



God Is Good News

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 2017—FEBRUARY 2018

Holidays revive best memories

A few years ago, our staff asked parishioners, "What is your favorite memory of Christmas?" For this issue, we went a little deeper and posed the question, "What is the most significant thing your parents taught you?" Here are their responses.



Pam Wroblewski

"Mom always reminded me that 'Nobody is going to hand you anything on a silver platter.' You have to work hard for everything. Dad's approach was softer. 'I'm happy that you did your best,' he often said."



Gary Mulica

"My family's spirituality was their commitment to going to Mass every Sunday. We many times went with our grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. I remember my grandparents always dressing up. Grandmothers in dresses and babushkas. Grandfathers in two-piece suits and ties. I also enjoyed after Mass many times gathering around a household, usually grandparents, for an afternoon meal which kept us full and listening to Polka music!"



Ray Zawicki

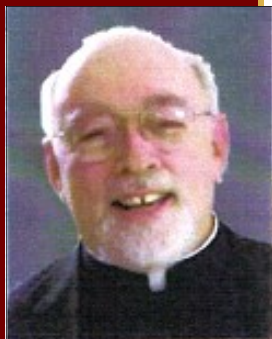
"Both my parents were role models on becoming a good husband and father. I try to live that best I can."

Phyllis Buckshaw with guide dog **Ginger**

"I was often told, 'Believe in yourself and follow your heart and soul.' This has been my guide through life."



PadRay Ponders



**"We 'enter'
the church to
pray and we
'exit' the
church to
serve."**

Matthew 25:40 holds message for all of us

"The King will say in reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" (NIV)

Dear Church,

For years we as a parish have reached out to the poor and marginalized in our community through our work with Brookside and Metanoia, among other ministries.

In the Gathering Area, you will now see a life-size sculpture of "I was Hungry and Thirsty" (aka "Jesus the Beggar"). You might remember a few months ago, a priest from Food for the Poor spoke at all the Masses about this sculpture in the lobby of Food for the Poor.

Our sculpture will eventually be placed outside the north entrance to the Church in a patio where we can see the sculpture as we enter for worship. This sculpture will be a visible reminder each week that we "enter" the Church to pray and we "exit" the church to serve.

Inspired by the Gospel of Matthew 25:40, this sculpture is a visual representation of charity. It tells us that we need to see Christ in the poor and the hungry and that we should see our acts of kindness to them as kindness to Him.

"This is a very powerful Gospel just by looking at it." You can stand there and look at it and think about the implications. It's a powerful symbol, and I think it represents what we're all about here," says sculptor Timothy Scmaltz.

"It brings me happiness when my sculptures are installed outside; three dimensional bronze works of art are excellent advertisements for any Christian church. My purpose is to give Christianity as much visual dignity as possible. Christian sculptures are like visual sermons twenty-four hours a day."

Inspired by this sculpture, I would like to suggest a parish project for 2018 Lenten Season. You might recall that last lent we raised \$20,000 for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) through the annual Rice Bowl campaign. The lent before that, we raised \$37,000 to dig seven wells in South American countries.

This year I suggest we concentrate on helping our brothers and sisters in Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the Southern Hemisphere. Most people there live in make-shift shacks made of left over corrugated steel and tree limbs. There are no toilets, and their cooking is done on an outdoor fire ring.

Through the auspices of Food For the Poor, we can build small duplex homes at the cost of about \$6,500 apiece. I propose we raise \$26,000 so we can have four duplex homes built and give safe shelter to eight families. After the homes are built, representatives of the parish will be invited to go to Haiti and meet the folks for whom the homes were built and develop a personal relationship between the parish and the people in Haiti.

This endeavor has been discussed with and approved by the Parish and Finance Councils of the parish. More information will be forthcoming after the first of the new year.

Medicare enrollment help still available

St. Matthias hosted two Medicare presentations and a day of individual counseling for anyone wanting to review and/or change plans during the Medicare Enrollment period, October 15 - December 7. The goal was to ease the confusion surrounding Medicare and offer practical assistance through the resources of the Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIP).

Thirty people attended both presentations. Two OSHIP volunteers consulted with 12 people for a total savings of approximately \$1,000 in reduced costs. OSHIP counselors are in many local Senior Centers, and interested parties are encouraged to contact these agencies for appointments. Information can be found at the Department of Insurance website, www.insurance.ohio.gov, under Medicare Services. Questions may also be directed to the OSHIP Hotline at 1-800-686-1578.

Military double duty for two parishioners

By Rita Dowd-Mikolajczyk

Parishioner Bonnie Hackett has two sons on our prayer list — Marine Sergeant David Schmidt, 31, and Army Sergeant Timothy Schmidt, 28. David is a Force Recon/Scout Sniper Team Leader stationed at Camp Lejeune where he lives with his wife Kelsey and newborn daughter Charleston Elizabeth. David trained at Camp Pendleton, served in Afghanistan and Japan and was at sea for nine months on Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) ship deployed to the Middle East.

