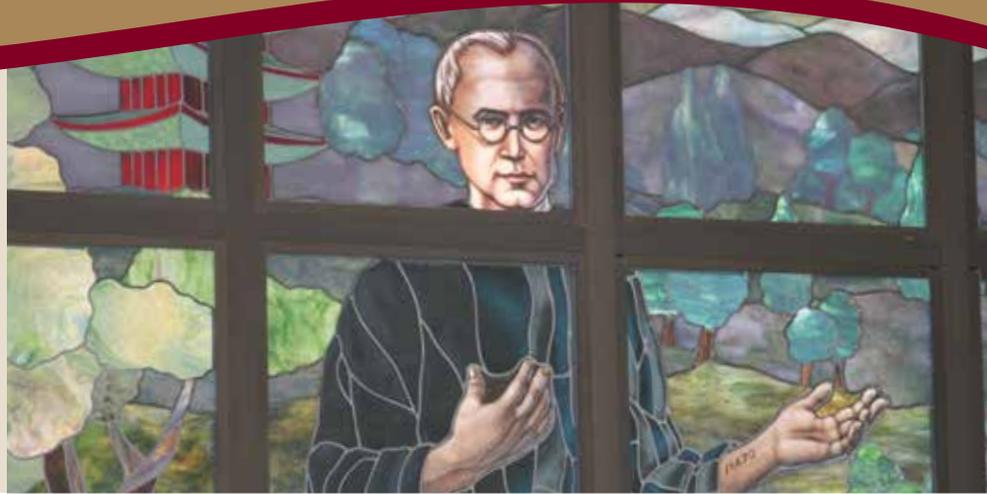


The MODERN SAINT



SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CATHOLIC CHURCH

“EMPOWER YOUTH TO LIVE AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST”

St. Max Junior High Youth Ministry

Robin Burbrink has worked with young people for nearly three decades as a teacher and school athletic director, which is how she knows firsthand that the junior high years are a pivotal time in the faith formation of youth.

“The junior high years are critical,” says Robin, Junior High Youth Ministry Coordinator. “They make their own investment in the faith during these years, and we provide an opportunity for them to grow in their faith in a safe environment while having fun.”

At St. Maximilian Kolbe, the Junior High Youth Ministry brings young people from sixth grade to eighth grade together to learn more about the faith and to put their faith into action in the community.

“We gather in a Catholic environment to learn, grow, serve, and have fun together,” Robin says. “Our objectives are to empower youth to live as disciples of Christ, to draw youth into participating in parish life, and to foster individual personal and spiritual growth.”

Throughout the school year, junior high students have monthly opportunities to connect with their peers. The

ministry meets for its monthly event on every second Saturday from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. The gatherings usually take place in the gym, and include dinner and activities.

Scripture Stars also takes place every month usually on the fourth Sunday evening from 7:15 p.m. until 8:15 p.m. All our youth need to participate is to bring a Bible and a notebook.

“As young people come together in these events more often, they begin to have a whole different sense of what ‘church’ is to them,” Robin says. “They develop a sense of their church community and the importance of gathering with others outside of the friends they’re already comfortable with.”

Some events bring junior high students together simply to help foster their Christian friendships. This summer, Terrific Tuesdays took place every Tuesday evening from the end of May until the end of July from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. The students enjoyed a range of movies and indoor and outdoor games.

Other events are specific opportunities for young

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Junior High Youth Ministry at St. Max – Summer Service Camp

The MODERN SAINT

A Letter From Our Pastor



*Moved by Mercy:
Every Life
Is Sacred, Unique
and Precious*



"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." – Galatians 3:28

"The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God." – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1700

My dear brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

The Catholic Church proclaims that every human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is at the core of all the principles of our Church's social teaching. As we all know, human life – especially human life at its most vulnerable stages – is under direct attack in many ways and in many venues in our society. As Catholics, we believe that every human life is unique and precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution, every plank of every political platform and every stance of every candidate is based upon whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

As we end this extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy next month, the theme offered to us this month by the U.S. Bishops as we commemorate October as Respect Life month is *Moved by Mercy*. This is so very appropriate in our time where human life is threatened by aggressors moved by anger or fear, moved by ignorance or revenge. It is tragically preposterous when human life is threatened by aggressors "in the name of religion," a heart-rending reality not only in our time but throughout history. (Remember the Crusades?)

