knor, Thomas Kwest, Bob Learned, Stephen Libey, Mike Manzo, Eric Martens, Marc S. Martens, Fred Martin, Shawn McManamy, Mike Moell, Phillip Mraz, Matthew Naveau, John Nehrbass, Greg Notestine, Shawn Norris, Shannon Pence, Fr. Brian Phelps, Clay Pittman, Chris Rauch, Gregory Rowlands, Kenneth Sailors, Joseph V. Schmidt, John Sliemers, Jim Stewart, Ed Vance, Andy Ward, Raymond Wasky, Rick Weddle, Ross Wellman, Nathan Whitford, Timothy Whitford, Robert Whitehouse, Fred Wootan, Mike Wootan



Andy Folfas
Bagpiper



Men's Retreat Team

Seated: Ed Dandeneau

Standing L to R: John Sliemers,
Anthony Giambrone, Marc Martens,
Jim Kracus, Ray Wasky, Ken Sailors,
Dana Harrod, Bill Bradfute

The Giving Tree

This ministry, through the cooperation of various local and city agencies, identifies families that would have little or nothing in the way of material goods for celebrating Christmas. It acts as channels for parishioners in sharing their goods with the poor.

Calleen Moloney, Facilitator



Celebrating Memories



“I cherish the awesome times spent with family and friends doing activities, serving, going on retreats, and more.”

Jill (Csavina) Raison

I have so many wonderful memories with family and friends! Advent is particularly special. Every year culminated with Kris Kringle during Advent.

The families exchanged names and every week during Advent we would leave a gift on a family's door step and then ding-dong dash. The idea was to remain anonymous. Some families set booby traps to catch their Kris Kringle family. One Christmas Eve, we received the best gift, a breakfast casserole and coffee cake. We still celebrate every Christmas morning with these recipes.



Holiday Bazaar Ministry

Annette Giambrone, Paulette Majni, Carolyn Brittain, Jacquie Kaiser, Mo Kaiser, Cathy Frank, Dottie Manzo, Andria McManamy, Marlene Berardi, M.T. Hurbanek, Esther Nehrbass, Michele O'Christie, Genevieve Albers, Shirley Adams, Frank Berardi, Kim Brown, Pat Rouff, Heidi Petre, Carol Mauro Not Pictured: Sharon Carr, Mary Dandeneau, Julie Darr, Amy Go, Madeline Metzger, Anna Monnett, and Sheila Kwest

Celebrating Memories



Paul & Judie Schuh

Memories of our 50th Wedding Anniversary...

We are charter members and celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary in 2009. Our beautiful memory of St. Francis of Assisi Church is the Celebration Mass at 5:00pm.



**Paul & Judie Schuh,
October 2009**

We invited all our family and friends to attend mass with us before dinner. To our delight we filled one whole section of the church. In addition, Fr. Tom called us and our three daughters to the altar for a special blessing. Our three oldest grandchildren carried the gifts to the altar. What a special day! We will be celebrating 60 years soon but we will always remember our special 50th.

Keenagers



We are a lively group of senior citizens age 55 and up. We meet the second Wednesday of the month for a program or other entertainment, followed by a covered dish lunch or theme menu. We breakfast after First Friday Mass, and enjoy monthly dinners and Sunday brunches. If you are a senior who enjoys fun and fellowship, we welcome you.

Row 1: Al Woeste, Betty Woeste, Cathy Podiak, and Chris Long.

Row 2: Jim Deime, Ann Deime, Bob Krebs, Eleanor Fariello, Joann Schneider, Jeanette Ruffing, Joyce Neuhauser, and Ima Jean Podiak.

Row 3: Dick Fitzgerald, Rose Williams, Nancy Petrosky, Betty Hiebendahl, Mary Ann Parts, Gail Clarke, Jim Widner, Mary Widner, Kay Mancuso, Charlene Desch, and Carol Fox.

Row 4: George Lowry, Max Clarke, Jim Podiak, Mary T. Hurbanek, Kathleen Allan, Ruth E. Laprocina, and Fran Krebs.

Row 5: Jean Egan, Terri Faas, Dave Faas, John DeWine, George Hurbanek, Patrick Allan, Jim Tunney, and Andrew Ridley.



Respect Life Ministry

Called to defend the dignity of each human being at every stage from conception to natural death.

Ann Moell, Tom Brockman, Cheryl Brockman, Cathy St. Pierre

Secular Franciscans

The Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) is a secular movement established by St. Francis of Assisi almost 800 years ago. Our purpose is to bring the gospel to life where we live and where we work. We look for practical ways to embrace the gospel in our lives and try to help others to do likewise.

The local fraternity at St. Francis originated at St. Leonard in 1961 and transferred to our parish upon its founding. One of the founding members, Anne Wolf, is an active member of St. Francis of Assisi parish.



Anne Wolf



Ning Dann

Celebrating Memories



“In 1998, Bette Davis, my dear neighbor, sponsored me to attend the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program.”

I learned liturgy of the word, gospel readings and the theology of the sacraments. Meanwhile, I got to know many people of faith and their experience with God. RCIA built the foundation of my Catholic faith and the desire to become a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Fr. John Turnbull baptized and confirmed me in full communion with the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil of 1999.

Before I became a parishioner, I was drawn by the spirit of St. Francis, our patron saint. I was inspired by the Spiritual Pilgrimage event in October 2018 and it refreshed the Franciscan virtues to live each day in the Franciscan way.

Soon after my baptism, I was invited to the Small Christian Community group and started my faith journey with 14 other parishioners. They have become part of my life helping my faith to grow stronger.

I love the annual Pentecost event, “Feast of the Nations.” I always come away from the event with the Holy Spirit witnessing to my heart that we all are God’s children.

Lectors

The lector is called to proclaim the Word of God as found in Scripture in a manner that makes the Word fresh and meaningful to the people.

