



A place to BELIEVE... BELONG... BECOME

Customs, beliefs bind generations of families, our faith

Tradition, by definition, means the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way. Traditions are those things passed down from father to son; mother to daughter; Pope to Pope; and have been carried out for years, decades, centuries and millennia.

A word cloud featuring various holiday-related terms. The words are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner. The largest words are 'Traditions' (purple), 'Celebrate' (red), and 'Food' (red). Other prominent words include 'Story' (green), 'Holiday' (green), 'Family' (green), 'Fun' (blue), 'Moments' (blue), 'Love' (green), 'Feast' (red), and 'Light' (blue). Smaller words include 'Life', 'Together', 'Surprise', 'Joy', 'Hours', 'Games', 'History', 'Day', 'Friends', 'Party', 'Celebration', 'Eve', 'Music', 'Observance', 'Create', 'Affirm', and 'Music'. The colors used include shades of green, blue, red, purple, and brown.

Catholic traditions

The role of tradition in Catholicism provides a continuity of faith, linking the early Church with believers today. It's seen as a living tradition, growing and evolving while remaining anchored in core principles. This sense of continuity fosters a strong community and offers a framework for moral and spiritual guidance.

Family traditions can vary widely but often include customs and rituals that are passed down through generations. These might be tied to holidays, such as Thanksgiving or Christmas, where certain foods,

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God's grace and the single life

By Carlos León

I am living the vocation of a single person. You may say widower, and I would not be offended. I just prefer single. There I've said it. Since May 30, 2020, my life, my decisions, my joys, my tears, my grief, my prayers and many more things were no longer shared via the sacrament of matrimony with my wife and angel in heaven, Peggy.

I remember being young and single and making decisions with little life experience. Too young to know better but old enough to care for someone else. I attended a parish retreat in my early 20s at Christ the King in Richland and one afternoon we broke out into small groups. Somehow, I wound up at a table with four grandmothers (I knew them all) and me being me, I had to ask if I was going to get a turn to talk. One of them said to me, "Our angels have been in the life business longer than yours. You may learn more if you just listen this time." (We had a wonderful time sharing).

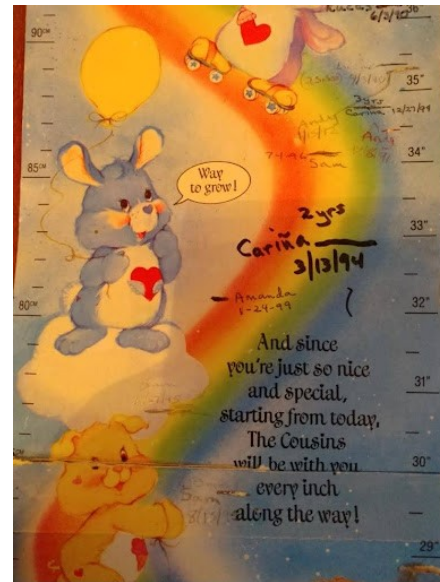
Now fast forward 50 years from that retreat, or four years since Peggy died. I see the pages of my life have yellowed and writings of memories somewhat faded. I am taxed to put the pen to new pages, a little nervous as to what collection of words I will put together. I am not as impulsive as before, yet somehow more hopeful in my decisions. I don't feel so clear-eyed. My focus comes a little slower. Yet, I gaze at a photo of my children's growth chart and see a life of many small moments fulfilled.

I am reminded of a line in a poem written by a 28-year-old man who compared old age with when he was 16 years of age.

"I am old, but a child still smiles within me; when I sing, he dances; when I sleep, he dreams endlessly ... I am weary but the child plays on."

At 28, I knew nothing but life as a single person. At 67 I had known almost 40 years of shared life. The single life was a memory that had long faded. Now at 71, my life is full of surprises and blessings as a single father, grandfather, brother, nephew and friend. The only common denominator in my life in all its stages is that my God does not change. He visits me, He stays with me and when a door closes, I am not the same. I am ready for the continuous visits and another door.

I wasn't ready to be single when Peggy died, but I was ready to accept it. It was in our vows. Now, what



My children's growth chart is a reminder of a different time in life. People and circumstances are constantly changing, but our God never does.

Photo courtesy Carlos Leon

have I been taught and where am I at the moment ... there is so much, but I will keep it brief.

