



ST. GABRIEL

THE ARCHANGEL ♦ CATHOLIC CHURCH

Environment Ministry **SHARES TALENTS TO DRAW US FURTHER INTO PRAYERFUL WORSHIP**

Our parishes are beautiful and can stand alone without additional adornment. But anything extra truly adds to the beauty of the parish. That's the role of the Environment Ministry — to make everything look a little more beautiful. It's a way to give glory to God and point to Him.

Terri Kowalczyk has been part of this ministry for about 12 years. She enjoys arts and crafts but notes that she doesn't necessarily have the skills in

interior design. Regardless, when she was asked, she said she would help. She's thankful to all those who help year after year to decorate, haul items, and more.

"We count on that extra help for Christmas and Easter especially," Terri says. "I appreciate everyone — even those who just give an hour or two of their time to help."

Many elements help keep St. Gabriel's looking

continued on page 2





ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY SHARES TALENTS TO DRAW US FURTHER INTO PRAYERFUL WORSHIP *continued from front cover*

nice all year. Kathy Thomas, our Liturgy and Music coordinator, takes care of hanging the banners in front of the parish. Bruna Van Cleave and Jenny Grawe take care of all the flowers, a large task that requires weekly and sometimes daily work. Both of these ministries could use help.

"There's no way I could do all the work without those three," Terri says.

Terri takes excellent care to ensure everything looks beautiful, especially for Easter and Christmas. When people walk in, she wants them to be in awe and drawn into prayer. This past Christmas, she strongly felt that people were forgetting that Jesus was the reason for the season.

"We added more Christmas trees to enhance the tabernacle," Terri says. "I wanted to get people to focus there — to see this is why we are celebrating Christmas."

The Environment Ministry helps Terri to direct our focus onto "the presence of our Lord in the Tabernacle and all around us." She feels very thankful for the opportunity.

"I like giving my time to the Lord, and this is one way I can do that," Terri says. "I love just giving Him the praise and glory that He deserves."

There is a team that helps Terri decorate when needed. She couldn't do this work without each of them. She especially appreciates the group from the Spanish community who help with packing and unpacking statues, setting up the platform, carrying heavy items, and more.

Since taking over this ministry, Terri has slowly started introducing new and different pieces. But she will always keep many handmade items crafted by parishioners as part of the decorations. Terri is also conscious of making the decor emphasize the beauty of the liturgy. She recognizes that the Mass is beautiful in itself.

"I want to make sure all of the decorations bring emphasis back to Jesus," Terri says.

In turn, Terri encourages others to use their talents to decorate the parish or to get involved in another ministry.

"It's having the confidence to know God has given us these talents and realizing that we should appreciate them and share them," she says. "It's being Jesus' hands."

Terri loves doing this work and again wants to express appreciation to everyone who helps keep St. Gabriel's looking its best.

"It's only with the help of great volunteers and my husband Bill's support that I can step in to help when asked," she says. "We want to make sure we enhance those special seasons and help people appreciate the rest of the year."



To get involved in the Environment Ministry, contact Terri Kowalczyk at 719-649-4065.

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

A STEWARDSHIP JOURNEY THROUGH LENT TO EASTER JOY

Dear Parishioners,

As we are in the midst of the holy season of Lent and approaching Easter, we are reminded of the profound journey of renewal and transformation that these days call us to undertake. Lent is a sacred time when we are invited to deepen our relationship with Christ through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These practices, rooted in Scripture and tradition, also align beautifully with the principles of stewardship — embracing prayer, participation, and generosity in our daily lives.

Through prayer, we open our hearts to God's grace and guidance. This Lent, I encourage you to set aside intentional time for personal and communal prayer. Whether it is attending daily Mass, participating in the Stations of the Cross, or spending quiet moments in adoration, these acts draw us closer to the Lord and prepare us to celebrate the glory of His resurrection.

Fasting reminds us of the need to simplify our lives and place God at the center of all we do. By giving up distractions or indulgences, we create space for Him to work more fully in our hearts. Consider how fasting can also be a way to offer your time and talents to those in need. When we detach from material goods, we grow in solidarity with those who lack the necessities of life.

Almsgiving challenges us to be generous with the blessings we have received. During Lent, we are called to share our resources with those who are less fortunate. Perhaps this is the perfect time to discern how you can contribute more intentionally to the ministries of our parish or support charitable initiatives that serve the



most vulnerable in our community. Generosity, a hallmark of stewardship, allows us to witness Christ's love to others and builds up the Body of Christ.

As stewards of God's many gifts, we are invited not only to prepare our hearts during Lent but also to rejoice in the promise of Easter. The resurrection of Jesus reminds us that new life is always possible when we place our trust in Him. Let this truth inspire us to live as faithful disciples who reflect His love

and mercy in all we do.

This issue of our newsletter offers stories of faithful disciples in our parish community, including feature articles on our Environment Ministry, and our Encountering God Through the Arts Ministry. We also bring you an inside look at a unique men's movement in our parish called the Inferno Men's Hard Cor Coffee group. I hope these stories will inspire you to live your stewardship calling.

