

OUR LADY

Star of the Sea

CATHOLIC CHURCH

"Digging for Treasure"

During this Summer's Vacation Bible School

INSIDE

- 3 Take Vacations from Work or School, Not From God
- 4 Deacon Don DeLorenzo Reflects on His Vocation in the Permanent Diaconate
- 6 A Catholic's Guide to Good Summer Reading
- 7 Dancing the Night Away: The Annual Father-Daughter Dance

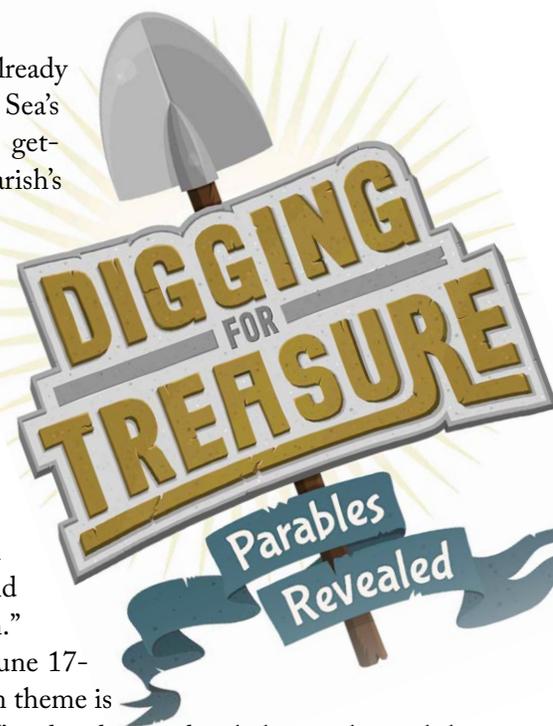
It's hard to believe that another summer is already here! And once again, Our Lady Star of the Sea's kindergarten through sixth-grader students are getting geared up for a week of fun during the parish's annual Vacation Bible School, or VBS.

"Our program sells out every single year and the kids look forward to it so much," says long-time adult volunteer Vivian Garcia. "It's a week-long program filled with games, crafts, skits, songs and teachings, all designed to present Christ and the teachings of His Church in an attractive and fun manner. In the process, children are shown that faith isn't simply limited to Sunday Mass or Religious Education classes, but rather is meant to be a living and breathing thing filled with joy and enthusiasm."

This year's VBS program will take place June 17-June 21 from 9 a.m. to noon daily. The chosen theme is

"Digging for Treasure — Parables Revealed" and is designed to help parish youth learn the hidden meaning behind Christ's deceptively simple stories. Best of all, says Vivian, the program is fully Catholic which means that in addition to their daily Bible lessons the children will also learn about the saints, experience the sacraments, and ultimately explore the richness of our Catholic faith.

"For the last two years we were fortunate to find a specifically Catholic curriculum and it has been truly amazing," Vivian says. "You just don't know what you are missing until you have it! Through it, we're able to profile the different saints throughout the week, and on Wednesday instead of doing their usual Bible rotation, every child will get to experience 20-25 minutes of Eucharistic Adoration. During this time, we'll pray the Rosary and it's truly the real deal."





"Digging for Treasure"

Summer's Vacation Bible School *continued from front cover*

Having been part of Vacation Bible School for many years as both a parent and an adult volunteer, Vivian has been amazed by the fruits it has borne within her own children, as well as the other youth who attend each summer. Thanks to its interactive and fun presentation, VBS helps children realize how truly alive and exciting the faith can be, and to embrace the faith in a truly unique and life-changing way.

"They see the excitement of other children and all the volunteers and it's truly contagious," Vivian says. "Instead of going to the beach or jumping in the pool, they are learning about Jesus and having a total blast doing it. My own children are so excited each year to attend. The growth and knowledge of the faith that they receive is incredible. And when you start teaching them these things like that, it becomes part of their life. There is none of this, 'Are we going to Mass this Sunday?' but instead, 'Which Mass are we going to?'"

This is only possible each year, however, through the generosity of our adult and youth volunteers. Each year,

after undergoing the appropriate background check and training, many generous parishioners give of their time to help oversee crafts, teach songs, prepare snacks and lead games. Students in seventh through 12th grades also have the opportunity to help out, earning service hours for the upcoming school year and allowing them to transition into parish leaders.

"It's a great way to give back to the Church and to help out our parish families," Vivian says. "Any time you help a child grow closer to God, it only makes it easier and better for the parents. It helps children become excited about the faith."