This is not to say that some current events and issues are not real and that their consequential dynamics, which might even evoke protests, are not justified. With the exception of self-defense – and even then the defense has to be proportionate to the attack – violence, especially unprovoked violence, toward any person

or group of people is wrong. The violence of injustice – which comes in many shapes and sizes and can be physical or mental, blatant or passive – is always wrong. The injustices of racial profiling and racial inequality are detrimental to unity of our beautifully diverse, divinely created human family. It is an injustice when law enforcement officers regardless of their race are ignored or disrespected or, as we have seen in recent weeks, assassinated. It is an injustice when citizens regardless of their race are mistreated or denigrated or even killed. It is an injustice when governments enact laws that prevent people from freely practicing all the tenets of their religion. It is an injustice when people do not have available to them the basic necessities of life, including timely and full healthcare for their families.

This is also not to say that the choices people make are always acceptable – there is right and wrong in our world, there is good and evil, saintliness and sinfulness. But we cannot base our opinions or feelings toward people – individually or collectively – solely on their actions. St. Augustine in *Letter 211* reminds us, "*Cum dilectione hominum et odio vitiorum*," which roughly translates to "with love for mankind and hatred of sins." Modern parlance renders this as the well-known adage, "love the sinner, but hate the sin." And most assuredly, we cannot judge a whole group of people based on the actions of just a few.

Thus, as Catholics we believe *every* human life is sacred, unique and precious... white, black, brown, yellow

continued on page 3

Moved by Mercy continued from page 2

or red... poor or rich, employed or unemployed, free or imprisoned, hungry or fed... oppressed or oppressor, abused or abuser... male or female, heterosexual or homosexual or transgender... single, engaged, divorced, married, or widowed... Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, indigenous, those who profess no religion or atheist... young or old, healthy or sick, born or unborn... *every* human life is sacred, unique and precious.

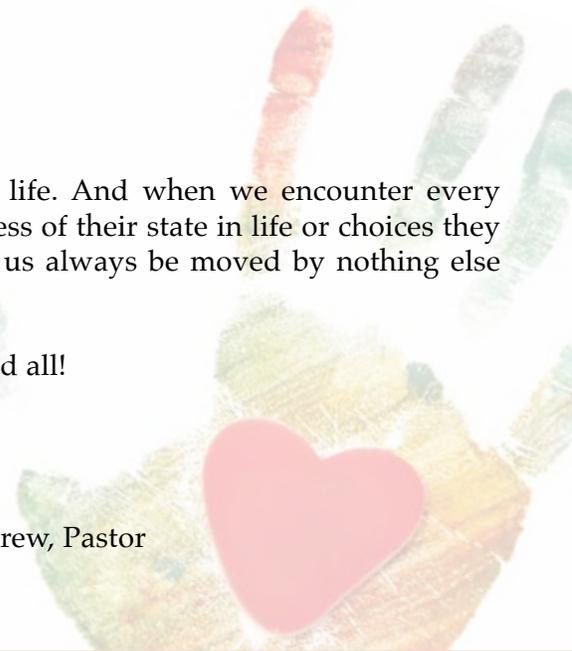
During this Respect Life month, let us pray for the grace and strength needed that each of us always respects the sacredness, uniqueness and preciousness

of every human life. And when we encounter every person – regardless of their state in life or choices they have made – let us always be moved by nothing else but mercy.

God bless one and all!



Fr. Geoffrey D. Drew, Pastor



“EMPOWER YOUTH TO LIVE AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST”

continued from front cover

people to reach out to the community and serve others. The Summer Service Camp with the theme “Everyday Heroes” took place from July 18 to July 22. After attending morning Mass together each day, the students had breakfast and reflected on the various ways we can be “heroes” for others in our daily lives. Then they went out to serve the community.

“We held a car wash to raise money for Haircuts from the Heart,” Robin says. “We also tied fleece blankets for Butler County Children’s Services, created cover sheets for the Cherub Choir, and created the prayer cards for birthday cards sent to all parishioners 80 years old and over.”

This fall, our junior high youth are invited to attend CHOSEN, which is the archdiocesan event for Catholic teens from sixth grade to eighth grade that will take place at Roger Bacon High School on Nov. 5 from 5 p.m. until 9:15 p.m.

