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ST. CHRISTOPHER PARISH

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HAPPY 25TH
FR. JOHN!

the celebration is on page 10...

The Belltower Beacon

A publication to inform, welcome and inspire the spirited community of St. Christopher.

Volume 22: Issue 87

September 2022

ALL NEW COMMUNITY WEEKEND CELEBRATING OUR CENTENNIAL



The St. Christopher Parish Centennial celebration, also coined as SCP Weekend, was an action-packed, fun-filled, three-day event that kicked off on a warm Friday night when over 80 children arrived to watch Disney's *Encanto* in Centennial Park. Families came equipped with pillows, blankets and picnics and were treated to free popcorn, cotton candy and beverages. Saturday's picture-perfect weather was the backdrop for a full day of activities

and lots of live entertainment that included a fun run for the kids, carnival games, a giant inflatable slide, a cornhole tournament, a magician and an animal show, airbrush tattoos, sack races, a cake walk, a limbo contest and plenty of hula hoops and balloons for all ages. The 5 p.m. Mass was celebrated on the performance stage with over 600 in attendance, pretty amazing if you think about it. There were food and beer trucks and live music from the headliner band Iced Cherry which had everyone dancing late into the night. As bright sunshine and blue skies gave way to dusk, the evening was capped off with a spectacular fireworks show launched from Centennial Park. Sunday's festivities included bingo, more carnival games, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament and live music from Hayden Grove with the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra and The Michelle Romary Trio. So what did it take to create this unforgettable weekend celebration of 100 years of service to our faithful community? Kevin Tennant explained, "Planning for the weekend started this year in March and we had 300 volunteer hours covered with around 150 volunteers from start to finish." Kevin felt that the highlight of the weekend, beyond having a private fireworks show, was seeing the parish community and community at large, out in full force enjoying themselves and being in communion with one another. We are so blessed and thankful for all those who made the celebration a huge success. Kevin continued, "There are so many opportunities for our parish to gather in communion with one another and share experiences, friendships, and spirituality. We have to make sure we harness that energy and continue to build this community to its full potential." We are truly beginning "a new century of service."

Lori Alexander

Thank You SCP WEEKEND COMMITTEE

Kevin Tennant, Event Chair

Alex DiMichele, Co-Chair

Sharon Armstrong

Brendan Barker

Allison Coale

Greg Hildebrandt

Meg Hildebrandt

Colleen McKenna

Julie Patton

Zac Patton

Sue Pichotta

Angela Rosati

Melissa Walsh



DAY 1: *Movie Night*

Thank You OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

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DAY 2: *Fun Run*



DAY 2: *Fun + Games*



DAY 2: *Fun + Games*



DAY 2: *Outback Ray + Magic Man*



DAY 2: *Carnival Games*



DAY 2: *Outdoor Mass*



DAY 2: *Iced Cherry + Fireworks!*



DAY 3: *Bingo + Music for All*



SCP WEEKEND: *The People*



SCP WEEKEND: *The People*



Congrats! RAFFLE WINNERS

\$1,000 WINNERS

Becke Natale
Aaron Vaughn
Dave Blue
Karen Kirk
Melissa Martin

\$2,000 WINNER

Michael Cantrell

\$5,000 WINNER

John Lackey



ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW PRINCIPAL



There's a new principal at the helm of St. Christopher School, and she's no stranger to our school community. Beloved third grade teacher Mary Meler has stepped into the role of principal, to succeed Scott Raiff who retired.

"All I'd ever wanted to do with my life was to teach at a Catholic school; it was my dream since second grade," said Meler. "A friend asked me if

becoming a principal was something I'd always wanted to do. Until now, it's always been teaching. Upon reflection, I realized all my dreams have already come true and the plan God set for my life is better than any I plan I ever had. I realized if God wants me to do this now, I'm all in – show me the way."

Over 18 years ago when Meler joined the St. Christopher School staff, then principal Sr. Pat told her that the students that come to St. Christopher are our future teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and business owners. Meler recalls Sr. Pat sharing, "It is our job to teach them to lead with the compassion and love of Jesus Christ." That philosophy resonated with Meler and is foundational to the type of principal she plans to be.

"My philosophy is that children are not the future of the church – they ARE the church. We need to give them the opportunity to develop their own personal relationship with Jesus Christ, to find a way to serve and to really feel a part of the Catholic Church. Jesus has been my closest friend and confidante for 50 years. I want everyone – especially the students in our school – to have that same thing in their lives."

