

The
BREAD OF LIFE
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
Family Newsletter

Family Newsletter | Issue No. 6

February 2026 | Winter Edition



BREAD OF LIFE
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

SIX CHURCHES, ONE MISSION
ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, ST. BENEDICT, CHRIST THE KING, INFANT OF PRAGUE,
ST. LEO THE GREAT, SS. PETER & PAUL

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Letter from our Pastor & Website Info.....	Page 1
About this Newsletter & Pillar Update.....	Page 2
Ash Wednesday, Ministry of Perpetual Ashes at St. Benedict Church.....	Page 3
Lenten Calendars.....	Page 4
Holy Week Calendar, Other Events in our Family.....	Page 5
Respect Life Ministry Presents NCBC, Beneath Mary's Mantle Welcomes You.....	Page 6
Ministry of C.A.R.E.....	Page 7
Ss. Peter & Paul School Fosters Life of Prayer, 108 Years Young!.....	Page 8
Family Photos.....	Page 9-10
Meet Deacon Bill Hynes, Generations of Faith.....	Page 11
Holiday Traditions and Photos.....	Page 12
The History of St. Leo the Great Parish.....	Page 13-14
Cookie Exchange at Infant of Prague Parish.....	Page 14
School Christmas Concerts – CTK and SSPP.....	Page 15
Puzzle.....	Page 16
Saint's Corner, St. Aloysius Hospitality Photos.....	Page 17
Please consider patronizing the businesses and professionals who support us.....	Page 18-19



Dear Parishioners and Friends,

We are on a Journey

All of life is a journey of discovering who we are in relationship to Jesus and others. "One psychiatrist has said that there are four 'persons' in each of us:

1. The person I think I am; 2. The person you think I am; 3. The person I really am; 4. The person I can become." This quote was taken from the book *Praying with Scripture* by Maureen Gallagher, Clare Wagner, O.P., and David Woeste. Lent is an oasis on life's journey, a time to pause from rushing around, discover who we are, reflect on how God sees us, and refocus on what is important. Here are some suggestions to guide you. Remember it is better to do a few things well than to try to do all of them and get overwhelmed.

Prayer: There are many ways to pray. All of them invite us to pray with the intention of entering the presence of God. Before praying, make an effort to bring to the forefront of your thoughts the idea that you are now entering into the presence of God, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you pray. All prayer is an invitation to have a heart to heart conversation with Jesus. So, at some point make sure you have an open and honest conversation with Jesus. Tell Him everything!

Fasting: When you are thinking about fasting also think about feasting. Examples are: fast from judging others and feast on encouraging others. Fast from bitterness, feast on forgiveness. Fast from anxiety, feast on trusting God to assist you.

Almsgiving: Giving alms is about healing our world and bringing about the Kingdom of God. How can you use your time, talent and treasure in a big or small way to help others? Accepting the challenge to bless someone everyday can be an outstanding way for all of us to begin this building of a better community. To be a blessing means to truly recognize and respect the other person. Then you try to make that person's world better.

Journal: Pray, write down your thoughts, reflect upon what you wrote and then end with a prayer. Keeping a prayer journal enables you to see Jesus' action in your life.

Companion: Jesus surrounded Himself with disciples for friendship and support. Find someone who will support, encourage and challenge you in delving deeper into life.

At the end of the day or at the beginning of the next, review your day. Start with asking God to help you see the day from His point of view. Then as you review the day, give thanks for the day and for individual things that went well. If something didn't go well, ask Jesus to help you understand why it happened and ask for God's forgiveness on anything you did wrong. Consider what lies ahead for the following day, and ask for Jesus' assistance. Try to count three special blessings you received that day.

May Jesus lead us through the desert of Lent to the springs of new life this Easter.

In Christ's peace,
Fr. David Bellittiere

If you haven't yet, please visit our new family website!

Check it out!



 www.BreadofLifeCatholicCommunity.org

Our Family Newsletter:

The purpose of our newsletter is to celebrate the life of our Bread of Life Catholic Community by sharing stories, milestones, and events that foster connection and joy. We encourage deeper participation in parish life through communication and invitations to gather. We extend a warm welcome to our family, our neighbors, and our friends.

If you'd like to share photos from upcoming Family Events for possible inclusion in our next Newsletter, please email Melinda at Communications@saintbenedicts.com

**Have the next newsletter
emailed to you, and follow us
on social media!**

Scan the QR Code or go to
linktr.ee/BreadofLifeCatholicCommunity



Bread of Life Catholic Community Pillars Update

As part of our continuation of offering updates on our six Bread of Life Family Pillars, this issue highlights our Liturgy and Administrative Pillars. You may also check our family website for more information as it becomes available, www.BreadofLifeCatholicCommunity.org.

