

OUR LADY

Star of the Sea

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Becoming Better Stewards of Our Bodies With Help From Our Health Care Ministry

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Though we live in a culture that is increasingly health conscious, few people think of health and wellness in terms of Christian stewardship. Yet, at its heart, stewardship is about caring for, cultivating, and using our God-given gifts. And what greater gift is there than the gift of life itself?

“We sometimes forget that our health is a gift from God,” says Sr. Joan Grace Gabbin, SFCC. “As Catholics, though, we believe that we have a responsibility to care for the body that God has given us.”

Our Lady Star of the Sea’s Health Care Ministry is devoted to assisting parishioners in this task by providing them with support and information on health-related matters. This is done through monthly seminars, community outreach opportunities, and by providing referrals to other health organizations.

“The Health Care Ministry’s purpose is to provide comprehensive resources to the parish in a variety of ways,” Sr. Joan says. “We use a holistic approach to help improve the overall health of parishioners, including not only physical needs, but also emotional and spiritual. We also serve as a referral, providing information for healthcare questions about types of insurances, recommendation for home health agencies, or places for long-term or short-term care for their loved ones.”

As both a professional nurse and a religious sister, Sr. Joan has devoted her life to caring for others. The Health Care Ministry, then, has become a unique way for her to use her professional expertise for the benefit of fellow parishioners. Over the past three years, she has been joined by many other medical professionals within the parish, undertaking healthcare efforts to better support the needs of our parish family.



The Health Care Ministry’s Colon Cancer Awareness Talk, given by Dr. Michael Picco



Good Stewardship of Our Social Media

When we are talking about the idea of stewardship and how we care for the tools and gifts we have been given, it is not often that we stop to have a conversation about how we are caring for and using the gift of social media to positively spread Gospel values. However, this is an appropriate topic for us to consider when we are talking about the many young people, as well as adults, who gather online on a frequent basis. Therefore, it is important for us to think about how we are using the amazing gifts of technology.

If you are frequently online – especially on Pinterest – there is a popular acronym that you may have already come across. While it is used in many different contexts, it seems very appropriate to follow as we find ourselves posting statuses and pictures on various social media sites. The acronym is T.H.I.N.K., and it invites us to consider what we are saying and sharing, and whether or not it should be said!

Is what we are posting:

True? Are we sharing factual information or a rumor that we heard, and if we think our information is factual, what is our source? Is it trustworthy?

Helpful? Is the information we are sharing something that can be useful to another person? We don't need to over-examine all of our content to consider its "educational factor," but is the content we are posting going to help someone learn about us, learn about a place or an activity,

think about the world, reflect on life, engage us in laughter, and so forth?

Inspirational? There is certainly no requirement to be a poet or an artist, but social media has become a wonderful outlet for positive self-expression. "Positive" is the key word – are we posting to inspire others about the good in our world, or are we posting to cut someone down or to simply rant?

Nice? Have we considered the feelings of others when we include them in a status or post a picture of them? Will they be embarrassed? Are we using social media to humiliate and intimidate others, or are we using it to try to better the world and the lives of others?

Kind? What a great tool to compliment, show gratitude, and build the self-esteem of those you care about!

People often speak of social media in a negative way because of the content they see posted. T.H.I.N.K. is a great way for us to remind ourselves that we can be good stewards of our own social media use. Remember that there are many ways to share the Gospel without writing out its words. Gospel living has to do with the positive way we approach this life and bring God's light and love to others – and it couldn't be easier than sharing an uplifting status on Facebook, a Tweet of gratitude to a friend, or a beautiful image of God's inspiring creation on Instagram. What a great way to build the Kingdom of God!

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A Letter from Our Pastor

“Here I Am, Lord.” But Are You Really There? Are You Responding to God’s Call?

Dear Parishioners,

Throughout the Bible we hear people say, “Here I am, Lord,” or something similar. Normally, it is a response to a communication, a call, from God. In the Old Testament Book of Exodus, for example, it states, “God called out to him from the bush: ‘Moses! Moses!’ He answered, ‘Here I am’” (Exodus 3:4). We often speak in the Church about the fact that we have each received a calling from God. We also regularly say that one way to respond to that call is to live a life of stewardship.

Of course, the truth is that many do not hear God’s call because they are either not listening or they do not want to hear it. Of course, that is not how we should feel. I could write about my own call, but right now, I would rather address your call.

This is a time of year when there are calls from those in need all around us. Some of those calling are ministries right here in our parish. Before I address our response, it is important to emphasize that we need to hear the call. To hear something, we have to be listening.

The second issue is our response to the call. Do we indeed say, “Here I am”? Or, do we choose to say and do nothing? Stewardship is a call to action, a call to do something to share with and to help others. In the Old Testament passage cited above, Moses responds, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11) – meaning he feels unworthy and unable to fulfill this call from the Lord. God’s answer is everything, as He says to Moses simply, “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12). Thus, we receive the call; we are to respond to God making it clear that we are ready. We may quite likely feel (as Moses did) that we are unprepared for what God may be asking us to do, but His response to Moses was the same as His response to us – “I will be with you.”

