

## *To all who came to celebrate the birth of Christ at St. Stanislaus Kostka...*

Throughout history, God's people have found the need to live their faith – and teach their faith – in a world which often opposed their efforts. Throughout history, God's people have tried to find a light in the midst of a dark and gloomy world, and they found it in their faith in God and in Jesus, his Son. This is why we speak of Jesus as “the light of the world” and why the prophets, especially Isaiah, remind us that we need to find, and then be, that light in a world that tries to make it hard to see.

The gold cross on our newly refinished front doors is meant to remind us of that fact every time that we enter our Church; the light in the midst of the darkness can be found in this church and in our gathering together when we enter through the cross of Jesus. At the same time, when we walk out through that same cross, we have been challenged to be that light for others. In this way, we are doing our part to fulfill the promise which St. John proclaimed in his Gospel: “*the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.*” Today, it is up to you and me to make this happen.

St. Stan's has had a long, and proud, history of doing this by the efforts of those who “reach out” to others with sacrifices of their time and their talents. This yearly special Christmas bulletin is put together for two reasons: first, to show how many things have been done as a light for people in need, and secondly in the hope that those who read this will find something that they would like to do to share their time and talents with others and be a light in their darkened world. We hope that next year, when you read this bulletin again, you will “see” your efforts on these pages and know that you have helped make our light shine a bit more brightly.

We all know quite well that the last few years have been a troubling time for our Church and our people, as well as for our nation, our families and our traditions. While it is normal to not want to “get involved” this is really not an option for God's people. Being angry or upset with what is happening will not make things better. We must *do* something if change is to take place. It is easy to “curse the darkness” but, as the founder of the group called *The Christophers* used to preach: “*It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.*” The miracle of Christmas challenges us to be that light. We can, at the very least, pray for our world and our Church, but that prayer will be more effective if we pray it in the light of Christ. On this blessed day, can't each of us find some time to first pray that the light of God's truth will shine in – and through – each of us and bring change to our world and, secondly, be a part of the answer to our own prayer by the lives we lead? How appropriate that would be for this holy season.

**May the light that led the magi to Bethlehem... the light that has brought us here today and encouraged us to read these words... the light that lights our path as we leave this gathering and return to our homes... the light that lit the skies on that first Christmas... may THAT light become the light that each of us brings to someone else, today... and every day... AMEN.**

*May God bless each and every one of us...*

*Fr Jay*

## **2019 WAS A JOY-FILLED YEAR FOR OUR PARISH OF ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA:**

- \*We welcomed 28 new families and now have 1078 registered families
- \*Through Baptism, we added 14 to the family of God
- \*16 children made their First Communion in May and 20 received the Sacrament of Confirmation
- \*2 couples entered Marriage
- \*We remembered the lives of 13 who passed from this world
  
- \***We offer congratulations** to and prayers for our pastor, Fr. John Backes as he was appointed Dean of Dutchess County. He has accepted these added responsibilities with humility
- \*We thank Fr Charlie Brunick, CSP and other Paulist priests who serve and inspire us throughout the year when Fr Jay is on conference, retreat or vacation
- \*We welcome Deacon John Nash (retired) and acknowledge Deacon Richard Aglietti (retired) who serve us as able – to help Deacon John Dunn and Fr Jay with their duties
- \*We congratulate Sr. Cora Caeli, SV (Colleen Dunn) who professed her First Vows with the Sisters of Life
- \*We offer gratitude to Mrs Marge Sullivan who retired as Coordinator of Faith Formation K-6 and we welcome Mrs Nan Kramer “home” to St Stans in that position.
- \*We congratulate Dawn Andrews and Michelle DeMild who received the Vincent Pallotti Youth Ministry Award
- \*We congratulate Veronica Keene who serves on the Archdiocesan Youth Ministry Board and Samantha Schucker who will be next year’s Pallottine Teenage Federation President
- \*We congratulate our St Stanislaus Teen Club who received the Vincent Pallotti Apostolic Award for their work with the local homeless.

## **2019 WAS A YEAR OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING FOR OUR PARISH:**

- \*Our Sunday Masses are enhanced by the traditional music of our Saturday evening choir as well as our Folk group at the 11am Mass. Each of these dedicated volunteer ministries are always looking for more talent!
- \*61 Liturgical Ministers serve at our Masses: 14 Lectors, 33 Eucharistic Ministers, 14 Altar Servers
- \*16 Ushers take up the weekly collection as well as assist parishioners in finding a place to sit
- \*Monthly Children’s Liturgy of the Word during the 11am Mass enlivens the scriptures for children in PreK-4 through 4<sup>th</sup> grade with age-appropriate discussion and activities
- \*Monthly morning First Friday Adoration continues from October thru June. This year, 2 Nocturnal Adoration dates have been well attended and received. This will continue, hopefully 3 times in 2020.
- \*Lenten Friday evening Stations of the Cross are a staple at St Stanislaus as well as the Good Friday Ecumenical Stations in Pleasant Valley
- \*Many take advantage of the 2 Reconciliation Mondays (Advent and Lent) which offer the forgiveness and grace to move forward in service to the Lord.