During 2025 our Family Liturgy Pillar worked on:

1. a. Sharing of a joint list of deceased members from all 6 parishes for the Prayer of the Faithful each week.
 - b. Producing a Funeral Planning Resource booklet to be used by all 6 parishes (now in publication).
 - c. Coordination of All Souls Day /Masses of Remembrance in each parish.
2. Lector assessment, recruitment, ongoing formation, and training. Lector workbooks now available as a resource.
3. Offering a Family-wide support of Eucharistic Minister recruitment & training program, which was held at St. Leo's in November.

This year our Liturgy Pillar focus will include:

1. Liturgical Education: including Family-wide cantor recruitment, formation, and training; and identifying members of each parish for training and implementation of Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest, in the event that the need arises.
2. Theological Education: including possible workshops and presentations to foster further understanding of Sacred Scripture, Sacraments and Church teachings.

Our Family Administrative Pillar focused on:

1. Evaluating Family parish campuses for a recommendation of a Family Centralized Office site.
2. Developing a preliminary staffing model for the Administrative Functions to support the Bread of Life Catholic Community Family of Parishes.
3. Initiated a process to survey the various administrative functions in the Bread of Life Catholic Community Family of Parishes to facilitate an understanding of staffing requirements to support all the parishes in the family.

This year our Administrative Pillar focus will include:

1. Developing job descriptions for new roles in the Family Centralized Office, and finalizing our centralized staffing model and begin implementation of staffing plan.
2. Begin the process for migration of individual parish staffs to the Family Centralized Office.

Ash Wednesday

In our Family

February 18, 2026

ASH SERVICE

St. Ben's – 7:30 AM to 8:00 PM
IOP – 12 Noon
SSPP – 3 PM

MASS WITH ASHES

St. Ben's – 7 AM, 12 Noon
CTK – 7:30 AM, 12 Noon, 5 PM
(No confessions after Mass)
St. Al's – 8 AM, 7 PM
St. Leo's – 8 AM, 11:30 AM, 6:30 PM
IOP – 8:30 AM, 7 PM
SSPP – 12:05 PM

CONFESSIONS

St. Ben's – 7:30 AM to 8:00 PM

Ministry of Perpetual Ashes at St. Benedict Church

By Andrew Pitisi

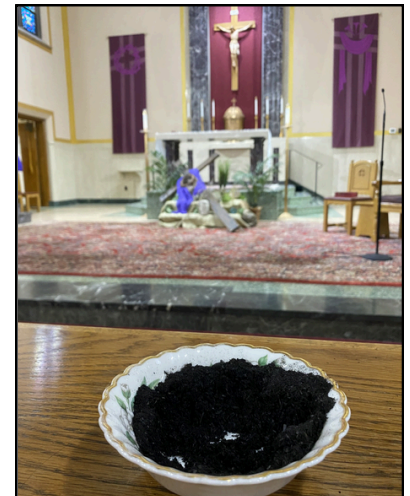
For many years now, St. Benedict Parish continues its beautiful ministry of offering Perpetual Ashes throughout the day on Ash Wednesday.

Right after the 7:00 AM morning Mass, our volunteers arrange for stations where they greet, pray with, and distribute ashes nonstop throughout the day until 8:00 PM. We also have greeters at the doors who represent the welcome of Christ. Participants are warmly greeted by staff and volunteers and then guided to a prayer station where our volunteer prays the psalm with them and distributes the ashes. In recent years, this Ash Wednesday ministry has welcomed over 3,000 people per year, many of whom do not attend Mass regularly at St. Benedict or at all. It is an opportunity to meet people where they are, and walk with them in their faith journey. In addition to receiving ashes, we have priests available at all times until 8 pm, to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Our volunteers make participants aware of this option, and offer guidance or resources to help ease their minds and hearts, as some haven't received Reconciliation in many years.

As each person leaves the Church, our volunteers hand them a bag filled with Lenten Prayer aids, information about the family Lenten retreat, Holy Week activities, and Easter Mass schedule. The bags also contain information about our regular weekend Mass times and the many ministries we offer. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to participate in the retreat or join us at one of our other activities or Mass.

Ash Wednesday's Perpetual Ashes is a highlight of what Church ministry can be: utilizing the talents, prayers, and energy of well over 100 incredible volunteers, many wonderful priests, our amazing deacons, and as mentioned, thousands of faithful from across Western NY. Pope Francis called us to accompany each other on our journeys of faith – and that is what Perpetual Ashes does at its core. It invites all of us to be lights of Christ, and all of our volunteers and participants leave this ministry changed for the better as we begin our Lenten Journeys.

This incredible ministry doesn't happen without many volunteers. If you are ready to be the light of Christ to others, are willing to walk with others in their faith journey, or looking for a unique way to start your Lenten Journey... We need you! No experience is necessary; everyone is welcome and able to be part in this ministry. If you are willing to volunteer, please email Andrew Pitisi: apitisi@saintbenedicts.com or call 716-836-6444.