I no longer feel the need for speed. Days do seem to pass by more quickly, but my mornings are long, my afternoons fulfilled, and my evenings peaceful. My body no longer feels young, but my mind and heart still feel the need to fulfill dreams. I contemplate and navigate through a heartfelt relationship with Jeanette, who I met on the Camino de Santiago last year. We are the same age. She lives an active and blessed life in Wisconsin near her daughters and grandchildren. A complication? No, a joy.

I am fortunate that I am still physically and mentally strong. As I have written before, the time for me is now, there are no "do overs" and I don't want to miss the tomorrows God has granted me. Whether it's alone or with a friend or family or a group, look for blessings and an occasional miracle, for we have a good God.

Lyrics come to mind, reminding me that we all have gifts to share: "Jesus had a song, and from His heart he did speak... Love and truth and planting seeds, blessed are the meek. This and more I have to share, for many have shared with me. Embrace the life God's given you, let it shine for all to see."

I am now single, and grace will lead me home. Buen Camino.

Marjie's Corner

To Gift or Not to Gift ...

Is that really even a question?

By Marjie Sloon

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in a 1998 issue of Voice of the Spirit.

In a rare display of practicality, my mother asked my sister and me if we'd like to stop the Christmas gift-giving between us. She quickly went on to say of course she'd still give the grandchildren gifts, but isn't it kind of silly for the adults to continue exchanging?

"No!" I blurted out. "I like getting Christmas presents. I don't want to stop!"

My sister, the sycophant, (look that up in your Funk and Wagnalls) said, "Oh sure, Mom. That makes more sense. I never know what to get anyone anyway."

"You never know what they really want or need," my mother went on. I couldn't believe my ears.

"You don't buy a person what they want or need," I argued. "You buy them what you want them to have. The point isn't whether or not they need it or want it or even know what to do with it. The point is they get a gift to unwrap and fuss over while everyone watches, and then you get one in return!"

Mom and Sis stared at me wordlessly, then turned to each other and said, "Let's ask everyone else."

The three of us traipsed into the kitchen and asked my brother-in-law. "Don," my sister began, "Don't you think we should quit exchanging Christmas gifts between the adults this year?"

"No," my sensible in-law responded. "I like doing the gifts. That's part of Christmas."

Still not convinced, they asked my 19-year-old niece, who almost qualifies as an adult. Like the good, bright, intelligent girl that she is, she agreed with me.

Seeing that they'd been out-voted, Mom and Sis began lamenting the gift shopping.

"You guys make it too hard," I announced. "I'll help. Here's what we'll do. The three of us will go to Target and buy everything there. We'll be armed with our lists, we'll cruise the aisles. I'll say, Oh, Christine



would like that, and you'll say, Oh, Bryan would like that, or Ted needs one of these. We'll buy 'em and go home and wrap 'em. Our extended family shopping and wrapping will be done in one day."

"Oh good girl. You be in charge. You're always so organized."

This from Sis who not too long ago labeled this same character trait of mine as, let's see if I can remember it exactly, "bossy and opinionated". (No sibling rivalry between us.)

But like I said, it's not necessarily what a person needs or wants that makes the best gifts. Like the pink china teacup from my friend's mother: I didn't know I wanted it until she handed it to me and said, "I thought of you when I saw this." Oh yes, I want it.

Or the red mittens I gave my friend in Montana: Too light for freezing winters there, but just right for remembering the warmer winters of when she lived here.

And the little wooden "money box" my dad made for me with my family's initials carved on it. The key rings and picture frames and earrings from my kids. The little gold hammer from my husband, perfect for pounding nails to hang pictures.

Of course, there have been other gifts that I've received and thought, "What am I going to do with

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Taking the Church with us



Youth from Holy Spirit's Life Teen program participated in a recent SEARCH retreat at Camp Dudley.

Photo courtesy Joe Bliss

By Joe Bliss

In the dictionary, a church is defined as a particular Christian organization, typically one with its own clergy, buildings and distinctive doctrines. At best it's a very bland definition, one that sorely lacks inspiration. *Our* Church, with a capital "C", defines itself as a visible society, a means of salvation, the body of Christ, a union of people, and a communion of churches. What our Church truly is could fill the pages of countless dictionaries because God is limitless and this is His Church.

