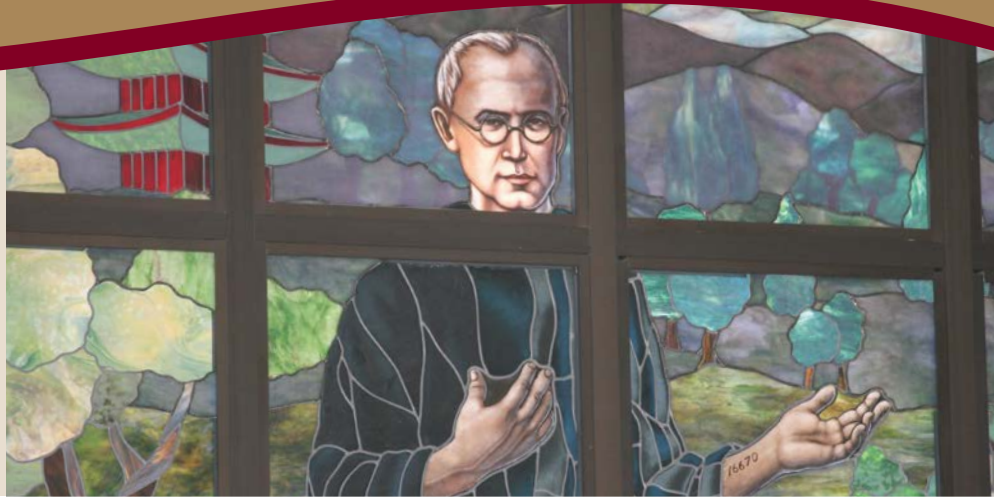


The MODERN SAINT



SAINT MAXIMILIAN KOLBE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Being Christ to Others During a Difficult Time *New Bereavement Ministry Assists with Funerals*

One of the most wonderful things about our parish is that St. Maximilian Kolbe is not just a place where we gather on Sundays for worship, but it is also a strong community bound by our faith and love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. One of the richest expressions of this love is to show kindness and compassion to one another during some of life's most difficult moments. This is the focus of our Bereavement Ministry here at St. Max.

St. Max offers three ministries that fall under the umbrella of the Bereavement Ministry – funeral planning and assistance, funeral luncheons, and continuing support for those who have suffered a loss. The funeral luncheon team has long been established in our parish, and our aftercare support for the grieving has been Companions on the Journey, a nonprofit organization now serving the extended community.

Linda Sullivan and Jim Trousdel have joined Holly Moran, Pastoral Associate of Outreach, to become the core team helping with funeral arrangements at St. Max.

"As we continue to empower our lay leadership to share their gifts and ministerial skills to ultimately become one body in Christ, we are thankful for Linda and Jim," Holly says. "Linda and Jim have been serving in our funeral ministry since Carol Heuser, our previous parish bereavement minister, retired. There was a need for additional help in this ministry, and I'm thankful that they heard the calling of the Holy Spirit."



*The St. Max Bereavement Team –
(from left) Jim Trousdel, Holly Moran, and Linda Sullivan*

Indeed, Linda describes her desire to begin serving in bereavement ministries as a call from the Holy Spirit. Having lost her first child 36 hours after he was born, Linda spent many years studying death and dying in a search to make sense of her own loss, eventually becoming a certified grief specialist. In 2004, she began serving with the St. Max bereavement aftercare ministry Companions on the Journey. This year, Linda once again answered the call when she saw Holly's need for assistance with funeral planning.

As funeral planners, Holly and Linda minister to families immediately following the death of a loved one by assisting them with the planning of visitations, funeral Masses and burials.

"I think it is so important to provide them with compassion and understanding and hopefully a whole lot

continued on back cover

The MODERN SAINT

A Letter From Our Pastor

Our *Fr. John E. Porter* Family Life Complex *Twenty-Five Years of Faith, Fellowship, Food, and Fun!*

My dear brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Having celebrated our 25th anniversary as a community of faith in 2014, it logically follows that in the next few years, we will be having more 25th anniversary celebrations commemorating the expansion and growth of our parish. This month is one such, dare I say, major anniversary! Following the founding of our parish on July 6, 1989, we celebrated our first Sunday Mass as a parish family at Freedom Elementary School on Beckett Ridge Boulevard on Sept. 10, 1989, and every Sunday afterward for three years as plans were being made to build our parish facility. Those plans became a reality when on Sunday, Nov. 22, 1992 – 25 years ago this month – the parish center was dedicated and the first Mass was celebrated by then-Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk. Of special note, upon his retirement in 2003, the center was most appropriately named the Fr. John E. Porter Family Life Complex, in honor of our founding pastor.