Though registration for attendees and volunteers has already closed for this summer's Vacation Bible School, we encourage all parishioners to support this ministry spiritually by praying for the youth and adults who will be involved. And if you or your child has yet to experience the joy of Vacation Bible School, we encourage you to sign up early for next summer's program.

If you would like more information about Vacation Bible School and Our Lady Star of the Sea's other youth Faith Formation opportunities, please contact the office of Faith Formation at 904-567-1960 or kvoutour@olsspvb.org.



A Letter from Our Pastor

Take VACATIONS from Work or School, NOT FROM GOD

Dear Parishioners,

By now, many schools across America have let out for the summer. In almost no time, camp programs for younger students will be underway. Meanwhile, many older students are ready to trade their homework and notebooks for seasonal jobs until it's time to return to class in a few months.

Whether or not we're directly involved with schools — as students, teachers or parents — we find that the calendar for the school year also impacts our lives at work, at church and in our leisure time. And although some people are on vacation at any time of year, summer traditionally retains its place as *the* vacation season.

Vacations, no matter when or where we take them, provide us with a wonderful opportunity to refresh our lives by following a totally dif-

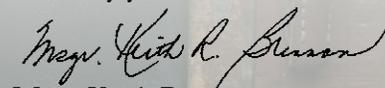
ferent daily pattern. Whether it's a day trip to the beach or hiking in the mountains, an excursion to the big city or a road trip out to the country, a visit to relatives or friends, or even a quiet and relaxing week spent at home, a vacation offers a break from our daily routines. We get to spend our time the way *we* choose.

A vacation also provides a good opportunity for us to make some permanent changes in our use of time. When we're free from the demands of everyday life, this is a perfect chance to try something that is not part of our regular routine, such as spending a few minutes a day in prayer or meditation. "Try it — you'll like it!" as the old commercial said. It may have some lasting, positive results in fostering a stronger spiritual life.

Importantly, we must also remember that this is a time of year when our parish will be welcoming visitors who are on vacation themselves — whether they are visiting family, spending time in the area, or just happen to be passing through on the way to their next destination. So, let us all uphold the Stewardship Pillar of Hospitality and provide a warm welcome to those visiting our parish.

Be sure to worship at Mass, wherever you happen to be each Sunday. You'll come back from vacation refreshed both emotionally and spiritually.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Msgr. Keith Brennan
Pastor



Deacon Don DeLorenzo Reflects on

As funny as it might sound, if it weren't for Deacon Don DeLorenzo's love of chocolate, he may never have heard a call to the permanent diaconate! The path that led Deacon Don to a vocation in the Church was a winding one. He could never have predicted — and yet he is grateful — that a casual visit to a bakery would eventually bring him into the diaconate. Looking back, however, Deacon Don can see the intentional way that God came to meet him on that particular day.

Deacon Don grew up in a Catholic family and attended a Catholic grammar school in his home state of New Jersey. Following high school graduation, he began taking classes at Montclair State University, but had to discontinue his studies when his father passed away. He would later go on to receive an undergraduate degree from Seton Hall University.

For 10 years, Deacon Don worked with a summer theater camp that raised money for chronically ill and differently abled children. In the summer of 1975, he met Cathleen when

she auditioned for a role in a musical the group was putting on. The two fell in love, and were married in 1977.

Although Deacon Don and Cathleen were both raised in the Catholic faith, they fell away from the Church. It had been about 10 years since the couple had practiced their faith when circumstance — and a craving for chocolate — brought them back to the Eucharist.

“We often talk about how God comes and gets you where you are,” Deacon Don says. “Well, one day, we had gone to a bakery for some chocolate when Cathleen saw a sign for the Shrine Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament right up the street. It was an adoration chapel, and she wanted to go in. I didn't want to go at first, but we did, and that was the first step of us coming back to the Church.”

Once Deacon Don and Cathleen began attending Mass and adoration again, the Lord worked quickly in their lives. Cathleen ended up in the position of music director at the Shrine Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, and the DeLorenzos continued to



Deacon Don DeLorenzo has counted himself fortunate to have such a loving source of support in his wife, Cathleen.

spend time there in adoration in addition to joining another parish closer to their home.

Returning to the Mass after so many years away, Deacon Don was intrigued to see men on the altar wearing stoles — and wedding rings! One day, as he looked through the church bulletin, an announcement about the permanent diaconate, which had re-

continued on page 5

“There are so many people in and around the parish every day — it's very active. The spirit is alive here, and so is Mary's influence. It's just a wonderful parish.”