Seated: Louis Bede, Victoria Haller, Jeannette Fromm,
Standing: Terry Comer, Jeff Cutlip, Skip Fromm



Front row: Jerry Reinstatler, Michael Reese, Elaine Steiner, Susie Hahn

Second row: Carolyn Destefani,
Third row: Chuck Destefani, Carrie Bartsch, Tim Davis, Perry Yaney, Jack George

(Lectors Not pictured)

Saturday 5PM Mass

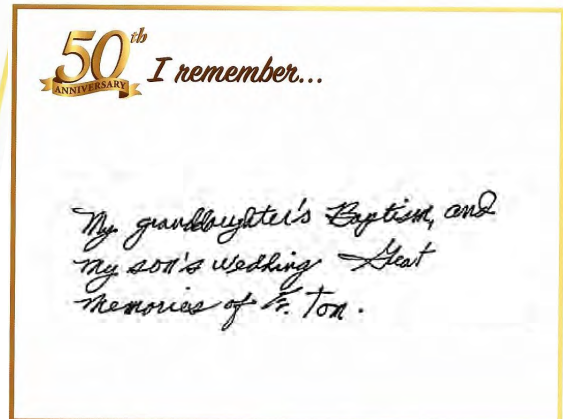
Diana Brademeyer, Anthony Casey Jr., Steve Casey, Chuck Daley, Jim Franz, Jack George, Jacob Lindle, Casey Norris, Cathy Podiak, David Reuber, Bobbie Roland, Mary Ann Saker, Mike Staup, Carleen Turner, Dan Turner

Sunday 8:30AM Mass

Louise Carter, Mike Carter, Amy Cozad, Jean Egan, Bruce Guindon, Jill Irlbeck, Bob Jackson, Michael Manzo, Joe Schmidt, Gary Woodall, Janet Woodall

Sunday 11AM Mass

Julie Lehman, Justin Orr, Erika Swain, Nicholas Sylvain



Women's Retreat Team

The St. Francis Women's Retreat is held each year at Bergamo Retreat Center in Beavercreek, Ohio during the end of February.



Front row: Suzanne Dankel, Joan Travers, Sue Merland, Marcelle Toma

Back row: Tracy Vogel, Theresa Fitzgerald, Jeanne Fehskens, Joanie Rauch, Meghann Naveau

Small Church Communities

These groups help people share their faith in a regular group setting through prayer, scripture, faith formation, community and service.



Front row: Joan Cutlip, Joei Hunt, Pat Kracus, Mary Jane Nielsen, Judy Martens
 Back row: Jeff Cutlip, Bill Hunt, Jim Kracus, Phil Nielsen, Marc Martens
 The Hunts now live in Cincinnati but remain in the group.



First row: Sue Merland, Claudia Marsee, Joe Dann, Ning Dann, Madeline Metzger
 Second row: Jeanette Fromm, Trudy Montgomery, John Metzger, Cathy Frank, Deb Franz
 Third row: Skip Fromm, Bob Merland, Cal Frank, Jim Franz

Small Church Communities (Continued)



Front row: Michaela Folfas, Danny Sliemers, Luke Naveau, Meghann Naveau, Emma Naveau, Lucia Sliemers, Andrew Sliemers, Kyle Folfas, Rachel Burke, Elliot Burke, Jonathan Burke, Aaron Burke
Back row: Fr. Brian Phelps, Matt Naveau, Beth Sliemers, John Sliemers, Andy Folfas, Jeanne Folfas



Front row: Gloria Gregory
Next row: Bill DeVito, Marge DeVito, Judith Dunlap, Mary Ellen Bagen, Marilyn Michaud
Leaning on back of sofa: Betty O'Brien
Back row: Tom O'Brien, Bob Gregory, BJ Moore, Marnie Moore, Herb Bagen, Jim Michaud
Not Pictured: Roger Dunlap (who actually took this picture during the group's Christmas party in 1996)

Small Church Communities (Continued)



Front row: Dorothy Place, Ima Jean Podiak, Phyllis Lienesch, Linh and Clara Bui

Second row: Kathy Goetz, Barb Sullivan, Ellen McEwan, Carol Cyphers, Pidge Ward, Nat Diederich



Seated: Pam McCall, Emmanuel Rugina (husband of Leocadie)

Standing: Perry Yaney, Ed Dapore, Cindy Dapore, Mary Yaney, Paula Trimbach, Don Steiner, Leocadie Mukaneza, Elaine Steiner

Not pictured: Mike Trimbach, Jan & Bob Whitehouse

(Note: Pictured while group was doing a study of their favorite saints.)

Celebrating Memories



Bill Bradfute



It was in the fall of 2008 when my wife, Irene, suffered a series of mini strokes. Miami Valley Hospital's Neural ICU treated her until her discharge to a nursing home just before Thanksgiving for rehab care. She remained there until passing on to God's eternal reward in 2018. I visited her in the evenings and on Sundays. During one of my visits, I noticed something off with Irene. She had been scheduled for some lab tests later in that week. I requested doing those tests sooner. They complied and during another of my visits we learned the results of the tests. She needed immediate transport to the hospital to administer antibiotics. Unfortunately, no transports were available until suddenly one did become available. She was diagnosed with sepsis and her blood pressure was 40/0. That miracle of quick action for transport saved her life. During those ten years, I joined the Man to Man Fellowship and began singing in various parish choirs. The support I received from those groups helped me endure. I will be forever in debt to those people and the many other parishioners who provided prayers and moral support.

St. Vincent Hotel Breakfast Ministry

The St. Vincent Hotel provides overnight respite for the homeless of Montgomery County. This ministry collects food and distributes it to provide breakfast for the hotel's guests.



Front row: Dona Pierce, Joe Kreis, Angela Romero, Dottie Manzo, Lou Bede, Mike Manzo Second row: Dan Turner, Michael Nowak, Michael Romero, Rich Knoll, Ken Haacke, David Cartmel Not pictured: Gail Haacke, Marybeth Cartmel, Chris Brown and Celeste Romero.



Celebrating Memories

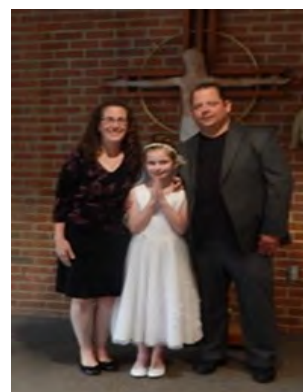
Amy Ziehler

I came back “home” to St. Francis in 2003 after attending Ascension for about six years after Pete and I got married. This is my ninth year of teaching faith formation class here at St. Francis. I have had the opportunity to teach faith formation to all three of my wonderful kids. When I asked the kids about their favorite memories, they all responded “VBC.” We have been active volunteers at VBC for over 10 years. Gabby was in liturgical dance and Natalie was in the Christmas choir.

