



The Belltower Beacon

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

Volume 25: Issue 97

September 2025

WE WELCOME MRS. MARIANNE BROOKS, CERTIFIED LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTER

Pastoral Associate at St. Christopher

A new career, a renewed mission.

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Please join in welcoming Marianne to our parish community, where she will apply the skills and talents acquired during her many years in "corporate America"

to serve God's people at the deepest level. Her experience as project leader and continuous improvement director for The Sherwin-Williams Company has prepared her to improve program effectiveness, planning, and implementation in any organizational setting, including our parish. Since 2013, while working full-time for Sherwin-Williams, Marianne also volunteered at her parish church, St. John Bosco in Parma Heights. Despite a demanding work and travel schedule, Marianne found time to serve on several ministry initiatives. Over the years, she was a Stewardship Ministry co-leader, a member of Parish Council, a PSR (Parish School of Religion) catechist and minister of the Word (lector). Marianne retired from Sherwin-Williams at the end of August 2025. On September 1, she became a full-time Pastoral Associate. She brings with her an extraordinary history of transferable leadership experiences.

Marianne earned her bachelor's degree in Chemistry and her master's degree in Polymer

Science from the University of Akron. In 2022, she completed the requirements for her Lay Ecclesial Ministry Certification through the Diocese of Cleveland. In 2023, she earned a master's degree in Theological and Pastoral Studies at Ursuline College, Pepper Pike, OH. She describes herself as "highly motivated and a continuous learner, a faith-filled leader with a passion to serve God and others." Marianne was raised Catholic and has remained devout all her life. She was influenced in her faith journey by her mother, who attended Mass daily and was actively involved in the life of her parish. While successfully pursuing her career, Marianne also felt a strong pull toward church ministry. As she approached retirement, Marianne began to seek employment opportunities where she could more fully serve God by applying her gifts of management, service and giving back. She was interviewed by Fr. John Chlebo and, impressed by his leadership style, met the St. Christopher pastoral team, toured our campus, and accepted God's call to begin her full-time ministry position here.

Marianne began her career as a chemist at Sherwin-Williams, Cleveland, in 1988, eventually becoming their Quality Director/Manager through 2018. From 2019 through July of this year, she was the company's Continuous Improvement Director. In this position, Marianne was a project leader for industrial production sites to improve efficiency and standardization. She identified improvement opportunities, implemented new processes, and conducted related training across North America and Europe. She also

continued ...





served on the Corporate Steering Team whose purpose it was to approve new standards and lead Annual Quality Conferences. Readers may wonder why all this acquired professional knowledge is important to Marianne's new role at St. Christopher. According to Marianne, leadership skills and work ethics required in her secular career can and should also be applied to her role as Pastoral Associate. She is grateful and excited to begin this new phase.

Marianne and her husband, Dave, have two sons: Mike, age 30 (married to Kyra), and Josh, age 28. Her husband has worked as a chemist and a science teacher. He is currently employed by Amazon.com, Inc. In her free time, Marianne likes to take walks and socialize with friends over dinner. In addition, she has traveled extensively and remains active at St. John Bosco. Her personal mission includes prioritizing the needs of others and growing ever closer to Jesus Christ. Marianne's primary goals are to evangelize through small-group activity and meeting one-on-one with parishioners. When she finds her schedule or life in general stretched too much, she recalls the words of St. Paul to the Philippians in 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." It appears that Marianne has been called to land in the perfect place at the perfect time. Please join us in welcoming Marianne's faith-filled passion and valuable experience to this vibrant parish community.

Carmen Everett DeHaan

MEET AND WELCOME ALYSSA NADIN, MBA

Business Manager, St. Christopher Parish Community

After graduating from St. Joseph Academy in Cleveland, Alyssa earned her bachelor of arts degree in accounting from Baldwin-Wallace University (with a minor in entrepreneurship). She then earned her master's degree in accounting. Her professional experience has been primarily in business, auditing, and accounting. Alyssa began her career in the corporate sector before transitioning to Catholic parish communities. Presently, she is business manager for Holy Martyrs Parish in Medina, where she has worked since April 2023. From 2014 to 2023, Alyssa was business manager for St. Clement and St. James, both in Lakewood. She comes to St. Christopher with several years of managing and processing church collections, donations, payroll and employee benefits. Her positions have required that she work closely with the pastor, parish council and pastoral staff. She must compile, prepare and submit financial reports to the Diocese of Cleveland throughout the year. Alyssa collaborates with parishioners on special projects and is an active part of the daily life of the parish. On July 1st, Alyssa brought her talents and skills to St. Christopher when she became our business manager. Before he left, former and retired business manager, Joe Williams, worked alongside Alyssa for a period of time before turning the financial reins over to her.