A cradle Catholic from a Bay Village family of eight children, Meler attended St. Raphael grade school followed by Magnificat High School and Bowling Green State University. It was there she earned a dual certification in special education and elementary education.

Her first teaching experience was with the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. There she taught those with multiple handicaps and later became a supervisor of classrooms. She subsequently met and married her husband Paul and took a break from teaching to start a family. The Melers have three children: Ann (named for the Blessed Mother's mother), David (named for the city in which Jesus was born), and Elizabeth (named for our Blessed Mother's cousin). When Elizabeth was four, Meler found her way back to the classroom, as a special education teacher in Parma, and then joined St. Christopher as a special education teacher, a post she held for two years. She then taught fourth grade for one year and then settled into the third-grade classroom. Many school families fondly remember (or even still display) the famous "auto-ball" autobiography project her students create each year.

Meler has deep experience with the administrative aspect of religious education, having served as the Director of Religious Education at St. Basil the Great Catholic Church in Brecksville, which was her family's home parish for many years. There she worked in tandem with 400 families to oversee the religious education of more than 650 students.

Drawing on that experience, Meler looks forward to reimagining the school Retreat Program. One addition will be presentations by missionaries who can explain firsthand, "how cool it is to be a best friend and follower of Christ."

"I tell my students, 'Your parents send you here because they value something – it's Jesus Christ,'" said Meler. "I believe in Catholic education. As a family we sacrificed to send our children to Saint Ignatius, Magnificat, Loyola Chicago, and Creighton. We didn't need a dream home – but we needed our kids to have a dream education." That dream education, firmly rooted in a relationship with Jesus Christ, is what Meler plans to continue and enhance for the students of St. Christopher School.

Beth Van Horn



THE FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS PET BLESSING

Join us on Tuesday, October 4 at 6:30 in Centennial Park for the St. Christopher Pet Blessing for the Feast of St. Francis! This year will be a special celebration for our centennial anniversary. Every pet attending the blessing will receive a special gift. Cats, dogs, mice, hamsters, turtles, rabbits, even stuffed animals – ALL ARE WELCOME!! If you can't bring your actual pet, bring a picture! *(in case of inclement weather the blessing will be in the Gathering Area.)*

Sharon Armstrong

FR. JOHN'S MASS OF CELEBRATION & THANKSGIVING



During the weekend of August 6-7, our parish community celebrated the 25th anniversary of Fr. John Chlebo being shepherd of our flock. Fr. John was named pastor of St. Christopher on July 1, 1997; he was ordained in May 1980. In a centennial year full of celebration, Fr. John's anniversary gave us one more reason to gather spiritually and socially. Parish staff and volunteers organized a weekend of thanksgiving and joy. Following each Mass a reception took place at the Parish Center where parishioners and visitors young and old could personally congratulate Fr. John while sharing refreshments and perusing photographs. Introductory remarks were made by Pastoral Associate Gayle Cilimborg wherein she recognized Fr. John's leadership and, on our behalf, thanked him for his years of service to God and God's people. At each Mass, Fr. John presented a special homily and ensured that every parishioner who attended Mass in person or via livestream heard the exact same message. He described the theme of his homily as twofold: focusing on God's time and looking for God in life's small moments and events. The readings for the weekend spoke to the topic of waiting on God because God's time is quite different from our own. In addition, God's plans for us can also be very different from our own. At the end of Mass, the assembly extended their hands over Fr. John as Gayle led them in a blessing for him and then invited him to give us his blessing.

Having been encouraged to be more open about his personal life, Fr. John chose the occasion of his 25th anniversary to reveal little known facts about his past, something that does not come naturally to him. He mustered the courage to share his own story of waiting many years for God's perfect timing. Knowing that he was adopted

as an infant (six months old), Fr. John explained that he wondered about his birth parents. He is grateful that he was raised in Cleveland by loving parents in a supportive, devout Catholic home. The couple changed his birth name from Christopher Joseph to John Christopher; his adopted father's name was John. (What are the chances that he would end up at St. Christopher Church?) Fr. John states that he and his adopted brother had a happy childhood. His life has been "a good one, it's been a great run, and [he] loves being a priest." Yet, he still pondered the question of his natural parents. Out of respect for his adoptive parents, Fr. John waited until after they passed away to inquire about his natural parents. His commitment to finding his birth parents was motivated by a desire to thank his mother and to learn more about his medical history. Through the help and support of friends, he searched ancestry and DNA sites. Once again, he waited patiently, faithfully, and prayerfully. Interestingly enough, the weekend's second reading (Hebrews 11) discusses the incredible Old Testament story of Abraham and Sarah, who desperately desired children. Their prayers were answered in a powerful way long after they had stopped hoping.



