

OUR LADY

Star of the Sea

CATHOLIC CHURCH

All Things for the Glory of God: Evon and Hugo Mickler

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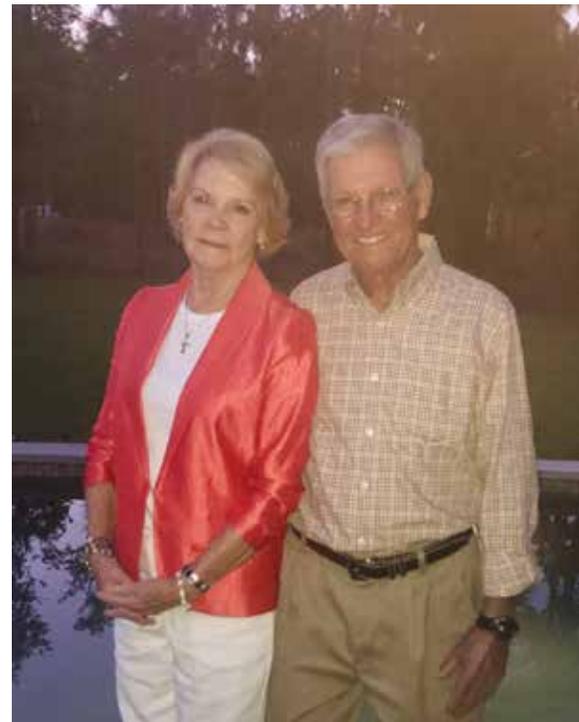
Though people often associate stewardship with giving money or acts of service, parishioners Evon and Hugo Mickler have a slightly different definition. To them, it’s an actual continuation of their family – a way of bringing their “little church” to God’s family, the universal Church.

“We believe that we are a little church here at home, and that through stewardship, we bring our little church to the big church, our second home,” Evon says. “So, we become stewards by living out that faith in whatever way that Jesus calls us. Hugo and I have always tried to just give in whatever ways that we can, to serve our family.”

During their 60 years of marriage, Evon and Hugo have managed to live out their faith in a wide variety of ways. In fact, as one of our founding families, they’ve literally helped build Our Lady Star of the Sea

from the ground up. A plumber by trade, Hugo donated countless hours doing the actual plumbing for the church, rectory, and other parish buildings.

Meanwhile, Evon eagerly began assisting with religious education classes, even serving as the parish’s first Director of Religious Education,



Evon and Hugo Mickler have strived to live their life by 1 Corinthians 10:31, “Do everything for the glory of God.”



All Things for the Glory of God *continued from front cover*

back when classes were just small circles of children in various corners of the church.

“We never refused help when we were asked,” Hugo says. “We always tried to help the best that we can.”

“We just couldn’t get enough of doing everything that we could do to make our church bigger and better,” Evon adds. “We started out here with about 77 families, and now we’re in the thousands.”

Over the years, the Micklers have tried to live their lives by 1 Corinthians 10:31, “Do everything for the glory of God.” They’ve been blessed with three children, raised here at Our Lady Star of the Sea, nine grandchildren, and soon to be four great-grandchildren. They spent years working with Marriage Encounter, helping to strengthen sacramental marriages across the United States. They’ve attended both Christ Renews His Parish and Cursillo, and have served as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion here at the parish from the very beginning. Hugo remains an active member of the Men’s Group, while Evon is a volunteer for the Celebration of Life Ministry and a member of the Council of Catholic Women. They participate regularly in the Rosary Group, various Bible studies, and work hard to “spread the Good News” wherever they go.

Yet, when asked about their impressive list of ministry involvement, the Micklers humbly point it all back to God. They describe our parish as an “umbrella of love,” explaining that you have to give before you can truly receive. Over the years, Hugo and Evon feel deeply blessed to have been part of such a vibrant and hospitable parish family – to have seen our parish grow, and to watch their own spiritual life transform in the process.

“Serving has never been a struggle for us,” Hugo says. “It’s never been this big thing of asking what we were going to do. It just sort of happens. And God has been so good to us over the years.”

“We’ve been involved in all of these ministries over the years because we felt moved to do so, not because it was ever a burden,” Evon adds. “After all, if the Church

is offering it, then why not take part? We are so blessed to have been married for 60 years now – blessed in our family and in our good health. This is just a way for us to draw closer to Him in appreciation for His blessings. We are the body of Christ. These ministries are just ways for us to show His love to other people, becoming His hands and feet.”

“We believe that we are a little church here at home, and that through stewardship, we bring our little church to the big church, our second home. So, we become stewards by living out that faith in whatever way that Jesus calls us. Hugo and I have always tried to just give in whatever ways that we can, to serve our family.” – Evon Mickler



A Letter from Our Pastor

November is a Time for *Thanksgiving*

Dear Parishioners,

November seems to automatically bring us to thoughts of thanksgiving and Thanksgiving – it is both a time of year when we tend to think in terms of gratitude to God, and a time when we also formally celebrate our American holiday. My memories of Thanksgiving are filled with food, of course, but they are also filled with thoughts of family, a sense of togetherness, and a sense of my faith.