Alyssa is well versed in the areas of social media, website maintenance and the use of other online platforms. From the start of her career, she prioritized building a good rapport with clients and staff in order to generate confidence and build trust. This makes her job more effective and efficient. Ultimately, the result is more rewarding for everyone involved. While pursuing her corporate financial career, Alyssa felt a calling to church finance. She found that working in a church setting was a better fit for her. Her goal became to continue working within the Cleveland Diocese, because she loves the business of church accounting. She met Fr. John during her time at St. James and St. Clement when Fr. John was the administrator of those parishes. She grew to respect his management style, and this led her to apply for the vacancy at St. Christopher. The fact that she's familiar with the area and attended high school in Cleveland, added to the appeal.

Though she has not worked in a parish with a day school, Alyssa is familiar with the Parish Schools of Religion (PSR) at other locations. She realizes that St. Christopher's versatile campus, day school and its large PSR program create a unique work environment. Though the summer months are quieter, with time she will also get to know the various ministries, parish groups, and special events that attract others to St. Chris. Alyssa looks forward to getting to know other staff members, students and parishioners. Please make Alyssa feel at home by extending a warm greeting when you see her.

Carmen Everett DeHaan

SCP WEEKEND 2025



What a weekend! Our 4th Annual SCP Weekend was the best yet—amazing attendance, perfect weather, and incredible energy. Even with a more relaxed six-month planning timeline, everything came together beautifully thanks to the dedication of our team.



Back in February, Alex DiMichele, Sharon Armstrong, and I began planning. We met with Fr. John and coordinated with the Parish staff to align on logistics. While February might seem early, for an event of this size, it's actually cutting it close. We were fortunate to have many returning committee members, though we could always use more help. If you're interested in joining the planning team, visit scpweekend.com or email us at scpw-info@stchrisparish.com.

This year, we introduced new musical acts, carnival games, inflatables, and activities like Poker Night and Mini Golf. We also added ice cream and churros to the food lineup. At the same time, we kept the core schedule and menu consistent to maintain familiarity and ease for our food team.

A special mention goes to Rocky River Brewing Company, a longtime supporter

of SCP Weekend. Due to their fire in June, they couldn't join us this year, but we hope to welcome them back soon. Donations to support their rebuild can be made through our website.

As excitement built, sponsors stepped up with generous support, and we began recruiting volunteers. With over 800 shifts to fill, it truly takes a village. From bartenders to carnival helpers, every role mattered. Whether you gave an hour or a hundred, thank you for making this event possible.

Then came the big weekend.

Friday kicked off with an all-school Mass, followed by food, drinks, carnival games, inflatables, and magic by Rick Smith Jr. Our Friday night headliner, Ace Molar, was a huge hit—something I've wanted for years. Despite competing with the Rocky River High School football game, we had our best Friday turnout ever.



Saturday started slow, as expected with CYO games and busy family schedules, but quickly picked up. The Kids' Fun Run returned, and the day was packed with food, beer, games, and entertainment. Highlights included a balloon artist, airbrush artist, Realm of the Reptile animal show, more magic from Rick Smith Jr., and music from Riley and Flanagan. Our outdoor Mass drew over 500 attendees, and the evening wrapped up with the Michelle Romary Band.

Sunday was more low-key but just as meaningful. We held our traditional 11:30 a.m. outdoor Mass, followed by a complimentary brunch provided by our

generous sponsors. Though Erny Nunez had to cancel last minute, the Michelle Romary Trio—already present from singing at Mass earlier—stepped in and delivered a beautiful performance. It was a perfect, heartfelt close to the weekend.



Looking back, I'm still amazed we had perfect weather again—rain before and after, but sunshine for all three days. Divine timing, perhaps, and a blessing we don't take for granted.

SCP Weekend has come a long way from its Block Party roots. It's still evolving, but we should all be proud of what it's become. Huge thanks to our planning committee (listed in this edition of the Beacon), our volunteers, sponsors, parish staff, and everyone who attended. Your support makes this event not just possible, but truly special.

If you missed it, check out the photos and highlights on our website—and mark your calendar for SCP Weekend 2026. The more we come together, the stronger our community becomes.



Thank you all for being part of something so meaningful. Here's to next year!

Kevin Tennant

Thank You OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

Presenting: Joyce Buick GMC

Blue: The Sullivan Family
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St. Edward High School
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Wakefield Equipment

Thank You PARISHIONER PATRONS

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Thank You

St. Christopher Pastoral Staff
St. Christopher School Staff
John Yakim
Joe Machesky
Tom Arnold
Caitlyn Castro
Kathleen McNamee
Marilu Norena
Savannah Paez
Sarah Rish
Allison Tjan

Thank You SCP WEEKEND COMMITTEE

Kevin Tennant, *Event Chair*
 Alex DiMichele, *Co-Chair*
 Sharon Armstrong, *Staff Chair*
 Mary and Nector Castro
 Betsy Fritz
 Rob and Annette Crook
 Brendan Barker
 Kathy Rohn
 Craig Rimlinger
 Dan Rooney
 Mary Meler
 Mary Kay Curtis
 Kristy Bertke
 Deacon Mike Hayes