Eventually, the adoption laws in New York changed, and he was able to locate a birth certificate that revealed his mother was Veronica Alice (last name withheld here for privacy reasons). She was a young unwed mother when she gave birth to a baby boy (Christopher Joseph), at Our Lady of Victory Infant Home in Lackawanna, New York. Although he now had a name, it still did not lead to an answer, and his frustration continued.

As it turns out, God had other plans and was not done yet. In December 2021, his mother's obituary was found online; she had died just before Thanksgiving. Although not the news he wanted to receive, his



hope was renewed and the search began once again. Upon making contact with the priest who presided at Veronica's funeral, Fr. John learned that his mother had been married for 61 years and raised three children (Kathleen, Patty and Dan). Telephone contact was made with Kathleen, who was curious and cooperative. They had no idea whatsoever that Fr. John existed and, of course, responded with uncertainty. Kathleen suggested DNA testing, and the results showed a genetic match between Fr. John and his sisters, confirming that they are related. Kathleen was receptive to continued contact but the younger siblings were not ready to meet him. Their mother's interment was scheduled for July 2022, and the siblings were coming from other parts of the country to attend. However, as the date approached, Kathleen called to inform Fr. John that she had tested positive for Covid-19. She would be unable to attend, so Fr. John chose not to make the trip. Once again, a period of waiting patiently ensued which continues to this day. Once again, dependence on God and faithfully enduring the wait are required.

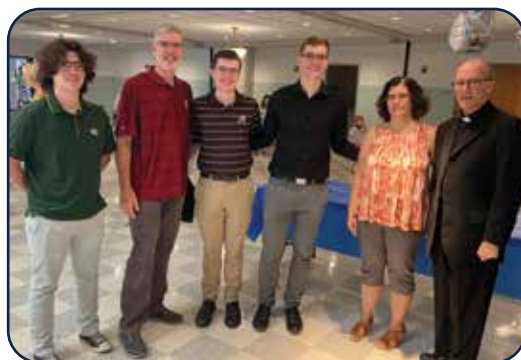
According to Fr. John, he shared his story as "an amazing example of God's time." Oftentimes, we have clear expectations as to the timing and results we seek. We wonder why things happen when they happen. Sometimes we are enlightened by God's timing and answers; and sometimes we just scratch our heads and are tempted to give up. Fr. John told us that had he met his

mother, he would have thanked her for loving him enough to give him life and loving him enough to put him in a position where he could have a life that she felt she could not provide for him. He had waited 67 years to meet her in person. These things were not to be, but he appreciates coming to know who his birth mother is and that she has a family. In addition, Kathleen sent him pictures of their mother which were shared with us at the reception. He is a loving and proud son. Assuredly, given the opportunity, Veronica's message to her son would be one of unconditional love, thanksgiving and pride in a son who chose a lifetime of service to God.



Fr. John thanked us, his flock, and reminded us that God does not forget us. God's hand is in our lives, in every moment, in little signs. When Kathleen learned of Fr. John's birth and adopted names being Christopher and that he ended up at a church named St. Christopher, she responded: "God's hand is in there someplace." Fr. John agrees and believes that there are no coincidences, but there are "God-incidences." God loves us, leads us and gives us what we need to reach eternal life in his Kingdom. Fr. John left us with this advice: "Thank you for the privilege of serving you as pastor these 25 years. It's been a blessing. Stay tuned with the eyes of faith, see the hand of God in your lives and be patient with God's time. God bless you, God bless us everyone."

Carmen Everett DeHaan



Outdoor Mass + Cabaret Night



Outdoor Mass + Michelle Romary Trio



ANGEL SCHOLARSHIP FUND



In September 1926, St. Christopher School opened in two classrooms attached to the church building. Staffed by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, the school initially welcomed students in grades one through four. Fast forward to 2022. St. Christopher School now operates out of a beautiful building, dedicated to providing an

environment where Catholic values, service, excellence, and community are shared with all by loving God, studying hard, and being kind to each other.