The center became the center of parish life – Sunday Mass, team practices, large-group activities and parish meals in the gym (how many remember the “chair ministry”?), classrooms and office space for our religious education program, a kitchen, youth room, nursery, sacristy and an office (both of which are now storage rooms). Even to this day – our Fr. John E. Porter Family Life Complex, named “complex” rather than “center” because the new church building became the center of parish life in 2001 – provides the venue for many of our

parish ministries, activities and organizations! Of special note, in just the last few years, a wonderful art display (with accompanying brochures to describe each painting which represents one century) entitled “Celebrating 2,000 Years of Christianity” grace the hallways of the complex, and a unique portrait of St. Maximilian Kolbe made of 64,000 mosaic pixels of 92 colors by late parishioner Evelyn Skotnicki is displayed to the left of the doors leading into the gym. A new gym floor and the execution of polished, colored concrete replacing the original carpeting also now adorn the complex. And even though Sunday Mass is now celebrated in church, we use the gym for Mass on Christmas Eve and Easter Sunday to accommodate the huge crowds. As one founding parishioner told me, she and her family (which now includes grandchildren!) purposely go to the gym for Mass on these days since it fondly and deeply reminds her and her children of “Mass in the gym” every Sunday when she was raising her family. And now, whether it is the Lenten fish fry, funeral luncheons, chili cook-offs, Fat Tuesday or Holy Thursday dinners, or whether it is athletic practices and games or a venue for us to seat a larger number of people for various parish activities, the Fr. John E. Porter Family Life Complex remains a vital venue for parish life here at St. Max.

And don’t forget, Phase II of our capital campaign Together We Grow envisions the expansion of the complex with the kitchen being enlarged, a lobby for the

continued on page 3

PRAYER for PARISH RENEWAL

*O God, you filled your priest and martyr, St. Maximilian Kolbe,
with resilient zeal for the faith and profound love of neighbor.
Grant that we who claim him as patron may be renewed by his witness
in our love for the Eucharist, in our desire to strengthen our faith,
in our love for each other and our service to all.
We make our prayer to You, Father,
through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, in the Holy Spirit,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

For more parish news and current events visit our website at **www.saint-max.org** or follow us on Facebook (St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic Church) and on Twitter **@saintmaxcinci!**

gym, and the addition of three rooms, which can be used individually or in conjunction to seat up to 150 people.

So how are we going to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the dedication of our Fr. John E. Porter Family Life Complex?

First, instead of our annual chili cook-off, we will be having a steak fry on Saturday, Nov. 11. Please be on the lookout for more details concerning this evening of food, fellowship and fun.

Secondly, we will have our Thanksgiving Day Mass at 9 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 23, in the gym, just one day after the actual silver anniversary date of the dedication of the complex. The annual post-Thanksgiving Day Mass fellowship hosted by the Knights of Columbus will also be in the gym that morning. (The suggestion had been made to have all obligation Masses in the gym one weekend in November to commemorate this anniversary, but with the

size of the parish and number of people at weekend Masses, this idea, interesting as it was, did not seem practical.)

Anniversaries are wonderful times to remember the past, acknowledge the present and plan for the future! As we celebrate this anniversary in our parish, join me in continuing to pray in thanksgiving for what has been, what is and what is yet to come. The parish renewal prayer that was distributed for our Silver Jubilee in 2014 is printed here for you to add to your daily prayers – pray it well and pray it often!

God bless one and all!



Fr. Geoffrey D. Drew, Pastor



God's Word: Ever Ancient, Ever New

“The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God’s word and Christ’s body.”

Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), 18 November 1965, #21

PREPARING to HEAR the GOSPELS

Wednesday, Nov. 1, 2017 – All Saints (Holy Day of Obligation) – Matthew 5:1-12a

It is fitting that the gospel for the Solemnity of All Saints is taken from the beginning of Matthew’s famous Sermon on the Mount and as the beatitudes are the handbook for living in the kingdom of heaven and to attain sanctity.

Nov. 5, 2017 – Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 23:1-12

This passage contains harsh criticisms for the Jewish leaders of Jesus’ time. Yet, the true message of the gospel, appropriate for us and all generations, is Jesus’ observation, “For they preach but they do not practice.”

Nov. 12, 2017 – Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 25:1-13

The parable of the ten virgins – five wise and five foolish – encourages vigilance at the “delay” of the second coming of Christ. The last line of the parable serves as a perpetual warning – everyone must “stay awake,” for no one knows the day or the hour of the final judgement.