This Lent and Easter, let us walk together as a parish family, striving to grow in holiness and embrace stewardship as a way of life. May our Lenten sacrifices and Easter joy bring us closer to Christ and renew our commitment to serve Him and one another.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Kirk J. Slattery".

Fr. Kirk J. Slattery
Pastor



ST. GABRIEL
THE ARCHANGEL • CATHOLIC CHURCH

ENCOUNTERING GOD THROUGH THE ARTS

A Showcase of Local Talents



Art has historically played an important role in Catholic history, and for good reason — the arts have allowed the faithful to both express and experience a deeper connection with God. The Encountering God Through the Arts Ministry at St. Gabriel's seeks to do just that, with quarterly presentations highlighting a variety of local artists' work.

Fr. Kirk started this ministry in 2021, with the vision of bringing awareness of the arts, and to educate and share with parishioners ways art can enhance our faith. Whether it be paintings, music, or sculpture, local experts present their insights and highlight the depth of thought and beauty that goes into their work.

Kim Nguyen is the Ministry Coordinator and a member of the committee tasked with facilitating these quarterly presentations. The committee meets once a month to both study a selection of Catholic art and to suggest and organize presentations for the public. They review proposals from artists for these quarterly presentations and then take care of the logistics, including booking a space and organizing food and drink.

"Our group has 11 members, including two deacons," Kim says. "We all have different backgrounds, and we all appreciate art."

The monthly presentations at the committee meetings have been a fascinating collection of various art forms based on the members' abilities and interests. These aim to showcase both the artist's process and the unique attributes of the art itself. One evening featured Kathy Thomas, Liturgy and Music Coordinator, who presented a short verse in Latin to the group. Kathy played the same



THROUGH the Arts

Talent That Honors God

song by different composers, explaining the difference in the tension and notes and revealing the emphasis of each composer. Kim, whose background is also in art, presented a slide show of a particular piece and explained how to understand the use of color and placement of the figures.

Fr. Kirk also tasks the committee with special projects. One such memorable project was restoring a Eucharist banner that dated back to the 1800s. The group contacted a specialist in historical restoration from Denver. Kim explains that it was a delicate process preserving the aged material.

"The woman who worked on it actually had to deep freeze the banner as part of the restoration,"

Kim says. "She ordered custom-made plexiglass to preserve the color under the display lights. The whole process took a year."

Other presentations include an iconographer, a choir, an engineer who created a version of the Shroud of Turin using a 3D printer, and sculptures of olive wood from the Holy Land. Kim loves being able to share individual talents with the public as a way of honoring God.

"It's amazing," Kim says. "It's a different way of expressing our faith. We can praise God through art, singing, the written word, and poetry. We are able to showcase our specialties and gifts as individuals. It deepens our own faith as well as the artists'."

To get involved with the Encountering God Through the Arts ministry, contact Linda Popolano, Volunteer Coordinator, at 719-528-8407 or lpopolano@diocs.onmicrosoft.com.





ST. GABRIEL
THE ARCHANGEL • CATHOLIC CHURCH

CELEBRATING THE 2025 JUBILEE YEAR IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Pope Francis Declares Theme, “Pilgrims of Hope”

The Catholic Church’s 2025 Jubilee Year, themed “Pilgrims of Hope,” offers Catholics worldwide a profound opportunity to deepen their faith and rekindle their relationship with Christ. A Jubilee Year, rooted in the biblical tradition of restoration and renewal, is a special time set aside by the Church to foster spiritual growth, encourage reconciliation, and celebrate God’s abundant mercy. Declared by Pope Francis, this Holy Year is an invitation for all Catholics to embrace hope as a guiding light in their spiritual journey.

At the heart of the Jubilee Year are pilgrimages, particularly to Rome, where the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica will be opened as a symbol of God’s grace. Walking through the Holy Door signifies a passage into a renewed life with Christ. In his apostolic letter introducing the Jubilee, Pope Francis emphasizes the need for hope in a world marked by challenges, encouraging the faithful to rediscover their role as witnesses of Christ’s love and mercy.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) echoes this sentiment, urging American Catholics to see the Jubilee Year as an opportunity for renewal and a deeper commitment to discipleship. The bishops have outlined several ways for Catholics to participate in the Jubilee, including pilgrimages to designated shrines across the United States, special liturgical celebrations, and communal acts of prayer and service. The USCCB also encourages parishes to focus on Eucharistic

devotion, as the Jubilee aligns with the National Eucharistic Revival, emphasizing the transformative power of the Eucharist in Catholic life.

Special events and devotions will highlight the year. Many dioceses will host local pilgrimages, mission retreats, and reconciliation services to inspire spiritual renewal. Parishes are encouraged to organize events fostering community and prayer, such as Eucharistic processions, adoration, and acts of charity. These activities aim to remind the faithful of their call to stewardship and their role in building up the Body of Christ.

