



THE

VOICE

A Praying, Teaching, Caring, Serving Sign of God's Presence



YOUTH MINISTRY SOARS THROUGH SUMMER!

Submitted by Joe Ollier

*June 27, 11:00 PM. It was ninety degrees earlier today. We've got no air conditioning, so inside the house it's still in the 80's, even this late. The fan rattles against the window frame, pushing around hot air. If I lay still maybe I won't sweat **all** the way through the sheets. I'm tired, but too wired to sleep. I better be out soon, though, because it's Sunday night and we've got a big week ahead. Somehow I've got to be up by 6 AM ready to work.*



Hardly sounds like the ideal start to a great work week, but it was. That's the beauty of a mission trip. Somehow, when you're giving time back to God, some of the things that normally matter so much, like air conditioning, lose their importance. That was one of the great lessons learned by the 12 young people and 3 adults who spent June 27 to July 2 in Cincinnati working with the Franciscans for the Poor. While the focus of our week was working for and with the poor, we found ourselves learning a lot about simplicity, living in community, and the impact small actions can have when done with great love. We call our week **SOAR – Step Out And Respond** – and we take that to heart. We did a lot of stepping out of our comfort zones in our attempt to respond to Jesus' call to serve "the least of these."

Our residence for the week was the Tau House, a former Franciscan convent in St. Bernard, a neighborhood just north of downtown Cincinnati. We shared the house, the daily cooking and cleaning chores, and most of our free time that week with a group of teenagers from St. James Lutheran Church in suburban Columbus. Each morning began with Mass at the Franciscan Friary next door, where we were welcomed with open arms. It was a joy to join the Friars at the Eucharistic table each morning, and it was a great way to frame our whole week in the loving sacrifice of Jesus. After a quick breakfast we would participate in an activity and prayer to help us focus our efforts for the day and then we were off to our worksites by 8:30 AM.

Every day the young people had six different worksite options. Those with the desire to do physical work could spend the day with CHP (Cincinnati Housing Partners) or HONK (Housing Opportunities of Northern Kentucky), **(continued on page 2)**

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two organizations that rehab homes in the area. More direct contact with the poor could be found at an inner city day-care, a local center for the developmentally disabled, or at Mercy Franciscan St John, where we prepared and served lunch each day. Other agencies we worked for included Matthew 25 Ministries, which collects and ships out relief supplies all over the country and the world; the Rose Garden, an amazing ministry which supports poor women in crisis pregnancies; and CAIN, a local food pantry.

Our evenings were interesting, to say the least. One night was spent with speakers from the Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, learning about the causes and the results of homelessness. Another was spent with the Franciscan Sisters at their convent. But we also found plenty of time for fun – taking in a Reds game and “Salsa on the Square” – an evening of free Salsa music and dancing in the heart of downtown. It was something special to see 30 young people dancing back to our cars that night. One thing I learned about our group over the week was that we did everything all out – we worked hard, we prayed hard, and we played hard.

The worst thing about the week was that it was over so soon. It felt like we had barely just begun when it was time to go. For one thing, it feels great to give – whether it be time, talent, or treasure. As Paul writes to Timothy, when we do good works, we begin to **“take hold of the life that is truly life.”** (1 Timothy 6:19) For another, there was still so much to do. Our little time was but a drop in an ocean of need. And so we will return next year, and we will keep serving, because Jesus’ command to serve isn’t complete until the needs of all his children are met.

Before we had even reached the midway point of the week the kids from both churches were talking about getting together over the school year and coming back next summer.



Our graduating seniors, meanwhile, took the first steps toward a young adult mission trip for next year. The Lord was clearly at work that week, changing lives and changing hearts. All in all, giving up air conditioning for a few days was a small price to pay.

If you’d like to participate in SOAR, we have 1 more one-day opportunity this summer – we call it a **SOAR Summer Short – August 10**. Info packets are at the church doors. If you’d like to join us for next summer’s week in Cincy, look for info late this fall!