Nov. 19, 2017 – Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time – Matthew 25:14-30

Open to many interpretations, the parable of the talents encourages everyone to use their God-given talents and gifts resourcefully – both personally and for the building of God’s kingdom. Jesus reminds us that unlimited material wealth is not a sign of success in the kingdom of God. The authentic disciple is also the courageous one willing to expose injustices.

Sunday, Nov. 26, 2017 – Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe – Matthew 25:31-46

This gospel portrays the glorious Son of Man making preparation for the final judgment of “all the nations” where we will either inherit the kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the world, or be cast into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Parish ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR July 2016-June 2017

Outreach

An Opportunity for Everyone to Serve

Once again, Outreach Commission ministries experienced a wonderful year of growth in giving and serving through connecting and reaching out to both parishioners and those in need in our local and world communities. Indeed, outreach was bolstered by increased parishioner involvement and transition of ministry leaders and structures. A primary goal this past year was to further expose and engage parishioners to the 21 outreach ministries St. Max has to offer. Within these ministries are opportunities for every parishioner, regardless of age or ability, to volunteer and help make an impact in our community.

Our third annual *Just Try It* event, held in March, reached new success with each ministry and its leaders/members committing their time to staffing and engaging parishioners throughout the two-day initiative. Each ministry was tasked with providing information and activities designed to introduce their individual missions to new, potential members and encourage sign-ups. Families were encouraged to attend to learn about the outreach ministries at St. Max and to better understand how to volunteer at any level of commitment and talent. In addition, Outreach Commission collected over 4,500 toiletry items from parishioners – enough to fill 435 personal care bags to be handed out at local shelters and food pantries, including Dove House, St. Raphael's, CHOSEN/Serve City, Talbert House, and Haven House. This was a substantial increase over the 340 bags that were collected at last year's event. Parishioners even included personal notes of encouragement to be added to the bags. Thank you to our generous church families, who brought in items, participated in ministry activities or simply stopped by to check it out. Our next *Just Try It* event is scheduled for

spring 2018. Outreach Commission hopes to continue the growth of this signature event to provide better parishioner access to all ministries in one place in a fun, dynamic setting.

The funds generously given by parishioners to the Catholic Ministry Appeal this year once again exceeded the financial goal set by the archdiocese and blessed us with additional monies for outreach distribution. In addition to a one-time estate donation, just over \$52,000 was distributed through our ministries throughout our local, regional and world communities. Notably, \$10,000 was given to Fr. Edward to fund a new school building in Uganda. Additionally, St. Max continues to tithe three percent of our weekly Sunday collections to aid urgent and ongoing needs in our community and beyond.

Each ministry worked diligently in the 2016-2017 season to connect with each other and share best practices. Many of our ministries experienced transition with leadership and status, most notably **Companions on a Journey**. COJ has grown exponentially over the past years and, due to its amazing scope and need, became its own 501(c)3 non-profit organization. COJ will still have a vibrant and much needed presence at St. Max in helping grieving families navigate loss.

Ongoing emotional and grief support is always available through **Stephen Ministry**, **Bereavement Ministry** and **Surviving Divorce**.

Specifically, **Stephen Ministry** continues to provide one-to-one Christian care to individuals in our parish and community who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. **Bereavement Ministry** provides funeral planning and luncheons following the death of a loved one. **Surviving Divorce Ministry** is a 12-week

Outreach

An Opportunity for Everyone to Serve *continued from page 4*

program created to provide hope and healing to those who have experienced the pain and loneliness of a broken marriage.

Outreach ministries continue to foster inclusion, fellowship and education with programs such as **Financial Peace University**, **Include Me!**, **Nursing Home Bingo**, and **Respect Life**.

Financial Peace University is on track to resume its series this fall. **Include Me!** continues to provide catechesis and faith formation for students with special needs. **Nursing Home Bingo** is a family friendly activity that provides fun and entertainment to the residents of Doverwood, a local nursing home. Perhaps the most visual impact of **Respect Life's** ministry is its annual placement of crosses on the front lawn of St. Max representing the 3,300 lives lost to abortion every day.

Other vital ministries that directly aid those among us with basic economic needs such as food, clothing and shelter include **Family Promise**, **IMPACT (Individuals Making Proactive Charity Together)**, **Transitional Living**, **CHOSEN**, **Susan's Garden**, **Tender Mercies**, and **Christmas Food Baskets**.