Congrats! RAFFLE WINNERS

\$1,000 WINNERS
 Charlie Rowley, Jan Bender,
 Bill Murman, Mary Zammikiel and
 Dan O'Leary

\$2,000 WINNER
 Don Nugent

\$3,000 WINNER
 Keith Kleinsmith



Friday Fun & Games



Friday Fun & Games



Friday Fun & Games



Ace Molar



Kids Fun Run



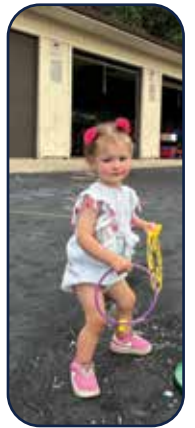
Saturday Festivities



Saturday Festivities



Saturday Festivities



Saturday Festivities



Sunday: Mass & Breakfast



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST EDUCATORS: MEET THE NEW FACES JOINING ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

This fall, we welcome five new staff members to the St. Christopher School family. Each brings not only a deep passion for teaching but also a heartfelt commitment to nurturing the minds, hearts, and faith of our students.



Mary Kramer – Preschool Director, “Little Knights” Program

Mary Kramer brings a lifetime of experience working with young children along with a joyful, faith-centered approach to early education. This middle child of ten children is a proud west side native and graduate of Magnificat High School and Bowling Green State University, where she earned a degree in Early Childhood Education.

Mary has worked with children in some capacity her entire life: from babysitting siblings and a high school job at a childcare center, to teaching Sunday school when her children were young, before beginning her long stint in the preschool classroom 17 years ago.

For Mary, teaching is not just a profession, it’s a calling rooted in her deep appreciation for the wonder children bring to the world. The theme for the school year is “Jesus, our True North.” Mary believes that every child deserves a “True North”—a place of safety, faith, and love—and she hopes St. Christopher Preschool becomes just that for our youngest learners.

Mary and her husband have been married for 38 years and are proud parents of three grown children and grandparents to two. When she’s not in the classroom, she enjoys cooking, reading, gardening, and spending time near Lake Erie and the Metroparks.

Mary’s warmth and lifelong passion for nurturing young children will help shape the future of our Little Knights program. “Children are the greatest gift from God,” said Mary. “I love the wonder and awe that they see in the world every day, that we as adults can overlook. Beauty is everywhere if you look through the eyes of a child.”



Bonnie Whitmer – Kindergarten Teacher

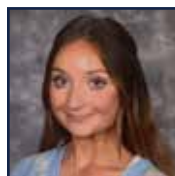
With 42 years of experience—28 of them in kindergarten—Bonnie Whitmer brings wisdom, joy, and a deep sense of purpose to her classroom. A graduate of Cleveland State University with a Master’s from Baldwin-

Wallace, Bonnie previously taught in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District for 35 years, and most recently at St. Peter School in Lorain.

Teaching has always been a calling for Bonnie. Her philosophy centers on the belief that all children can learn and thrive when education is joyful, engaging, and infused with faith. Movement, music, and a love for Jesus are incorporated into every aspect of her instruction.

Bonnie and her husband Joe reside in North Olmsted and are proud parents of two adult daughters, Kelly and Kayte. They recently welcomed a new dog, Chance, to the family. Bonnie is also an active member of the choir at St. Clarence Church.

“I wanted to be a teacher from my first day of kindergarten, and never changed my mind,” said Bonnie. “To me, teaching is a calling, not a job. My philosophy is that all children can learn. I am looking forward to bringing joy to my kindergartners and helping each one reach their highest potential.”



Megan Schurch – 1st Grade Teacher

A recent graduate of the University of Akron with a degree in Early Childhood Intervention, Megan Schurch is an educator with a deep passion and energy for helping children thrive.

She began her career teaching pre-kindergarten and now brings her skills and enthusiasm to our first-grade classroom.

Megan believes in creating a warm, inclusive space where children feel safe, seen, and celebrated. Her approach to teaching emphasizes hands-on learning, foundational literacy development, and nurturing the whole child academically, emotionally, and spiritually. She sees teaching as both her passion and a privilege and is cognizant of the responsibility to foster curiosity, confidence, and kindness in every child.

Originally from Avon, Ohio, Megan comes from a close-knit family with four siblings and supportive parents. She enjoys hiking, reading, and spending time with loved ones. Megan is eager to build strong relationships at St. Christopher and make a lasting, positive impact on her students’ lives.

“Each child is a unique gift from God, with their own strengths and challenges,” said Megan. “My goal is not just academic growth but social-emotional development, and spiritual as well. I love helping children unlock their potential and watching their faces light up when they grasp a new concept.”

“I care deeply about creating a space where my students feel safe, seen, and celebrated for who they are. My hope is that each child leaves my classroom not only knowing more academically, but also feeling more confident, kind, and curious. That’s the kind of impact I hope to make, and I can’t wait to get started!”