Calendars Lent 2026

Key CTK: Christ the King SSPP: SS. Peter & Paul St. Ben's: St. Benedict
IOP: Infant of Prague St. Al's: St. Aloysius Gonzaga St. Leo's: St. Leo the Great

Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026

Ash Service

St. Ben's — 7:30 AM to 8:00 PM
IOP — 12 Noon
SSPP — 3 PM

Mass with Ashes

St. Ben's — 7 AM, 12 Noon
CTK — 7:30 AM, 12 Noon, 5 PM
St. Al's — 8 AM, 7 PM
St. Leo's — 8 AM, 11:30 AM, 6:30 PM
IOP — 8:30 AM, 7 PM
SSPP — 12:05 PM

Confessions

St. Ben's — 7:30 AM to 8:00 PM

Lenten Reflections & Series

Musical Evening of Reflection:

God's Mercy is Everywhere: Blessed are the Merciful, for They Shall be Shown Mercy
February 10 at 7 PM, CTK led by Msgr. Litwin

Making Your Prayers Powerful

February 12 at 1 PM, and again at 6:30 PM,
St. Al's Cafeteria, led by Fr. David Bellittiere

Experiencing Christ through the Sunday

Gospels - Retreat

6:30 - 8 PM at St. Leo's Parish Center
Tuesday, February 17 & 24, March 3
Monday, March 9
Tuesday, March 17 & 24
Monday, March 30

Encountering Jesus Through the Gospel of Matthew - Scripture Series

Thursdays, February 19 - March 12 at 6:30 PM
SSPP Church, Led by Fr. Moses

Women's Lenten Retreat

February 21 from 9 AM to 12 Noon
St. Leo's Parish Center, Speaker: Sr. Louise Alff OSF

Week of Prayer & Fasting March 1 - 7

- **Holy Hour:** March 4 at 7 PM, St. Leo's
- **Day of Service:** March 7, details to come

Presentation: "They Were There" - Reflections on the Way of the Cross: March 27 at 7 PM, IOP Church

Lenten Meals

St. Leo the Great - Lenten Fish Fry

Every Friday February 20 - April 3
4 - 7 PM or until sold out, St. Leo's Parish Center

CTK Fish Fry

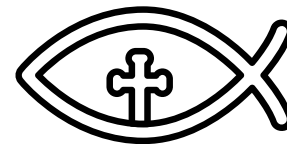
February 27 from 4:30-7:30 PM, CTK School Gym

IOP Soup and Sandwiches

February 27 & March 27 at 5 PM
IOP school hall, use door #3

St. Joseph's Table

March 19 from 5:30 to 8 PM,
Henesey Hall at IOP Please RSVP (716) 634-3660



Penance Services

February 23 at 6:30 PM, CTK
March 12 at 3 PM, St. Al's (with Soup Supper)
March 23 at 6:30 PM, St. Ben's

Stations of the Cross

St. Al's — Fridays after 8 AM Mass
— Good Friday at 7 PM
St. Ben's — Fridays at 4 PM, None on Good Friday
CTK — Fridays February 27 (Pro-Life Stations),
March 13 (Mary Stations) & March 27
at 7 PM
SSPP — Fridays February 20, March 6 & 20
at 7 PM
IOP — Fridays February 20 through March 20
at 7 PM
St. Leo's — Fridays at 7 PM



Holy Week:

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday Vigil - March 28

Regular Mass Schedule

Palm Sunday - March 29

Regular Mass Schedule



Holy Thursday April 2

Shared Supper- 5:30 PM at St Leo the Great followed by 7 PM Mass and Adoration

Each Family Church will have Mass of the Holy Supper at 7 PM followed by Adoration

Good Friday

April 3

Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion:

Christ the King - 1:00 PM

St. Aloysius - 3 PM

St. Leo the Great - 3 PM

Holy Saturday

April 4

Blessing of the Easter Baskets:

St. Benedict - 12 Noon

Infant of Prague - 12 Noon

St. Aloysius - 1 PM

St. Leo the Great - 1 PM

SS. Peter & Paul - 1 PM

Christ the King - 2 PM

Easter Vigil

St. Benedict with OCIA - 8:00 PM

SS. Peter & Paul - 8:00 PM

Easter Sunday April 5

St. Aloysius - 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM

St. Benedict - 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM

Christ the King - 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:00 Noon

Infant of Prague - 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM

St. Leo the Great - 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM

SS. Peter & Paul - 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM



More Opportunities for Reconciliation:

