

## 'ANTIBODIES OF SOLIDARITY'

Watching our children struggle to connect with classmates and teachers over iPads, pondering strategies for safely returning to work or for finding new work, many of us will no doubt have a hard time imagining a post-COVID-19 world. But at some point—may it be soon—life may begin to look like something we recognize again. Should it?

Pope Francis has acknowledged the suffering created by the pandemic but has also suggested that the novel coronavirus era can be appreciated as an opportunity to reinvent not only relationships among workers and consumers and people and states, but also humankind's relationship with creation. The Pope has poignantly asked: What kind of world do we want to return to?

We will emerge from this experience eventually “either better or worse,” the Pope said. “We must come out better.” To come out on the other side a better nation, a better world, and better people, what changes might we consider?

### **Restore relationships in commerce**

The crisis has laid bare the mistreatment of workers in food production and exploitative practices in sectors where workers have been deemed essential. Those of us fortunate to have weathered the pandemic working remotely cannot return to thoughtless consumption and an uncritical acceptance of the inequities that have been hard-

wired into our food production and distribution systems. Stronger protections, common-sense benefits such as sick and family leave, and a minimum wage that gets closer to a just wage should be minimum standards for a post-COVID-19 working world.



### **Health care and employment**

Case counts and unemployment tragically rose together as the pandemic accelerated and national lockdowns began that put millions out of work. For many, COVID-19 illness was accompanied by the loss of the job that had connected them to health care. Rarely have the contradictions, shortsightedness, and cruelty of America's health care delivery system been more stark.

### **Renew our stewardship of creation**

The global lockdown offered creation an unexpected respite from the overconsumption that has been a “normal” privilege of life in the affluent world. We stopped commuting and driving and called a halt to some pursuits such as air travel that place the greatest strain on the Earth. Carbon emissions declined by 25 percent as the virus staggered economies around the world.

The International Energy Agency sees the 2020 emissions collapse as a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity” to respond to the threat of climate change and reset priorities on energy production.

*Continued on page 2*

## Antibodies of Solidarity

*Continued from page 1*

### Distribute the wealth

Decades of steadily growing inequity in wealth went into hyperdrive during the pandemic lockdown. A handful of the world's wealthy became wealthier while job losses staggered the progress out of abject poverty for millions of vulnerable families around the world. How long can the vast discrepancy in wealth creation and retention be ignored as thousands of U.S. families face evictions and hunger because of COVID-19?

The novel coronavirus has acted as a global stress test that should shock us out of a complacency with social deficits that have moldered unaddressed for decades. "We must treat a great virus," Pope Francis told us—but perhaps not the one we think.

We must treat a virus, he said, "of social injustice, of inequality of opportunity, of being marginalized, and of lack of protection of the weakest." A return to normality can't be allowed to mean merely returning to a vast indifference to political or economic injustice and the degradation of creation. "An emergency like COVID-19," Pope Francis pointed out, "is overcome ... by the antibodies of solidarity."

*By Kevin Clarke for the November issue of the U.S. Catholic Magazine.*

### Pregnancy Aid Giving Tree

For 27 Advent seasons now, we have erected a **Pregnancy Aid Giving Tree** in our church building as a demonstrative way of supporting our pro-life convictions. This Giving Tree outreach program benefits the local Pregnancy Aid Society at their new location at 15847 E. 8 Mile Rd. in Eastpointe, where women with unplanned pregnancies can find positive alternatives to abortion.

Given the "iffy" nature of church attendance and shopping over the next few weeks, it makes sense to extend the collection time for Pregnancy Aid this year – and take a pass on the gift tags.

Usually we would ask that gifts arrive here during the actual Christmas masses. However, because of current circumstances, **gifts to Pregnancy Aid will be welcomed now through the end of December.** Although cumbersome when it comes to storage, it's better for the good of the whole to get this done earlier rather than later. If you want to make an online purchase from a vendor, please have it sent directly to the parish office with a marking "Pregnancy Aid" on the label or gift card.