Daisy Johnson – 3rd Grade Teacher

With over two decades of experience in the Diocese of Cleveland, Daisy Johnson (whose nickname stems from her older sister’s mispronunciation of “Suzanne”) brings deep-rooted faith, creativity, and heartfelt commitment to the classroom. After briefly stepping into the

world of instructional design, Daisy realized her heart belongs in the classroom, so she is excited to return to teaching, this time in third grade at St. Christopher.

Daisy graduated from Cleveland State in 2002 and earned her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction in 2013. She especially loves teaching reading and writing and enjoys using picture books and art to bring social studies to life.

Daisy lives in Fairview Park with her husband, Bradley, and their Golden Retriever, Bristol. In her free time, she loves exploring the outdoors, being on the water, and going on adventures with Bristol.

"I am excited to become part of the St. Christopher family and am looking forward to incorporating my faith as part of my teaching philosophy," said Daisy. "I am passionate about meeting every child where they are and teaching the invaluable lessons of kindness and acceptance."



Karyn Sanders – Junior High Mathematics Teacher

Joining us to teach mathematics for grades 6–8, Karyn Sanders

brings a strong background in math and science education, a heart for service, and the ability to help students think critically and develop confidence in their problem-solving abilities. A graduate of Hiram College with concentrations in math and science, Karyn previously taught science for grades 5–8 at East Academy in Collinwood, Ohio.

Karyn believes that great teaching is about much more than simply delivering content—it's about building confidence, resilience, and curiosity—and being a consistent source of encouragement, compassion, and support for students. She credits her own K-12 Catholic school experience with inspiring her to become the

kind of teacher who helps students grow in confidence and character.

Raised on the east side of Cleveland in a faith-filled home, Karyn has been actively involved in her parish through youth ministries, choir, and service for many years. "I'm looking forward to building meaningful, long-lasting relationships with my students and being someone they know they can count on," said Karyn. "I hope to create a classroom culture that promotes growth and incites curiosity, especially when it comes to math. It is my hope that students will not only develop stronger math skills but also see the subject as valuable and even enjoyable."

Please offer a warm welcome to these new members of our St. Christopher School community. We are truly blessed to have them bringing to life our school's mission of empowering the mind, nourishing the spirit, and caring for others, all in Jesus' name.

Beth Van Horn

LADIES GUILD SUMMER 2025

The Ladies Guild celebrated the return of summer with its 4th annual Summer Solstice Social on June 18. Storm clouds, rain, and high winds pushed this year's event indoors to the Parish Center, but the spirit of celebration and friendship in those attending could not be dampened. Parishioner and Tai Chi instructor, Mary Holtz, led the group through the gentle, flowing movements of basic Tai Chi with a mindful focus on the breath and the presence of the Holy Spirit. A sense of calm and peace came over the room, despite the storm raging outdoors. It was a beautiful reminder of how prayer and attention to the Holy Spirit within help guide us through turbulent times. Time for refreshments, socializing, and conversation with friends capped off the enjoyable evening.

The Guild welcomed back the liturgical season of Ordinary Time by celebrating those women that inspire us by their faith and their extraordinary capacity for loving service. While the Guild has profiled many well-known saints and holy women on its Woman of the Month parish webpage this past year, during the summer months the focus turned to "ordinary saints". As Pope Francis said: "The saints are men and women who have joy in their hearts and spread it to others." Guild members were asked to contemplate the question: "Who spreads that joy to you?", and to respond in writing about their own "ordinary saints" if so moved.

The always festive Raise Your Spirits Ladies Guild Social is scheduled for October 2. It's a fun way to welcome the fall season while enjoying delicious wines and appetizers catered by Lake Road Market. Come catch up with old friends and make some new ones!

Nancy Sullivan



FR. JOHN'S BIRTH FAMILY UPDATE



When our parish celebrated our centennial in 2022, I also celebrated my 25th anniversary as pastor. I was grateful to be recognized with this achievement the first weekend in August. I preached at all the Masses and included news that I had recently learned regarding my own family background. It is centered on

the fact that I was adopted as an infant. Over the years I knew very little about my background although I always knew that I was adopted. New York State law did not allow the real birth certificate to be released to adoptees until 2020. Prior to that, I had a maiden name and the first name of Mary for my mother. The only other details I had was non-identifying information. Once the records were released, I came to know my birth mother was named Veronica Alice. However, I did not have a married name and I was not able to learn anything by searching social media.

In November 2021, her obituary appeared online which included her married name in addition to what I already knew. She had died at the age of 87. Based on the non-identifying information I had, there were a number of similarities. I contacted the priest who had conducted the service. He had no knowledge of her having a child prior to marriage. It was clear she had been married and had three children. It was also evident that her husband was not my birth father. The priest put me in touch with the eldest daughter who in turn contacted me. She checked me out online, and decided to call me. She had no knowledge whatsoever that her mother had a child prior to being married. She was curious and agreed to contact some extended family and get back to me. She did that and a few weeks later called to say that she could not find anyone still living who knew anything about the situation. She suggested doing DNA testing and I agreed. The results came back with a high percentage of being related. Other similarities and pictures caused all of us to believe that we might be related and that I would be their half brother. Their father was still living, now widowed after 61 years of marriage. I was hopeful that they might reach out to him to see if he knew anything about my existence. However, they decided not to do so for fear that if he did not know, it would be upsetting for him. Though disappointed, I did respect their decision and the matter was never pursued. He passed away in November 2024 at the age of 98.