Tim serves with the Airborne Infantry, 173rd, 2nd Battalion, 503 Div. Following basic training at Fort Bragg, his first assignment was three years in Italy until they returned stateside to Texas. This September, his wife Lauren, their daughter Pernilla James and he lived at Fort Bliss, Texas where he worked as a gunner for a Bradley Fighting Vehicle. In October Tim was reassigned to the Middle East. Lauren and Pernilla are now staying with her parents in Stow, Ohio. He and Lauren met at Kent State University, married and graduated in 2012; he enlisted in 2013.

The Schmidt brothers come from a long line of veterans. Perhaps influenced by this history, Tim announced early on that he was going to be a soldier when he grew up, but David's interests lay elsewhere. Two shared events, however, influenced their futures. In 2001 both were deeply affected by the events of 9/11 and later in 2009 by the death of their friend killed in Iraq.

Tim speaks of joining the military as "wanting to be part of something larger than myself." When asked how the military has changed them or affected their spiritual lives, David mentions having "a great appreciation of life and the freedoms we have as Americans." Tim came to realize that family is ultimately most important in life, and his military service has actually strengthened his faith in God and the Church. David believes that the service has given him a spiritual sense of life, showing him that all people are "put where they are for a reason."

Her sons' military service also deepens Bonnie's faith as she prays for them and the children of other parents she meets through military support groups. She's formed deep friendships with people whom, in some cases, she has only met online. Bonnie and her sons express heartfelt gratitude for the prayers and generosity of St. Matthias parishioners. But as Tim deployed to Kuwait, he asked us to remember other, much-appreciated gifts: care packages to his brothers-in-arms.



Enjoying some time at home between military assignments are brothers Tim and David Schmidt with their sister Heather.



Please remember those serving in the military, especially the members of our parish family...

**Patrick Chalupa
Delaney Davis
Christopher Dominick
Kevin Frattin
Joshua Haugh
David Jaklitsch
Craig Kolling**

**Anthony Lonero
Gregory Payne
Ricky Richardson
David Schmidt
Timothy Schmidt
Sean Sirl
Aaron Sykora**

We regularly send care packages to our military members. Check the weekly bulletin (you can find it online) for a list of items we're able to send and are needed by the troops. All donations are appreciated and can be put in the bin in the Gathering Area. We also need bakers to bake and drop off cookies to send to the military. For details, call Karen Spirakus at 216-524-7070. For a cookie recipe, see page 7.



**Fr. Ray Sutter –
Pastor**



**Fr. Art Snedeker -
In residence**



**Bob Arbuckle -
Facilities**



**Brandon Arbuckle –
Facilities**



**Gina Gazda - Cook/
Housekeeper**



**Ken Golonka -
Deacon Emeritus**



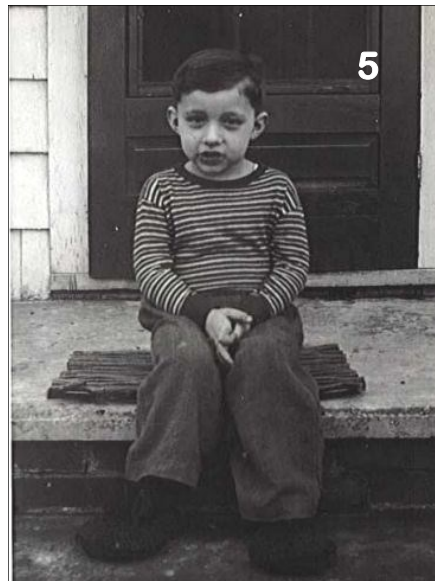
**Dianne Laheta -
Pastoral Minister**

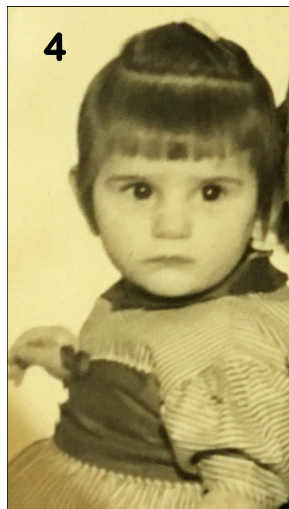


St. Matthias helpers...

Can you guess who they are?

These toddlers grew up to become our St. Matthias staff who are now busy preparing many advent and Christmas celebrations for us. Just for fun, can you match their photos with the list of names below? Don't peek, but answers are listed on the back page.





**Tom Litwinowicz -
Deacon**



**Joe Mikolajczyk -
Cantor/Choral Director**



**Sig Mikolajczyk -
Music Director**



**Mike Starinsky -
Business Manager**



**Chris Walter -
Office Manager**



**Laura Walters -
Receptionist**





December Activities for Catholic Families


If there is one within traveling distance, visit a Living Nativity. If this is not possible, set up your family's Nativity scene and have a discussion about what the sights, sounds and even smells may have been.

Choose an activity that will help babies such as donating to a crisis pregnancy center, praying for babies in danger, or even just spending time with a special baby in your lives. (Feast of the Holy Innocents is Dec. 26.)

Fill your children's shoes with small gifts or wrapped candies while they are asleep to celebrate St. Nicholas Day on his feast day, Dec. 6.