“CHOSEN is a high energy youth rally that includes food, music, adoration, a service component, and talks led by nationally known presenters,” Robin says. “The evening also includes a concurrent session just for parents.”

Through the Junior High Youth Ministry, our young people are becoming further rooted in their faith as they create a network of “travel companions” to support each other along their discipleship journeys.

“I want to be there for our junior high students to help them make that decision to be an active part of the Church,” Robin says. “The tools that they receive now will keep them connected to the faith in high school and in their adult lives.”



Junior High Youth Ministry at St. Max – Summer Service Camp



For more information about the Junior High Youth Ministry at St. Max, please reach out to Robin Burbrink at rburbrink@saint-max.org or 513-777-4322, ext. 124.

YEAR OF *Clothe the*



“The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2447). Throughout the Holy Year of Mercy, each month a work of mercy will be highlighted for both reflection and action.

Clothing the naked is a corporal work of mercy. Clothing provides for two basic human needs: protection and dignity, thus everyone needs clothing. It is an act of love to help others with clothing – helping those without clothes to have proper attire, to help a younger child or older person get dressed, to even help with washing or ironing! Biblically, nakedness is seen as a result of original sin and “clothing” as a sign of spiritual salvation. To this day, a “white cloth” is given to the newly baptized in the Rite of Baptism and a “white cloth,” a pall, is placed over the casket of the deceased in the Rite of Christian Funerals.

@ St. Max

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is the largest lay association of charity in the Roman Catholic Church, serving those in need by person-to-person contact. This is accomplished through home visits made by members of the society. The society then contributes as they are able to anyone within the parish boundaries of that particular parish conference. Membership in the conference offers opportunities for spiritual growth, friendship and service.

Vincentians help the truly needy, those who are struggling to pay rent or utilities, or to put food on their table. St. Vincent de Paul contribution envelopes are distributed through the envelope-giving packet sent to St. Max parishioners' homes every other month. Thanks to all for your past and continued generosity!

Of special note, our parish St. Vincent de Paul Society conference offers clothing vouchers to those in need of clothes. Similarly, donations of clothes can be made to St. Vincent de Paul, offering all of us the

opportunity to “clothe the naked.” When did you clean out your closets and bureau drawers last? What about those old pairs of shoes that are still good but the youngest child in the family has outgrown? Don't wait for “spring cleaning” to donate clothes and shoes – the winter months are coming when warm clothes and dry shoes will be needed the most by those in the most need!

The three St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores closest to Liberty Township/West Chester are in Colerain (8269 Colerain Avenue, 45239, 513-741-1641), Evendale (9864 Reading Road, 45241, 513-563-2949), and Mason (1065 Reading Road, 45040, 513-492-7940). Current hours for these stores are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m., and Sunday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. And if you can't make it to a thrift store, a St. Vincent de Paul truck is here on parish grounds every so many months. Be on the lookout in the parish bulletin for the next time one of their trucks will be here!

MERCY

Naked



SACRAMENT OF PENANCE – OCTOBER 2016

Individual Confessions

Thursday mornings after the 8:30 a.m. Mass

Thursday evenings at 6 p.m.

Saturday mornings after the 8:30 a.m. Mass

Saturday afternoons at 3 p.m.

@ Home

- Go through your drawers and closets and find good-condition clothes and shoes to donate to agencies that provide assistance for those in need.
- Simplify your life and wardrobe – give excess away, more than just out-of-date and outgrown clothing.
- Participate in programs that provide towels and linens for hospitals in distressed areas.
- Volunteer to work at a clothing drive or at a shelter where clothing is distributed to those in need.
- Support the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
- Donate time or money to organizations that provide low- or no-cost clothing to the poor.
- Participate with groups who make trips to the city to pass out clothing to the poor.
- Develop the habit when shopping to buy some new clothing to give away.