Over the last three years I have met all of the family. I have three half siblings. Kathy is the oldest, is married and has two adult daughters. They live in North Carolina. Patty is the middle child, also married and has two children (twins), and lives in Minnesota. Dan is the youngest and lives in Syracuse, near where the family grew up. He has one adult daughter who is married with two children and lives in Syracuse.

The first time all four of us met together was in the summer of 2024 in Syracuse. It was a brief visit but a good opportunity for all of us to be together and we enjoyed our time together. We agreed to stay in touch in the months and years ahead. Before we departed, they indicated that their father's health was declining. Their plan when he died was to have him cremated and eventually buried in Syracuse next to my birth mother. They asked me if I would be willing to do the service at the time of the burial. I agreed to do so and this past summer we gathered in July for the service. The picture in this article was taken afterwards. Obviously I am on the right. Next to me is Kathy, Patty, and Dan. You can arrive at your own conclusions about whether or not we have some physical resemblance!

Fr. John Chlebo

ALL SAINTS FAMILY NIGHT

Join us for our first annual All Saints Day Family Night on Saturday, November 1 from 6-8 p.m. in the Parish Center. Come dressed as your favorite saint – there are thousands to choose from! It promises to be a celebration for every generation – join us! This event is similar in structure to Advent Family Night and Lent Family Night, featuring games, stories, crafts, and prayer. Watch for the details in the Parish Bulletin and on our website.

Sharon Armstrong

DONATE VASES & JARS

Bighearted Blooms (BHB), a nonprofit 501(c)(3), needs your unwanted vases and clean Mason-type jars. BHB repurposes donated flowers from grocery stores, wholesalers, funerals, weddings, and other sources into bouquets for nursing homes, cancer wards, hospices, and similar organizations. Vases may be bud vases or any jar/vase 8 inches tall or shorter. Donations can be placed in the boxes marked "BigHearted Blooms Donations" in the Gathering Area after all Masses the weekend of September 20–21. Thank you for helping BHB "deliver joy through recycled flowers."

Maureen Hrehocik

SOCIAL OUTREACH CHRISTMAS IN JULY: ST. CHRISTOPHER PARISH SHINES WITH GENEROSITY



This past July, our Parish once again demonstrated the true meaning of Christian love and giving through its Christmas in July collection for The Centers' H.O.P.E. Campus. The response from parishioners was nothing short of extraordinary, with the hallway leading to the parish center lined with generous donations—clothing, essential items, toys, art supplies, and much more—creating a heartwarming scene of compassion in action.

A special thank-you goes to parish staff members John Yakim, Colleen McKenna, Gayle Cilimburg, and Dawn Bloom for making this year's collection seamless.

The Centers' H.O.P.E. Campus expressed its heartfelt gratitude in a thank-you letter written by Maureen Horton:

"On behalf of every child and staff member at The Centers' H.O.P.E. Campus, we want to extend our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude for your truly overwhelming 'Christmas in July' celebration! Your incredible generosity has absolutely stunned us and filled our campus with warmth, joy, and excitement..."

The gifts you provided—including essential undershirts, socks, personal products, toys, art supplies, and posters—were not just abundant but perfectly suited to our children's needs. Every single item was something they could use right away! One of our residential specialists remarked how thrilled she was that the children could put the new t-shirts to use immediately. This immediate impact is a direct result of your kindness and attention to detail.

Your 'Christmas in July' has brought so much more than tangible items; it has brought a profound sense of care, community, and hope to children who need it most."

As we reflect on this beautiful outpouring of generosity, we are reminded that the spirit of Christmas isn't bound by a season—it lives in every act of kindness we share. The Social Outreach Committee is blessed to witness these moments of faith in action throughout the year. If you feel called to help bring Christ's love to others through service events like Christmas in July, we invite you to join us. Please reach out to socialoutreach@stchrisparish.com—together, we can continue to make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.

Julie Mallett



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE NEWS

Registration for PSR Grades K-5 and "the Way" is well under way. We hope to enroll over 375 students this year. Classes start on Sunday, September 14 at 8:30 or 10 a.m. We would love your help – all ages are welcome – teens, young adults, parents, and grandparents. If you would like to volunteer, we will find you a job that fits your time and talent.

Confirmation Candidates have a new time for class this year: Sundays from 9-11:15 a.m., followed by the Youth Mass at 11:30 a.m. The parent/student meeting is September 3 or 4 at 7 p.m. in the Atrium and the first class is Sunday, September 7 at 9 a.m. Bishop Malesic will be celebrating Confirmation with our Candidates on May 6, 2026.