Christ the King: Wednesdays at 5:35 PM

St. Leo the Great: Wednesdays at 5:30 PM followed by 6:30 PM Mass

St. Aloysius Gonzaga | Sat. 4-4:30 PM

St. Benedict | Sat. 4-4:45 PM

Infant of Prague | Sat. 3-3:45 PM

St. Leo the Great | Sat. 3-3:45 PM

Ss. Peter & Paul | Sat. 3:30-4:15 PM

Other Events in our Family

Hospitality Weekends:

St. Leo the Great - March 7 & 8, after all Masses

St. Aloysius - March 1, after 10 AM Mass

Infant of Prague - March 1

after 8:30 AM & 10:30 AM Masses

St. Benedict - February 21 & 22, March 21 & 22

after all Masses

Christ the King - "Meet, Greet & Eat"

March 8, after all Masses

King of Kings Movie with Pizza

March 15 at 1:30 PM, St. Aloysius School Cafeteria

Bread of Life Respect Life Ministry Presents: National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) Spotlight


During the season of Lent, Christians are invited to journey with Jesus through the last days of His life. We know those days were filled with sorrow and suffering for our Lord. We also know the glorious conclusion of the story: Victory over death has been purchased for us through His suffering and His death and resurrection. Jesus has opened Heaven for us. Therefore, no matter the journey we follow at the end of our lives, we do so with the confidence that our ultimate prize is everlasting life in the peace of Christ.

End-of-life journeys may be filled with many struggles, medical treatments, and questions for patients and caregivers alike. We do not have to face those end-of-life concerns alone. **The Catholic Church will walk with us – and we can rely on the National Catholic Bioethics Center (NCBC) for trusted advice and guidance.** The guidance provided by the NCBC upholds the dignity of the human person in healthcare and biomedical research, and it is aligned with the teachings of Christ and His Church.

Parishioners may have already noticed the NCBC resources that are available in the vestibules of all our Bread of Life churches, including copies of the NCBC guides: **“A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions”** and **“A Catholic Guide to Palliative Care and Hospice.”**

We also invite parishioners to join us for a viewing of the NCBC video, *The Gift of Dying Well*. All are welcome for this FREE event! See details in the adjoining ad.

THE BREAD OF LIFE
RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY
Presents
NCBC Video:
THE GIFT OF DYING WELL



Featuring Fr. Tad Pacholczyk, a Senior Ethicist at the NCBC, this is an excellent talk touching on many of the medical, ethical and spiritual aspects of the end-of-life.

All are Welcome!

**Tuesday, April 14, 2026
7 PM at St Leo the Great
Parish Center**

No registration required

For more information, please contact
Rose Quebral at (716) 319-7657 or
rosemaryquebral@gmail.com



Beneath Mary’s Mantle Rosary - All Are Welcome!

Beneath Mary’s Mantle of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish is a rosary prayer gathering that meets every month in the beautiful Our Lady of the Assumption Garden, located outside next to Ss. Peter & Paul Church. The group meets in the Garden during the warmer months and in the Neumann Room behind the church during the winter. Tuesday Zoom Rosary is another prayer opportunity offered during the winter season. Please feel welcomed to join and enjoy time of reflection and fellowship!

Rosary Meeting Information

Winter: Gather in Neumann room behind SSPP church

Summer: Gather in the Garden

Meets every second Saturday at 9 AM
Feb. 14, March 14, April 11,
May 9, June 13, July 11, August 8

Zoom Rosary Information:

Meet on Zoom, every Tuesday at 7 PM from January to May

Zoom Log in:

Meeting ID: 469 621 5756

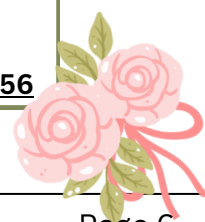
Passcode: Create26

Log in Link:

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/4696215756>

All are welcome!

Call or text Gina at (716) 868-6296 for more info.



Ministry of C.A.R.E

Crocheting And Reaching Everyone, Sharing Love, Hope and Prayer...

By Kathy Halliday



In April of 2024, St. Benedict Parish began a heartfelt mission of spreading love, hope and prayer through the special ministry of sharing “Pocket Hugs” and “Prayer Squares”. Each is crocheted by hand, made with prayer, individually wrapped, blessed by our priests, then placed in baskets for you to take! The original baskets were placed at St. Benedict Church, and we have now expanded to St. Aloysius, Infant of Prague, and the Christ the King Adoration Chapel! They can help someone pray, brighten their day or just let them know that someone cares. It is a small gift with a big spiritual message!

Passing on these small tokens of love, hope and prayer is an easy way to get involved in a loving and creative way. They can be kept, or given to family, friends, strangers, put into Easter baskets, Christmas stockings, birthday cards, get-well cards, given as favors at luncheons, to doctors, nurses, patients in waiting rooms, students, police officers, priests, teachers, someone grieving a loss, given at nursing homes and the list continues!