## **2019 WAS AN INSPIRING YEAR FOR OUR PARISH OF ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA:**

- \*We enjoyed a wonderful pre-Lent Mission in February by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. These men, who serve the poor, presented an inspiring 3 evenings on the topic of *Holiness*.
- \*Many of our women attended a Lenten afternoon painting retreat focusing on the Cross of Christ.
- \*Our Family Catechesis programs were successful in presenting worthwhile programs
  - Lent:** The Seven Last Words of Christ
  - Fall:** Walking with St Stanislaus Kostka – A history of our Parish
- \*The Men's Prayer Group continues to meet one Saturday a month in the Church from 7-8:15 am
- \*Opening the Word Scripture study (with 20 attendees) meets 2-3 times per month
- \*Our children had fun as well as learn about the love of God through participation in our VBS "ROAR" in August and Journey to Jerusalem (Lent) and Adventure to the Stable (Advent)
- \*Many of our parishioners followed the *Rejoice! Advent Meditations with Joseph* daily reflections

## **2019 WAS A YEAR OF GROWING IN FAITH FOR OUR PARISH OF ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA:**

- \***FORMED** ([watch.formed.org](http://watch.formed.org)) has proven to be a worthwhile gift to the parish by the Archdiocese!
  - allows access to Catholic movies, formation programs, documentaries, bible studies, online books etc.
  - has helped us greatly with Faith Formation programs here at our parish
  - Call the Parish Office if you would like more information
- \*Our Faith Formation program includes 99 families / 145 students with 5 in our GIFT Programs  
16 catechists and 6 aides support this ministry

## **2019 WAS A YEAR OF IMPROVING THE CAMPUS OF ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA:**

- \*Asbestos abatement in the Church attic
- \*Tree removal around garage to prepare for new roof.
- \*New roof on the garage
- \*Refurbished front doors of church as well as interior vestibule doors
- \*First phase of engineer work for new driveway and sidewalks

All of this is due to your generosity to our Parish. Thank you!



## 2019 WAS A YEAR OF SERVICE FOR OUR PARISH OF ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA:

- \*Our Parish Council works hard to serve our community and is comprised of committees that work to enhance parish life, such as Liturgy, Social, Outreach, Finance, Education, and Buildings and Grounds
- \*Once a month a group of retired parishioners gather and assemble over 100 sandwiches and large trays of pasta to be taken to the LunchBox in the City of Poughkeepsie.
- \*These same individuals host a Mass followed by a hot luncheon for 30 disabled Catholics from all over Dutchess on the First Saturday of February.
- \*Once a month a group of teens prepare dinner and serve 60+ at the local Homeless Shelter.
- \*30 parishioners volunteer once a month at the Pleasant Valley Ecumenical Food Pantry
- \*Many parishioners donate food which is delivered to the Pantry on a weekly basis
- \*Over \$2500 was collected through the generosity of our parish families and donated to Good Counsel Home for unwed mothers via the annual Baby Bottle Coin Collection in October.
- \*Each October St. Stanislaus participates in the Dutchess Outreach Coat Drive, collecting an exceptional number of winter coats for those in need in Dutchess County.
- \*Each week 7-10 parishioners volunteer for two hours at the Lutheran Care Center.  
They transport residents from their units to the Chapel and assist Father as he celebrates Mass  
Annually, many parishioners donate gift items to the residents for their Christmas party
- \*The Prayer Shawl Ministry, dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe, comprised of 12-15 ladies (and one man) knit and crochet shawls and lap blankets for those needing to be “wrapped in our Lady’s mantle of love.”  
Last year over 40 shawls and blankets were given for comfort. Never hesitate to call for someone you may feel would benefit from one. They are remarkably beautiful and truly made with prayer and love.
- \*Members of our Garden Club faithfully share their time and talent in beautifying our parish campus.  
**We NEED more help.** If you are talented in this way give a call to help us plan for Spring!
- \*A group of faithful parishioners decorates the church for each season, especially Easter and Christmas
- \*Our Social Committee offers monthly coffee and refreshments after the 11am Mass, held an Ice Cream Social in October, and organized the annual Pot-Luck Supper in November in celebration of our feast day
- \*The Senior citizens enjoy an annual Advent Breakfast and work together on service projects
- \*Approximately 70 men are members of the St. Stanislaus Chapter of the Knights of Columbus.  
Some of their activities include:
  - Sponsoring a Mardi Gras Dinner Dance just before Lent
  - Fish Fry’s every Friday during Lent and Annual Palm Sunday breakfast
  - Pig Roast and Golf Outing fundraisers for Teens club’s pilgrimage to March for Life
  - Sponsoring Blood Drives twice a year
  - Assisting with Faith Formation, Family Catechesis, and Vacation Bible School
  - Repairing and setting up the large outdoor Nativity and indoor tree
  - Sponsoring an annual scholarship to a graduating senior
  - Sponsoring scholarships for parish youth to attend retreats
  - Supporting vocations both in our parish as well as on a diocesan level
- \*Our PTAF (Pallottine Teenage Federation) Teen Club has 35 members and 5 adult volunteers.  
They participate in many service projects that support our parish and community.
  - Provide Sandwiches and other donation or food and clothing
  - Annual Souper-bowl Sunday collection for The Dutchess Coalition for the Homeless
  - Attend the annual March for Life in Washington, DC.
  - Assist at various parish activities and Faith Formation classes.



Please join us next weekend by celebrating  
**The Feast of the Holy Family**  
Saturday evening at 5:30pm and Sunday at 8:15am & 11:00am  
*and* next Wednesday, January 1  
**The Feast of Mary, Mother of God**  
at 8:15 and 11:00am...

Parish Office  
(845) 635-1700

For emergencies requiring a priest  
outside of Parish office hours, call  
(845) 242-1531

[www.saintstanislaus.net](http://www.saintstanislaus.net)