Catholics across the United States can celebrate the Jubilee Year in their daily lives by embracing discipleship and stewardship. Engaging in regular prayer, receiving the sacraments, and participating in acts of service and charity can deepen their connection to Christ. Families might consider creating home altars, praying the Rosary together, or reading Scripture to mark this holy time. Small groups or parish ministries can focus on themes of hope and renewal through study and discussion.

Ultimately, the 2025 Jubilee Year is a call for all Catholics to walk as “Pilgrims of Hope” — to rediscover the joy of the Gospel, renew their faith, and strengthen their commitment to Christ. By participating in the Jubilee’s spiritual and communal opportunities, the faithful can grow closer to God and embrace their mission as stewards of His hope in the world.

For more information on Jubilee 2025, visit the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Jubilee page at www.usccb.org/jubilee2025





INFERNO MEN'S HARD COR COFFEE

A Movement of Men on Fire Together for Christ

In fall 2021, four men met in a basement for a gathering on the principles of prayer, friendship, and the Word of God. A movement spread, which led to the start of Inferno COR groups. Four years later, Inferno Men's Hard COR Coffee started here at St. Gabriel's.

"We were created to know Him, praise Him, and worship Him," says Doug "Spider" Richardson. "That's an old saying from the *Baltimore Catechism*. That's what we do when we meet together in prayer and brotherhood."

The group meets on the first and third Wednesday mornings from 6 to 7 a.m. in St. Gabriel's Hall for prayer, fellowship, and coffee and donuts. A second meeting time started over a year ago, meeting the second and fourth Wednesdays from 7 to 9 p.m.

"We grew so large that we started an evening meeting," Spider says. "One of those meetings, the second, is hosted in Phil Davy's house. His wife is so fabulous. She cooks a wonderful meal. That allows men the flexibility to go to either or both."

COR comes from *cor*, which is Latin for "heart." It's also the root of the word "courage." The larger movement within the Diocese of Colorado Springs hosts 55 individual COR groups. The two here at St. Gabriel host 20 to 30 men.

"There's a chaplain, Fr. Chance," Spider says. "Every November, we have an enormous leadership meeting, COR Bootcamp. We have speakers from around the country. Adoration goes on. Leaders talk about bringing the Word of God and evangelizing. I joined over three years ago. We just had a training. [They] gave us a charge, 'Go out and set the world on fire.'"

Bishop James Golka shared Pope Francis' Jubilee message to the Inferno Men at COR Bootcamp. The video is on YouTube.

"Men like to be challenged," Bishop Golka



says. "God will make me more than I can be by myself. Missionary discipleship is one of the overarching goals for the diocese. An intentional disciple means I do it on purpose. I wake up and decide to follow Jesus Christ today. Our world needs that. If I just do what I want to do, it's never enough. I need to listen. 'God, what do you want me to do?' Imagine if every Catholic started doing that."

The men of this community and the larger diocesan community are doing just that. Hearts are being set ablaze as men come together in prayer, fellowship, and discipleship for Christ. Spider has witnessed a growing camaraderie among his fellow COR members.

"There's a sense of privacy," he says. "People can share their innermost problems. I notice a growing trust. I've developed many friends. The hope is we can set our own examples, improving our lives, examples of patience and evangelization to our children and friends who have fallen away from the Church. How do we bring them back, away from hardness of heart? We share books that help us."

The group also helps other parish ministries.

"We support the church, especially during Holy

continued on back cover



ST. GABRIEL

THE ARCHANGEL • CATHOLIC CHURCH

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COLO SPGS, CO
PERMIT NO. 406

Saint Gabriel the Archangel
A Parish of the Diocese of Colorado Springs
228 North Cascade Avenue | Colorado Springs, CO 80903
(719) 528-8407 | www.saintgabriel.net

INFERNO MEN'S HARD COR COFFEE *continued from page 7*

Week,” Spider. “We set up soup kitchens and stuff like that. The deacon recommended some books. He said, ‘Why don’t you start a ministry?’ It focused on children who’ve fallen away from the Church. It’s so enlightening. I called at least 12 different ministries throughout the U.S. Most of them use St. Monica. It’s been rewarding. That ministry’s been part of our parish since March of 2023.”

Inferno COR offers larger events several times

a year, as well.

“We have great gatherings,” Spider says. “We’ve had a four-star general who’s been in space talk about bringing the Holy Eucharist and evangelizing people.”

Other guest speakers have been Fr. Mike Schmitz, Chris Stefanick, and Jesse Ramirez. While they host prominent speakers, they remember that it all started from a basement, with four men gathering in Christ.

Those interested in morning meetings may contact Scott 612-385-2137 or Spider 719-237-3890. For evening meetings, call Jacob 701-809-8824, Phil 774-239-9117, or Spider. Learn more about the larger movement at www.infernomen.com/cor.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday: 4 p.m. | **Sunday:** 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and 1 p.m. (Spanish)

Daily Mass: Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. | **Adoration:** Monday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Confession: Sunday: 12 p.m. – 12:45 p.m. (Spanish) | Wednesday: until 9:30 a.m. (after daily Mass), and 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. (Spanish) | Saturday: 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.