Specifically, **Family Promise** continues to provide lodging, meals and activities for three to five families for one week each quarter. These events require enormous collaboration and planning and are always in need of volunteers from our church family. Charitable **IMPACT** organizes special collections of goods and coordinates volunteers to aid economic needs and inspire spiritual growth. Likewise, **Transitional Living** assists adults with mental disabilities to live independently by collecting items needed for furnishing their new apartments. Parishioners can choose tags with needed items listed from a wreath located in the gathering space at various times throughout the year. **CHOSEN** volunteers from St. Max provided and served 12 hot meals this past year. Additionally, monetary donations for much needed repairs were given through CMA funding. **Susan's Garden** is completing its first growing season with vigor, inviting parishioners to donate their extra garden grown fruits and vegetables in addition to its own bounty being donated to local food pantries. **Tender Mercies** helps adults with histories of mental illness by providing resources and residency. **Christmas Food Baskets** directly engage

the St. Max community by connecting families in need with parishioner families in providing non-perishable foods and other basic necessities.

Providing care and comfort through personal visits and interactions with the sick and homebound is an integral part of outreach and is most personified through the **Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry**, **Nursing Home Rosary**, **Pastoral Care of the Sick** and the **Society of St. Vincent de Paul**.

Living Waters Prayer Shawl Ministry hand knits or crotches shawls while praying for those in need. **Nursing Home Rosary** prays the Rosary with those in local nursing homes. **Pastoral Care of the Sick** provides Communion to hospitalized and homebound patients. The **Society of St. Vincent de Paul** continues to serve those in need through person-to-person contact.

Serving those above and beyond everyday needs is what **RASKALS (Random Acts of Simple Kindness Affecting Local Seniors)** and **West Liberty Outreach** do best! Twice a year, **RASKALS** volunteer to help elderly adults with outdoor chores around their homes. **WLO** collaborates with the Glenmary Sisters to complete specific home improvement projects in rural Eastern Kentucky over weekend mission trips.

Outreach Commission is blessed to lead and work with ministries that offer opportunities for each and every member of the St. Max community, regardless of age or ability to volunteer and serve our local and world communities. As always, please continue to visit the St. Max website and outreach ministry tab for service opportunities listed under each ministry. There is a spot for you!

Outreach Commission thanks our generous church community, including parishioners, volunteers, ministry leaders and members, for their outpouring of time, talent, and treasure. You truly change people's lives everyday through your witness of faith and kindness. A very special thank you to the Pastoral Council, all other councils and commissions, parish staff and Fr. Geoff for their leadership and guidance. We look forward to the continued engagement with all members of our community and beyond.

"Thank You" From The Finance Council

The Finance Council extends a heartfelt thank you to our generous St. Max parishioners. Accountable stewardship implies that the use of the fiscal resources received from you will be thoughtfully allocated for the spiritual and temporal needs of our parish.

For the fiscal year that ended on June 30, 2017, we are pleased to report that total Sunday offerings were \$1,971,171 resulting in average weekly Sunday offerings of \$37,907 which were 2.8 percent higher than last year. Total revenue was \$2,818,663 and includes debt reduction contributions, fundraisers, festival proceeds, interest income, RFY fees, Together We Grow Campaign contributions, and other revenue as well as Sunday offerings.

Total expenses including salaries, fringe benefits, general and administrative expenses, interest on our debt, maintenance and repairs, utilities, and capital expenditures were \$2,424,358 for the Fiscal Year. This resulted in a gross surplus of \$394,305 – all of which was used for principal payments on our debt.

Some of the major expenses, other than general

and administrative expenses, included heating and air-conditioning service contracts and repairs (\$46,894), roof replacement and repairs (\$57,638), software licenses, service contracts, and computer equipment (\$39,091), utilities (\$86,889), and parking lot repairs and replacement (\$122,752).

As a parish committed to being good stewards, it is important to share our fiscal blessings with others. Accordingly, we continue to tithe and expand our local and international outreach programs. In fiscal year 2016/2017 we donated \$104,087 to various programs.

The Finance Council would also like to thank the 593 parishioners/families who pledged to the Together We Grow Campaign and parishioners using the Drive Down The Debt envelopes who gave \$290,641 and \$101,584 respectively during the fiscal year, contributing to a reduction of our debt to a balance of \$240,518 as of June 30, 2017.

Thank you again to all parishioners who generously provide financial support for our parish.

Worship and Sacraments

At the core of our parish's mission is the celebration of the sacraments. In the Second Vatican Council, the Church affirmed the constant teaching that "the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all the Church's power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's Supper" (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, # 10).