Beginning September 7, the Religious Education Office will be providing a special "Bulletin" for our youngest friends (ages 4-7), to experience Mass on their level. They can busy themselves during Mass with this special handout and then take it home to share with the family. The "Bulletins" will be at each entrance of the Church and will be changed on a weekly basis.

Sharon Armstrong



LAUDATO SI' TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

“Oh God, we ask your blessing on this tree and on those who nurtured it, planted it, cared for it and will enjoy its food, shelter and beauty.” With these words the Social Outreach Committee asked for God’s blessing on the tree they planted on the St. Christopher property. The tree was planted to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis encyclical Laudato Si’. In this encyclical Pope Francis emphasizes that the poor and vulnerable are disproportionately affected by environmental problems and highlights the role of environmental protection in social justice. Trees are extremely important for environmental protection and thus a fitting symbol of the parish’s commitment to the protection of God’s creation.

Jeanette Nappier



J+WALKERS YOUTH MINISTRY PREPARES FOR AUTUMN EXPANSION



Participants of the St. Christopher Youth Ministry program have enjoyed an amazing summer filled with retreats, campfires, and opportunities to play, pray, learn, and grow together. Our two retreats, “Made for More” (high school students) and “Behold” (middle school students) gave 30 teens the opportunity to explore their faith in an overnight setting alongside their peers. Students enjoyed Mass with one of the parish priests, faith discussions, prayer with art and scripture, and plenty of fun! High school students explored the stories of some of the church’s greatest figures like Mary, Bl. Carlo Acutis, and King David, to understand how God chooses ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. The retreat took place at a farmhouse in central Ohio and featured

an outing to a local amusement center. 7th and 8th grade students headed to Bellwether Farm, a retreat house in Wakeman, OH, for their “Behold” retreat. This experience explored the presence of God in the world around us, with particular focus on the Mass, Eucharist, and nature. Students enjoyed Mass, adoration, canoeing, a farm tour, and more. Retreats are one of the most powerful experiences that move students to engage more deeply in their faith and relationship with God. Our students and leaders are grateful for the support we received during our 2023 #WeGiveCatholic campaign to make these experiences possible.

In addition to our retreat experiences, students have had opportunities to gather regularly throughout the summer months to enjoy the beautiful weather and company of one another. Our summer meetings have included our annual cookout, fireside chats, water canon mayhem, and a trip or two to Mitchell’s ice cream. Meeting themes have included “Wrestling with God,” “Kindness,” “Being Present,” and “Comparison to Others.” Talks for each night are flexible, actively moving to meet the needs of our students, prompting questions and contemplation, and encouraging a change of heart and mind. This approach to youth ministry helps maintain engagement and solicit input from teens.

J+Walkers is excited to announce some major updates for the fall! With the support of Fr. John and school principal Mary Meler, we are excited to announce the St. Carlo Acutis Youth Room. This room, a former classroom located near the middle school wing of St. Christopher School, is in the process of being transformed into a dedicated space for youth ministry activities. Construction includes drywall repairs, removal of lockers and chalkboards, new flooring, and updated aesthetics. The room will feature comfortable furniture, a dry kitchen (dedicated in memory of the late Deacon Tom Long), and a commissioned icon of St. Carlo Acutis. Much of this work is possible thanks to our 2023 #WeGiveCatholic campaign.

Logan Feldkamp



CONGRATULATIONS 8TH GRADE CLASS OF 2025

May God Bless you on your journey into high school and beyond!



Evalina Beeler – Magnificat High School
 Aela Betters – Magnificat High School
 Cathleen Carr – Magnificat High School
 Miahbella Caserio – Magnificat High School
 Abigail Curtis – Magnificat High School
 Margaret French – Magnificat High School
 Matthew Goode – St. Ignatius High School
 Daniel Johnston – St. Ignatius High School
 Molly Laudolff – St. Joseph Academy
 Peter Lin – St. Edward High School
 Olivia McGannon – Magnificat High School
 Kateri Myers – Magnificat High School
 William Pichotta – St. Ignatius High School
 Lillian Pussel – St. Joseph Academy
 Ryan Rennell – St. Ignatius High School
 Rocco Roche – St. Ignatius High School
 Luke Rodgers – St. Ignatius High School
 Stone Sorensen – University School
 Luke Stefan – St. Ignatius High School
 Valentina Vazquez – Magnificat High School
 Colin Warren – St. Edward High School
 Brooke Wearsch – St. Joseph Academy
 Vivian Williams – Magnificat High School
 Caroline Wise – Magnificat High School

Mary Meler

POWER COUPLE: MURMAN & CABOT



We are happy to spotlight Bill Murman and Mary Kay Cabot for their achievements in our parish, community, and beyond.