But this is also a significant month in the Church from a number of perspectives. Nov. 1 is a Holy Day, the Solemnity of All Saints. The next day is All Souls Day, a day devoted to all the saints in our lives – living, not living, known, and unknown.

Most of us have people in our lives who have had a profound impact on us – people we can consider our own personal saints. This month is a wonderful reminder to think of them, thank them, and thank God for making them a part of our lives.

Our Thanksgiving holiday falls on Nov. 23, and is a time for families and gratitude. Thanksgiving became official in the United States in 1863,

and in his proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln made very clear Whom we needed to thank. “To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God,” Lincoln said. In other words, we all need to thank Almighty God for our many blessings.

Finally, November also brings us to the end of one Church year and the beginning of a new one. The Feast of Christ the King on Nov. 26 officially begins the final week of our liturgical year, and the First Sunday of Advent is on Dec. 3. From the beginning of the month when we thank God for the example of the saints and the saintly people in our lives, to the end of the month when we thank God for everything we have and everything we are, November is a time to approach the Lord with a grateful heart. That is



what stewardship truly is all about – about approaching God, about approaching each day, and about approaching all those with whom we come in contact, with hearts filled with gratitude and love.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Keith Brennan
Pastor

The Fourth Annual Parish Family Thanksgiving will take place on Thanksgiving Day at 1:00 pm in the OLSS Cultural Center. For information or to RSVP, contact the Parish Office at 285-2698.



Ministry Makes Date Night



Youth from our parish also volunteer to help give parents a break.



The Date Night Project is an opportunity for parents to have an evening away while other parish parents care for their little ones.

Though many couples may like the idea of prioritizing their marriage, when it comes right down to it, the reality of getting time away from the kids is often more easily said than done. Especially for those without trustworthy family nearby, finding good child-care can often feel like a daunting task.

“When you’re pregnant, or after you’ve had your first baby, People tell you, ‘Continue dating!’” says parishioner Brittanie Stevens, admitting that the advice didn’t really hit home until their son was over a year old.

“We realized, ‘He’s basically consuming all our energy!’” she adds, with a laugh. “It’s difficult to date when you have a little person who requires you to care for their needs 24/7! They need you!”

Brittanie started thinking about other parents who were in the same position –lovingly devoted to raising their little ones, but also in need of time together as a couple.

“If I’m in need of this, how many other people are in need of this, who might not have family nearby?” she says. “Maybe it was the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, but I thought, ‘Why don’t you try to do something at church?’”

And thus came the Date Night Project. Designed to give parents an opportunity to go out alone, this monthly event provides couples with two hours of babysitting at the parish, provided by fellow parents and the youth of Our Lady Star of the Sea. Catered towards children under the age of 10, the kids have a chance to play, color and participate in other low-key activities.

“Come, drop your kids off, and go have a dinner or a date night where you can communicate without interruption,” Brittanie says. “It’s important for us to nourish our marriages first because our children see how we respond, how we communicate together, and that’s where they are going to learn the most.”

The Date Night Project is also an opportunity for busy parents to become involved in serving their fellow parishioners.



nts Possible for Our Parents

“If you get from it, you also give back – it’s reciprocal,” Brittanie says. “If you partake in it, then another time, you’ll volunteer. If you can’t donate your time, then it’s a \$10 donation, per family.

“And what better way for parents to serve, with their children?” she continues. “We can serve our community and brothers and sisters in Christ, by volunteering for the date night and helping other couples nourish their marriage.”

To ensure the safety of all children, parent volunteers must go through Protecting God’s Children, along with getting fingerprinted.

By spending time serving together, parents will also have the chance for fellowship, connecting with like-minded parents.

“We’re coming together in this area of our life, with people who are in the same chapter,” Brittanie says. “It’s a great opportunity. It gives you the ability to meet other parents who are going through the same things you’re going through. It’s a great way to get to know other parishioners in your church.”

Brittanie hopes that the Date Night Project will also help to increase the sense of “family” within the parish, reminding parishioners that they’re not alone, but that they have a community that wants to support them, in all the stages of parenting and family life.

“I grew up surrounded by lots of family members, and so moving here, and starting a family without family around, it’s difficult,” she says. “It’s not only that meal train that someone gets after having a baby. Support should continue. This is our little way of continuing it.”

Brittanie encourages parents who may struggle to spend time together to make this investment in their relationship.

“God created marriages and He wants to see them thrive,” Brittanie says. “I’m always interested in how much more we can push our marriage to be what God created it to be. Investing and making this a priority in your life, you’ll reap the benefits for years to come.”



Date Night gives couples an opportunity to spend time together and prioritize their relationship, knowing their children are safe and well cared for.

If you would like more information on the Date Night Project, or to become involved, please contact Brittanie Stevens at 985-320-0021 or brittaniadesign@gmail.com. Date Nights typically occur on the third Thursday of the month, from 6 to 8 p.m., in the Browning Center, Room 2. This month’s date night will take place on Nov 16. Please contact Brittanie in order to access online links for volunteer and child sign-ups.