I had the opportunity to spend some time with the Church at our recent SEARCH Retreat for sophomores and juniors from our Life Teen program. If you have been on a SEARCH retreat, you know exactly what it is. If you haven't been on one, you don't know what it is and, as is the tradition, no one is going to tell you. At least they better not.

Those of us who have experienced a SEARCH can only say that it's worth it, and Fred loves you. He really does. Who is Fred you might ask? I'm afraid I can't tell you. I experienced my SEARCH retreat over 30 years ago and have never forgotten it. Fred, as it turns out, doesn't like to be forgotten.

Our retreat was held in the wilderness of Camp Dudley, about two hours from the Tri-Cities. One of the beautiful aspects of our Church is that we can take it with us wherever we go. We packed our Church up in the trunks of cars and the beds of trucks. Our Church sat in passenger seats and drove vehicles and talked all the way there. I got to spend the weekend with some amazing kids and some equally amazing adults.

While at the retreat, I was struck by just how important the union of people is for our Church and for each of us individually. The world, as dark as it may seem at times, would be far more grim without our Church community. I told the kids that I choose to do youth ministry as much for myself as I do it for them. I learn so much from them and am greatly inspired by them. It takes courage to be a young person in the world today, especially a young person striving to be a person in the world and not *of* the world. It isn't easy to follow Jesus, and our young people know that as well as any of us.

In the early mornings, before the teens were awake and forcing us to chase them around, the adults

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Living on the Edge

New team powers middle school religious education program

By Kim Barany

To say the religious education year started afresh would be an understatement. With a completely new crew to lead small groups, I rejoined the team to assist Danielle May in leading Edge this year. Danielle was the only vetted member to start our year. When the call came to our church congregation for small group leaders to assist us in the very intricate details of creating a successful Middle School Religious Education Program, you did not shy away! Danielle and I were astounded at the amount of interest in helping guide our youth on their faith journey.

We are blessed with a team consisting of five small group leaders, who co-lead the program. We are very thankful to Shelly Baulig, Bill Retterer, Terrance Casey, Alejandra Villagrana, and Morgan Young, who selflessly give their time each Sunday evening to engage with the kids in games and activities, while serving as excellent examples of faith.

Getting to know your Edge leaders

Danielle is happily married to her middle-school carpool companion, Eric, and they have a 1-year-old, John Joseph, and another on the way. In her free time, Danielle enjoys spending time outdoors, going for walks, playing board games, working on arts and crafts projects, writing original music, and reading non-fiction of all kinds. Danielle started out in youth ministry by babysitting with her mom in the church nursery when she was 10 years old, and she hasn't stopped working with kids since. Whether leading skits and music for VBS, teaching pre-school religious education, or working in Life Teen and Edge, her passion is teaching young people the faith. She loves youth ministry because she believes it is such an honor to walk alongside them as they deepen their faith and discover Jesus' love for them, maybe even for the first time. She feels blessed for how others have walked alongside her through her faith journey and wants to pass on the same mentorship to others.

I am ecstatic to be involved with the Edge again this year after taking the last two years off. I spent the last two years teaching middle school at St. Joseph Catholic School in Kennewick, but took this year off to focus on family and serving in the church more. One of my favorite reasons for being involved with Edge is sharing in the faith with the kids. Another great perk is not having to cook dinner Sunday nights thanks to the amazing Mary Ramos, who is in charge of cooking and serving dinner to all of the youth and team members. I have a 3-year-old son who attends Montessori Preschool at St. Joe's. I have been married to my husband Alex for six years. Fun fact: We actually met through the Life Teen program at Holy Spirit.



The Holy Spirit Edge team, from left, Danielle May, Bill Retterer, Kim Barany, Morgan Young, Alejandra Villagrana and Terrance Casey. (Not pictured, Shelly Baulig)

Photo courtesy Kim Barany

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Book Review - By Theresa Barnaby

Bethlehem: The Sacred Infancy of Our Most Dear and Blessed Redeemer By Father Faber

Written in 1860 by Father Frederick William Faber, *Bethlehem: The Sacred Infancy of Our Most Dear and Blessed Redeemer* is a deep dive into the story of Christmas. You'll go way beyond the familiar Christmas narrative and become transported back to the manger and the events leading up to and surrounding the birth of Jesus.