Each and every Sunday, nearly 3,000 people come to this place to celebrate the Eucharist. They come to experience Christ's presence in the Word proclaimed and in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Jesus is also present in the ministry of our priests, deacons, and 700-plus lay liturgical ministers, and truly and really present in the community of believers who gather here.

During the past year, we at St. Max have worked hard to continue growth in faith through liturgical catechesis – understanding more clearly WHY we do WHAT

we do. Our website and each Sunday's bulletin have featured insights into our liturgical celebration, and our Sunday homilies have occasionally been opportunities to reflect upon the liturgy, as well. We continue to offer several opportunities here at church for you to unpack why we do what we do at Mass, including digital, Web-based liturgical catechesis options, as well.

We've launched a trial reconfiguration of our Blessed Sacrament chapel, aiming to create a more beautiful space in which to pray, where the tabernacle is the focal point of the chapel.

Our sacramental preparation ministries continue to be robust, as well, preparing several hundred young people for First Penance, First Communion, and Confirmation each year. We've begun a new sacramental preparation orientation process for parents of children seeking these sacraments. Like we've already done for Confirmation, we're now preparing children to celebrate First Communion in the fall, as well as the spring, offering busy young families flexibility.

We prepare engaged couples for marriage and

continued on page 7

Worship and Sacraments *continued from page 6*

new parents for baptism. Our RCIA team is ready to work with adults and older children who want to be baptized, to become Catholic, or become more faithful disciples. In all of our sacramental preparation ministries, we continue to journey with people who are seeking to know and love Jesus and to encounter Him in the sacraments of the Church.

We've continued to expand our Music Ministry program, involving over 150 adults, teens, and children ages kindergarten and up! Our adult/

teen, children's, cherub, and handbell choirs, along with our teen ensemble, adult ensemble, orchestral instrumentalists, and psalmists lead our parish in singing God's praises, giving countless hours of time in rehearsal and liturgy.

All are welcome in this place each Sunday as we celebrate the Eucharist. Let's all be welcoming to one another. Let's reach out to those we don't know and get to know them better. Let's each be the face of Christ to all who come to this house of grace.

Parish Life and Stewardship

"As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." ~1 Peter 4:10

Our sincerest thanks to all ministry leaders and participants who have answered their call to be active in the Parish Life and Stewardship Commission ministries. Your wonderful contributions truly are gifts of your talents, and they help to bring God's grace to parishioners and community members.

Parish Life and Stewardship is thrilled to see the utilization and growth of the nursery at St. Max! The nursery staff does such a wonderful job with the St. Max children, receiving much acclaim from parents and children. This year, the Nursery Ministry is able to offer their services not only during 8:00 and 10:00 Masses, but also as requested for parish meetings and events so that parents may attend without the worry of searching for childcare. This has been a truly amazing service to encourage parishioner participation. Don't forget to make sure that your Kroger Community Rewards are earmarked to benefit St. Max, as this money supports the cost of childcare providers for the nursery ministry.

Parish Life and Stewardship is fortunate that commission members have the opportunity to attend the Msgr. McGread Stewardship Conference. Those who have attended find it an enriching opportunity to feed their understanding of stewardship in the Catholic Church. Commission members who have participated share their knowledge and experience with the commission upon

their return so the whole commission can benefit from their rekindled zeal for stewardship to pour fourth into the greater parish and community.

A Rosary Walk was installed as an Eagle Scout project by one of our St. Max scouts this year for prayerful enjoyment around Susan's Garden. Our newly formed Wellness Ministry has already started providing health screenings, flu vaccines and presentations to provide for our parishioners' well-being of body and spirit.

St. Max is blessed to have amazing volunteer and community participation in our three major parish socials – the Lenten fish fry, parish festival, and parish picnic. These three events have countless dedicated volunteers that work tirelessly to present opportunities for parish and community fellowship. These events bring parishioners together to develop a stronger parish community and, at the same time, encourage awareness among our non-parish members through our welcoming hospitality.

We are so grateful for the many treasures we receive at St. Max of parishioners' time and talents – there are so many opportunities for these gifts in all of their beautiful forms. If you are feeling called to participate in a Parish Life and Stewardship ministry, please call the parish office or visit our website, www.saint-max.org, for more information.