The “Thanksgiving Spirit” Doesn’t Have to End at Thanksgiving

The origin of the first Thanksgiving feast is a matter of some debate among historians. But since 1863, Americans have annually set aside the fourth or fifth Thursday of November to give thanks to God for a bountiful harvest. The holiday became a matter of federal law in 1941, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint congressional resolution to observe Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday of November. Even as our society has become less agrarian, families continue to gather each November to give thanks to God for each other, and for the many blessings they have received throughout the year.

Most people associate this “spirit of Thanksgiving” with the fall holiday and its many recognizable symbols – brisk weather, cornucopias, family gatherings, and plenty of delicious food. But giving thanks to God in gratitude for the gifts we have received isn’t an attitude we should save for this annual holiday alone. When we live lives of stewardship – sharing of our time, talents, and treasure in thanks to God and at the service of others – we can sustain life in the Thanksgiving spirit throughout the year.

The Church teaches that this daily response of gratitude is an important element of living the life of a Christian disciple. As the *Catechism of the Catholic*

Church states, “Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory. The thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head” (*CCC*, 2637).

And how can we express this spirit of thanks? We can serve others, living the virtue of charity by reaching out to our brothers and sisters in need through acts of kindness. We can give back to God from our “first fruits,” sharing of our treasure in thanksgiving and recognition of the need to return a portion of our gifts to God. We can utilize our unique talents to make our parish and local communities better places. And, as the *Catechism* also points out, we can even express thanks through prayerfully offering up our daily activities to God – “Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving” (*CCC*, 2638).

This Thanksgiving, take a moment to think of ways that you can live in the “spirit of Thanksgiving” on the fourth Thursday of November, and every other day throughout the year. Living the stewardship way of life may not always involve a precisely carved turkey, decorations or a family viewing of *It’s a Wonderful Life* – but it will provide lifelong fulfillment and joy rooted in an attitude of perpetual thanksgiving.

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Recognition Dinner

Honoring Those Who Have Served

Have you ever wanted to thank a veteran for giving of his or her time but not known how? Our Lady Star of the Sea is giving parishioners the opportunity to do just that this month with the annual Veterans Recognition Dinner.

Hosted by the Men's Group, in coordination with families from Palmer Catholic Academy, the dinner invites parish veterans of all branches of the Armed Forces to enjoy an evening together celebrating their contribution to our country.

"We're there to honor them with a very inspiring event," says coordinator Dan Devenny. "It's the one time many of these people reminisce back to their service to our country."

The event begins with Mass at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 11, followed by dinner at 6:45 p.m. The veterans are brought into the Cultural Center with a red-carpet welcome, flanked on both sides by members of the Bishop Kenny NJROTC Color Guard. Once inside, they'll be treated to a meal cooked by families from Palmer Academy and served to the veterans by Palmer students.

"I got a lot of feedback from the veterans when the kids helped one year, that they loved the children," Dan says. "They give a gift to these children, because these children don't understand what these guys have done. So during the event, they're not only serving them but they're receiving something, as well."

The event will also feature a talk by Captain Patrick J. McCormick, a parishioner who recently retired from the Navy after more than 30 years of distinguished service. He is a faculty member of the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, was a Combat Advisor for U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, and served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

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Parishioners who served in the Armed Forces share a meal and fellowship together at the annual Veterans Recognition Dinner.



Captain Patrick J. McCormick, a parishioner who recently retired from the Navy after more than 30 years of distinguished service, will be the featured speaker at this year's Veterans Recognition Dinner. The dinner will be held Saturday, Nov. 11, at 6:45 p.m. in the Cultural Center.



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Recognition Dinner Honoring Those Who Have Served

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In addition to several unit and campaign awards, Captain McCormick is authorized to wear the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with two gold stars, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal. He attends Our Lady Star of the Sea with his wife, Jennifer, and their children Madelyn, Patrick, and Thomas.

“Being a Navy town, we always try to get a speaker with some sort of connection,” Dan says. “But this time, hearing from one of our own members, we’ll also be able to thank his family for serving this country over all these years.”

Dan adds that one of the things that makes the dinner so special is seeing the pride on the faces of those who have given so much of themselves in stewardship to the United States. From seeing an elderly service member walk the red carpet with the aid of a cane, to witnessing their interactions with the youth who help with the event, Dan says it’s very moving.

“At the end of the dinner, our Master of Ceremonies will play a short snippet of each Armed Service branch’s anthems,” he explains. “They stand up for their anthem and they’re all so proud of their branches. Right then, you’re at an emotional high with these awesome men and women, and that’s how we end the event right there.”

Veterans and their guests are asked to RSVP for the event by Nov. 5. If you have not already filled out an RSVP slip from the bulletin, you may contact the parish office at 904-285-2698.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil - 5:30 p.m. | Sunday - 7:30 a.m.; 9:00 a.m.; 11:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Daily (Monday to Saturday) - 8:30 a.m. | Wednesday - 7:00 p.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Wednesdays from 6:00-6:45 p.m.

Saturdays from 4:00-5:00 p.m.