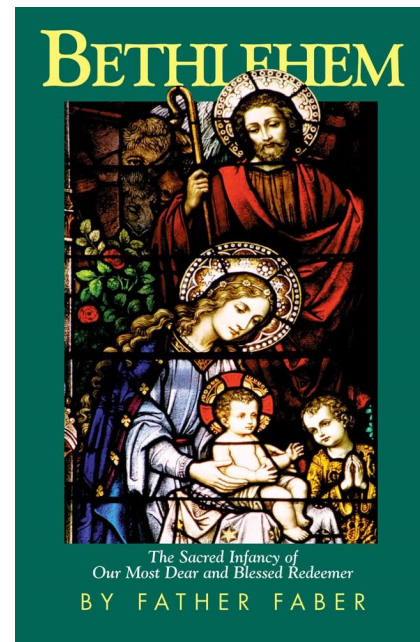
Father Faber was an interesting individual. Born in 1814 in the West Riding of Yorkshire, he was ordained in the Church of England in 1839. In 1845 after much thought, he decided to follow his hero Saint John Henry Newman and joined the Catholic Church. Faber was a fan of congregational singing and wrote many hymns. Perhaps his best-known hymn is Faith of Our Fathers. He died in London in 1863.

With this book, Faber invites us to think about all the events that occur in the story of Christmas and consider that there was a divine purpose behind each moment – from the humble manger itself to the visit of the shepherds. He explores the significance of the shepherds' visit, helping us to see the symbolism of the faith – so simple and pure – and their immediate response to the divine revelation.

We don't really know who they were, as we are never told anything about them. We never hear from them again after they leave the manger. But in their simplicity, we see the representation of "the place which simplicity occupies in the kingdom of Christ; for, next to that of Mary and Joseph, theirs was the first external worship earth offered to the new-born Babe of Bethlehem."

Faber's writing style is not for everyone. It's dense and theological in nature – full of rich insights and spiritual reflections. It will take some concentration to wade through the more archaic writing style and language. But if you persevere, you'll be rewarded with a much deeper understanding of the Christmas Story. You'll be challenged to look beyond the surface and discover the very profound truths that lie beneath.

At times his writing is beautifully lyrical. In the first chapter Faber talks about the moments just after



Jesus was born. "St. Joseph is kneeling by the Child in the Cave of Bethlehem. Let us draw near, and kneel there with him, and follow his thoughts afar off. It is but an hour since that Babe was born into the world, and gladdened Mary's eyes with the divine consolations of his Face. It is but nine months since he was incarnate in the inner room at Nazareth. Yet neither Nazareth nor Bethlehem were his beginnings. He was eternal years old the moment he was born. Time, which has already lived through such long cycles, and had perhaps endured through huge secular epochs before the creation of man, was younger by infinite ages than the Babe of Bethlehem."

Bethlehem is a beautiful spiritual reflection that invites you to contemplate the profound significance of Christ's birth. The poetic prose brings a wholly unique perspective on the Christmas Story and shows the reader new insights and an authentic and inspiring devotion.

Whether you read it during Advent to prepare for the birth of Christ, or another time during the year, this book is a beautiful treasure for anyone looking to deepen their faith and meet the divine love that permeates every aspect of the incarnation.

How are you called to serve?

By Lenice Nagle

The Holy Spirit Stewardship Committee encourages the sharing of time and talent from members of our parish community.

For the last few years, the Stewardship Committee has focused on the continued development of our Holy Spirit family. We are a welcoming parish that thrives on the diversity and inclusion of each member.

This effort has included several different team-building activities. For example, on the fourth weekend of each month, we have a Meet & Greet time before each Mass. This is meant to encourage us not only to recognize each other, but also to call each other by name. We also have a Name Tag weekend four times a year. We see each other often, but don't always know each other's names. Our Parish enjoys both the Meet & Greet and Name Tag weekends. There is a lot of enthusiasm as people acknowledge each other. The ushers, greeters, lectors, Eucharistic Ministers and hospitality volunteers also wear name tags at each Mass to help us get to know their names.

The Parish Celebration held each summer is another event that gives us a chance to get to know people. Oftentimes we attend the same Mass every week, and we don't get to know members who attend different Masses. It is always wonderful to see so many of our church family enjoying good food and good company!