Gabby and I enjoyed going to NCYC together, and she also enjoyed the mission trip. I hope that Adam and Natalie will enjoy these opportunities with fellow parishioners as they get older. I went through cancer treatment for multiple myeloma in 2014 and to this day I cannot thank this parish enough for their kind, loving, support!



Natalie, Gabby & Adam



2018

Men's Club

The Men's Club is open to all men of the parish. The objective is to promote parish fellowship involving religious, social, charitable and service functions throughout the parish.



Front row: Chuck Daley, Danny Sprouse, Frank Berns, Tom Kwest

Back row: Skip Fromm, Steve Berns, Bob Komoff, Cal Frank, Bob Merland, Mike Manzo

Not pictured: Tom Hannon, Jim Deime, Paul Sheidler, Dave Laurash, Michael Freil, Ken Haacke, Tim Davis

Welcoming Team

Members approach newly registered parishioners to introduce them to the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi community and to warmly and personally welcome them.

Patrick and Michelle O'Christie

Team Leaders



Ushers

This is a ministry of welcoming and fellowship. They welcome those who come to church, help find a seat, take up collection, assist in the presentation of the offertory gifts, direct the parishioners movement during communion, distribute bulletins, and are prepared to attend to emergencies that may occur.



Front row: Jim Stukenborg, Fred Eckert, Jim Deime, Michael Freil (Chief Usher), Patrick Allan, Jeanette Smith,
 Second row: John Monnett, Robert Herbst, Deogratias Eustace, Jim Podiak, Michael Tortorici, Virgil Cruz
 Back row: Steve Berns, Bob Luppino, Fred Wootan

(More ushers on next page)

Ushers (Continued)



Ed Stangel



Seated: Louis Bede, Lori Everitt
Standing: Dan Pfeiffer, David Brademeyer,
Shawn McManamy, Phyllis Berns



Mark Rasch, Belinda Metter,
Eugene Metter

Not pictured in alphabetic order: Rick Bowers, Bill Brucken, Carter Caldwell, Ken Caldwell, Keith Carr, Joe Crane, Jasson Cwiekalo, Robert Cwiekalo, Fred Dye, Ray Finney, Cal Frank, Dan Gorman, Ken Haacke, Steve Haller, Bob Kurpiel, Dave Laurash, Dave Leff, Jeff Lehman, Chuck Martinson, Bob Merland, Brad Miesle, Kim Nartker, Trevor Nartker, Leroy Nieport, Norm Osterday, Dan Price, Michael Romero, Stephen Scherrer, Jim Borg, Patricia Ulrich, Paul Ulrich, Don Ubansky, Tony Walsh, Bob Wittman, Al Woeste, Rick Woeste, Gary Woodall



St. Vincent DePaul Society

Members seek to improve their spirituality and friendship and to help those experiencing difficulties. Our target group lives within our parish boundaries, regardless of whether they are Catholic or not.

Tom Brockman, Cheryl Brockman, Cathy St. Pierre,
Bobbie Roland-Gorman, Tom Kwest, Shawn Norris

The Wedding Anniversary Celebration Committee

Hosts Mass and dinner in Friendship Hall for parishioners celebrating their 25th, 40th, and later anniversaries, with their guests.

New committee members are welcome.



Front row: Frank Berns, Phyllis Berns, Ann Deime, Jim Deime.

Second row: Cathy Frank, Gail Haacke, Linda Tortorici, Michael Tortorici.

Third row: Cal Frank, Ken Haacke, Steve Berns.

Not present: Ed and Mary Dandeneau, Bob and Donna Learned, Shawn and Andria McManamy, Ken and Sandy Sailors.



Altar Servers

Our mission is to assist the priest in the conduct of the Mass and other liturgical celebrations.

Front row: Danny Sliemers, Faelynn Gill, Lucia Sliemers, Kyle Folfas, David Bartsch, Stephen Bartsch

Second row: Tori Haller, Quincy Capogna, Anna Petre, Adam Petre, Corinne Gill, Marga Franz,

Third row: Zach Haller, Riley Capogna, John Sliemers, Paul Steiner, Andrew Folfas, Daniel Sprouse, Sam Barhorst

Landscaping Ministry

The volunteers coming together to make our parish grounds attractive to all who visit St. Francis Church.

Seated: Kim Avery, Ning Dann, Cathy Frank

Standing: Tom Brockman, Skip Fromm, Cheryl Brockman, Andria McManamy, Cathy Guntle, Ray Guntle

Not pictured: Jeff/Tammy Duckro, Mike/Pat Zehringer, Robert Gill, Carol Simmons, Pat Norris, Donnie Bell, Karen Paasch, Elaine Steiner, Beverly Hyman, Nancy Rauch, Mike Manzo, Shawn Norris, Bette/Tim Davis, Vickie Carter, Dan Nevels, Stephen Schear, Eileen Petric, John Silkauskas, Al Fullenkamp, Barry Berty, Bob Wissell, Calleen Moloney, Barb Laurash, Mary Brodowski



Celebrating Memories

Betty O'Brien

We joined St. Francis Parish in 1977. I remember agreeing to teach Liturgy of the Word for 3 - 5 year olds. We would gather in a small room where Father would prepare for Mass and change into his vestments. There were no chairs or desks.

The very favorite place for the children to sit was on the floor under a small table—it was very cozy. We talked about the readings and would do a craft or coloring project to try to make it meaningful! An usher would knock on the door to let me know when our time was up. One Sunday, the usher forgot we were in there. My little ones were the last to return to Mass!

Tom and Betty O'Brien



Celebrating Memories



Mary Ellen Bagen

“May the welcoming and loving attitude of St. Francis of Assisi Parish go on for another 50 years!”

My husband Herb (now passed) and our two sons, Erich and Jon, moved to Dayton in late July 1987 from Rochester, NY. We were all sad at leaving our home, friends and church. After visiting several churches, we decided on St. Francis of Assisi. When September came, the boys were off to their adventurous first day of school, their Dad to work- - and there I was alone! I decided to go register the kids for CCD and while in Trudy's office, someone came in and said the words, “Women Gathering in the Hall.” I perked up and said timidly, “Oh, can I go in there?” I walked into the Hall and saw someone walking towards me. Again I said feebly, “Can I come in here?” and my greeter, closer now, looked at me with the eyes of Jesus, touched my elbow and said: “Come.”



Precious Planet Ministry

Encourages parishioners to be thoughtful stewards of creation.

Promotes opportunities for learning and challenges parishioners to make changes in their daily lives to protect creation and create a sustainable future for all people of the world.