A SAINT of MERCY – St. Martin of Tours

Martin was born in the early fourth century into the family of a Roman army officer. Against the wishes of his parents, he became a catechumen as a youth and was eventually baptized at the age of 18. As the son of a Roman officer, Martin was required to join a cavalry, but according to legend, he was very conflicted between the kindness of his faith and the slaughter of the battlefield. He was eventually released from military service. Defending the faith in a multi-heretical time and at one point even living the life of a hermit, he eventually became Bishop of Tours (France), where he continued to live a monastic lifestyle. He always advocated mercy for prisoners and his visits were often rejected by authorities, who knew they would be persuaded to release those imprisoned under them. The most remembered legend of Martin's life was when, still as a Roman soldier, he met a scantily clad beggar. Instinctively, Martin tore his own cloak in half and gave it to the beggar for warmth. That very night, Christ appeared to Martin wearing the half of the cloak he had given the beggar. Martin then realized that in the poor beggar, he was meeting and clothing Christ Himself (Matthew 25). Martin died in 397 AD, the first non-martyr to be honored with an annual feast in the Church calendar. His feast day is Nov. 11.

“A Doorway to the Church”

WALT SCHAEFER REFLECTS ON SERVING AS AN USHER

In the words of Pope St. John Paul II, we are called to “Open wide the doors for Christ.” And while all of us can strive to welcome everyone to the Lord’s house, these words hold a special meaning for one ministry in our parish. As the first people to greet Mass-goers at the door with a smiling face and warm welcome, ushers provide our church with an invaluable service.

Parishioner Walt Schaefer has been one of the usher coordinators at St. Max since our parish was founded over 25 years ago. His entirely accidental initiation as an usher began when the parish’s founding pastor noticed his talent for guiding people to the pews.

“When we first went to church, we didn’t go to a church, we held Mass at a school,” Walt says. “Fr. John Porter was the pastor then. My wife, Rose Mary, and I were sitting on the end of the pew and there were two empty seats next to us. I put two fingers up to let [people] know there were two seats there, and after Mass, Fr. Porter came down and said ‘You’re an usher!’ Fr. Porter was that kind of guy – he could tell people’s talents as well as anyone I’ve met.”

The current usher team numbers about 50 parishioners, seven to eight of whom are busy seating and assisting close to 1,500 people at each Mass. Walt and fellow coordinator of ushers Doug Zeik work together to keep the ministry running smoothly.

Many parishioners may not realize just how many services our ushers provide.

“People think you just stand there and don’t do a lot, and it’s not

that at all,” Walt says. “It’s a very important thing. The Usher Ministry is one of trying to keep reverence for the sacraments and the Mass while at the same time making people feel welcome. You have to do it with tact and with understanding. It’s a balance.”

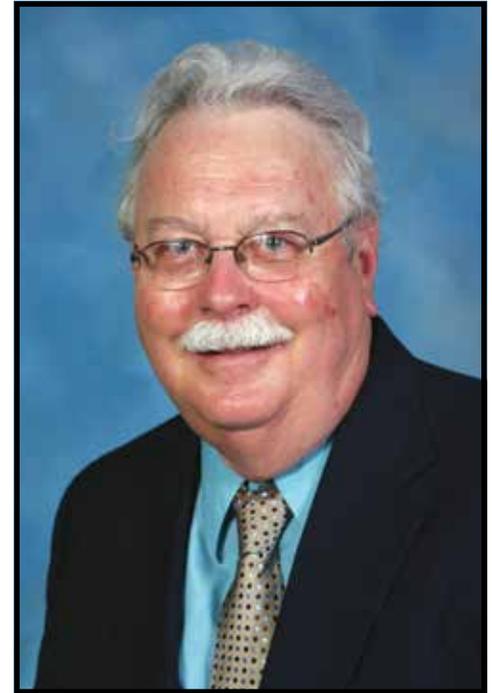
In addition to promoting reverence in the church, ushers serve another essential purpose – helping parishioners in need.

“Most people don’t know that about a third of us are trained in CPR and defibrillator,” Walt says. “An usher is always at the back of the church so that people will know where to go if they need help with anything, whether it is [an emergency situation] or simply asking directions to the restroom.”

And perhaps most importantly of all, ushers are called upon by the Church to “open wide the doors for Christ” by providing a warm welcome to the faithful who gather in the house of the Lord. Walt feels blessed by the relationships he has been able to cultivate with other parishioners as he greets them at Mass each Sunday.