What is a “Pocket Hug”?

Small, crocheted Hearts, attached to a small colorful card, with a powerful, positive, encouraging message. They are meant to provide comfort, support and are a reminder of God’s unwavering love for you! God is always with you!



What is a “Prayer Square”?

Small, crocheted squares with a cross embossed on one side and a small card attached with a prayer and message. They can be held in your hand when you pray or put into a pocket. A physical reminder that God hears your prayers and is with you always. You are not alone.



April 2024:

Began with two baskets with **116 Pocket Hugs** and **75 Prayer Squares**. Each basket was filled weekly and we learned all the creative ways these small handmade items were being gifted.

September 2024:

In just six months, we distributed 1,026 Pocket Hugs and 506 Prayer Squares.

December 2024:

Nine months into this wonderful ministry, we had distributed 1,828 Pocket Hugs and 988 Prayer Squares and the journey continues!

April 2025:

By our one-year anniversary of this ministry, we now distributed 3,503 Pocket Hugs and 1,593 Prayer Squares.

December 2025:

We have now distributed a combined total of over **10,000** Pocket Hugs and Prayer Squares!

We continue to grow!!! We now have a group of volunteers that help assemble and package the items, and replenish the baskets at our churches. Our ministry also donates the Pocket Hugs to Beechwood Nursing Home and Briarwood Nursing Home for the residents. We recently have been given an official name! We are “St. Benedict’s Ministry of C.A.R.E.” (Crocheting And Reaching Everyone)!

We will continue our amazing journey, making a difference one small gesture at a time...together! Take a couple today, for yourself and for a friend! Experience how much happiness there is in gifting a small token of love and friendship to someone that may need a reason to smile!

If you are interested in joining St. Benedict’s Ministry Of C.A.R.E. or would like the pattern for the Pocket Hug, please call 716-836-6444. You can also find the pattern on our New Family website, under the Faith & Life Resources tab. www.BreadofLifeCatholicCommunity.org

Ss. Peter & Paul School Fosters Life of Prayer

By Dr. Betsy Hartzell and Patricia Herweg

SS. Peter & Paul School has a special sacred space set up for students: The Atrium. The Atrium room is part of the Montessori *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd* program. This space gives the children hands on experience with imagining the life of Jesus. Here, the Gospels are made real through hands on materials and figurines. The children explore the life of Jesus from Christmas, his Birth in the stable at Bethlehem, preaching in the temple, to His death on the Cross.



Scripture is read and the children are guided to think about what they have heard and understood. They then pray together. The Atrium is a very special space shared by the entire school, as they believe that praying with children is the gift of forming a relationship with Christ. It is forging the love of God and of prayer. The following describes what a session might look like in the Atrium room.

A Scripture text is selected, the candle is lit with the words “Jesus said ...” and the children’s response, “I am the light of the world.”

“He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all of his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers”

The Catholic Prayer Bible New Revised Standard Version, p. 1690

The candle is extinguished, but the interior fire of love is enkindled. Children are guided to think about what they hear in the scriptural passage. “I heard it said that he is the good shepherd,” said Francisco. “I have everything I need,” said Emily. Charles shared, “Jesus can do anything and He protects you.”



“I wonder, who is the shepherd?” “Jesus is the Good Shepherd and we are the sheep,” exhorted Emily. “He is the shepherd and defends us from attacks,” offered Miriam. I wonder what it means to be called by name ... I wonder who would be a stranger ... I wonder what it means to know ... I wonder why the sheep only listen to the voice of their master and would not follow a stranger ... “The sheep do not know the stranger, so they do not know if he is a good guy or a bad guy,” said Francisco.

In the silence of their hearts’ children remain in the presence of God. Finally, children think about and share how they can set the Word into action, and prayer closes with a song.

Photos show the Montessori Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program at Saints Peter & Paul School.

108 Years Young! Happy Birthday, Bob Noonan 🎉



During a Mass on December 14, 2025, St. Al's Parish Family celebrated a milestone for Mr. Bob Noonan who turned 108 yrs. young. He has been a parishioner of St. Al's for over 70 years. We were honored that one of our celebrants was Fr. Mark Noonan, a grandson of Bob Noonan and son of our parish who graduated from St. Al's school. He and Fr. David Bellittiere, our pastor, concelebrated the Mass, that included many members of Bob's family who joined us for the celebration. Bob takes only 2 pills every day, a D-3 vitamin and AREDS 2 for his eyes. God's blessings on Mr. Noonan and his family.



Christmas in OUR Family



*St. Aloysius Gonzaga
Mass and Choir*



*Christ the King
Children's Mass*



St. Leo the Great



St. Benedict



St. Peter & Paul



Infant of Prague





Christmas Fairs & Breakfast with Santa

St. Leo the Great



St. Aloysius Gonzaga



Infant of Prague



Meet Deacon Bill Hynes

Submitted By Patricia Herweg



Born in the Black Rock area of Buffalo, Deacon Bill Hynes is the oldest of 3 children. His mother was a homemaker and his father a machinist at Ford.