B.J. Moore, Marilyn Garland,
Anne Wolf, Colleen Kammer,
Kathleen Kammer, Elaine
Steiner





Celebrating Memories

Roger and Judith Dunlap

We arrived in Centerville in 1982 with five children, a new job, a new home, and hope for the future.

We left behind many friends and a great, close-knit parish in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. Judith and I were involved in several aspects of our past parish making the selection of a new parish a crucial proposition. Prayer and patience were the key words in our search. Finding a new home had one major similarity to finding a new parish. It had to 'feel' right. It took us only one month to find the 'right' house. It took us almost six months of trying new parishes to find 'the right one.' The parishioners, staff, and the Franciscan spirit at Saint Francis, were friendly, welcoming, and accepting. We became involved, made new friends and watched our five children grow with their own families. We found the right parish for us. ***It feels right.*** Roger & Judith



Library Group

Front row: Carol Fox, Kirsten Leedy, Ellen McEwan, Carolyn Brittain, Jane Moore
 Second row: Annette Giambrone, Dottie Manzo, Ronnie Clayton, Rita Nieport, Joyce Fisher, Ginny Lucisano, Patricia Sprouse, Mary Ellen Singer, Anne Wolf
 Not present: Mo Kaiser and Barbara Komoff



Library

Serves the spiritual and educational growth of our community by providing reference materials in the Roman Catholic tradition.

Celebrating Memories



Tom and Sharon Poppenhouse

**My memories revolve around the many blessings
I have received from the St. Francis Church Community.**



One of those instances was on 9/11. Planes had crashed into both of the Twin Towers and the Pentagon in a terrorist attack on our country. The pictures of people jumping out of the Towers and constant news coverage made for a sad and terrible day. Realizing the need, the St. Francis Staff organized by phone and word of mouth an evening church service. It was amazing how very many people showed up to pray. Words cannot express how comforting the service was and being with our church family. Our family felt much calmer as we left church that night. **We felt very grateful for our St. Francis of Assisi community.**

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

A formal process of formation through which interested persons learn more about the Roman Catholic way of life, and may choose to become Catholic.

Front row: Connie Tschantz, Sr. Beth Grismer
SFCC, Mary Ellen Singer

Back row: Shawn McManamy, Jim Michaud,
Roger Dunlap, Cheri Rotterman



Celebrating Memories



Michael Freil

The Choice of St. Francis of Assisi when moving to Ohio in 2005 is a blessing.

Memories are past, present, and continuing: Breeana's Confirmation with Bishop Carl Moeddel, Father Tom's Christmas Eve Mass holding Baby Jesus, Father Brian's homilies-that are moving and contemporaneous. Activity in church functions build on memories - Knights of Columbus that I started with Father Tom 12 years ago, Parish PAC for 5 years, Eucharistic Minister, Usher/Chief Usher, Server at Funerals, Bible Study, Christmas Bazaar, Parish Picnics, Karaoke Night, Mardi Gras, Fish Fries, enjoying the friendship and advisement of Father Joe Rigali, seeing Father Tom's struggle with cancer, and battling through it to become cancer free. Most recently by the grace of GOD, love and prayers extended by the parishioners, and Holy Water from Lourdes given to us by Gene Wall, Candi awoke from a 4 day coma (15 minutes from putting it on her.)



**We Love the St. Francis of Assisi Parish Community.
God Bless our parish!**



Liturgical Movement

A form of worship that glorifies the word and spirit of God through joyful and prayerful body movement.

Melissa Bennett, Carolyn Destefani, Corinne Gill

Marriage Ministry

Working with our ordained clergy to help engaged couples prepare for their wedding day and future lives together



Cheryl Brockman, Betty Hiebendahl, Jeff Bennett, Melissa Bennett, Terry Comer, Carol Comer, Rachel Burke, Aaron Burke, Holly Shields, Jim Shields
Not Pictured: Carolyn and Chuck Destefani, Matthew and Meghann Naveau, Deacon Chris and Joanie Rauch

Mental Health Ministry

Mission Statement: To further the well-being and support of the mentally ill and their families and/or caregivers in three ways: education, support, and developing talents.



Marilyn Garland,
Chiquitta Nawuba,
Barbara Komoff,
Mary Ellen Singer



Ministry to the Sick and Homebound

Ministry dedicated to bringing Holy Communion to parishioners who are homebound due to illness or infirmity and unable to attend Mass.

Anne Wolf, Kathleen Kammer, Cathy Arnold, Kim Nartker, Gail Clarke, Carol Comer, Marilyn Garland, Bette Davis, Bobbie Roland-Gorman



Celebrating Memories

Casey, Pat & Alicia Norris



When Casey retired from the Air Force, we moved and bought our first house in 2003. On the way to see our house, we passed the St. Francis of Assisi sign on Clyo Road and thought how wonderful it would be to buy this house and be so close to our church! We stopped by to register and to see the church. Upon entering, there was busy construction workers, wood and sawdust everywhere!

I remember thinking, "I don't care what this place looks like, we are coming here!" When the new worship space and the gathering space were completed... oh how big, bright and beautiful they were! Father Tom, Charlie and Lois Woeste, Jim and Ann Deime and Deacon Mark were so welcoming to us. We knew we were going to love it here. We so miss many of the people who have gone to their final resting place: Charlie Woeste, Mike and Mary Ann Monseur, Pete Mauro, Tom Milinac, Rick Fannin and Mary Ann Warner. **But like the beautiful quilts in Friendship Hall, all the people from past and present make the wonderful fabric of our church family and we love coming here!**



Celebrating Memories

Linda York-Tortorici

“When I came to Ohio, I found the passion and love in this Franciscan parish joyful and inviting.”

I joined the St. Francis of Assisi Parish 34 years ago. I came from the East coast where the Catholic churches followed old traditions. One spring Sunday Mass was celebrated outdoors where balloons were released during the Gloria! I wanted to give back to this community of believers. I taught CCD to third graders for 16 years. When the new church was being built, I joined the design committee. I enjoyed being part of the Christmas bazaar and the Martha Ministries for years. I volunteered to help with the Anniversary Dinner many years as well. As a matter of fact, I cooked the dinner a few times! For the last 10 years I have planned this dinner with the help of a fantastic group of people to make this celebration happen every year. If you think you have seen me before, you probably have!



Linda and Michael Tortorici

50th ANNIVERSARY I remember...