ONE BREAD ONE BODY EUCCHARISTIC PROCESSION

The One Bread One Body Eucharistic procession will be held this year at St Helen Parish on **Saturday, September 25 beginning with dinner after the 5:00 Masses**, followed by a Eucharistic procession through the neighborhood beginning at approximately 7:00 p.m. The evening will conclude with Benediction in the church and desserts afterward in the St. Helen gym. **Come be a part of the fellowship and devotion to our Lord.**

Details for will follow in the bulletin. You can also visit our parish website at <http://www.ascensionkettering.org/>

JOIN ASCENSION'S COMMITMENT TO THE EARTH

Submitted by David Wheeler Reed

With his encyclical *Charity and Truth* as well as his World Day of Peace message, Pope Benedict XVI is asking all Catholics to take seriously their commitment to the Earth. Whether one believes in "climate change" or not, we as Christians have a mandate to be good stewards of our planet, which goes all the way back to the first three chapters of Genesis. We are not called "to dominate" the Earth, nor "to rule over it." No, we are called to take care of it as farmers take care of their fields or as a biblical king took care of his kingdom. In fact, St. Paul reminds us that just as we long for the return of Christ, so does all of creation cry out for redemption (Romans 8).

Here at Ascension we've begun a new sub-group under the Discipleship Committee that will be committed to exploring ways that our parish and our parish families can help heal creation and live out our biblical mandate to be good stewards of the planet Earth. As a first step please consider signing the St. Francis Pledge at www.catholicclimatecovenant.org. (This pledge is supported by the Archdiocese and Archbishop Schnurr).

If you are interested in being part of this sub-group please contact me, David Wheeler-Reed, at drdwheeler-reed@me.com.

VBS EXPLORES THE SON- QUEST RAINFOREST

Submitted by Lauren Boyd

This year I had the pleasure of guiding a group of nine 5 year olds through a week full of stories, music, crafts and games. We learned how to plant seeds, find lost sheep, help those in need, share our talents and to never give up on what we believe. It was amazing to watch as these children heard the teachings of Jesus and learned how to apply them to their daily lives.



Ascension's Vacation Bible School (VBS) ran from July 12 through July 16. This year's theme was SonQuest Rainforest. The children learned songs, made crafts and played games based on a rainforest theme. Every day had a motto to go along with the bible story. Get It (The Parable of the Sower), Get Found (The Parable of the Lost Sheep), Get God's Love (The Parable of the Good Samaritan), Get Praying (The Parable of the Midnight Knockers), and Get Going (The Parable of the Talents). At the end of each day the children were given a mission based on the bible story they were taught. Monday was the Parable of the Sower and they were asked to do something with an open heart and be like the good soil from the story. The next morning the children were all eager to share how they had completed their missions. As a service project the children were asked to bring in nonperishable food items and toiletry items to be donated to the Food Pantry. The donations from the week filled three large bins! The week concluded on Friday with a morning Mass, music program and slide show presentation.

This was the fourth year for Vacation Bible School at Ascension. There were 30 adult volunteers, 40 teen helpers and 135 campers. All volunteers were given special thanks during the closing program on Friday. Support from Sue Graham and Katherine Wagner in the RE Office and help from the janitors was greatly appreciated.

Cyndy Pellegrino volunteered as lead coordinator for a fourth time this year and made sure that everything ran smoothly. The position is currently open for next year and a volunteer is required. Ascension is blessed to have so many adult and teen volunteers working to keep the VBS program going. New volunteers are always wanted and welcome.

CONFIRMATION IS OUR PERSONAL PENTECOST

Submitted by Sue Graham

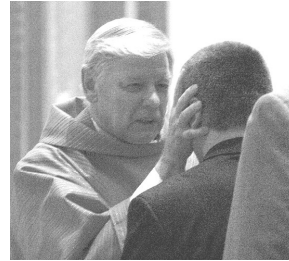
If you were at the celebration of Confirmation here at Ascension this past April you witnessed seventy-nine students process up to Fr. Dave Brinkmoeller, hand off a card with the Confirmation name they had chosen, and then watch as Fr. Dave marked their foreheads with the sign of the cross using the chrism oil and saying, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." Each child responded, "Amen" and then Fr. Dave offered them a sign of peace, shaking their hand and saying, "Peace be with you," and the students responded, "and also with you." Over and over and over again, seventy-nine times, each one exactly the same.