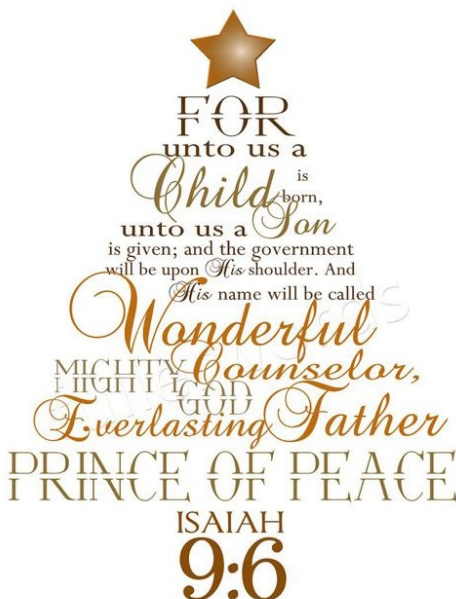
We have many parishioners who contribute to the numerous ministries and other activities at Holy Spirit. We are filled with gratitude for each of them. We encourage all members of our Parish family to find a way to serve. Each of us has a talent that would enhance our Parish family.

The many acts of kindness that occur at Holy Spirit are a sign of our welcoming and caring community. A community that strives to follow and grow in our Catholic faith. We are truly blessed.



The Parish Celebration held each summer brings our church community together for an evening of food and fellowship.

Photo courtesy Lenice Nagle



Voice of the Spirit volunteer editors: Dieter Bohrmann and Erica Hohl. Special thanks to contributors for this issue: Marjie Sloon, Cindy Ellis, Joe Bliss, Kim Barany, Theresa Barnaby, Lenice Nagle, Jim Carey, Carlos Leon, Judy Cleary, Clem Matylinski, Pat Gardner, Linda Garner, Wynona Vaz, and Debbie Forgette. The Voice of the Spirit is published each spring and fall and distributed to parishioners.

The newsletter is also available on Holy Spirit's website, <https://holyspiritkennewick.org>. Articles, photos and story ideas are always welcome! If you would like to help, please contact Dieter at 509-987-3158 or dgbohrmann@gmail.com.



When the Holy Spirit calls

By Judy Cleary

"The very fact that God has placed a certain soul in our way is a sign that God wants us to do something for him or her. It is not chance; it has been planned by God. We are bound by conscience to help him or her." – Mother Teresa

Have you ever had a pressing need to do something out of the ordinary, or a nagging thought that just does not go away? Something just pops into your head, and you wonder where did that come from? Like a thought to visit a loved one or pay a visit to a friend who you know is lonely or sick. This is the Holy Spirit working in your life, giving you an opportunity to act on it.

It happened to me last summer when I suffered a bad fall, which resulted in two surgeries and recovery at a local rehabilitation center for two months. I was assigned to a two-person bedroom. It was frustrating that the person in the other bed liked to watch television all night! I was asked if I would like to transfer to the room across the hall; that it was a better room anyway, quiet and with more sunlight. The thought of a quiet night's rest was appealing, and I agreed to the transfer. Little did I know that the person in the new room appeared to be a very sick lady.

As the days went on, a thought came to me that this person really needed some serious prayers! I wondered what I could do to help the situation. Immediately, a thought came to mind that I could pray the rosary for her. I do not pray the rosary every day,



but the Holy Spirit kept nudging me to begin saying the rosary for her.

I prayed every morning before breakfast. We had conversations now and then and I got to know her as a kind person. Daily I could see that she was becoming weaker, eating very little, and the conversations became less and less. Sometimes she would just smile and wave to me as I wheeled myself past her bed. I just kept saying that rosary every morning. For almost two months I prayed that she would receive the graces and blessings that she needed, whatever they were.

One morning it was apparent that she was dying. One of her friends came and she and I prayed the rosary by her bedside.

That evening I ate my dinner in the room as I usually did, the curtain separating us. After a while, I realized it was noticeably quiet. I did not hear her labored breathing. I wheeled over to her bedside, and then I knew, for on that mid-summer evening as the sun was going down, she had quietly left this world. She looked very peaceful.

I left the rehab center a couple of days later. I have often wondered if this sweet lady had been my special mission. She must have needed those prayers. The Holy Spirit certainly let me know what I should do. Now I am more mindful to pray the rosary more often.

Never underestimate the nudging of the Holy Spirit. He knows what He is talking about.

Don't underestimate the power of the rosary

By Jim Carey

During this Year of Prayer, one of the most powerful prayers we can use is the rosary.