Brainstorm with your family **things you can do to live more like the Holy Family.** Plan to do at least one by the following week.

Pray for missionaries all over the world, who are spreading God's Word. Optional: To extend this activity, see what your family can do to help those doing a mission. (St. Francis Xavier's Feast Day is Dec. 3.)



Plan to give a gift (or three) to Jesus this year to celebrate His birthday. Jesus taught us that when we help those in need we are helping Him. Find a way to give a Christmas gift to someone who is particularly in need this year.

Wait until Christmas to add Jesus to your Nativity scene.



Attend Mass on Holy Days, **Immaculate Conception** Dec. 8 and **Christmas** Dec. 25.



Celebrate the season!

Thanksgiving Day Mass, Thursday, November 23

The Thanksgiving Day Mass at 9 a.m. is not only a Mass to give thanks for all the blessings we have received but also a time to share with others. This year we will be collecting non-perishable items as well as monetary donations for Brookside during the offertory procession. Please bring an item to donate. After Mass enjoy coffee, pastry and fellowship.

Breakfast in Bethlehem, Saturday, December 9

The Knights of Columbus will host Breakfast in Bethlehem on Saturday, Dec. 9, 9-11:00 a.m. with food, fun, crafts for the kids and an appearance from St. Nicholas. All are welcome. Please RSVP so enough food is prepared. Sign up in the Gathering Area or online at www.stmatthiaschurch.org.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, December 8

Masses for this Holy Day of Obligation will be at 8:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. This feast day is especially significant for American Catholics because it is the feast of Mary, Patroness of the United States.

Pizza and Penance, Monday, December 11

Pizza will be served at 6:15 p.m. followed by a Penance Service beginning at 7:00 p.m. Sign up in the Gathering Area or online at www.stmatthiaschurch.org.

Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas

This book of reflection is a great preparation for Christmas. Books will be in the Gathering Area for a free-will donation.

Giving Tree

Giving Tree will be in the church Gathering Area in time for Thanksgiving. Tags on the tree are for Brookside, Jail Ministry, Metanoia, Military Postage, Good Samaritan and Womankind. Bring your unwrapped donation to the church with tag attached and place under the tree by Sunday, Dec. 10.

Christmas cookie recipe for military care packages

As many of you know, Tom Rymarczyk packs up cookie care packages to mail to our military who serve overseas. For the bakers among us, Theresa Mudry offers an Italian anise cookie recipe that is a family favorite during the Christmas holidays.

Italian Anise Cookies

6	Eggs
1 cup	Sugar
2½ cups	White shortening, melted and cooled
2 Tbl.	Liquid anise flavoring
5½ cups	All-purpose flour
5 Tbl.	Baking powder
	Milk, if needed



Preheat oven to 300 F. Beat together eggs and sugar until light. Add shortening; beat well. Add all remaining ingredients, including milk if necessary, to form a soft dough. Form into 1/4-inch thick rolls, then cut these into 2- or 3-inch lengths and form into S-shapes, wreaths, braids or other desired shapes. Bake 12-15 minutes. Yield 75-100 cookies.



Liturgy Schedule

Mass - 4th Week of Advent

Sat. Dec. 23

4:00 p.m.

Sun. Dec. 24

10:00 a.m.

Mass - Christmas

Sun. Dec. 24

4:00 pm &

Midnight Mass

Mon. Dec. 25

10:00 a.m.

Mass - Feast of the Holy Family

Sat. Dec. 30

4:00 p.m.

Sun. Dec. 31

10:00 a.m.

Mass - Solemnity of Mary

Sun. Dec. 31

4:00 p.m.

Mon. Jan. 1

10:00 a.m.



Saint Matthias the Apostle Church

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Mission Statement of Saint Matthias Church

We, the family of Saint Matthias, called to be disciples of Christ, reach out with a loving and caring spirit. Proclaiming the message of the Risen Lord, we provide for the spiritual growth and development of our community. By sharing liturgies, ministries and responsibilities, we promote God's kingdom.

"God Is Good News" is the newsletter of Saint Matthias the Apostle Church.

Editor: Patti Bertschler

Staff: Irma Baker, Rita Dowd-Mikolajczyk, Chris Walter

Special thanks to Marty Kearns for photos used on page 1 of previous issue.

1. Chris, 2. Sig, 3. Deacon Ken, 4. Gina, 5. Fr. Ray, 6. Fr. Art, 7. Deacon Tom,
8. Dianne, 9. Joe, 10. Brandon, 11. Bob, 12. Mike, 13. Laura.

Saint Matthias Church

(440) 888-8220 - www.stmatthiaschurch.org

Masses

Saturday: 4 p.m.
Sunday: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.
Holy Days: 8:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 8:30 a.m.
Wednesday: No service

Reconciliation

Anytime by appointment or Saturday 3-3:45 p.m.

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

St. Matthias Parish Staff

Rev. Raymond A. Sutter, D.Min. - Pastor

Rev. Art Snedeker - In residence

Tom Litwinowicz - Deacon

Ken Golonka - Deacon Emeritus

Dianne Laheta - Pastoral Minister - Catechesis

Sig Mikolajczyk - Music Director

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