Over these 96 years, St. Christopher School has educated thousands of children in faith formation, sending them out into our community to excel academically, civically and spiritually. The school remains robust today, continuing in the tradition, which began back in September 1926.

In order to continue to provide our children with an opportunity to receive their faith formation and academic excellence through St. Christopher School, we have an opportunity to provide enhanced funding to the school in the form of scholarships.

DID YOU KNOW?

The State of Ohio legislature has enacted a Tax Credit Scholarship program, whereby individuals may receive a 100% tax credit against their Ohio income tax liability, with a maximum credit of \$750 for individual filers (\$1,500 for married couples filing jointly)! All of this is available at **no cost to you!**

You have the power to fund Catholic education here at St. Christopher School. Students at St. Christopher School will be eligible to receive a scholarship from the newly formed Angel Scholarship Fund. This fund is being managed locally by the Diocesan Catholic Community Foundation.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

1. Review your tax liability from last year (2021 1040 UT, line 8C) to help estimate the amount of your tax liability. Remember, you can take a maximum credit amount of \$750 for individuals and \$1,500 for married filing jointly.
2. Make a contribution to the Angel Scholarship Fund in 2022 at catholiccommunity.org/angel, or by calling 216-902-1312. Don't forget to designate St. Christopher School for your Ohio state tax deductible contribution. If your tax liability is less, then you can contribute less.
3. Claim your tax credit on your 2022 Ohio tax form with the tax credit receipt that will be mailed to you from the Diocesan Catholic Community Foundation.

As we enter our New Century of Service, please help the St. Christopher School community to continue to thrive by maintaining our educational excellence, both academically and spiritually. Do not hesitate to follow the steps above as it only takes a few minutes and the benefits last a lifetime. You can direct any questions to Joe Williams, St. Christopher Business Manager, by calling (440) 331-4255 x101 or emailing me at jwilliams@stchrisparish.com.

Joe Williams

INTRODUCING J+WALKERS



Perhaps you have noticed odd logos in the bulletin, a large stone in front of our gym, or some teenagers walking around the parish wearing matching blue shirts. What if I told you

that they are all related? Our community is excited to announce J+Walkers, a re-envisioned youth ministry community at St. Christopher!

J+Walkers is a community of students open to anyone in grades 7-12. We are for teens, by teens. What does that mean? Our core team is a group of 20 students that has met consistently throughout the summer discerning what they desire youth ministry to look like here at St. Christopher. Their vision has come to life in J+Walkers, a community of Catholic teens dedicated to play, pray, learn, and grow as the apostles did. Students can suggest, plan, and lead different prayer opportunities, educational topics, and games. Our integrative approach allows students to grow spiritually, socially, and intellectually. We strive to enable teens to participate in other areas of parish life, such as music ministry, liturgical ministry (as altar servers, ushers, lectors, and eucharistic ministers), social ministry, and catechesis. Simply put, we gather as a community of students who seek to grow in love of Jesus and our neighbor.

Does this sound like a movement that you want to experience? We would love for you to join us! Scan the QR code to visit our website, learn about our logo and mission statement, and view our upcoming events. Our fall kick-off was Sunday, September 11 at 6:30 p.m.



Logan Feldkamp

Youth Mass



PARISHIONER AND SEMINARIAN THOMAS BYRNE SERVES OUR PARISH COMMUNITY



The ongoing Centennial anniversary gives us much to celebrate and countless people to thank for its ongoing success. One person who has been working quietly and diligently all summer is Seminarian Thomas Byrne. On any given day he could be found performing tasks around the Church to help beautify, improve and update our campus. In more ways than one, this assignment is a labor of love for Thomas. He and his siblings grew up at St. Christopher, all graduated from our day school and from St. Edward High School. The family continues to attend St. Christopher. Their parents are Patrick, an ESL teacher (English as a Second Language) and Tracy, a Title I teacher (designed to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students). His older brother, Patrick, age 21, graduated from Kent State University with a degree in Business Administration. His younger brother, Joseph, age 18, will attend The Ohio State University in the fall where he'll study film and business. Mr. and Mrs. Byrne raised their family to understand the importance of faith, Church and giving back to the community, especially to those in greatest need.