Having been educated by Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for 12 years, the rosary was an important and ever-present part of my formative years. We even regularly prayed the rosary during Mass, which in those days was in inaudible Latin, so we needed something to keep our minds busy.

However, by the time I was in college, I was conflicted by the need to be focused on the words that I was saying over and over again and at the same time to meditate on the mysteries. I was not able to get an adequate explanation from the priest. After many years of infrequently praying the rosary, I finally got the answer to my dilemma from Father Baron's Catholicism series. The constant repeating of the Hail Mary provides us with a sort of background music to put us in a state of mind to more fully meditate on the mysteries.

And although we say that the rosary is a devotional prayer to Mary, it is also a meditation on the key mysteries of our faith, the incarnation (Joyful Mysteries), life (Luminous Mysteries), death (Sorrowful Mysteries), and resurrection (Glorious Mysteries) of Jesus Christ.

I find it helpful when meditating on a specific mystery to say a brief scriptural phrase before each Hail Mary. And during the fourth and fifth Sorrowful Mysteries I will use one of the Stations of the Cross or one of Jesus' last words on the cross. Since this is not possible for all mysteries, I might reflect on a picture depicting that specific event.

Father Michael has suggested that before each Hail Mary for the third Luminous Mystery, The Proclamation of the Kingdom, we meditate on a parable of Jesus that begins with "The Kingdom of Heaven is like ..."

To help with this, here are the parables. The Kingdom of Heaven may be likened to:

- * A farmer who sowed good seed in his field
- * A mustard seed
- * A treasure buried in a field



Members of Holy Spirit's Catholic Daughters group held a lighted rosary at their meeting in October.

Photo courtesy Linda Garner

- * A merchant searching for fine pearls
- * Yeast
- * A net cast into the sea
- * A king who settled accounts with his servants
- * A landowner who went out at dawn to hire workers for his vineyard
- * A king who gave a wedding feast for his son
- * Ten virgins who went out with lighted lamps to meet the bridegroom

I find that a good time to pray the rosary is when I am alone, such as when I am taking a walk, working out, or driving in my car or boat. On long walks, I can pray two rosaries. The rosary is a powerful prayer, so when you pray the rosary, include one or more intentions. I hope you are encouraged to pray the rosary often.

Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary, Pray for us.

Warm for the holidays

Members of Holy Spirit's Knights of Columbus Council delivered a truckful of new coats — more than 450 total — to Catholic Charities and the Kennewick School District as part of the Coats for Kids program. About 1,500 Knights of Columbus councils in all 50 states and 10 Canadian provinces participate in the annual program. Since Coats for Kids began in 2009, the program has distributed more than 1 million coats to ensure no children in need go without a warm coat during the winter months.



Photo courtesy Clem Matyilinski

The importance of tradition

(Continued from page 1)

decorations or activities are repeated year after year. They could also include more personal traditions, like bedtime stories, family reunions or specific ways of celebrating life milestones.

Family traditions serve to strengthen familial bonds, instill values and create a sense of belonging. They offer stability and predictability, which are particularly comforting during times of change or uncertainty. Just like Catholic traditions, family traditions create a continuity that links the past with the present and future generations.

Keeping traditions alive

My family once had many traditions that had been passed down from my great-grandparents to my grandparents to my parents to me. It kept my generation connected to my great-grandparents even though I had no memory of them. I think I shared these family traditions with my children for a time — especially when they were young. However, I also felt

that creating our own family traditions was more important than carrying on the “old ways”.

I think I may have kept something very special from being passed on to my grandchildren and beyond. The strong family connection is not nearly as apparent now as it was when I was a child, and it makes me sad.

Family traditions as well as Catholic traditions bind us directly to the past. The past is not something to hide from or bury. It is what made us who we are. It is what formed our consciences, formed our moral compass, formed our spiritual beliefs, and formed the connection to grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins.

Holding onto the past, I believe, is what keeps us grounded and facing fully forward to take on whatever the future brings. We must learn from others' actions — good or bad. We must take those lessons learned and use them to forge the future — of our families and of our faith.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Sacraments

*Sacred, visible signs of God's loving grace and presence to humanity.
Sacraments manifest the faith of the Christian community on Earth.*

Baptisms

We welcome the following who were baptized into the
Holy Spirit Parish Catholic Community from
May 1, 2024 through October 31, 2024

Luciano Christopher Calvey
Aurora Judith Tiffany
Simon Kolby Von Rotz
Vincent Xavier Lumetta
Jackson Todd Dessert
Savannah Marie Rodriguez



Deaths

May 1, 2024 through October 31, 2024
Please pray for the souls of our deceased parishioners.
May they rest in peace.