Evangelization and Catechesis

“**E**vangeliizing is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize...” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, #14). With these strong and inspiring words, Pope Paul VI reminded the Church of our purpose in mission. His words echo those of Christ at the Great Commission as he tells us to “Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). The Evangelization and Catechesis quadrant within our parish tries to take these words to heart and help integrate them into the entire life of our parish. Through offering opportunities for faith formation, learning and spiritual growth, we walk with individuals on their journey of faith, while equipping them to be the Body of Christ in the world.

During the 2016-17 fiscal year, the many ministries within our quadrant continued their important work to build up and strengthen the Body of Christ. These ministries are targeted at a vast array of ages, situations in life, and stages along our spiritual journeys.

The Religious Education for Children (RFY) program continues to form children within our parish through both classroom and summer home study programs. These programs are constantly adapting and improving as we try to form the children of the parish into authentic Catholic disciples. In particular, this past year we highlighted the Catholic social teaching principle, “Call to Family, Community, and Participation” and continued with adoration experiences. The “Faith Gallery” was also introduced into the Early Childhood program. This is an environment where children engage in scripture re-telling using a variety of manipulatives. Other opportunities are also provided for youth formation including Vacation Bible School and Mighty Max. These ministries to children are supported by a large number of dedicated volunteers, catechists, and parents.

Our Youth Ministry programs reach out to the junior high and high school teens within our parish and provide many opportunities for these teens to grow in faith. Retreats, bible studies, large-group gatherings, service events, and small-group communities are just a handful of the ways these ministries attempted to reach teens where they are at and walk with them as they become true disciples.

Our Adult Faith and Family Life Ministry and events are continuing to evolve and grow as we recognize the essential role of the family in forming faith. As this ministry has continued to grow, two new events were put on for families this year. The first of these two events was Marching with the Saints, which provided an opportunity for families to journey throughout the church and learn about different saints while dressed up themselves, culminating with a chance to

trunk or treat or pass out candy. An Evening with Our Queen was the second event which focused on learning about Mary, praying the Rosary, and a May crowning.

Our ministries focused on adult formation and spiritual growth continued to offer many opportunities for our parishioners to be strengthened as disciples so that they can be Christ in the world. These ministries are targeted at all demographics including young adults, men, women, spouses, mothers, fathers, and the list goes on. Our wide array of ministries includes opportunities for faith sharing, faith formation, and equipping to share the faith. We have also continued to provide free access to hundreds of hours of inspiring content through our parish subscription to FORMED, an online platform filled with great Catholic media for all ages.

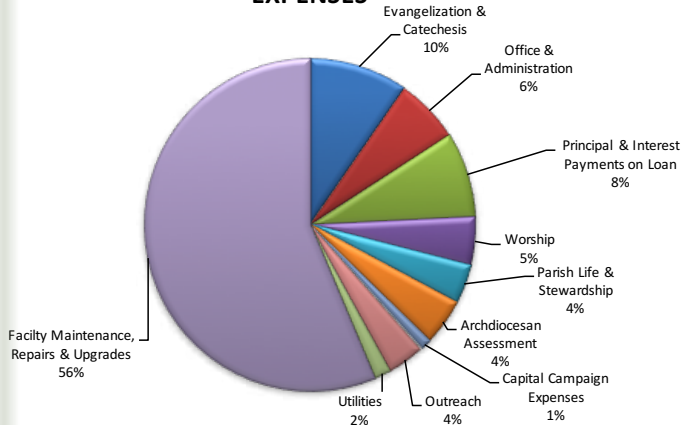
The parish mission in the spring of 2017 also drew hundreds of parishioners to hear about God’s love and invitation to us for a life filled with His Spirit and joy. The mission consisted of three evenings with three different speakers and wonderful, varied experiences of music, prayer, and the sacraments. A new addition with this mission included morning sessions which filled the conference room. The mission culminated with the launch and invitation to parishioners of an exciting new effort for small groups within our parish. These small groups focus on building community and helping members grow in faith through authentic Christian friendships. These groups, which meet in homes, have constantly grown and flourished with over 100 adult parishioners already a part of the groups and many being trained to help in this effort.

This year, our Evangelization and Catechesis Commission also formed some new committees in an effort to help strengthen our culture of faith and continue the great work set in motion the past few years. The first of these is the 1% Challenge committee to help continue the culture of praying with scripture in our parish. The parish mission committee also was formed with the intent to continue the future efforts for parish missions. Finally, the Parish Gift committee was formed to coordinate the gifts given out to all in attendance at Christmas and Easter as a means of evangelization and to continually improve this effort.