I will never forget when the Archbishop dedicated the new church, and the moment when he poured holy oil on the new altar and consecrated it. He rubbed the oil in and pushed the oil all over the top of the new altar... and suddenly a "wave of oil" poured down the front of the altar; soaking into the porous marble finish. A gasp was let out by many in the congregation as they witnessed the event unfold and Fr. Tom Schmidt was visibly disappointed about the altar being stained. A few parishioners attempted to remove the oil within hours of the dedication but were unsuccessful.

That night, I had a dream that I was removing the oil from the face of the altar, and shared the "strange" dream with Fr. Tom the next day. I asked Fr. Tom if he would like me to try to remove the oil using the method I remembered in my dream and he agreed. To my surprise at the time, the technique worked flawlessly to the point where no visible stain can be seen to this day.

God is certainly alive and well at St. Francis and He definitely works in mysterious ways!
- Deacon Chris



Telephone Prayer Chain

This is a ministry that provides prayer for others, including family, friends and the community at large.

Pictured: Marlene Berardi, Sharon Poppenhouse, Bette Davis, Kathleen Kammer, Elaine Steiner, Mary Jane Nielsen, Gail Clarke



Celebrating Memories

Patrick & Michele O'Christie

**One of our most memorable moments
at St. Francis occurred in the second or third year
after we joined the parish.**

We attended our first "Ministry Fair" and decided we wanted to find out more about the Welcoming Committee.

We stopped to talk to Jim and Mary Meixner, who headed the committee at the time. We decided we wanted to HELP OUT and asked them to come to our home for a welcoming visit demonstration. A couple of weeks before Christmas they came to our home carrying a small box. We chatted with them as they did the mock Welcoming visit. After answering a few of our questions we decided we wanted to join the Welcoming Team. At the end of our visit, they stood, put on their coats and moved toward the door handing us the box.

As we reached for the box, Jim said "Mary and I are moving to Florida after Christmas and you're now in charge of the Welcoming Team!!!"

That was 12 years ago!



Celebrating Memories



Terry and Carol Comer



**Terry & Carol
Comer**

We are simply awed by the many parishioners involved in the numerous ministries here at St. Francis and feel very blessed to belong to such a great Parish!

“We became members of St. Francis of Assisi 11 years ago, although we had been living in the neighborhood already for 13 years. We were very active at Ascension Parish, but as we became less active, we thought about joining St. Francis. We had attended Mass several times over the years and a Mardi Gras, and always found the parishioners very friendly and welcoming. Well, we decided to join but on a less active level. However, our idea of limited involvement didn’t last long since we discovered that **praying together, helping and getting to know others on a deeper level and being part of the community means...being involved!**



Bereavement Ministry

Serves families following the death of a loved one. Meets with families to plan the Mass, coordinate details, pass programs, lector or serve as Eucharistic ministers and do other things like make phone calls, send cards and more as needed.

Front row: Cathy Frank, Mary Ann Parts, Ima Jean Podiak, Betty Hiebendahl, Diane Brademeyer

Back row: Intern Jacob Lindle, Kay Mancuso, Ellen McEwan, Dolores Connelly, Kathie Weekley, Mary Gutman, Deacon Ralph Gutman

Not Pictured Fr. Brian Phelps, Julie Weaver, Rhoda Fister, Beverly Hyman, Mary Fiely

Celebrating Memories



Gene and Jeanne Fehskens



My husband and I joined St. Francis when we moved from Pennsylvania in 1991.

Joining a small Christian community was a great way to connect with others in our new church family!



I did liturgical decorations for 15 years, created the Christmas angel banners in the old church, helped plan outdoor masses for special occasions like the ground blessing of the new church, the Franciscan Farewell, and the most significant one for me was the Feast of St. Francis in 2001. Two days after the tragedy of Sept. 11, I painted “Brother Sun and Sister Moon” which we used as a back drop for mass. I felt the Holy Spirit painting with me as I prayed for peace. Now we use those paintings at the St. Francis Women’s Retreat. Being on the Women’s Retreat team, helping start M.O.M.S., being on the design committee for the new church, family religious education classes and Generations of Faith were all things that grew my faith.



These experiences connected me with so many Spirit filled people in our St Francis of Assisi community!

St. Francis of Assisi Church is my Spiritual Home.

Further “Brother Sun and Sister Moon” commentary: “... a visible sign of my prayer for peace and unity ...a broken circle, kind of like a communion host, filled with light in the moon and fire in the sun, surrounded by darkness. The paintings were placed in the place where the tabernacle would eventually be in the new church. Our nation was broken,[*September 11, 2001*] but Christ was our prayer and our means for healing and wholeness.” Jeanne Fehskens

Martha Ministry

Parishioners volunteer to work together to provide family and friends of the deceased a luncheon after a funeral.



Alphabetic order: Shirley Adams, Genevieve Albers, Frank Berardi, Marlene Berardi, Carolyn Brittain, Bonnie Brown, Kim Brown, Sharon Carr, Julie Darr, Deb Franz, Jim Franz, Clara Freiberger, Terri Foos, Carol Fox, Antoinette Giambroni, Gloria Gregory, Nancy Hayes, Pat Jones, Ginny Lucisano, Calleen Maloney, Carol Mauro, Paulette Majni, Dottie Manzo, Anna Monnett, Jane Moore, Kim Nartker, Rita Nieport, Betty O'Brien, Dorothy Place, Elaine Steiner, Christine Wuebben, Linda York-Tortorici, Pat Zehringer

Not pictured: Peggie O'Neill

Alphabetic order: Phyllis Berns, Bambi Billock, Sue Fullenkamp, Al Fullenkamp, Mary Hurbanek, Jennifer Kovacs, Mike Manzo, Gail Maynard, Belinda Metter, Florence Murphy, Nancy Petrosky, Theresa Ribbink, Patty Rouff, Jeanne Sheppard



Celebrating Memories



Theodore (Ted) Kuchta and Peggie O'Neill



If you are looking for a parish in which to get involved, this is the one. There are so many great opportunities that are truly rewarding!

When Ted retired from the Army in 1995, we moved to Dayton and attended several other parishes before joining St. Francis of Assisi in 1998. We never felt connected to the other parishes like we do at St. Francis. When my father died in June 2001, I attended a grief support group run by Mary Ann Warner and Liz Kingsborough. From that group I developed several lasting friendships. My mother died in 2009 and there was no Martha Ministry. I have been an active member of this ministry for the past nine years and feel that it is great to be able

to help provide food to a family after a funeral. We both have also enjoyed serving the parish as Eucharistic Ministers and find that very rewarding.