Perhaps it seemed simply repetitious and meaningless to many, but was it more than that? Were the students and even Fr. Dave just going through the motions? Or was there something deeper happening? I for one believe so. For if you were really watching that evening, as each student came forward and was presented by his or her sponsor, it was evident that this was a very personal and spiritual experience between the confirmandi and Fr. Dave – everything and everyone else just faded from view.

Of course, Fr. Dave is gifted and created the intense experience through his focus and concentration. As we were preparing the students beforehand, we had told them, most notably the girls, that Fr. Dave was quite generous with the chrism oil. But we also told them this was important as it reminded us of the symbol of strength that the Holy Spirit provides us with as we are sent forth to live out the Gospel and share the good news with others. And Fr. Dave met our expectations! From where I was standing I could only see Fr. Dave's face, not the students, but upon seeing his face and by looking into his eyes, as were the students – it was truly an encounter that won't soon be forgotten. I don't know quite how to describe it except to say that truly the Holy Spirit was working through Fr. Dave that evening, and I believe ALL the students felt His power and presence.

I read somewhere that theologians suggest that the Holy Spirit is the "personification" of the love between the Father and the Son. Perhaps what I saw was that love freely given through Fr. Dave to each one of those students. The Holy Spirit was sending down His blessings upon each one of the confirmandi through the actions of Fr. Dave. They are now full members of the Catholic Church ready to go out and begin their ministry, begin their call to action. The symbols, smells, and sights witnessed remind us of just how powerful this sacrament truly is, and how wonderful the gifts truly are.

The celebration of confirmation has changed many times over the years. The age for being confirmed has varied from century to century and even from diocese to diocese or parish to parish. The way the sacrament is practiced has shifted depending on culture, practical and pastoral needs, and the insights of theologians and religious educators.



As Sr. Kathleen Glavich states in her book, *The Gift of Confirmation*, "What has remained constant, however, is the essence of confirmation. This special, 'once-in-a-lifetime' sacrament is designed to deepen our relationship with Christ and his Church and to celebrate the presence and action of the Holy Spirit within us and within the church."

Confirmation has its roots in the original experience of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down on the infant church and empowered it to carry on the life and mission of Jesus. Confirmation is our personal Pentecost.

The first records of the Christian celebration of a liturgical feast of Pentecost date back to the 3rd century; however, it seems early Christian communities were celebrating Pentecost long before that time.

Originally a Jewish harvest festival held fifty days after Passover, Pentecost is often referred to as the birthday of the church. The early Christians believed that the Spirit of the risen Lord had mysteriously but powerfully empowered Peter and the other disciples of Jesus to proclaim the good news of hope and salvation in Jesus Christ.

Through the Pentecostal outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit many followers were made bold enough to undertake the mission of evangelization entrusted to them, and began to baptize and preach the good news given to them. Like those early followers, the sacrament of Confirmation enables us to live out our commitment with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, courage/fortitude, piety/reverence and wonder and awe (also called fear of the Lord). The first four of these gifts of the Holy Spirit enable us to know God's will. The other three help us to accomplish God's will.

Armed with these gifts, along with the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, tolerance, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control and chastity, we are ready to live an active Christian life. At Confirmation, each of us publicly affirms our willingness to let God be a part of our life and that the life of Christ will be our model. We know this is no easy task, but we are given this gift from God. It's the Holy Spirit who encourages us when we are weak; it's the Holy Spirit who instills in us the desire to do well; it's the grace of the Holy Spirit that enables us to carry on when all seems impossible.

And so, now our newly confirmed eighth graders are also empowered as were those early followers through the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Fr. Dave made the celebration one that will be remembered for how it touched us and made us all proud to be a part of these students' lives and of the Ascension community. As we watched those seventy-nine young people go forth after receiving that most awesome gift – feeling the love surrounding them and, in fact, all of us, I couldn't help but thank God the Father for his gift of the Holy Spirit on that first Pentecost.

RE NEWS

REGISTRATION for the 2010-2011 school year will be held after all Masses in the Narthex on **August 21 and 22** or you may call the Religious Education Office at 254-0622. Fees are due at the time of registration. Fees remain the same: one child, \$85; two children, \$170; each additional child, \$40. Families experiencing financial need may request a full or partial waiver of fees.