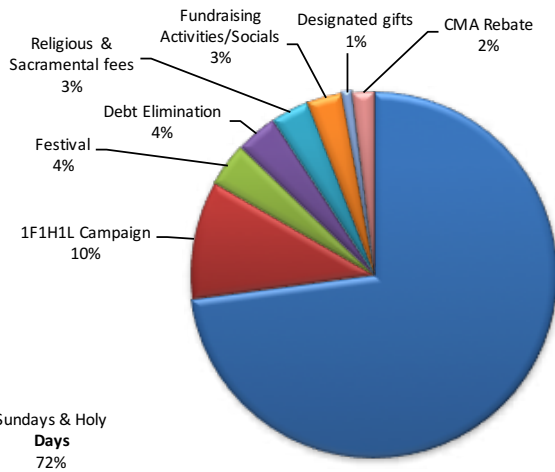
Through all the great work and dedication within the Evangelization and Catechesis quadrant, we are continuing to make St. Maximilian Kolbe a culture of authentic Catholic disciples, driven by faith filled friendships. All our efforts in living out this shared mission as Church could not happen without the support of amazing parishioners and staff who truly are Christ to one another.

Expenses and Income

EXPENSES



Facility Maintenance Repairs & Upgrades	633,736
Evangelization & Catechesis	482,826
Office & Administration	316,358
Principal & Interest Payments on Loan	415,479
Worship	236,333
Parish Life & Stewardship	191,908
Archdiocesan Assessment	226,342
Capital Campaign Expenses	53,542
Outreach	182,915
Utilities	83,541
Total	2,822,980



INCOME

Sundays & Holy Days	2,041,001
1F1H1L Campaign	290,641
Festival	107,000
Debt Elimination	101,584
Religious & Sacramental fees	96,346
Fundraising Activities/Socials	86,427
Designated gifts	25,243
CMA Rebate	52,002
Bequests	15,850
Other income	2,569
Total	2,818,663



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 cgroh@saint-max.org to give us an update!

From The Catholic Telegraph

A Question of Faith: Burial or Cremation?

BY FR. DAVID ENDRES

Q: *I am making my final arrangements and have been trying to decide between traditional burial and cremation. I have some concerns about cremation from a religious point of view, although it is the best financial option. Does the Church have a preference between burial and cremation?*

A: The Church historically forbade cremation out of respect for the bodies of the deceased and to acknowledge the hope of resurrection. However, since 1963, the Church, responding to present-day circumstances, has permitted cremation while still preferring traditional burial of the deceased.

While today one may not think of the choice for cremation as offering a theological statement, in ancient times cremation was associated with a lack of belief in the resurrection. In the first days of the Church, we see that Christians buried their deceased while the pagans burned the bodies before burial. The choice of how to treat the bodies of the deceased was seen as testimony to belief or unbelief in the afterlife. Canon law had forbidden cremation and did not allow Christian burial for someone who had been cremated.

Today the choice for cremation is not often made to deny the resurrection, but is often chosen for practical reasons including financial necessity. These present-day circumstances are the reason for the relaxation of canon law regarding cremation.

Despite this relaxation, the Church's preference for the burial of the body remains. The presence of the body at the time of funeral and burial witnesses to its dignity. The Church recognizes that God is the creator of body and soul. As the catechism relates, "The human body shares in the dignity of 'the image of God': it is a human body precisely because it is animated by a spiritual soul" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 364). Since we are more than spirits, our bodies are integral to us. It is our bodies, not just our souls, which received baptism, were anointed at confirmation, and were fed with the Eucharist.

Initially after the change of church law, cremation was permitted, but the remains could not be present at the funeral Mass. Since 1997 the Church has provided the possibility for cremated remains to be present at a funeral Mass (if the local bishop permits this as in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati). However, even if a Mass with the presence of the cremated body is allowed, the presence of the body with cremation occurring later is still preferred.

In recent years it has become popular to scatter the ashes of the deceased or to retain them in an urn at home. There is concern that such practices do not respect the integrity of the individual who is more than "spirit" and ought to be returned to the earth or interred in some permanent space such as a mausoleum or columbarium. In October 2016 the Church issued instructions on care for cremated remains, reminding the faithful of the importance of not scattering or storing remains. Proper burial of cremated remains, according to the teaching, "prevents the faithful departed from being forgotten, or their remains from being shown a lack of respect, which eventually is possible, most especially once the immediately subsequent generation has too passed away." Only burial or entombment can assure lasting respect for mortal remains.