His calling to serve the Church led him to Christ the King Seminary, where he began his formal training. Interestingly, for married men pursuing the diaconate, the journey begins with their spouse’s blessing. Not only must they receive her permission to enter the program, but she also participates in monthly formation sessions throughout his five years of preparation. Deacon Bill has been serving in this diaconate ministry for 27 years. He is currently assigned to serve at St. Benedict and St. Aloysius parishes; as well as working with many different religious groups: Muslim, Sikhs, Jews, Christian Communities to name a few.

Deacon Bill received his BA degree from Buffalo State in Medieval Philosophy with a minor in Latin. He continues his longtime career in education, teaching 12th grade religion courses at St. Joseph Collegiate Institute. The Christian Brothers instilled in him a calling to extend his teaching ministry around the world. He won a scholarship to teach in Egypt and Israel at Christian Brother Schools. That scholarship started Deacon Bill on his travels teaching around the world. He remarked that Vietnam was the most unique and special place he was able to visit and that Thailand had the best food and the largest Christian Brothers School, with over 5,000 students.

Deacon Bill Hynes loves pizza—any style, from any place. A gifted musician, he enjoys playing both the piano and the organ, and finds joy in reading and exploring new destinations. When time allows, he and his wife can often be found visiting Niagara-on-the-Lake. He shared that Our Blessed Mother has a strong presence in his life. Above all, Deacon Bill finds his greatest fulfillment in his ministry: preaching, teaching, and connecting with new families through the Diaconate.

Generations of Faith

Generations of Faith is the Faith Formation program of St Benedict and St Leo the Great Parishes. It is a full-family program that gathers for Mass, a meal, and a lesson.

In December, families were given ‘gold’ coins and encouraged to give the coins to one another along with an affirmation. We may not always have physical gifts to give, but we can always give our love and gratitude. They were also given seeds of Lucy Wheat, to plant one seed every time they did a good deed. By Christmas time, they could cut the wheat, and lay their baby Jesus in the Manger, on a bed of their good deeds.

This is just one of the many Faith Formation Programs in our Family of Parishes. Please see our new Family Website for more information on our many programs. www.BreadofLifeCatholicCommunity.org



Blessing of the Manger at St Benedict

St. Benedict Church placed a beautiful new Manger at the corner of Main and Eggert. ABC Hardware, Robert DiPasquale, and crew completely rebuilt and reimagined the manger with funding donated by the St. Benedict Rosary Altar Society. Thank you to all involved! A blessing and dedication was held the weekend before Christmas.



A New Tradition at St. Aloysius

This Christmas, St. Aloysius Church did something different. Parishioners were asked to bring in an ornament to hang on the Church Christmas trees on the altar. They were not to be breakable or heirlooms, but something to join the parishioners together with the Parish Community. After the Christmas season was over, families were to take them home for their own tree next year.



St. Leo the Great Young at Heart Christmas Party

St. Leo’s Senior Club had a wonderful turn out of about 75 people, at their annual Christmas Party at Classics V.

Young at Heart (55+) Social Club meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at St. Leo the Great Parish Center. Doors open at Noon and meetings begin at 1 PM They have speakers, games, and wonderful people!

For more information, contact Kathy at 716-861-8846.

From Farmland to Family: The History of St. Leo the Great Parish

By Mary Siedlikowski

The development of St. Leo the Great Church arose from the needs of the growing Church during the 1950's. In 1953, the Diocese of Buffalo established the parish, and land on Sweet Home Road was designated as the site. Parishioners first met for Mass in the Northtown Plaza parking lot. The school was built to meet the faith formation and education of the children. Ground was broken on Ascension Day in 1954, and the school opened for children grades K-8 by September of that year. Masses were celebrated in the school basement. In 1970, the present church was built.



According to Msgr. Zapfel, former Pastor of St. Leo the Great Church, a wealth of exceptional priests guided the parish's growth. Father Cletus Snyder, the founding pastor, was "an outgoing and charming entrepreneur, and used his creative spirit to bring people together." Next, Msgr. Patrick Dineen, a one-time associate pastor at St. Benedict's with a brogue from his native Ireland, "is still remembered for his wonderful smile and dedication to the parish." Msgr. William McDonnell, the third pastor, "was an extremely ..



bright and competent administrator, instrumental in guiding many diocesan seminarians and newly ordained priests in the service of God's people." And it was Msgr. Zapfel who served as pastor for the following 21 years, until 2023. Our current pastor, Fr. David Bellittiere was appointed Pastor of Family 16 (the Bread of Life Catholic Community) in 2024 and continues to faithfully lead and guide St. Leo Parish community.