Genevieve Reisenauer
Emanuel "Bill" J. Ziegler
Jay Johnson
Dennis "Denny" Haffner
Nancy Susan Darke
John Edwin Hackert
Thomas John Sokol



Sacrament of Matrimony

May 1, 2024 through October 31, 2024

Chase Daniel Riley
and
Natalie Teresa Ka Yan Ip
Jensen Eugene Horlacher
and
Kendall Ann Roberson



Confirmation

May 1, 2024 through October 31, 2024

Fabricio Augustine Martin



Disbursements from Holy Spirit Conference of St. Vincent de Paul

April 1 through September 30, 2024

The Mission of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul: "A network of friends, inspired by Gospel values, growing in holiness and building a more just world through personal relationships with and service to people in need."

Total disbursement to the needy who contacted Holy Spirit Conference of St. Vincent de Paul for help:
\$12,903.21

Total number of neighbors helped financially: 333

Larger disbursements:

- * Utilities: \$5,183.60 (30 neighbors)
- * Gas: \$3,230.71 (66 neighbors)
- * Rent: \$697.90 (4 neighbors)
- * Food: \$2,003 (78 neighbors)

Total number of calls to the helpline: 295

Administrative costs: \$491.79

Parishioner contributions: \$20,498.26



On Oct. 12, in our parish hall, St. Vincent de Paul District Council President Ralph Grummer commissioned five new Vincentians, including two, Tim Mello and Kris Welch, from Holy Spirit. Our council, officially formed three years ago, is composed of the parish conferences from Holy Spirit, Christ the King, and St. Joseph's.

Photo courtesy Pat Gardner

Picture this!

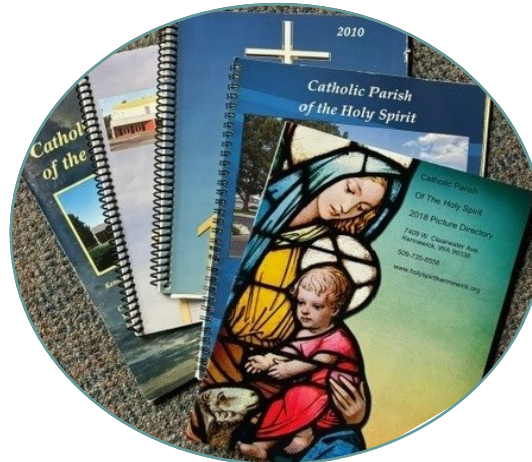
New parish directory in the works

By Wynona Vaz

Holy Spirit is in the process of producing a new parish pictorial directory. This directory is more than a collection of photographs. It is an important tool to strengthen connections and build community within the parish. Our last directory was compiled in 2018, so it is definitely time for an update! The new directory will serve several different purposes, such as:

Preserving parish history:

Every photo in the directory is a snapshot in time for our parish. Together, they help illustrate the diverse and vibrant faith life of our community. By including family photos and contact information, we create a record that reflects the changes and growth our church experiences and can show future generations the faces that have shaped their parish. It's definitely fun to look at old pictorials and see how we all have changed!



Strengthening community & belonging: In an active and growing parish, it's easy to feel lost in a sea of people. A pictorial directory provides a visual representation of our faith family. It reminds us of the value of each person and allows us to have stronger connections with fellow parishioners. This sense of belonging is essential for fostering a supportive and welcoming environment. It can also encourage individuals to connect with others with similar interests or skills and foster increased par-

ticipation in parish activities, ministries, and events.

Enhancing communication & outreach: The pictorial allows parish staff and ministry heads to update contact information and more efficiently communicate with parishioners. By keeping everyone informed about important events, programs, and opportunities for involvement, we can develop a more engaged and active parish community.

So far, we have had more than 250 Holy Spirit families participate. It's a good start, but there is certainly room for more involvement in a parish with close to 900 registered families. Your photo and information are vital to creating a comprehensive and meaningful directory. For more information on how to participate, please email holyspiritpictorial@gmail.com.

The new directory is expected to be published and distributed to parishioners in spring 2025.