The Pregnancy Aid Society has a wish list which includes: baby clothing (0-12 mos.), sleepers, blankets, bibs, undershirts (one-piece snap-style), bath accessories, baby toiletries, diapers (size 1 and 2), strollers, breast-feeding accessories and informative books like: "You and Your Baby" or support items such as "Baby Einstein" DVDs, books and toys. "Pack 'n Plays," along with Pack 'n Play-sized crib sheets, are also welcomed, as are all gently used baby furniture and car carriers. In short – things that are practical, educational and essential. Gently used baby furniture, strollers and car seats are also a welcome gift – call for special drop-off instructions. All these items brought in are part of an inventory from which Pregnancy Aid draws all year long. There are few better ways to give a birthday present today to Jesus than through this Pregnancy Aid project.



As we continue to live with Covid-19, we also need to live with the notion that a good many of our traditions and special events must adapt and, in some cases, must be canceled until next year. Unfortunately, that is true for the St. Vincent dePaul annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraising event. A November tradition for many years, the Spaghetti Dinner will not take place in 2020. SVdP will also cancel the Thanksgiving Food Box collection which over the years has ensured that hundreds of families in our community do not go hungry on Thanksgiving and for a few weeks later.

While the traditional, community-involved events won't be happening this year, SVdP will still need our help! St. Ambrose Conference President Randy Renpage says the group will be providing gift cards to our needy neighbors to purchase food in place of the boxes. St. Ambrose SVdP will provide hams, as usual.

**If you would like to contribute, please purchase gift cards in the amount of \$25 or \$50 to either Kroger or Parkway foods and return to the rectory no later than Wednesday, November 18.**

Let me also note that the need for assistance is increasing once again to pre-Covid levels (with no federal stimulus checks in the offing). In addition to the Thanksgiving food gift cards, cash or checks made out to St. Vincent dePaul St. Ambrose Conference are most welcome this season to help fund the group's ongoing work in our community.

# All Things Considered

With your continuing financial support of St. Ambrose, we have been able to proceed with a few important property repairs over the summer.

The one you may have noticed was parking lot maintenance. While not a major overhaul, the lot was sealed, re-stripped and bumper-blocks replaced. Remember that this is the “first” parking lot ever developed for parish use. When the parish was founded 104 years ago, our parishioners built cars, they didn’t necessarily own them. The parking lot, developed in 2002 at the cost of just under a million dollars, occupies the site of the old St. Ambrose Grade/High School.

The rectory property, which wasn’t built until after the Second World War, is a beautiful looking building which unfortunately has always suffered from flawed design and material choices (not much available in 1947 especially in metals, roofing and masonry). The roof and eaves are chronically problematic. I’ve replaced the front lobby ceiling four times and the dining room three, and I was *not the first* pastor to make those exact same repairs. About half of the rectory roof was completely replaced after the fire of 1989 – repairs were made to the other half at that time. It’s the other half that are now problematic and received our attention. The rectory is usually the last on our “need to do” list.

And we can’t ever bring a boom-truck out without also doing spot repairs for leaks in the church limestone. This time, we secured the area around the organ pipes. Perhaps in the future, we will be able to put some resources into our vintage Casavant Frères organ.

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Last week, we managed to meet and exceed our CSA mandatory quote for the Archdiocese. How remarkable! I want to now close down donations for the CSA since it has pushed itself into

our important year-end giving cycle. It means leaving some money on the table – specifically the \$52,000 surplus that we earmarked for our property and liability insurances. To the generous and able, my recommendation is to now plan your Christmas gift to St. Ambrose.

In actuality, both the CSA overage and the Christmas Collection are the only two fund-raisers wherein the parish is allowed to retain the full amount of your contribution – that is, no 7% tax applied to the Archdiocese. The difference is that your Christmas donation will come to us before the end of this year, whereas a CSA overage does not get back to us until the late Spring. By that time, I may have ceded my financial powers to a Family of Parishes business manager.

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Archbishop Vigneron and his Family of Parishes program is pushing relentlessly toward its unveiling on the First Sunday of Advent in two weeks.