About 10 years ago, the facilities of the parish were greatly expanded to include a new parish center and an event center, enabling the parish to broaden its ministries and services to both the parish and the wider community. In addition, the Church building was renovated with the installation of new stained-glass windows. These depict saints with smiles that reflect the joy of the faith which they lived and which we are called to reflect in our lives. Another update to the church was the acquisition of its Stations of the Cross from St. Patrick Church in Salamanca. These were artfully renewed and lend to the church's prayerful atmosphere.

Stained-glass Windows



Jesus,
located in the chapel

Saint Ann
with Saint Mary

Saint Teresa of
Calcutta

Saint
Frances Cabrini

St. Leo the Great History Continued

Of course, a parish is only as strong as its members. Thanks to the generosity of so many parishioners and numerous volunteers, our organizations and ministries continue to contribute to the strength of St. Leo's and its outreach to our surrounding community. It has been edifying to see more and more young families and young adults joining us for liturgies, and getting involved in our parish community and outreach ministries. There is great hope for a future built on faith and service, as our St. Leo Parish community continues to live the Gospel.



*We ♥ our
Volunteers
Who make it all possible*

Cookie Exchange at Infant of Prague Parish

Another successful Cookie Exchange and Outreach! This has become a wonderful tradition at Infant of Prague Parish. Taking an evening out to relax and enjoy a visit with friends, new and old... parishioners donated a ton of cookies to our St Vincent de Paul Food Pantry - hopefully giving some of our neighbors a little gift for Christmas! Just look at those cookies and all those smiling faces!



School Christmas Concerts



Christ the King

Students from CTK performed a Christmas program for family and friends, led by Miss Kate Joslyn. Each class sang a song, the CTK band performed, and the Nativity story was told.



**SS.
Peter
& Paul**



THE CRADLE OF CHRISTIANITY

Created by Mary Siedlikowski

Directions: After you find all the words in the grid, place the remaining letters on the lines provided, working from left to right. The final solution will spell out a bible verse.

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------|-----------------|
| ANTIOCH | DAMASCUS | MACEDONIA |
| ARIMATHEA | EGYPT | MOUNT OF OLIVES |
| ATHENS | EPHESUS | MOUNT TABOR |
| BETHANY | EPHRAIM | NAIN |
| BETHLEHEM | GALATIA | NAPHTHALI |
| BETHSAIDA | GALILEE | NAZARETH |
| CAESAREA | GENNESARET | ROME |
| CALVARY | JERUSALEM | SAMARIA |
| CANA | JORDAN RIVER | SIDON |
| CAPERNAUM | JUDEA | THESSALONICA |
| CORINTH | LYSTRA | TYRE |
| CYPRUS | | ZEBULUN |

T	H	E	S	E	V	I	L	O	F	O	T	N	U	O	M
Y	C	B	E	T	H	S	A	I	D	A	H	Y	D	E	A
V	N	A	O	T	E	D	T	H	E	M	E	S	E	N	A
N	L	A	E	V	E	S	T	M	O	T	S	E	A	I	A
A	A	C	H	S	S	N	E	H	T	A	S	C	T	N	H
Z	I	C	N	T	A	H	G	T	H	E	A	A	T	A	P
A	O	C	A	P	E	R	N	A	U	M	L	I	S	E	T
R	L	E	T	L	S	B	E	T	O	A	O	T	E	H	R
E	H	E	H	Y	V	M	C	A	G	C	N	L	N	D	O
T	R	T	Z	O	R	A	E	M	H	M	I	U	A	M	B
H	E	N	N	E	A	E	R	L	L	L	C	M	I	L	A
B	V	R	S	I	B	E	I	Y	A	F	A	A	N	R	T
A	I	E	A	T	R	U	G	G	O	S	R	T	I	H	T
R	R	L	M	S	E	O	L	Y	C	H	U	M	B	R	N
T	N	E	A	A	E	K	C	U	P	Y	A	R	I	N	U
S	A	G	R	T	O	N	S	E	N	T	P	F	E	T	O
Y	D	H	I	O	H	E	N	B	H	R	E	R	A	J	M
L	R	D	A	A	M	P	N	E	P	H	E	S	U	S	D
N	O	D	I	S	T	E	A	O	G	P	R	A	Y	S	E
R	J	U	D	E	A	A	I	N	O	D	E	C	A	M	S

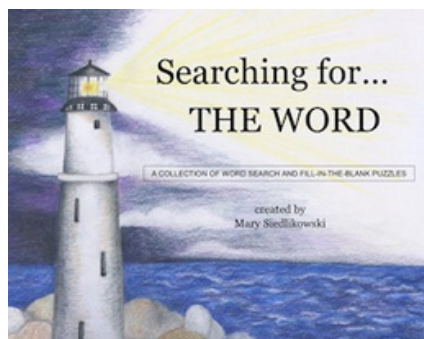
-----,

-----,

-----,

-----.