Thomas will be a sophomore at Borromeo Seminary in the fall. While at St. Christopher, Thomas and his brothers were altar servers. Thomas was also involved in band, school plays, the Science Olympiad, Classroom of Champions and Brain Brawl. He played baseball and basketball. In his spare time, Thomas enjoys time with his brothers and playing with his dog Gizmo. He spends time playing basketball and tennis. He also enjoys designing websites. Thomas's interests and activities will serve him well when he starts working with parishioners, young and old, as a parish priest.

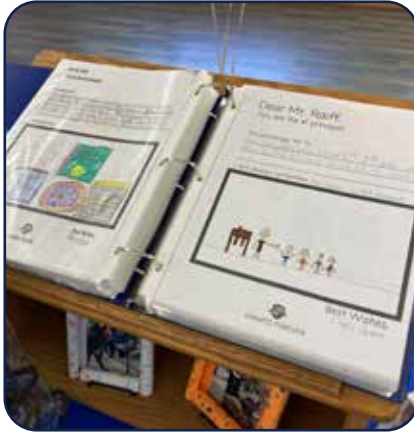
Thomas sensed God's calling while in the 8th grade and fully recognized the call to enter seminary after high school. He recalls thinking about priesthood at each Mass he attended. He was able to discern that he should enter seminary through personal prayer and discussing his spirituality with the diocesan vocation director. In his own words, he explained: "My desire to be a priest has been a continuous urge that slowly became more and more powerful. My calling has grown out of my love for Jesus Christ, the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and the preaching of the Gospel." Along with his strong conviction, Thomas also shares the following important message: "Spiritual experiences and their meanings can be very confusing without the guidance of a trained religious director." Thomas's words are not only beautifully inspiring for all of us, they are also sound advice for those discerning a call to religious life. Listening to God's call is always transformational. We know that God loves us the way we are but too much to leave us where we are.

As members of the lay community, we understand that saying yes to the priesthood involves a commitment to years of prayer, study and preparation. It also involves a lifetime dedicated to selflessly serving God and God's people. Priests are called to be servant leaders and shepherds of their sheep. According to Fr. John, it is important to be encouraging and uplifting toward those considering religious life. Some of the most important skills a seminarian can learn and practice fall in the category of humility. Accepting constructive criticism and being open to correction are crucial to all vocations, but especially to priestly formation. Per Fr. John, a priest must embrace all aspects of parish life, including maintenance and landscape, pastoral ministers, volunteers, school staff and the leadership team. It also includes managing the physical property, paying the bills and addressing complaints. The list of responsibilities is endless, but none is more important than sharing the Mass, administering the Holy Sacraments, evangelizing and providing opportunities for growth. Meeting people where they are and employing our Catholic virtues will go a long way to gaining the trust and confidence of parishioners. It is a uniquely noble and holy vocation that instills joy in the hearts of others. In Psalm 132:9, we hear David say: "Your priests, O Lord, shall be clothed with justice; your holy ones shall ring out their joy." In our Diocese we are fortunate to have the spiritual support of the Avilas, an authorized diocesan group of men and women who pray for those called to serve the Church in the priesthood and religious life, those discerning God's call, and for vocations. Named after St. Teresa of Ávila, they favor one of the saint's famous quotes: "There is but one road that leads to God and that is prayer. If anyone shows you another, you are being deceived."

The timing of Thomas's availability could not have been better. It was divine intervention that brought him back to St. Christopher when we needed him most. As our celebration extends into the next few months, we look forward to more community events. The help Thomas extends before he returns to seminary is greatly appreciated. Regardless of where his vocation takes him, St. Christopher will always be Thomas's supportive parish community. A litany for priests (EWTN) gives us the words to ask for God's blessings upon Thomas during this journey and throughout his priesthood: "Jesus, meek and humble of heart, give all priests your spirit of humility. Jesus, poor and worn out for souls, give all priests your spirit of zeal. Jesus, full of patience and mercy for sinners, give all priests your spirit of compassion. Jesus, victim for the sins of the world, give all priests your spirit of sacrifice. Jesus, lover of the little and the poor, give all priests your spirit of charity. Mary, Queen of the clergy, pray for us and obtain for us numerous and holy priests and religious. Amen."