That is when grouping of parishes will be revealed for our Family and who will be the moderator of that Family. The structural and pastoral changes are massive. We are rushing to get the written material they requested of us early this week. Even in the best case scenario, decisions will most likely have been made by the AoD.

Our parish meeting last week regarding the Archbishop’s new reorganization plan called Family of Parishes drew a respectable number of participants. There were 28 persons who attended in person joined by an additional 25 who participated online. It gave us an opportunity to reflect on just how much we have accomplished as a parish over the past three decades.

I arrived here in 1986. In 1989 we were labeled a parish that was “questionably viable” during the first round of Archdiocesan downsizings under Cardinal Szoka’s administration. Consolidating our parish resources with Sts. Martin and Philip parishes set us on the path for growth. Out of that awful time, our community emerged much stronger and wiser. While the Family of Parishes template is much more radical, I can

only hope that thirty years from now the parishioners of St. Ambrose would be able to look back at the trauma of the moment as another new beginning.

I maintain that in-and-of-itself, the Family of Parishes model deserves a fair hearing. There are some parishes where this would be a welcome and easy adaptation. The London, Ontario Diocese, where the Family of Parishes has been developing for several years, the word is that rural parishes report the greatest benefits – larger urban parishes with strong identities still struggle. Could this tell us that “one size does not fit all?”

In this regard, the groundbreaking work of Cardinal Avery Dulles in his 1991 book, Models of the Church needs to be required reading of every Catholic – especially clergy.

Dulles carefully studied the writings of contemporary Protestant and Catholic ecclesiologists and sifted out six major approaches, or “models,” through which the Church’s character can be understood: as **Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald, Servant**, and as **Community of Disciples**. A balanced theology, he concluded, must incorporate the major affirmations of each. “The method of models or types,” observed Cardinal Dulles, “can have great value in helping people to get beyond the limitations of their own particular outlook and to enter into fruitful conversation with others...” Dulles saw this as a tool for facilitating ecumenical dialogue. But I think it also applies to conversations within our own identity-divided Catholic community as well.

Under duress, we Catholics tend to retreat to what we know works, which is the institutional model – the “father knows best” sort of thing. It was perfected in a post-Reformation military, top-down call to the troops that held beleaguered Catholics together. I am sensing an unhealthy amount of that model now in the methodology that has been used to implement the Family of Parishes reorganization plan – even though it admittedly does pay service to others of Avery’s evangelical models.

*Continued on page 4*

## All Things Considered, cont

*Continued from page two...*

While we have been informed that Families of Parishes was long under consideration by our Archdiocesan leaders, the revelation of that fact only happened in late May. The unfolding of the plan begins at the end of this month, with another 12 months tacked on for practicalities.

Given that this assumes a novel (if you exclude the Protestant/congregational models) way of organizing more than 200 parishes – a six month institutional turn-around would be unimaginable of for many, if not most, entrenched organizations that thrive on tradition. The only way it can be accomplished this abruptly is by using the hierarchical/business model. And business experts have indeed been given leadership roles in the Family of Parishes rollout.

What makes me nervous is the unexplained reasoning that this needs to happen *immediately*. Specifically, all of this has been engineered without a single face-to-face meeting with clergy. And why? Because we are in the midst of a pandemic that emptied out churches, cancelled Easter and now threatens Christmas. If not for a reliance on an institutional/hierarchical model of governance, there is no way that this could be done during a time when Catholics are operating in isolation from each other.

Yes, other parish changes in the AoD's past moved similarly, but at least there was time for a modicum of community consensus building. Priests take an oath to obey their bishop, and we will. But in the short run, I believe that this "forced march" will produce quick results, but at the cost of minimal parishioner buy-in.

Like The Bridge On the River Kwai, it will get built on time. But you will recall how the movie ends.

Avail yourself of the information being offered by our Archdiocese. We now push on to phase two – which is a written self study and then onto phase three – a review with an Archdiocesan "missionary" facilitator. A chunk of this will, no doubt, be done after the Family assignments.