New-look landscaping coming soon



The landscape is changing at Holy Spirit – literally! Crews have been working this fall to remove some large bushes and shrubs around the church, including in front of the Parish Community Center and the side door near the mailbox. The bushes had grown large enough to become a potential safety and security hazard. New, lower-profile landscaping is planned for these areas in the coming months. Stay tuned for an update in the May/June 2025 issue of Voice of the Spirit!

Photos courtesy of Dieter Bohrmann



To Gift or Not to Gift

(Continued from page 3)

this?" while smiling and saying "Thank you! I love it!"

Sometimes God gives us gifts like that. Something happens in our lives and we think, "What is this for?" Only we usually don't smile and say thank you anyway. Maybe we should. Maybe someday we'll wake up and have a real need for that gift. Then we'll look back and say "Oh yeah, this is why I had to go through that."

Maybe the whole Christmas gift-giving thing isn't just because the Wise Men brought gifts to the baby Jesus. (Who bought and wrapped those gifts, anyway? And who agonized over whether frankincense

and myrrh were appropriate gifts for a newborn? Behind every Wise Man is a Wise Woman doing all his shopping for him. But that's a different story.)

Maybe the gift giving and receiving graciously – even the gifts we don't want – is a very real reminder from God. We don't know why He sends certain situations into our lives; we don't always know how to cope with them; and we wish He'd do things the way we want. But they're gifts just the same.

So smile. Say thank you. You've gotten enough outrageous Christmas gifts to know how.

Now, let's see. What shall I get for my sister this year?

Taking the Church with us

(Continued from page 4)

spent time sitting around a fireplace drinking coffee and discussing life, faith, the kids, and our slowly degenerating bodies. Those mornings were priceless because we needed each other. We need a community of faith around us. Our Church family is a necessary thing. They are there to lift us up when we are down, to strengthen our weaknesses, to hold us accountable when it's necessary, to pray with and for us, and to love us through it all. What a beautiful thing that is.

I want to thank our Church community for supporting our youth in so many different ways. You made our SEARCH possible. Your sacrifice and prayers

were, and continue to be, a *priceless* gift. You helped to teach the teens that our Church is not and will never be contained by the walls of any structure. The Church cannot be constrained by walls because we take it with us wherever we go. Thank you for proving that in a powerful way.

The kids celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a room surrounded by bunk beds. They celebrated mass in a cabin dining room. They took the Church with them into the wilderness, and they'll continue to take it wherever they go. Let's never stop praying for their journey. And please, whatever you do, don't ever forget that Fred loves you. He really, really does.

Living on the Edge

(Continued from page 5)

Faith and fellowship

For the 2024-25 school year, Edge is discussing many topics that are at the core of our Catholic beliefs. The first one is the Eucharist where we discover the gift that God has given us, the graces we receive, and Jesus' true presence. We will also be learning about the roles of the choirs of angels, miracles, purgatory, heaven and hell. It is a packed year. Although we do take some time to have a little fun with our annual All Saints/Halloween party, Christmas social and end of year BBQ.

With the change a couple of years ago of Confirmation being administered in 8th grade, we continue to see an increase in the number of students we have. This year our program is reaching 41 middle school students. This year we even had to expand to an extra classroom to accommodate our growing group. We would like to shout out our amazing 8th-grade class who continues to have the best record for full attendance, with 6th grade close behind them. So far this group has brought great questions and deep discussion points to our lessons.

VOICE OF THE SPIRIT

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Upcoming Events

December 24, 5:00 p.m., 10:00 p.m., Christmas Eve Masses

December 25, 9:30 a.m., Christmas Day Mass

December 31, 5:00 p.m., Solemnity of Mary (New Year's Eve) Vigil Mass

January 1, 9:30 a.m., Solemnity of Mary (New Year's Day) Mass

Voice of the Spirit is online!

Can't get enough of the Parish newsletter? An archive of issues dating back more than 10 years is available on Holy Spirit's website. Visit <https://holyspiritkennewick.org> and look for the Voice of the Spirit link under the "Parish Life" tab.

The newsletter is published each spring and fall and distributed to parishioners via mail and Flock-notes. Content submissions and story ideas are accepted year-round, and volunteer writers are always welcome!

For more information about the newsletter or questions on how to submit an article, please call, text, or email Dieter Bohrmann at 509-987-3158 or dgbohrmann@gmail.com.