Carmen Everett DeHaan

Scott Raiff Retires



Vacation Bible School

Each year St. Christopher Parish and Rocky River Presbyterian Church work together to offer a summer Bible school for our children ages four to ten years old. Lisa Watts and Bette Case from the Presbyterian Church and I have started planning this week-long effort in early March each year. We gather volunteers from each of our congregations, both adults and teens to teach our children a theme we choose. This year's theme, "Showing Compassion Through Loving Kindness" was taught by creating games and crafts, telling stories and learning songs to reinforce our theme for the week-long camp. The week ended with an Ice Cream Social and program to show off the songs and stories we learned during our time together

Thank you to ALL the St. Christopher Volunteers who helped with Vacation Bible School the week of June 13-18.

We had both adults and teens help make the week special for our 70 kids who learned how to show compassion to our neighbors near and far. We really had a good time with our friends at the Presbyterian Church.

Sharon Armstrong

Thank You VOLUNTEERS

Johna Graziani	Colleen McKenna
Gianna Rosati	Marilu Norena
Bonnie Twitchell	Chloe Basilone
Declan Juris	Alena Tuskan
Tom Armstrong	Mike DeHaan
Reed Winbigler	Annette Crook
Melissa DiFini	Eric Perusek
Rory McNally	Carmen DeHaan
Anne Hill	Mateo Noreno
Liz Hjort	Savanah Paez



WHAT'S GOING ON IN MARY'S ROOM?



I was meandering through St. Christopher Centennial Park early one Sunday morning last winter. Through the darkness, I startled to see lights ablaze above the School gym in Mary's Room. Several cars were parked outside, and through the illuminated windows several people milled about inside. I could not but wonder, "What's going on in Mary's Room?"

A quick check of the weekly Parish Bulletin revealed an early Saturday morning AA meeting was getting underway in Mary's Room. A little more research uncovered that St. Christopher Parish hosts six AA meetings of the 17 held weekly in Rocky River.

A few weeks later, just after Easter, I found myself in Mary's Room donating blood. A gorgeous spring day flooded Mary's Room with sunshine. As the Red Cross technician and I watched people streaming into 11:30 Mass, we admired the flowering trees and the beauty of the St. Christopher bell tower against the blue sky. Typically, Red Cross blood drives are tucked into basements or other windowless spaces. The technician could not help but remark on the welcome change of scenery in Mary's Room.

My curiosity piqued, I proceeded further to learn, "What's going on in Mary's Room?" Life is going on in Mary's Room! Families and friends gather for Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion celebrations. Parishioners celebrate milestone birthdays and anniversaries. Mary's Room offers a convenient and welcoming space to gather for lunch after a St. Christopher funeral. Graduation parties and St. Christopher School class reunions happen. Bridal showers and baby showers are celebrated too.

St. Christopher Parish, St. Christopher School and PSR use Mary's Room for adult education, days of spiritual reflection, school retreats, the annual School Christmas Shop. Church ministries including Youth Group, Young Adults, and the Young Families Ministry gather for meetings or social events in Mary's Room. Cleveland Diocese groups meet there sometimes.

A recent facelift has given Mary's Room new life. A renovated kitchen makes catering in the room safe and easy. An array of tables and chairs make the room suitable for all sorts of gatherings. Parishioners' capital campaign contributions enabled the installation of new flooring, carpeting and window blinds. A spruced-up restroom and fresh paint on walls and ceilings brightened the Room after 20+ years of use.

Mary's Room holds meaning for many whose lives have been changed there in small or significant ways. The St. Christopher Ladies Guild left their imprint. The Blaha daughters hosted the Parish Social Club lunches to honor their parents. Those celebrated and honored, healed and comforted in Mary's Room cherish their own special memories. So, what goes on in Mary's Room? Life goes on – family life, parish life, community life.

Mary's Room is available to St. Christopher parishioners. Funeral lunches and Parish and School events are prioritized. A nominal fee is charged for parishioners' private event use.

Mary Horvath

YOUNG ADULTS FALL 2022

Young adult events continue to be offered throughout the diocese! This summer we enjoyed local events like sunset kickball at Lakewood Park while also attending many diocesan events such as the FEST, Becoming Fire retreat, and the Hillbilly Thomists concert. The fall lineup is taking shape and will surely offer something for everyone! Theology on Tap will return from its COVID hiatus with Bishop Malesic at Forest City Brewery on September 20. Our St. Christopher Halloween Party looks to return later in October. We encourage you to keep your eyes on the bulletin in the weeks ahead for more events like these!