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## Faith Formation Station

- This is our 7<sup>th</sup> week of remote class. If you have any questions regarding access to the online program via Flipgrid or the *Our Sunday Visitor* website, please email the Religious Education office at [reled.stambrose@comcast.net](mailto:reled.stambrose@comcast.net).
- Family email reminders are sent to all registered families every Friday.
- Be sure to check your inbox for communications regarding the upcoming Confirmation Interviews and First Reconciliation Parent Meeting.

Kelly Woolums

## Family of Parishes Information

The Family of Parishes reorganization plan for the Archdiocese of Detroit was announced in May of this frantic year. Ever since, we've been playing catch-up with their time-table – which is set to reveal the specific Family for St. Ambrose. Our earlier consultation this Summer produced both positive and negative results.

The Family Plan will have serious consequences for our parish as we look toward an estimated decline of 100 priests over the next ten years and, most likely, a non-resident pastor. This project also overlaps with Archbishop Vigneron's Pastoral Plan, "Unleash the Gospel."

We cannot afford to be un-involved in learning about and responding to this program that would determine our long-term character and staffing. A self survey, which is Phase Two of the study, is now under way. The results will be used to determine what St. Ambrose may be and become when assigned to a "Family" with a priest "Moderator" and a supervisory combined staff in the following areas:

- Sacraments, Liturgy, and Prayer
- Evangelization (within the parish membership)
- Evangelization (outward in mission beyond our members)
- Administration and Operations
- Staff and Lay Leadership
- Pastoral Care and Christian Service
- Sent on Mission

But because of the potential consequences for the future of our entire parish community, we direct you to the materials provided by the Archdiocese of Detroit that they have produced for pastors/administrators. You can visit my online toolkit at [bit.ly/329xYcl](http://bit.ly/329xYcl) which has the following resources:

- A PowerPoint presentation (with audio narration, should you wish to use it)
- Please note that there are two versions of this: A PowerPoint version (that includes the audio narration) and a video version.
- A question and answer document.
- These questions and answers, while similar to the frequently asked questions for clergy and the laity, have been tailored to be most informative for the lay faithful.
- A one-page document that, in both a table and a brief narrative, explains the difference between a Family of Parishes and the traditional merger and cluster relationships.
- Three videos from the [familiesofparishes.org](http://familiesofparishes.org) website.

Be sure to bookmark the toolkit. Over the coming months, additional resources will be shared, including more videos, talking points, articles and, once the Family groupings are announced, numerous means of support as we begin the preparatory work prior to operating as a Family of Parishes.

# The Buzz

One thing the election has solved – at least for me – is the end of the constant, obnoxious political ads. I’m not constantly yelling at and arguing with the TV anymore. And although I don’t check it, I’m sure my blood pressure has gone down. Now, it all may return, but for now there is a lull in the action. Thank you, Lord.



A delightful piece of trivia regarding the national election and our parish: in Joe Biden’s speech a week ago Saturday night, he referred to a hymn that has meant a lot to his family: “On Eagle’s Wings.” Most of us are familiar with it as a standard often used at Catholic funerals, but in many other situations as well. I just read that this song goes back to the late 1960s, and over time has made its way into a number of Protestant hymnals as well.

Now here comes our connection: “Eagle’s Wings” was written by **Fr. Michael Joncas** up in Minnesota. This is the same Fr. Joncas who was personally commissioned a few years ago by our own Fr. Pelc to write a parish Centennial hymn for us at St. Ambrose: “*Christus Est Nobis Omnia.*” In the Body of Christ, even though it is a very big world, we are very close to one another. Amen.

Fr. Joncas is not done being creative in the Faith. Earlier this year at a major jumping-off point in the pandemic, he wrote a beautiful piece based on Psalm 23 entitled, “Shelter Me.” If you are quarantined, have symptoms, or simply are worried about yourself or loved ones ... Google “Joncas” and “Shelter Me” for a bunch of versions of this calming, meditative, prayerful piece ... and enter into the song. I only got a chance to listen and watch one, by a group called *Spiritu* I think, and found it visually as well as musically delightful. My blood pressure went down even more. May you also be spiritually enriched and filled with deep and abiding joy.