Parishioners for 32-plus years, Bill and Mary Kay have seen their three children graduate from St. Christopher School. Son, Chris, then graduated from St. Ignatius High School, while daughters, Celeste and Camryn, graduated from Magnificat High School. Bill served on Parish Council for four years, as well as serving on the boards of Magnificat High School, the Diabetes Partnership of Cleveland, and on the Board of Collaborate to End Human Trafficking. Being part of these organizations has strengthened in him the importance of being dedicated, positive, and goal oriented. His expertise as Senior Vice President at Wealth Management UBS Financial Services has enabled him in these endeavors. Bill's hobbies include swimming and golf, as well as international travel with the entire family.

You know Mary Kay as the Browns beat writer for The Plain Dealer and covering the NFL since 1988, but did you know that she has been selected as the 2025 Bill Nunn Jr. Award by the Professional Football Writers of America? She is the second woman to be a Nunn honoree and the second journalist who primarily worked at The Plain Dealer to win

the award. The Nunn Award is given to a reporter who has made a long and distinguished contribution to pro football through coverage. It is fitting that she was honored by the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton at the Enshrinees' Gold Jacket Dinner last month. Born in Lakewood, Mary Kay graduated from Kent State University in 1984 with a degree in journalism. While in college, she interned for The Plain Dealer and then accepted an offer to join the paper's sports department. "I am truly overwhelmed and humbled to receive this prestigious award, and I can't thank my colleagues enough for recognizing my contribution to the game over all of these years," said Cabot. However, this is not her only award. She was voted 2015 Ohio sportswriter of the Year by the National Sports Media Association and received the Ohio Associated Press Media Editors Sportswriter of the Year award in 2024. She was inducted into the Cleveland Press Club Hall of Fame in 2022.



We wish Bill and Mary Kay, along with their children, continued success in making their parish, community, and beyond a better place. Thank you for sharing your time and talent.

Roberta Trutko

"FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU," DECLARES THE LORD, "PLANS TO PROSPER YOU AND NOT TO HARM YOU, PLANS TO GIVE YOU HOPE AND A FUTURE." JEREMIAH 29:11

PIPE ORGAN CONSOLE UPGRADE

Did you know that the pipe organ at the back of the church was under renovation for over three months earlier this year? You might be thinking, “But I didn’t notice anything from my pew—there were no pipes missing, I didn’t see any scaffolding going up.” Perhaps, you recall not hearing the organ during Lent. That’s because it was undergoing essential repairs.

Although the pipes are the most visible part of the organ, they’re just one component of a much more complex sound-producing mechanism. Each pipe is like a whistle that plays a single pitch in a specific tone color. Pressurized air flows into these pipes from a blower system, and the pipes rest on ducts that carry this air. The organist controls valves that allow or block this airflow by playing the keys at the console. So, while an organ may look like a gigantic piano, its keyboard actually functions more like a modern computer interface. Historically, mechanical organs used levers and trackers connected directly to the valves, powered by human-operated bellows—a design still used today in some instruments.

Each key typically controls multiple pipes, allowing for a wide range of tonal combinations. The process of selecting which pipes to use is called registration. In modern instruments, these combinations can be stored and recalled electronically for convenience.

The current pipe organ was built in 1968 by the Schantz Organ Co., a respected firm based in Ohio. Over the years, it’s endured its share of challenges—most notably a serious roof leak—but the parish community has always come together to restore and maintain it.

However, one original component remained untouched until recently: the console and the electrical system. While still operational, many of the electrical contacts had begun to deteriorate, and the technology used to store registrations was long outdated—predating modern computer memory. (If you’ve ever renovated a house from the 1960s or earlier, you get the idea.) This renovation offered a chance to update the organ’s electrical system to meet current codes and to refurbish the console, ensuring that it would continue to serve our worship for years to come.

Northeast Ohio is fortunate to have several reputable organ builders. After reviewing multiple bids and consulting with other organists, we selected the Leek Pipe Organ Co. of Berea for the project. One helpful factor was that Easter in 2025 fell quite late. This allowed us to schedule the work between Christmas and Easter with minimal disruption to church activities.

Work began in early January, when the console was carefully removed and transported to the builder’s workshop for cleaning and restoration. Meanwhile, technicians quietly worked in the organ chamber—even during daily Mass—to replace the instrument’s wiring. (You likely never noticed—they were as silent as the proverbial church mice!)

While we had the option of replacing the console entirely, we chose instead to preserve the original case, which was built from high-quality materials. It was refinished rather than rebuilt. However, we did install a new, height-adjustable bench to accommodate organists of varying statures and ensure proper playing posture.

The entire renovation was completed just in time—right before Palm Sunday, 2025—and the renewed instrument has already begun to enrich our worship with beauty, power, and clarity once again. We are planning an evening of rededication and thanksgiving for the refurbished organ in the fall. Stay tuned for more details!