“I think what an usher can do is become a doorway to the church,” he says. “An usher can become someone who – especially to a young child who is being formed in faith – is welcoming, friendly and fun. Right now, there’s a family with two very young children. The one little girl has glasses and curly hair, and every time she comes up to me, she puts her hand out to slap my hand as the family goes up to Communion.

“There’s another little boy that



Walt Schaefer has served St. Max as an usher since our parish was founded over 25 years ago.

at first was really shy and wouldn’t shake my hand,” he continues. “But I kept going over to him and finally he now shakes my hand and giggles. And I look forward to that every Sunday, and it is one of those things that makes you want to get up out of bed that morning. I hope I’m leaving an impression on those people, and that in the future they’ll think about it and realize that our faith is a lifelong friendship that we endeavor to have because that is how Christ wants us to be.”

Are you interested in becoming an usher? New ushers are always welcome, with a particular need at the noon Mass on Sunday. Come up to the head usher at any Mass to express your interest, call Walt Schaefer at 513-779-2708, or email ushers@saint-max.org.



The Wilson family

Alan and Georgette Wilson *Building a Domestic Church*

Finding practical ways in which to live our faith can sometimes be a challenge in today's society. For parents who are trying to create a faith environment in the home, this challenge can result in some soul searching questions: *How is God calling us to live our vocation as parents? In what ways can our family be a domestic church? How can we reveal Christ to our children and give them the tools to go out into the world and be shining examples of God's love?* But from parishioners Alan and Georgette Wilson, we are reminded that being an example to our children on what it means to embrace our Catholic faith is a very good place to start.

Indeed, when Pope St. John Paul II referred to families as the "domestic church," he brought to the forefront the Church's teachings, which recognize the important role parents have in educating children in the Catholic faith.

"We see our home as the domestic church," Georgette says. "We strive to live in the Divine Will and to see Jesus in everyone. We have enthroned our home to the Holy Family. We begin our day with prayer and try to make our whole day a prayer. Then, at the end of the day, we talk about how we were a true follower

of Jesus through our actions and words – we make affirmations because we know we are not perfect, and we forgive one another."

To be sure, it's not always easy, but Alan and Georgette have made faith a priority on how they raise their children, which they lovingly refer to as their *A Team* – Alana, 17; Andrew, 16; Ariana, 14; Adam, 11; Anthony, 9; Amara, 8; Anna, 3; and Angelia, 1; as well as Ashley, Andre and Alexandra, who are already with God. Whether they are meditating on Sacred Scripture, preparing for the Sunday readings, attending daily Mass, praying the Rosary, or spending time in Adoration, the important thing is that they do all these things together – as a family.

In fact, family is so important that they have a very special tradition.

"We have been blessed to be married for 252 months!" Georgette says. "Our marriage covenant is very important to us, so we celebrate monthly. We consider our wedding date to also be the Wilson family birthday, and so we celebrate as a family. Our family is 21 years old."

Faith and family. When you start with these two

continued on back cover

HAVE YOU MOVED, OR DO YOU HAVE A NEW PHONE NUMBER
OR NEW EMAIL ADDRESS?

Please contact the office at 777-4322 ext. 101 or culm@saint-max.org to give us an update!

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Saint Maximilian Kolbe
Catholic Church

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basics, stewardship is the means to put that faith into action. Georgette says that parents can identify special talents their children may have, and when there is eagerness, passion and persistence on the child's part, then parents are in the perfect position to nurture and encourage that these talents be shared. Over the years, everyone in the Wilson family has been part of one ministry or another here at St. Max – lector, acolyte, Eucharistic Ministers, Music Ministry, Hospitality, Sacramental Prep, Faith Formation, Youth Group, Marriage Enrichment, and Pro-Life Projects.

"Parish involvement is important because it gives our family many opportunities to live out our faith," Alan says. "It is a way to grow deeper in faith and gives you the opportunity to meet the people God wants to place in your life. We have been abundantly blessed with our friendship not only with Jesus, but also with the many families here at St. Max."

For more Catholic news and current events check out the websites of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at www.USCCB.org and of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati at www.catholiccincinnati.org.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sat. Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sun.:** 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. | **Mon. - Sat.:** 8:30 a.m.
Sacrament of Penance: Saturdays after the 8:30 a.m. Mass & 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.,
Thursdays after the 8:30 a.m. Mass & 6:00 - 6:45 p.m.