Speaking of enriched, how did today’s Gospel passage sit with you? For me, a couple of reflections: one is that we are really unfamiliar with some of the time-dated language, even translated into English. “Talent” for instance.

Of course, many preachers will utilize our more common understanding of the word and talk about the aptitudes and gifts God gives to each of us. But in the actual passage, the master of the servants demands a reckoning for the *money*.

Here’s something for families to try – set up teams, such as parents vs children, to look up the value of a talent in today’s currency, compare notes, then talk about what you’d spend that money on or invest it in. I’d love to hear about some of your insights. I know I was fascinated by what I dug up.

I will humbly tell you that I couldn’t identify with the first two servants in today’s passage. Economically I’m not that bold. But neither would I be the third servant. More likely I’d be Servant 2.1 and put the money in a bank to earn interest ... so long as it would be FDIC insured!



Another reflection actually does come from a preacher, and it arises from the image of that last servant “burying” talents. During this November month of remembrance of the souls of our loved ones, today’s Gospel reminds me of a sometimes preaching point from Fr. Tim at funerals: Don’t bury the life and goodness you have received from the deceased loved one. This is such a realistic application of the Credal truth of the Communion of Saints. Life is changed, not ended. [*Domestic Church: help one another face the death of loved ones in this faith-filled way. As Catholics, we should be as comfortable praying to saints (including loved ones now with the Lord) as we are conversing with one another here. Ask them to pray to God for you – on your behalf. After all, they’re in a pretty powerful position to do just that. Amen.*]



In two weeks it will be a new year – Church liturgical year that is. In the meantime, may you have a safe, healthy, and responsibly happy Thanksgiving!

Chuck Dropiewski

# The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

**Pastor:** Rev. Timothy R. Pelc  
**Pastoral Minister:** Charles Dropiewski  
**Religious Education:** Kelly Anne Woolums  
**Minister of Music:** Dr. Norah Duncan IV  
**Office Manager:** Peggy O’Connor  
**Secretary:** Mary Urbanski

## Sacramental Celebrations

**Masses:** On the Lord’s Day – Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m. Sunday - 10:00 a.m.  
**Baptism:** Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.  
**Penance:** As announced and by appointment.  
**Marriage:** Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.  
**Funeral:** Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased’s passing.

## Directory

**Parish Office:** 15020 Hampton Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230  
**Tel:** (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838  
**Email address:** stambrose@comcast.net  
**Religious Education:** (313) 332-5633  
**Pastoral Ministry:** (313) 332-5631  
**Ark Scheduling:** (313) 822-2814  
**Parish Website:** stambrosechurch.net

<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>CSA</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Box Scores</b>

Number of Families .....	800
Returns to date .....	99
Average Gift ('19) .....	\$463
Quota for the Archdiocese	\$70,663
Property/Liability Insurance ...	\$52,000
Parish '20 Target.....	\$122,663
Received as of 11/11 /20.....	\$75,977

- Due to the pandemic, the Catholic Services Appeal has been delayed from the spring until now. There has been a 15% reduction in our target reflecting a 15% reduction in the AoD budget.
- We are responsible for a minimum of \$70,663. After that all overages will be applied to our insurances. CSA gifts are exempt from the regular Archdiocesan taxation.

## Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

**November 16**

*St. Margaret of Scotland*

**November 17**

*St. Elizabeth of Hungary, religious*

**November 18**

*Dedication of the Basilica of Saints*

*Peter & Paul, apostles*

*St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, virgin*

**November 19**

*Weekday - 33<sup>rd</sup> Week in Ord. Time*

**November 20**

*Weekday - 33<sup>rd</sup> week in Ord. Time*

**November 21**

*4:00 p.m. Mass – Feast of Christ the King*

**November 22**

*10:00 a.m. Mass – Feast of Christ the King*

•Web broadcast of weekend Mass from St. Ambrose will begin at 8:00 on Sunday, and will be accessible throughout the day.