The Church's concern for the body after death is connected to its theology of the resurrection. If as the scripture says, "The Spirit ... who raised Christ from the dead will give life to [our] mortal bodies" (Romans 8:11), consequently, the treatment of bodies after death is spiritually significant.

[Thanks to the archdiocese's Office of Divine Worship and Sacraments for assistance with this response. The office has compiled a short and helpful booklet titled "The Church and Cremation."]

We at St. Max would like to thank The Catholic Telegraph for their generosity in permitting us to share this article in our parish newsletter.

A Quiet Evening of Refreshment for Women

"Its purpose is to help women get started for Advent, giving them some ideas and helping them have a more prayerful entrance into the season. This is such a busy time – certainly a time of the year when we women never take time for ourselves. So, this helps us refocus on what the season is really all about." – Marlene Doughman, Coordinator of Adult Faith and Family Life Ministries

For many of us, the Advent season remains the busiest time of the year. Amidst the cooking and baking, Christmas shopping and seasonal events, it's far too easy to get lost in the general hustle and bustle around us. This can be especially true for women, who are often tasked with the bulk of holiday preparations. That's why St. Maximilian Kolbe's Advent by Candlelight Women's Retreat remains such a beloved event, refreshing and preparing women's hearts for the Christmas season.

"Its purpose is to help women get started for Advent, giving them some ideas and helping them have a more prayerful entrance into the season," says Marlene Doughman, Coordinator of Adult Faith and Family Life Ministries. "This is such a busy time – certainly a time of the year when we women never take time for ourselves. So, this helps us refocus on what the season is really all about."

This year's retreat will take place on Sunday, Nov. 26, from 5-8 p.m. The evening begins with a complimentary meal providing women with opportunities for fellowship. Each table is sponsored by a particular woman of the parish who serves as its hostess. She is responsible for decorating the table, bringing light appetizers, and wine if desired. Oftentimes, whole prayer groups or ministries come together, says Marlene, giving this big event a "smaller, more intimate feel."

"We hope it's just a quiet evening where women can get together," Marlene says. "Dinner is provided and all you have to do is bring an advent wreath for your table. We even have candles if you forget them. We begin a little early before Advent starts. So many of us haven't even started thinking about what Advent is going to look like."

Following the dinner, the evening transitions to a presentation on a particular theme pertaining to

Advent. This year's presenters will be some of the local consecrated women of Regnum Christi. The talk covers four different aspects, representing the four candles on the Advent wreath. There are also intermittent Advent songs and opportunities for prayer throughout the evening.

Open to all women, parishioners and non-parishioners alike, the Advent by Candlelight Women's Retreat is a great opportunity to evangelize to others. It can be a gentle way to bring women back to Church or to share aspects of the Catholic faith with nonbelievers.

"I have some friends who come that aren't Catholic and really look forward to it," Marlene says. "They never really celebrated Advent before, but now they do thanks to this program. I also heard from one of my facilitators that she invited her neighbor who was a fallen-away Catholic, and that now she's coming back to Mass."

The family life team, who manages everything – from the cooking and setup, to the decorating and cleanup – hosts the event each year. More volunteers are always needed to help share the load!

Sign-ups for the Advent by Candlelight Women's Retreat will be posted in the parish bulletin and will also be available in the parish office. The event tends to fill up fast, so we invite parishioners to sign up as soon as possible. For more information, contact Marlene Doughman at either 513-777-4322, ext. 118 or mdoughman@saint-max.org.

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Saint Maximilian Kolbe
Catholic Church

New Bereavement Ministry Assists with Funerals

continued from front cover

of love, so that they can just feel Christ's presence through us," Linda says about her role in funeral planning.

Along with Linda, Jim Trousdell serves the funeral ministry by providing assistance to the grieving families and the clergy during visitations, funerals and burials. Jim and Linda prepare the sanctuary for funerals by putting out programs, placing tissues and reserved signs in the pews for the family, and – if there is not a sacristan available – preparing everything for the Liturgy.

Most of all, they provide the family with support and compassion during a difficult time.

"My desire to help those suffering a loss started with my own mother's death," Jim recalls. "I took it very hard, so I went to a support group and just got started from there. I do it because I like giving back – it's not about me, it's about them. You see the look on their faces when they see you

show up for the visitation and stand there for three hours, and they are just really happy that someone took the time to represent the church."

Holly Moran, Linda Sullivan and Jim Trousdell are still in need of additional volunteers to help with setting up visitations and funeral Masses. Parishioners interested in serving with this ministry should call Holly Moran at 513-777-4322, ext. 116 or email Bereavement@saint-max.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.