Answer: Acts 2:42 NAB



Enjoying the word search and fill-in-the-blank puzzles found in the Bread of Life Family Newsletter?

Mary Siedlikowski offers a book of 100 of them for \$20! They can be picked up, delivered, or shipped. Just email her at art143mary@gmail.com to request your copy today!

Saint's Corner **Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati | 1901-1925 | Feast day July 4th**

By Carol Mathner



In September 2025, Pope Leo XIV canonized a holy young man, Pier Giorgio Frassati. Pier was born on April 6, 1901 in Turin, Italy. His father, Alfredo Frassati, was an agnostic who owned a newspaper, was a member of the Italian Senate and served as the ambassador to Germany. His mother, Adélaïde Ametis, was a painter whose work was purchased by King Victor Emmanuel III.

St. Frassati's deep desire to help others was apparent early in childhood. Once, he answered the door to find a mother begging with her shoeless child. He took off his shoes and gave them to her. Another instance he saw his father refuse help to a drunken man. In response, Frassati told his mother, who told him to find the man and give him something to eat.

An average student, he was known among his peers for his intelligence and devotion to the Eucharist and the Rosary. He was an avid athlete who enjoyed swimming and climbing mountains, which included the Grand Tournalin and Monte Viso.

Frassati became a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic in 1922 and adopted the name "Girolamo", in honor of Girolamo Savonarola, a 15th century Dominican friar.

In 1918, he joined a St. Vincent de Paul conference and began spending most of his time helping the poor and less fortunate. He studied mining engineering to spread the word of Christ among the miners. After graduating, his father offered him a car or a sizeable monetary fund. He chose the latter and gave the funds to the poor and needy.

On June 30, 1925 he came home from an outing with sharp pains in his back muscles, and a fever. A few days later he was diagnosed with poliomyelitis, which he believed he contracted from the sick he served. He died on at July 4, 1925 in his mother's arms saying, "May I breathe forth my soul in peace with you."

It was expected that many high profile figures would attend his funeral due to his mother and father's status. What wasn't expected was that thousands of mourners lined the streets. He was buried in his family's plot at the Pollone Cemetery, and then transferred to the Turin Cathedral in 1981. Upon inspection, his remains were found to be incorrupt, which is often seen as a sign that the individual is a saint. Due to his young age and incredible ministry to the sick and poor, as well as his work for reform, he continues to be an inspiration to many people – especially our young Catholics!

In 1932, the poor of Turin petitioned the Archbishop of Turin to begin the process of canonization. In 1978, Frassati was titled a Servant of God, and Pope John Paul II beatified him in Saint Peter's Square on May 20, 1990. On September 7, 2025, Pope Leo XIV canonized him and Carlo Acutis.

"Charity is not enough; we need social reform."
~Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati

St Aloysius Hospitality



Thank you to our generous sponsors, who are all parishioners at the Bread of Life Catholic Community!

Please consider patronizing the businesses and professionals who support us.



If you would like to advertise in the next newsletter, please email Melinda at communications@saintbenedicts.com



The gift of Faith

Catholic goods



Everyday faith living should be beautiful and functional.



We are dedicated to curating a unique selection of modern Catholic products that elevate the beauty of our faith.

Baptismal gowns, First Communion Dresses, Faith based toys, books, home goods and much more!

OWNED AND OPERATED BY BREAD OF LIFE PARISHONER

5742 Main st.
Williamsville, NY
14221

202-855-6022

thegiftoffaith.shop

@thegiftoffaith.shop

northtown automotive companies



Official Automotive Dealer

Northtown is your trusted destination for variety, value, and excellence.

Along with 20 top automotive brands and 14 convenient locations, we're more than just cars, we're your neighbors.

DRIVEN TO SERVE. DRIVEN TO GIVE. DRIVEN TO BE BETTER.

Proudly rooted in WNY, Northtown takes pride in giving back, supporting local organizations, schools, and families.



Wills, Trusts & Estates

Robert C. Freeman, Esq.

Bread of Life Parishioner

rfreeman@nft-law.com

(716) 688-3800
Ext. 219



The Power Agent® Advantage

The Confidence of 30+ Years Experience

Robert & Joyce Grinewich
Lic. Associate Real Estate Brokers
716-208-6129 / 716-208-0453



Nesper, Freeman & Tyrpak LLP

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Attorney Advertising



Various products can be found in your local Wegmans, Tops, Dollar Tree, Family Dollar, Dash's and Wal Mart. Looking for a specific product? Find the right store on our website.

www.libbysbrand.com