Logan Feldkamp

Car Blessing + Washing + Ice Cream

On Sunday, July 24 Fr. John, Fr. Tim and Fr. Anthony had the privilege of blessing about 150 cars, 30 bicycles, a wheelchair and more!

This recalls a popular annual custom in the early days of the parish when automobiles were just becoming popular as a means of transportation. Everyone who had their car blessed received a St. Christopher medal for the visor in their car. Stickers for bikes were also be available for our “young drivers.”

Once the cars were blessed our parish youth provided free car washes! And for the cherry on top, the Prayers From Maria Ice Cream Truck sold ice cream to help support brain cancer research for children, and earned \$400 for the cause. One generous parishioner even treated the entire car wash team to ice cream!





LADIES NIGHT OUT RETURNS OCTOBER 13

The Ladies Night Out event committee, in cooperation with St. Christopher Ladies Guild, will host what promises to be a festive Ladies Night Out at 7 p.m. Thursday, October 13 in the Parish Center. Ladies of the Parish are encouraged to take an evening off for fun and friendship – and to benefit a great cause, Moriah House Family Shelter, a West Side Catholic Center program.

Ladies Night Out celebrants will be treated to an array of wine from Rozi's Wine House and delicious and unique hors d'oeuvres from Nomad Culinary. Door prizes will be offered including a St. Christopher Parish centennial wine glass for all attendees. An auction will offer ladies the opportunity to bid on great prizes from local businesses. Best of all, 100% of auction proceeds will benefit our sisters-in-need at Moriah House.

Moriah House Family Shelter provides services for female veterans and families who are homeless or have resided in substandard living conditions and meet guidelines as low or extremely low income. Services at Moriah House include not just interim housing but guidance in finding permanent housing, stable income, self-sufficiency, and education and training. Moreover, Moriah House family services address with parents and their children the mental, physical, social and education needs of each child served. Our Ladies Night Out auction truly helps some of our most needy neighbors.

Ladies of the parish, friends, and women from neighboring churches are invited to take special advantage of the timing of this year's Ladies Night Out. The event falls the day before NEOEA Day, a school holiday – perfect for busy Moms and teachers!

Registration at stchrisparish.com allows for the advance credit card purchase of the \$40 event tickets. Pre-event tickets payable by cash or check are available in the Parish Office. Ticket purchase is required before the event registration deadline on Thursday, October 6.

The \$40 Ladies Night Out ticket includes:

- 4 wine tastings from Rozi's Wine House
- Hors d'oeuvres from Nomad Culinary
- A St. Christopher centennial wine glass
- Opportunities to win door prizes and auction prizes
- Support for the veterans and families Moriah House serves

Business owners and anyone who would like to support Ladies Night Out are urged to contact the LNO Event Chair: Laura Hunter at runhunter216@gmail.com Generous donors will receive event publicity and boundless gratitude!

Mary Horvath

ST. CHRISTOPHER CENTENNIAL CLAM BAKE

Join us for a Centennial Clam Bake

**Saturday, October 8, following 5 p.m. Mass
\$30 per person, complimentary wine and beer**

*Make your reservations and pay online at stchrisparish.com or contact the parish office.
Please make checks payable to St. Christopher Parish.*



AS WE CONTINUE
OUR YEAR OF
CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATIONS, JOIN
FELLOW PARISHIONERS FOR
THIS ADULT FALL FAVORITE
AND AN EVENING OF
FELLOWSHIP, CATERED
BY BRENNANS, IN THE
PARISH CENTER.

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS ONLY. RSVP BY OCTOBER 1

SUMMER WITH THE LADIES GUILD



Summer falls during Ordinary Time in our liturgical calendar. It is fitting that the liturgical color for this time is green. The deep, glossy green of our summer trees and foliage provides a beautiful backdrop for blues skies and vivid flowers. The Ladies Guild

held a celebration of summer's beauty with a Tai Chi practice led by parishioner Mary Holtz in Centennial Park. A day after the summer solstice, Mary gave a wonderful introduction to Tai Chi and described how its movements can lower anxiety and enhance one's prayer life. She led the group through gentle, flowing movements coupled with attention to breath and the presence of the Holy Spirit. It was a calming and contemplative experience. A social was held afterwards with cookies and lemonade and time for catching up with friends on a beautiful evening.