— Deacon Don DeLorenzo

In His Vocation in the Permanent Diaconate

cently been reinstated, caught his attention. Over the next six months, he found himself more and more drawn to a vocation in the diaconate. With the approval of his pastor, Deacon Don applied and was accepted into the diaconate program in the Diocese of Metuchen, N.J.

After four years of study, Deacon Don was ordained a permanent deacon on May 5, 1996. In the years since, he has enjoyed serving and building relationships with God's people in parishes first in New Jersey, and then in Florida.

Through it all, Deacon Don has counted himself fortunate to have such a loving source of support in his wife, Cathleen.

"Neither one of us knew what the demands [of the diaconate] were going to be like," he says. "My ministry is impossible without her, and she has given me more time and support than I deserve. I couldn't do this without her."

Five years ago, the DeLorenzos decided to escape the cold New Jersey weathers by coming to live in Florida. They first moved to Ave Maria before ultimately settling here in the Ponte Vedra area just over two years ago. In his time serving as an extern deacon at Our Lady Star of the Sea, Deacon Don has quickly come to love our parish and the people here.

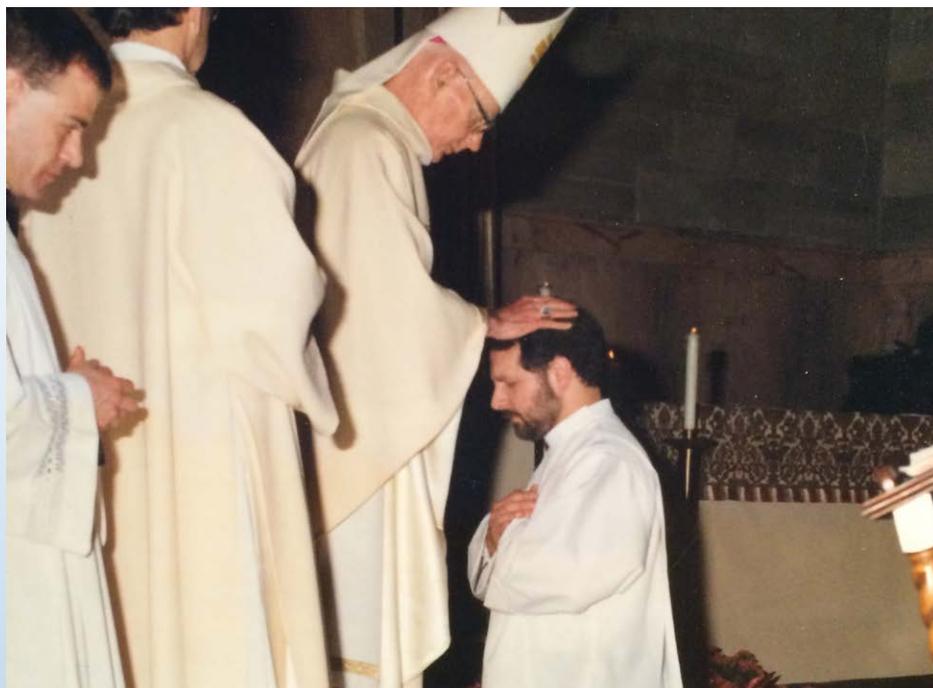
"Monsignor is great and Fr. Bastian has also been working very

hard," he says. "The office staff is lovely, and Deacon Dan is great to work with. There are so many people in and around the parish every day — it's very active. The spirit is alive here, and so is Mary's influence. It's just a wonderful parish."

Having rediscovered his own faith the day that he and Cathleen walked into the Shrine Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, Deacon Don would encourage any parishioners who are looking to rejuvenate their faith life to spend some quality time with the Lord.

"Just put yourself in the presence of Jesus," Deacon Don says. "We have adoration one morning a week and on First Friday nights into Saturday morning. And the church is open all day long. Stop in, put yourself in the presence of the Lord and pray — that's a great starting point. And then, try to listen."

With open hearts and minds, there is no telling what kind of transformation the Lord might work in our lives. After all, as Deacon Don tells us from experience, "God comes to us where we are, even in a bakery!"



Deacon Don DeLorenzo was ordained to the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Metuchen, N.J., in 1996.



A Catholic's Guide to Good Summer Reading

Have you been wondering what to read during vacation this year? Why not give spiritual reading a try?

There are thousands of titles out there – too many for any one person – just waiting to make a positive impact on your faith life. Reading is a fantastic opportunity for general spiritual direction and good practice for every searching soul.

Choose a title from “you can’t go wrong” authors such as Louis de Wohl, G.K. Chesterton, Peter Kreeft, Francis de Sales, C.S. Lewis, and Scott Hahn. Their works alone should take you well into the summer, and possibly through to the next decade.