I remember the blessing of the pets with Fr. Tom and always look forward to what unusual critters show up every year. Ted joined the Knights of Columbus over 10 years ago and has developed great friendships with his fellow brothers. **We hope to be parishioners for many years to come!**

50th ANNIVERSARY *I remember...*

*I remember the first Divine Love Class I helped facilitate 17 years ago. We have now witnessed 310 people come through the program. God has blessed the ministry.
Marcelle Toma*

50th ANNIVERSARY *I remember...*

My son calling the Easter Liturgical dancers "angels."

Celebrating Memories



Jim & Deb Franz



The welcoming and loving spirit of the St. Francis of Assisi family became the catalyst to join the first Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) in 1984!

After 13 years of attending mass with Jim, my husband, I chose to become fully committed to the Catholic faith. The welcoming and loving spirit of the St. Francis family became the catalyst to join the first Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) in 1984! I have many happy and joy filled memories of this beautiful community.

I cherish these memories from my own first communion, our son's first communion, spirit-filled outdoor masses with the folk guitar group led by the beloved Monseur family, the family enrichment program that our sons still talk about 35 years later,



Folk Group

Sacristan Ministry

Sacristans assist the presider at Mass by coordinating the activities of all the various liturgical ministries that participate at Mass and services.



Dan Sprouse, Ann Deime, Cal Frank,
Al Fullenkamp, Sue Fullenkamp

Not Pictured: Phyllis Berns, Karen Cwiekalo, Bruce Guindon, Betty Hiebendahl, Tom Kwest, Margaret LaParre

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

These ministers assist in the distribution of Communion under both species at weekday, weekend and Holy Day Masses.



Front row: Elaine Steiner, Gail Clarke, Debra Fussnecker, Nancy Hayes, Mary Jane Nielsen, Sharon Poppenhouse, Ann Deime, Paulette Majni

Second row: Virgil Cruz, Deb Franz, Kathleen Kammer, Bobbie Roland-Gorman, Tom Kwest, Patty Lammert, Bette Davis,

Third row: Jim Franz, Patrick Allan, Ed Dapore, Mary Fiely, Tim Davis



Lisa Barhorst, Dan Sprouse, Ann Moell, Anthony Franz, Gene and Belinda Metter



Mellissa Bennett, Betty Hiebendahl, Cheryl Brockman, Rachel Burke, Nancy Rauch, Joan Cutlip



Anthony Barhorst (away at college when pictures taken)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (Continued)



Bob Merland, Sue Merland, Sue Fullenkamp, Phyllis Berns, Al Fullenkamp



First row: Phyllis Berns, Mira Wilson, Judy Bede

Second row: Shawn McManamy, Andria McManamy, Ning Dann, Joe Dann, Cathy Frank

Third row: Eugene Fehskens, Jeanette Fromm, Skip Fromm

(not pictured)

Patrick Allan, Kate Baltes, Debbie Barlow, Marilyn Baumer, Mike Baumer, George Becker, Diana Brademeyer, Chris Brown, Kim Brown, Mike Carter, Melissa Carter, Leslie Christofano, Doug Cozad, Karen Cwiekalo, Jasson Cwiekalo, Stephen Davis, Marge DeVito, Jim Deime, Carolyn Destefani, Tootsie Dye, Allison Estadt, Mary Margaret Fiely, Kate Finney, Cal Frank, Anthony Franz, Breeana Freil, Candi Freil, Michael Freil, Maureen Goble, Bruce Guindon, Mary Gutman, Gail Haake, Ken Haake, Susie Hahn, Tom Hannon, Christine Herbst, Robert Herbst, Susan Hickey, John Hoffman, Bob Komoff, Jim Kracus, Pat Kracus, Joe Kreis, Ted Kutchta, Margaret LaParre, Patty Lammert, Jim Layer, Phyllis Lienesch, Jacob Lindle, Dottie Manzo, Michael Manzo, Andria McManamy, Linda Mescher, Laura Motil, Joe Nartker, Glen Niemeier, Michael Nowak, Peggie O'Neill, Shannon Pence, Liz Rasch, Cheri Rotterman, Joe Schmidt, Beth Sliemers, Encarni Smith, Elaine Steiner, Matthew Trimeloni, Michelle Wagner, Kathie Weekley, Laura Wysong,

Book Club

We are a social ministry made up of members who enjoy discussing a good book. It is a great way to meet other church members who share the love of reading.



Front row: Anne Wolf, Marilyn Mahrt, Sharon Poppenhouse, Chuck Daley, Mary Jane Nielsen, Chris Lynch

Second row: Wilma Karl

Third row: Karen Freyvogel, Berdie Maranto, Jackie Bray, Cindy Rose, Chuck Martinson, Jim Widner, Jan Tangeman

Back row: Jane Moore, Carol Larson

Celebrating Memories



Frances Obringer

Frances and Jack Obringer

My family has been a part of St. Francis of Assisi Church for forty some years. When we moved here there was no 675 highway, homes or stores. The priest's house had just been finished when the second pastor, Fr. Edward Fueglein, came to St. Francis. Our three children were all baptized, made their First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation in the old church. They attended CCD now known as Religious Education. I started volunteering for that program, then the Religious Education Secretary position became available and I was hired. Over those thirty years I got to meet many Franciscan priests, brothers and religious. I was fortunate to know Fr. Bruce Hausfeld, Fr. John Turnbull, and Fr. Tom Schmidt, our former pastors. I always worked with a good staff and have many good memories. I saw the addition being done for more classrooms and the building of our new worship space. I attended outdoor masses and picnics, as well as fund raising events with the many people and families I was blest to have known. I have seen how much St. Francis has grown with the new families I have gotten to know. This church will always be there to make new memories.

Ladies Bridge Club



Front row: Mary Jo Grismer, Marilyn Knorr, Mary Beasly, Kathy Goetz, Edna Mae Wynn, Sarah Cunningham

Second row: Jo Ann Shook, Doris Kovacs, Kay Mancuso, Mary Catherine Plogman, Barbara Albers, Evie Hogankamp, Mary Ann Parts, Jeanette Ruffing, Phyllis Lienesch

Not pictured: Karen Chrystal

The Knights of Columbus



St. Francis of Assisi parish is blessed to have an active group of the Knights of Columbus. Here you see them serving donuts in Friendship Hall after 11 A.M. Mass. They do this one weekend a month and it is affectionately referred to as “Donut Sunday.”