In keeping with the theme of enjoying the beauty of creation, Ladies Guild member Roberta Trutko led a Prayer Nature Walk in Clague Park on July 26. About 20 women gathered for the contemplative walk through several wooded areas and around a peaceful pond, stopping

periodically for spontaneous prayer centered on the theme of gratitude. As Thomas Merton once said, "Nothing has ever been said about God that hasn't already been said better by the wind in the pine trees." All felt renewed by the beauty of the July evening and the shared prayer and fellowship.



As always, watch the bulletin and your email for future Ladies Guild events and send your ideas to President Cindy McDonough at: cindymcdonoughcpt@gmail.com

Nancy Sullivan

CHURCH CHATTER

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Remember to wish the following St. Christopher staff members a happy birthday: **Bob McMurray** (Music Director) on October 10, **Fr. Anthony** on November 27 and **Fr. Tim** on December 2.

SUPER STUDENT

Rocky River High School recently inducted students into the National Honor Society, including senior **Cora Mathewson**. She was also inducted into the German World Language Honors Society. During the summer, Cora worked at the Rocky River Recreation Center as a lifeguard and swim coach. During the school year, she participates on the Girls Swim Team. Congratulations, Cora!

THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND

We all know that Rocky River has an outstanding public library. Did you know that some of our parishioners are on the Board of the Friends of Rocky River Public Library? Recently voted in for the 2022-23 year are **Kate Leslie**, President; **Craig Rimlinger**, Treasurer; **Jenny Dieringer**, Event Support; and **Noreen Vokic** and **Roberta Trutko** as Members at Large. Keep up the good work!

RAZZLE DAZZLE

Rocky River High School's spring musical, *Young Frankenstein*, won the Dazzle Awards Best Musical (Tier 1). Parishioners and (then) sophomore students **Carter Sindelar** and **Caroline Kysela** were in the cast. Carter starred as Dr. Victor Frankenstein and The Hermit, while Caroline starred as Elizabeth Benning. Congratulations to these young thespians.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) is an outstanding educational gem in our community. Thanks to **Bill and Joyce Litzler** for supporting this institution. They were recently honored by Tri-C as Community Champions. The Litzlers share a passion for enriching the lives of Tri-C students, dating back to their first gift to the college in 2006. Their contribution provides critical support through their endowed scholarship fund, which benefits graduates of the Seeds of Literacy program and other GED graduates who continue their education at Tri-C. The Litzlers have been St. Christopher parishioners for about 50 years. Joyce was very involved in school activities and Bill served on various committees. They are proud to say that they've had two generations of Baptisms, First Communions, Confirmations, and Weddings at St. Christopher.



COMMEMORATIVE GIFT

Thanks to parishioner **Maureen Hrehocik** who generously donated two cement benches which have now been placed in Centennial Park to provide us with additional seating as well as beautiful sculptures!

LITTLE LIBRARY

Parishioners **Dom and Noreen Vokic** returned to Rocky River after living in San Francisco where the Little Library project was huge, according to Noreen, housing everything from books to canned goods, to seeds. She was glad to see some of these in Rocky River but, there were none in their neighborhood (off Hilliard, between Lakeview and Northview). For an anniversary gift, Dom ordered and assembled a Little Library, which sits in their front yard. Here they are, with their children Evie and Nik. Happy reading to all.



Share your joyous events with us! Please forward submissions for Church Chatter to **Roberta Trutko** at (440) 263-7894 or roberta32red@hotmail.com.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 11	YOUTH GROUP BEGINS	October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, November 7, 14	BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP
September 11	CONFIRMATION CLASS BEGINS		
September 12	FIRST DAY OF PRESCHOOL	October 4	PET BLESSING
September 12	LECTOR WORKSHOP	October 8	CENTENNIAL CLAMBAKE
September 18	BLOODMOBILE	October 13	LADIES NIGHT OUT
September 18	PSR BEGINS	October 20	TRUNK OR TREAT
September 18	CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD BEGINS	November 2	EVENING OF REMEMBRANCE
		November 20	THANKSGIVING FOOD BOXES
September 19	RCIA BEGINS	November 20	BLOODMOBILE
September 19	YOUTH CHOIR BEGINS	November 20	PRE-BAPTISM CLASS
October 2	YOUTH MASS	November 27	ADVENT BEGINS
		December 4	ADVENT FAMILY NIGHT

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*We are the people of St. Christopher Catholic Church, a Eucharistic community of faith dedicated to ...
Welcome, Celebrate, Care, & Grow ... in the image and likeness of Jesus.*