Children who will be entering the first grade in the fall should be registered now in order to receive First Communion in the second grade. Parents of school-age children who have never been baptized or received First Communion are encouraged to contact the RE Office.

Class times: Early Childhood, Sunday 10:30-11:30 a.m. (must be three years old by September 30, 2010); elementary (grades 1-5), Monday, 4:15-5:30 p.m.; middle school (grades 6-8), Sunday, 9:45-10:15 a.m. or Monday, 6:30-8:00p.m.

Parent Orientation will be held on Sunday, September 12 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm beginning in the Church. High School students are invited to participate in the Home Life Program. Call the Youth Ministry Office at 253-5171 for more information and to register.

Congratulations to the Peacemakers of the Month for April/May: Jacob Fecher (Gr. 5) and Spencer Shampton (Gr. 2).

Perfect Attendance awards were earned by the following students: Early Childhood – Julianna Heindl, Addie Ryan; Grade 1 – Lena Canestaro, Vi Huynh, Vinh Huynh; Grade 2 – Alex Honious, Emma Sheppard (2nd yr.); Grade 3 – Conor Doyle, Genevieve Paulick (3rd yr.), Samuel Mathe-son; Grade 4 – Andrea Canestaro; Grade 5 – Haley Hart, Maeve Curliss (2nd yr.), Ashton Dicke (2nd yr.), Riley Myszka (5th yr.); Grade 7 – Alex Heindl, Tyler West, Joel Shiverdecker (6th yr.); Grade 8 – Daniel Janning, Payton Myszka (6 of 8 years!).
Congratulations students and parents!



WELCOMING REFUGEES WITH THE FREEDOM TREE

Submitted by Jean Nickelman

Red, white and blue stars brought life to a small barren tree and support to refugees who settle here in the Miami Valley. The stars on the Freedom Tree in the narthex the weekend of July 4th were requests for donations of household items for refugee families. The following weekend Ascension parishioners contributed almost 1100 items for these people seeking refuge in the U.S.A. Then, volunteers from Ascension's Knights of Columbus Council #14891 transported the donations to Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley in Dayton. The items included everything from kitchen, bedding and bathroom supplies to tool kits and flashlights.

Lynn Adams, CSSMV Volunteer Developer, thanked the people of Ascension, saying:

"Once again you have blessed us with your kind acts of compassion for Refugees resettling in the Dayton area. I had the pleasure of meeting the "Mighty Knights" when they delivered truckloads full of household items to our agency on July 12, 2010. It was a beautiful sight to see so many wonderful items and know that we are not alone in our resettlement efforts. Ascension Parish is truly a good friend to the community and to our agency. You consistently demonstrate your love and compassion for others through your kind and thoughtful actions. The donated items will go directly to refugee families arriving in 2010."

Refugees who arrive in the Dayton area are seeking freedom from oppression and come here with little-to-no personal possessions. Adapting to life here is challenging for them on many levels and, for some, it is even a bit scary. Many come needing to learn a different language, fit into our education system, manage their diet with unfamiliar food items, work with public transportation, and learn modern technology. They truly need the welcome and assistance offered by CSSMV in order to experience American freedom as fully as possible.

Catholic Social Services in the Miami Valley grew from the establishment of "Catholic Charities" in Dayton during the 1920's. The primary purpose for the establishment of that charity was providing support for the large groups of immigrant Catholics coming into the Miami Valley in that era. Work continues today as CSSMV works directly with the U.S. Government State Department's Refugee Resettlement Program to bring these refugee families into our communities. There are many ways the Parish as a whole can help. There are also many ways individuals can give of their time, talent and/or treasure on a one-time or continuous basis. If anyone would like to begin now, e-mail Lynn Adams at adamsl@cssmv.org or call her at 937-223-7217 ext. 1104.