Or, choose from this list of great Christian books, in no particular order:

The Story of a Soul by St. Therese of Lisieux

In this autobiography and all-time favorite Catholic book, St. Therese teaches her “little way” of spiritual childhood. Millions of copies have been sold worldwide.

Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

One of the most popular introductions to the Christian faith ever published, this series of broadcast talks has been collected into book fashion. *Mere Christianity* sets out to “explain and defend the belief that has been common to nearly all Christians at all times.”

Rome Sweet Home: Our Journey to Catholicism by Scott and Kimberly Hahn

This offers a conversion story of a brilliant, anti-Catholic Scripture scholar and his wife to the Catholic faith. Now

well-known speakers and Catholic apologists, Scott and Kimberly recount their story with simplicity and love.

The Good News about Sex & Marriage by Christopher West

This down-to-earth application of Pope John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body* is an easy to read yet insightful account of the Church’s teaching on sex and marriage.

What Catholics Really Believe by Karl Keating

Addressing 52 of the greatest misconceptions of the Catholic faith, Keating draws upon Scripture and Tradition to dispel errors and explain the rationale behind Church teaching.

No Greater Love by Mother Teresa

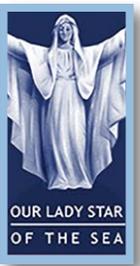
This anthology collects the teachings and sayings of St. Teresa of Calcutta. Founder of the Missionaries of Charity and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Mother Teresa speaks joyfully about her work with the poor and God’s call in our lives.

Surprised by Truth edited by Patrick Madrid

Eleven converts give their Biblical and historical reasons for becoming Catholic. These unique personal testimonies continue to transform hearts throughout the world in an insightful read for Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Happy summer! Happy reading!

Dancing the Night Away: The Annual Father-Daughter Dance



Getting all dressed up, going out for dinner, getting flowers, dancing the night away — sounds like the perfect evening, doesn't it? And for dads and their daughters who enjoy Our Lady Star of the Sea's annual Father-Daughter Dance, it's more than just a fun night out — it's a chance for them to spend quality time together.

Originally hosted by the Men's Group, the Father-Daughter Dance has been a parish tradition for over 10 years. Last month, the Family Life Ministry hosted the event, giving dads and their daughters — ranging in age from seven months to college students — a night to celebrate their special relationship, and 76 families took part in the evening.

"That's the heart of it, the little girls and how they feel about their dads and how the dads feel about their daughters," says Mary Ann Miller, who serves as the Coordinator of the Family Life Ministry. "It's their special night together. We want to give fathers the opportunity to have a special evening with their daughters, to keep family at the forefront and build that relationship between dads and daughters."

The night — which includes a catered dinner, a DJ and dancing — is enjoyed by all, from the youngest to the oldest, both fathers and daughters.

"I talked to several dads who were there," Mary Ann says. "One gentleman, he was all lit up and talked about what a great memory it's been over the years and how his girls have always looked forward to it."

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The Father-Daughter Dance is a chance for dads and their daughters to enjoy a fun evening together.





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The Annual Father-Daughter Dance *continued from page 7*

“It’s a really special night to have the dads and the daughters together,” she adds. “The dads were beaming.”

Volunteers from various parish organizations came to help at the special night and, for those who served, it was a chance to witness the joy shared among families.

“They were all very joyful about seeing the dads with their daughters,” Mary Ann says. “It was really heartwarming to see everybody just enjoying the evening. The dads were smiling just as much as the girls. For me, as a volunteer, it was a joyful evening.”

Mary Ann hopes that the evening will serve as a special reminder to fathers of the role they can play in their children’s lives, from the early years through adulthood.

“We want to keep the family at the center, so as children grow up, they feel comfortable talking to their dads,” Mary Ann says. “When you create that communication line early in life, children feel like they can talk to their dads. I look at fathers as being the ones who guide the family and guide their children in the direction that will foster keeping God in their life, and also using the talents that God has given them to the best of their ability. I think that dads can play a role of strength, someone who can be a protector, a confidant.

“I hope this will be a memory that will continue to strengthen their relationship and something they will remember as they grow up,” she adds.

If you would like more information, or to volunteer for the Father-Daughter Dance or other events hosted by the Family Life Ministry, please contact Mary Ann Miller at Maryannmiller64@icloud.com. The Family Life Ministry hopes to begin hosting monthly events to bring families together, so please contact Mary Ann if you’re willing to help!

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.