## Spending Spotlight

There are few things as “culturally catholic” as lighting a candle. The votive candles in the back of church sit in a stand that dates back to our original 1917 church building. It’s seen lots of prayers and candles over the years! We order those vigil candles 3 times a year and the cost for approximately 9 dozen plus shipping is \$1,274.

## Scriptures for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Week in Ordinary Time

**November 16**

Rv 1: 1-4; 2: 1-5

Ps 1: 1-4, 6

Lk 18: 35-43

**November 17**

Rv 3: 1-6, 14-22

Ps 15: 2-5

Lk 19: 1-10

**November 18**

Rv 4: 1-11

Ps 150: 1b-6

Lk 19:11-28

**November 19**

Rv 5: 1-10

Ps 149: 1b-6a, 9b

Lk 19: 41-44

**November 20**

Rv 10: 8-11

Ps 119: 14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131

Lk 19: 45-48

**November 21**

Rv 11: 4-12

Ps 144:1-2, 9-10

Lk 20: 27-40

**November 22**

Ez 34: 11-12, 15-17

Ps 23: 1-3, 5-6

1 Cor 15: 20-26, 28

Mt 25: 31-46

## The Feast of Christ the King

For the foreseeable future, there will be two Masses here on the weekend – Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Out of an abundance of caution, we have opened mass to a congregation of 25% of the building’s capacity – roughly 150 persons.

Face masks and social distancing is required. In addition, we will now be requiring tracing information similar to the one done at your doctor’s office.

Our church building is sanitized prior to each liturgy.

View Sunday’s mass at facebook.com/stambroseparish or stambroselive on youtube.stambrosechurch.net starting at 10:00 a.m.

## Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of..... \$10,100.00

**On Sunday, November 8, 2020**

in envelopes we received ..... \$4,977.00

in the loose collection ..... \$1,419.00

in electronic donations ..... \$4,211.00

for a total of ..... \$10,607.00

**Over** budget for the week..... \$507.00

Number of envelopes mailed ..... 782

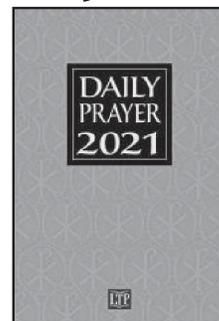
Number of envelopes used .....49



## Our Sick

Please pray for those who are seriously ill or who are hospitalized: Pat Blake, Karen Culver, Ann Sullivan Kay, Donald Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Jeanne Noto, David Schumacker, Matthew Elias, George Bucec, Emilie Kasper, Darby O’Toole, Anna Noto Billings, Eileen O’Brien, Liz Linne, Donna Barnes, Alexandra Cullen, Charmaine Kaptur, Frank Gregory, Alex Billiu, Jerry Hansen, Jackie Walkowski, Kristen Kingzett, Maria Simcina, Albina Checki, Brian Tague, Sharif Hannan, Shirley Whelan, Anne Purvis, Chris Walsh, Jerry Gutowski, Kevin O’Connor, and those suffering and hospitalized worldwide with COVID-19.

## Pray Every Day



Could you be searching for a fresh new way to pray every day of the year?

Daily Prayer 2021 is your guide to prayer that includes scripture, psalmody, a brief

reflection, general intercessions, and a closing prayer. It is ideal for personal and family reflection upon the word of God. This also makes an excellent gift for a senior, a newlywed or for a student away at college.

These prayerbooks are now discounted to \$10 each — which is a modest investment in someone’s spiritual formation. To pick up a copy of this year’s Daily Prayer 2021, stop in the back of church or call the rectory office at 822-2814.

## E-Donations

Your checking account or credit card may be used to make a single donation; or you may set up automatic weekly, monthly or quarterly contributions on a schedule through our website stambrosechurch.net. This solution is not meant to replace the current envelope method of collection, but instead to provide an additional alternative for those who might prefer to make their contributions electronically. We hope this additional financial service allows you another way to manage your stewardship to St. Ambrose.

# Recent Repairs