Our Anniversary Group Photographer with “Bagpiper Husband” and Children

Andy and Jeanne Folfas with Kyle and Michaela



Fellowship Ministry

It has become known as the **Pancake Breakfast**. Once a month a group of parishioners prepare and serve a breakfast in Friendship Hall after Sunday Masses.

This wonderful service began in 2005. It was started as a fellowship ministry by Don and Pat Frericks with Dave and Barb Laurash.



Whether presenting, fixing, or collecting, they all serve our parish.
 Alphabetical: Frank Berns, Robert, Karen and Paulina Cwiekalo, Chuck Daley, Dave Laurash, Jane and Tom Moore, Dan Nevels

Not pictured: Lori Everitt, Pat and Don Frericks, Arnold and Joshua Kiefer, Barbara Laurash, Mike Manzo, Carolyn Nevels

PART THREE

OUR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

50th ANNIVERSARY YEAR CLOSING MASS



Celebration of Mass with Bishop Binzer on October 6, 2019, in honor of the 50th Anniversary of our St. Francis of Assisi Parish

Accompanying the Auxiliary Bishop are Fr. Joe Kindel, Fr. Tom Schmidt, Deacon Chris Rauch, (Bishop Binzer), Fr. Brian Phelps, and Deacon Ralph Gutman.

Sir Knights Steve Berns, Ken Haacke, Danny Sprouse, and Don Coty, members of Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus Assembly 3056 provide the Honor Guard for this Mass. The Fourth Degree Assembly 3056 is comprised of members of several Councils from Parishes in the local area. They support a variety of activities like Youth Ministry Awards (also held at St. Francis), and “special” Masses or events presided over by the Bishop or Archbishop in the greater Dayton area. There are several Fourth Degree Assemblies in the greater Dayton area.

Celebratory Events

A steering committee was formed in December 2018 by volunteers from our parish. This committee, led by Roger Dunlap, wanted to find ways to get as many parishioners involved as possible. They began this by building a 50th Anniversary Bulletin Board and placed it in the Gathering Space. Memory Stationery and Memory Cards were provided for this board. Parishioner memories were solicited. These were placed on the board for all to see.

Spirit wear and tumblers, water bottles, mugs, and Christmas Tree ornaments emblazoned with our 50th Anniversary logo were developed by Connie and Jim Tschantz as keepsakes to commemorate our anniversary.

Additionally, parishioners were encouraged to write their memories and submit them for publication in the weekly parish bulletins. These memories have been interspersed throughout this book.

Fellowship has been one of the cornerstones of our parish so several events were held for all to enjoy. These began on January 19, 2019, with a Kick-off Party where parishioners had a great time and were invited to give their ideas of events they would like. From all the great ideas, the following rose to the top as the most wanted:

A Karaoke Party held on March 23, pitted our pastor, Fr. Brian Phelps, against parishioner challengers. He did very well and actually finished second.

We seem to be a “singing parish” and so that event was followed by an event featuring the “Easter Rising” Irish singers and a chili cook-off on May 10.

The next event on July 28, involved a lesson in the history of Franciscans in America provided and narrated by Fr. David Endres, the academic dean and associate professor of Church history and historical theology at The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West in Cincinnati.

A combination picnic/art exhibit/talent show was held on September 8. Much fun, many talents, and good food were enjoyed by all who attended.

The final event on October 6, was a concelebrated Mass with our Auxiliary Bishop Binzer, followed by a luncheon. This memory book is the culminating activity.



50th Anniversary Steering Committee

Front row: Carol Comer, Frances Obringer, Mary Widner, B.J. Moore

Second row: Connie Tschantz, Roger Dunlap (Chair Person), Bobbie Roland-Gorman, Mary Ellen Singer

Back row: Terry Comer, Jim Tschantz, Jeff Cutlip, Fred Wootan

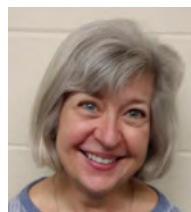
Parish History Book Team



Mary Widner



B.J. Moore



Cheryl Rotterman



Tim Davis



Christine
Findlay



Fred Wootan
Team Leader



Ann Deime

50th Anniversary Quilt



Sample Patches



History of Anniversary Quilts

25th Anniversary Quilt

A group of women started to discuss the idea of making quilts to raise funds for the parish. This discussion evolved into an anniversary quilt celebrating the people who are the parish. It took 8 months for an idea to become a quilt. The theme was designed around the St. Damiano Cross.

The quilt was hand-quilted on an antique quilt frame with over 30 people participating. It is 126 inches wide and 115 inches long. It was unveiled on October 4, 1994, the Feast day of St. Francis of Assisi and the quilt consisted of 204 patches. The centerpiece is a hand counted cross stitched rendition of the front of the church which was designed and stitched by Bill Prater. It is surrounded by the names of the four pastors who had been assigned to the church. Bill's wife, Volita, hand embroidered patches for each of the religious assigned to St. Francis.

As more squares came in after the deadline to finish the quilt for the anniversary, two smaller panels were made to include those patches. In addition, the women filled a binder with charts noting where each family patch was located, names of all those who participated in the construction of the quilt, and photos and documents tracking the making of the quilt, as well as other ways the parish celebrated their 25th anniversary.

40th Anniversary Quilt

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of our parish, a group of women gathered to assemble a collection of quilt squares representing the existing ministries at St. Francis. All ministries were invited to submit patches.

The centerpiece was a machine-counted cross rendition of the new entrance to the church. Similarities to the original 25th anniversary quilt were the colors of fabric used and the arrangement in groups of 4 and 6 quilt blocks. Differences from the original 25th anniversary were that the centerpiece was done by machine rather than by hand and all of the quilting was done by machine.

50th Anniversary Quilt

To celebrate the 50th anniversary, both families and ministries were invited to contribute patches. The centerpiece includes our parish vision: "Celebrating Loving, Lifting, Listening, Learning, and Leading", and a profile of St. Francis. The names of all of the past and present pastors, both Franciscan and Diocesan, are stitched in the border.



I know
our sons
liked it!



Do you think we have enough food?



"But, I can't dance"



Cowgirls?

Anniversary
fun day —
Singing and
chili!