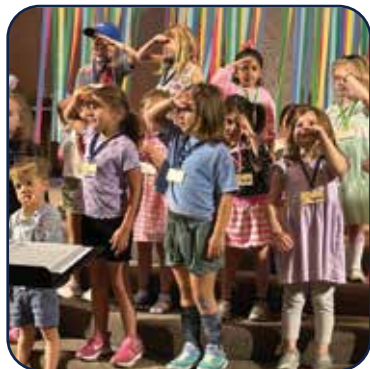
Mayumi Naramura



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025

Vacation Bible School was amazing this year. We had 90 campers, 33 teen helpers, and 20 adult helpers from St. Christopher Church, Rocky River Presbyterian, and Rockport United Methodist. It has been an “Ecumenical Collaboration” for over 30 years. The theme for this year’s camp was “God’s Big Beautiful World,” where we learned about how God created a beautiful world for us to take care of and enjoy. We also collected over \$1,250 for our mission: “Elle’s Enchanted Forest.” This organization is trying to complete a special needs playground on the City Hall property at the corner of Wagar and Hilliard Roads in Rocky River. This is the only playground of its kind on the westside of Cleveland. The campers are able to see who the money they raise is helping in our community. Thank you to the volunteers, especially those from our parish! We couldn’t have done it without you!

Sharon Armstrong



 THE LADIES GUILD INVITES YOU TO

Raise your Spirits

Join Us for an Evening of fun & friendship

10.2.2025

7 p.m.

Atrium

**Special
Price!** 

For \$30:

- Wine & light appetizers provided by Lake Road Market
- Desserts by Kathy's Kolacke & Pastry shop
- An evening of friendship, laughs and fun!



Please register online at stchrisparish.com with credit card by clicking [Donate Now](#) and selecting *Raise your Spirits*.

If you would prefer you can register in person at the Parish Office during business hours and pay with either cash or a check made payable to St. Christopher Parish.

All ladies who are current on their Ladies Guild dues can take an **extra \$5** off your ticket price.

Dues-paying members pay only \$25!

CHURCH CHATTER

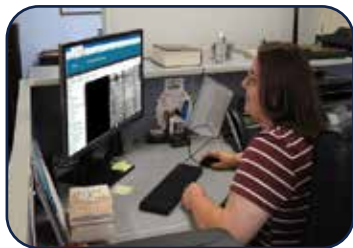
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Birthday wishes go out to **Joe Machesky**, maintenance, on September 2, and **Kerry Fioritto**, maintenance, on September 9. November celebrations include **Viorica Buda**, maintenance on November 9 and **Marianne Brooks**, pastoral associate, on November 16.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

Fr. Damian Ference was recently appointed parochial vicar of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Cleveland. This is in addition to his assignment as vicar for evangelization for the Diocese of Cleveland. **Fr. John Betters** concluded his appointment as pastor of SS. Robert & William Parish and as pastor of St. John of the Cross Parish, both in Euclid. He was appointed pastor of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Chagrin Falls, effective August 15.

DIOCESAN ARCHIVIST



Let's welcome new parishioner **Emily Ahlin**! Since graduating from the University of Pittsburgh with a Master of Library and Information Science, she has served as a Diocesan archivist since 2021. What does the Diocesan archivist do? Her job includes documenting each bishop's ministry; cleaning moldy materials from storage facilities; being present when cornerstone time capsules are recovered; managing closed parish records; consulting with parishes on sacramental records; and handling other archival needs. When St. Christopher celebrated its centennial, Emily welcomed members of our time capsule committee and guided them in proper documentation practices. She became familiar with St. Christopher from Fr. John and Deacon Mike and decided she "wanted to be part of this active, lively, and faithful community." She joined the Diocesan softball league and plays on our parish team. There she met Logan Feldkamp, our Pastoral Associate, and has since helped him with our youth ministry. Emily recently became a lector, too. We're glad you're here, Emily!

PATRIOTISM

Remember to exercise your right to **vote** on November 4. If you would like to donate a U.S. flag for our church's flagpole, please deliver it to the Parish Office and include your name with the flag.

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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Nancy Sullivan and Kevin Tennant

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 5, October 3, November 7	EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION	September 15	OCIA BEGINS
September 6	CARLO ACUTIS EVENT	October 2	RAISE YOUR SPIRITS
September 7	CONFIRMATION CLASSES BEGIN	October 5	PET BLESSING
September 8	FIRST DAY OF PRESCHOOL	October 11 & 12	ANOINTING OF THE SICK ALL MASSES
September 10, 24, October 8, 22, November 12, 26	MORNING WITH THE WORD	October 23	TRUNK OR TREAT
September 11, 18, 25, October 9, 16, 30, November 6, 13, 20	WALKING WITH PURPOSE	November 1	ALL SAINTS FAMILY NIGHT
September 14	PSR BEGINS	November 2	EVENING OF REMEMBRANCE
September 14	CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD BEGINS	November 16	PRE-BAPTISM CLASS
September 14	JR. HIGH PSR PROGRAM (THE WAY) BEGINS	November 21	ORGAN REDEDICATION
		November 22-23	THANKSGIVING FOOD COLLECTION
		November 30	ADVENT BEGINS

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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.*