That is enough to empower us and strengthen us to try to serve God and fulfill His desires for us. Of course, there is one other call to which we need to respond. It is, as Christ said many times, “Come follow Me.”

As we enter this part of our personal year, this part of our calendar year,



and this part of our Church year, may we be ready to listen, to respond, and then to do – full with the knowledge that the Lord is with us always!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Keith Brennan
Pastor

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“The Need is Great”



Don and Midge Barnhorst met in an operating room. During the early years of their marriage, Midge supported them financially as a nurse while Don finished his surgical training.

Then, long years of Don working 12-hour days and Midge singlehandedly raising their four children followed.

How could stewardship fit in?

“We’ve had a long romance with the Catholic faith, and that has strengthened us as we’ve raised a family,” Don says. “Sometimes in the hustle and bustle of raising kids and managing a career, one can put Christ in the background.”

Don and Midge joined Our Lady in 1986 and had only a rudimentary idea of what living stewardship meant. “We supported our parish and diocese as well as our resources allowed,” Don says. “We supported ‘adopted children’ and the hungry throughout the world. But we gave little thought to other means of serving our suffering fellow man.”

As Don explains it, Christ has a way of keeping tabs on our activities. Once the couple had more time, they began to hear Him whispering. The parable of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke’s Gospel began to resonate with them in a new way.

“The passage finally impacted us,” Don says. “Just as He said three times to Peter, ‘Feed my sheep,’ so He told us repeatedly that we needed to share not just increasing amounts of our treasure but also our time and talent. We began to look for those who needed our help.”

They found Mission House in Jacksonville Beach, administered by Lori Anderson. Don began transporting excess food from various local super markets to the House. Midge and Don also joined a group that prepared Sunday dinners for those in need. Actually, the food that they and others brought often exceeded the need.

“With Lori’s blessing, each Thursday Midge loads her SUV literally from floor to ceiling with excess food from Mission House and drives it to St. Augustine to the Cenacolo Community,” Don says. “They have a policy never to ask for food or clothing; they trust that the Holy Spirit will provide.”

Don and Midge have found that the parish is a rich source of opportunities to serve. Midge gives her time as a sacristan,

Don and Midge Barnhorst

and Don is reminded of Lazarus' sister Martha when Midge irons the laundered purificators.

"The ministry that I most revere is the honor to be a Eucharistic Minister," Don says. "Please take the opportunity to share this special intimacy with Christ. Preparing food for the hungry at St. Francis Kitchen following Mass at Immaculate Conception on Friday mornings is also a special blessing."

Don calls one of the greatest faults in his early life not giving Christ time to talk with him. He remembers Monsignor Brennan speaking to this issue in a recent homily.

"How many times has Christ tried to tell us something important, and we did not allow Him a hearing?" Don says.

Don sensed that Christ had been knocking on his door for a while; and, when he finally listened, he heard a calling to the Prison Ministry.

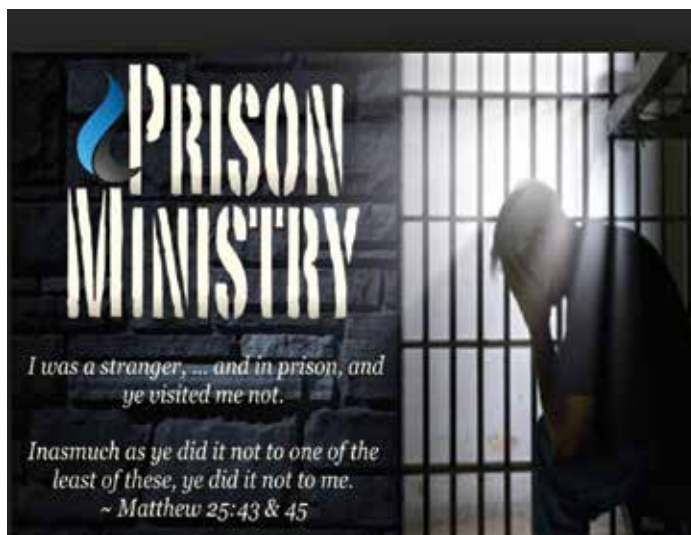
"I immediately told Him that He had the wrong address!" Don says. "But He persisted in calling me, and for the past six years that ministry has been one of my greatest gifts. Sharing Christ with these men is an unbelievable privilege."

Together Midge and Don share a wonderful ministry – a medical mission to the Dominican Republic. Though the travel and the work can be challenging, they find it to be very rewarding.

"We experience incredible joy and fulfillment three times each year in helping these desperately poor Dominicans and Haitians," Don says. Medical volunteers are, of course, essential. But, our non-professional parishioners have found great satisfaction in the many available roles. This is an especially worthwhile ministry for the youth in our parish.

Over the years, Don and Midge have gained a deeper understanding of stewardship, recognizing that everything they have is a gift from God and must be "shared liberally and returned to God with enhancement," as in the parable of the talents.

"Look around you," Don says. "The need is great. Opportunities to serve are everywhere. I promise that if you take the time to listen, Christ will give you guidance. I also promise you that you will find some of your greatest fulfillment in service for 'these least of His brethren.'"