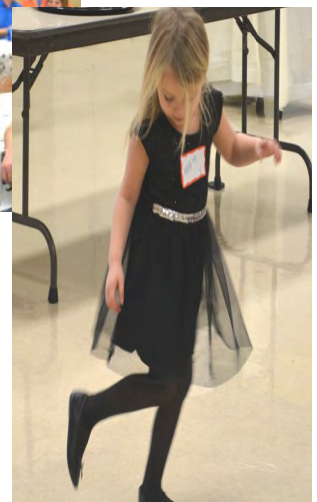
Great Chili



Whistling might work



**Beware of stranger
bearing gifts**



A Star Is Born



Happiness



Celebrating 50th Anniversary: Parishioner Interviews

These individuals have provided their thoughts about our parish. As you read these you will find a commonality of feelings involving the concepts of community, joy, outreach and Franciscan simplicity in living.

Judith
Dunlap



Using the theme of simplicity defines how the Franciscan inner joy in our community of brothers and sisters applies the concepts of peace and justice.

Roger
Dunlap



It is the nonmaterialistic ideals of the Franciscans that brought my wife and me to this parish.

Trevor
Nartker



It's the community atmosphere that I like. There are lots of activities to become involved in. It's easy to get ideas because everyone is very willing to share.

Kathleen
Kammer



Very early on when Fr. Bruce asked me, as a woman, for my opinion, I knew I was in the right parish. Also the many outreach programs to help the poor, and the ministry to the imprisoned are wonderful.

Marge
Devito



The St. John Paul II room provides me with a special place for an appointment to talk with Jesus. The joy that emanates from the parishioners is very uplifting.

Andy
Devito



Involvement as a youth in the youth groups became pivotal in my development as a person. The fellowship that permeates this parish is fantastic.

Noelle
Collis-
Devito



I have been a part of this parish family since my college days. I even became part of the staff and began working with the youth religious education. I left that due to my growing family, but just love the kids.

James
Deime



The Franciscan spirit is involved in so many things here. I had the opportunity to train servers for many years. The bereavement ministry is first class. The St. Vincent DePaul Society is one example of our outreach.

Marilyn
Baumer



So many opportunities to get involved in ministries allow for getting to know the many smaller communities within the community of the parish. I especially enjoyed teaching first grade religion.

Mike
Baumer



We have come to know so many people through our participation in ministries and even just helping set up and take down needed implements used in a group activity.

Roberta
Nehrbass



I grew up in this parish and have been afforded tremendous opportunity for growth both personal and spiritual. I love the experiences of the youth groups and the wisdom that is so graciously provided by the adults.

Louise
Carter



It feels like my kids have always had a community of grandparents as their parish. Everyone so willing to talk with them and help them. I have also experienced wonderful sharing of responsibilities of faith here.

Mary
Gutman



As a new member having been assigned here for my husband, Deacon Ralph Gutman, I can only comment on the wonderful, friendly welcome we have received.

Jeanne
Fehskens



I have had the good fortune to work with the church environment, making banners, etc. It is through that ministry that I have really grown in my faith. We are the living stones upon which the church is built.

Cal
Frank



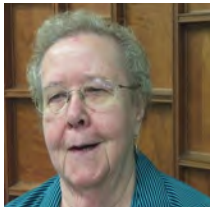
I am passionate about the community at St. Francis. I have had many opportunities to get involved in several ministries which means getting closer to people.

Terry
Comer



St. Francis has provided us with opportunities to meet people and to work with them. Becoming part of a ministry here is a great way to grow in your faith.

Jan
Turala



I joined the Centering Prayer group while looking for a parish to join. I later did join and I love the simplicity of the worship space. I also love what is being done on the exterior to beautify God's earth.

Anne
Wolf



I am a Secular Franciscan. I love that St. Francis promoted peace, even trying to convert the Muslims. This parish has that St. Francis spirit of friendliness and community.

Frances
Obringer



I had the honor of working in our religious education program for years. I still get to visit a bit with those kids. The Franciscan way saw no change when we changed from an OFM priest, to an archdiocesan priest.

Bob
Gregory



My wife and I were part of the first faith community celebrating at St. Leonard's. Even then the groups were involved as lay distributors, choir, and more. I am really glad that such a community still thrives here.

Jim
Michaud



I came to the Dayton area for my first job. I knew no one and was single. Fr. Francis was so welcoming and empowering that I felt the familial acceptance and love that I learned is the way of St. Francis.

Young Wings



A Singing Parish

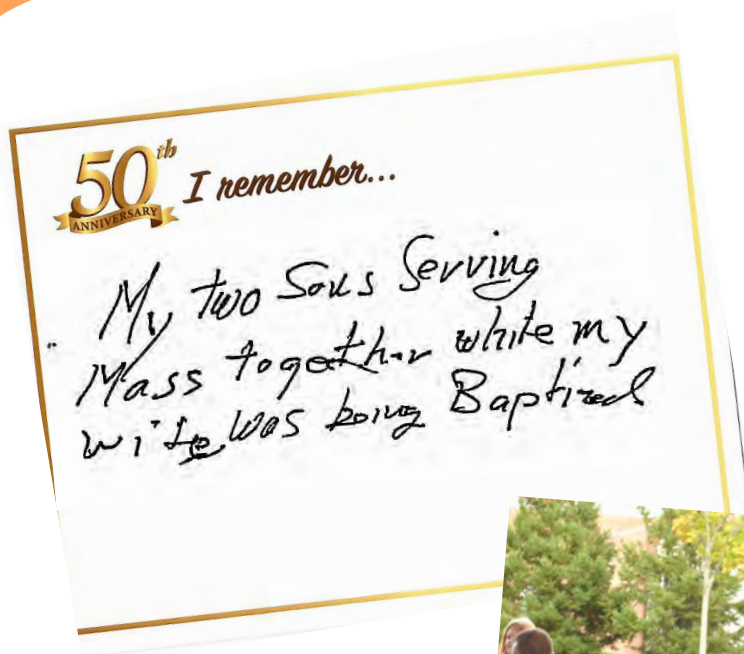


Anniversary Ornaments

Picnic Fun



**A 50th Anniversary Celebration
Parishioners Participate in a Karaoke Night**



Enjoying the talent show



Choir prepares to sing the "Monseur Version" Our Father

[...]



To be loved is to love with all my soul

2019

ST. FRANCIS *of* Assisi Catholic Church

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