FR. MIERENFELD AWARD

The **2010** Ascension Parish Fr. Mierenfeld Meritorious Service Award was presented to Toni Clarkson. This award is presented annually by the Ascension Athletic Board to the person (usually an adult in the parish) who, by vote of the Athletic Board has shown his or her superior commitment to the athletic program by their long-term service to Ascension athletics. By virtue of this individual's outstanding efforts, the image of the athletic program is enhanced and because of this person's moral character, the quality of the Ascension parish is enriched.



FR. RUDY AWARD

Co-winners of this year's **2010** Ascension Parish Fr.

Rudy Award were **Morgan Nash** and **Nick Clarkson**. The Fr. Rudy Award, honors our second pastor of Ascension Parish. This award is open to any eighth grade student of Ascension School or Religious Education Program. Recipients of the Fr. Rudy Award must exemplify the aspects of the Ascension Athletic philosophy, as a role model to other participants of superior Christian attitude and values and demonstrate the qualities of sportsmanship, fair play and team play. Recipients of the Fr. Rudy Award may be nominated by anyone associated with Ascension Parish.



REMEMBERING FR. RUDY

Submitted by Sherene Springer

Fr. Rudy changed our lives and our parish while he was here. His devotion to the Blessed Mother, sense of humor and outstanding personality are truly memorable. In his honor, his name lives on in a scholarship awarded annually, the dedication of the Parish Activity Center in his name along with room 114 in the Witzman Center as the Fr. Rudy Hospitality Room. Please remember Fr. Rudy and all the people who miss him in your prayers.

GR. 8 COMMENCEMENT AT ASCENSION SCHOOL

Thirty-seven eighth graders celebrated their commencement Tuesday night, June 1 in Ascension Church with mass, an awards ceremony and a reception. We thank all the Ascension School teachers through the years who have prepared these students to this point. We thank especially **Mrs. Gaeke & Mrs. Melvin** and parents for their role in preparing the students. We congratulate the following students.

Sarah Barbaro	Meredith O'Connell
Mattie Carter	Jacob Ollier
Nick Clarkson	Andrew Olson
Jake Cridge	Tyler Pavliga
Ashley Depoorter	Tony Quatman
Jordan Dickson	Craig Ramby
Brittany Dorr	Analu Reckziegel
Jacob Drumm	Margaret Sarfino
David Eichner	Anna Schlegel
Marissa Friel	Abby Schmidt
Molly Johnson	Emma Sobieski
Amanda Kackley	Shelby Springer
Elizabeth Knab	Gabrielle Tarlano
Kevin Koesters	Tyler Thompson
Rachel Magoto	Stephanie Townsend
Brianna Manfreda	Alexander Trimbach
Meghan McGarry	Gabrielle Tunney
Morgan Nash	Andy Walker
Chelsea O'Brien	

ASCENSION SCHOOL AWARDED BUCKEYE BEST

Ascension School has earned a gold award through the Buckeye Best Healthy School Award Program. The process involves reviewing the school's policies and practices in the areas of physical education & activity, tobacco and nutrition education. We thank the following staff members who serve on our school Wellness Committee who reviewed our application - **Carie Wheeler, Gretchen Parker, Brent Devitt, Martha Shipman, Mary Kozarec & Sharon Jakubs.**



**LED BY THE
LIGHT WOM-
EN'S
RETREAT**

*Submitted by Di-
ane Borchers*

All are welcome at the Ascension Women's Retreat. This retreat offers an opportunity to experience a touch of God's love in our busy lives. It provides a setting where we can renew and grow in our relationship with God and connect with other women from Ascension. The retreat is participant funded. The presenter for the weekend is Mary Cummins Wlodarski, pastoral associate at Trinity parish. The theme for the weekend is

"Mary's Heart and Martha's Hands—Living as Disciples." The retreat, which will be held at Begamo Center, begins on Saturday morning October 9 at 8 a.m. and ends around noon on Sunday October 10.

Some of the comments from attendees at last year's retreat are: "Spiritually uplifting and a wonderful opportunity to share our faith journeys with other women;" "a chance to get away;" "relaxing, energizing, and inspirational;" "peaceful, spiritual, prayerful, and fun."

We would love to have you join us. For further information, reach Diane Borchers at (937) 299-5148 or email borchersdp@sbcglobal.net. To register see the flyer and registration material in the narthex.



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