Parishioner Builds Rosary Garden for

When it is our time to come face to face with God, He is not going to ask how much money we made, what car we drove, or how big our house was.

“He’s gonna ask, ‘Did you pray?’” parishioner John Pate says. “Prioritize prayer, it’s one of the most powerful things we can do, to pray.”

With this in mind, John, a senior at The Bolles School, decided that his Eagle Scout project, which would complete his work and time in Boy Scouts, would be building a Rosary Garden at Our Lady.

While John could have chosen any service project within the community, it was important to him that he found a way to give back to his parish. After moving from outside of Washington, D.C., his sophomore year, our parish

became a source of friendship and support in his faith.

“I wanted to give back to the church for all it’s done for me,” John says. “I went to my first youth group meeting not knowing anyone at all, and throughout the next two years, I made friends. I’ve got a really close-knit group of guys. We’re brothers in faith.”

The Rosary has also been an important part of John’s life, from praying it with his family, to his memory of his grandmother’s passing, with a Rosary in her hands.

“The Rosary is valuable because the more and more we say it, the closer we get to our Lord’s mother, who has direct power to intercede for us,” John says. “It’s a really powerful prayer.

“It’s an easy, quick 15-minute prayer – it’s an easy thing to do,” he

adds, encouraging his fellow parishioners to take up the devotion if they haven’t already. “Praying the Rosary, you can really sit down and reflect on the life of Christ and the Blessed Mother.”

The Rosary Garden, which was completed a year ago this December, is designed with stones and pavers in the shape of a Rosary, along with a Marian statue and bench, for people to sit and pray.

“It’s a beautiful place to come and sit,” John says. “It’s a dedicated spot to pray the Rosary and you get to be outside and enjoy the nature, the beauty that God made for us to enjoy. It’s a great way to get closer to God. I hope that when people are praying the Rosary, since our church is named after Our Lady Star of the Sea, that they can devote a Rosary to our par-



John Pate (right) wanted to give back to his parish community through his Eagle Scout project.



The Rosary Garden is made of stones, forming the shape of a Rosary. Parishioners are invited to walk and pray, or sit with the statue of the Blessed Mother, asking her intercession.



Eagle Scout Project and Our Lady

ish and really grow closer to Our Lady Star of the Sea. “

A swimmer who hopes to go to the University of Florida next year, John also found that working on the project was an opportunity for him to share his faith with non-Catholic friends and fellow Boy Scouts who came to help.

“I had people who weren’t Catholic,” he says. “Not a lot of people knew what the Rosary was,” he says. “I explained, ‘we say this prayer,’ I walked them through how to say a Rosary.”

He hopes that his fellow parishioners will enjoy the garden and that

it will be an opportunity for people to grow closer to God, through the Blessed Mother.

“I would love to see my fellow parishioners use it – I really hope they enjoy it,” John says. “I hope that if someone is having a hard day or struggling, I hope they can walk out there, even if it’s just to say a quick Hail Mary. I hope it benefits them and they find healing or the answers they need.”

The Rosary Garden is located on the left side of the church, behind the Columbarium.



Complete with a lighted statue of the Blessed Mother and a bench to sit and pray, the Rosary Garden is a beautiful place to grow in your devotion to Our Lady.

“It’s a beautiful place to come and sit. It’s a dedicated spot to pray the Rosary and you get to be outside and enjoy the nature, the beauty that God made for us to enjoy. It’s a great way to get closer to God.” – John Pate

Upcoming Events at Our Lady Star of the Sea

Saturday, Oct. 14

Please join us to pack 20,000 meals for the needy!

To register or donate funds, please go to: <http://helpinghands.crs.org/events/olss/>

Sunday, Oct. 15

Please join us after the 11:00 a.m. Mass for a Walking Rosary!

Thursday, Oct. 26

Council of Catholic Women — Dinner at 6:00 p.m. in the Cultural Center



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Health Care Ministry *continued from front cover*

“This ministry has become an excellent way for our committee members to use their time and talent for our parish,” Sr. Joan says. “We have doctors, nurses and dietitians, each using their professional skills for the betterment of our parish family.”

Each month, the Health Care Ministry focuses on a different medical topic. October, for example, is always devoted to breast cancer awareness. Parishioners are encouraged to wear pink on the weekend of Oct. 14-15 and to attend a presentation by Donna Deegan, founder of the DONNA Foundation and three-time breast cancer survivor, on Thursday, Nov. 16, at 6:30 p.m.

November, meanwhile, will focus on diabetes education, and in February, the Health Care Ministry will be presenting its first ever Health Fair.

“We’re very excited about our first Health Fair,” Sr. Joan says. “This will entail many presentations from different companies on health topics. We’ll have glaucoma and cholesterol testing, for example, people that will talk about end-of-life issues, representative from the Board of Health to share ways to maintain healthy eating habits, YMCA leaders to talk about different low-budget programs available, and representatives from local assisted living facilities.

We encourage parishioners to join the Health Care Ministry for these monthly offerings, and welcome new ministry volunteers. For more information or to get involved, please contact Sr. Joan Grace Gabbin at 904-280-7321 or srjoanrace@gmail.com.

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.