

Ministry Booklet

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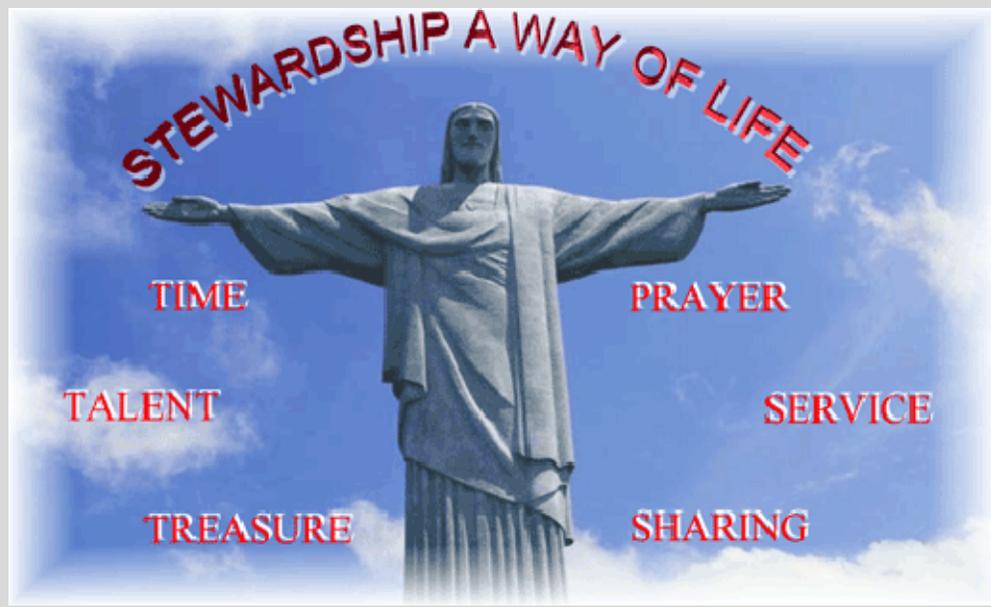
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LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

1. Eucharistic Minister (Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion)

The ordinary minister of Holy Communion is the clergy. The lay ministers are “extraordinary” and they have the great privilege of assisting the priest in the distribution of the Body and Blood of Christ. Training is provided and ministers are usually scheduled every 3 to 4 weeks.

Testimony from Jo-Ann Jenereaux:

“What a unique and special responsibility it has been and continues to be today to answer the call of Jesus to “feed my sheep” (people). Being a Eucharistic Minister requires your commitment, reverence and a special dedication to the responsibilities this ministry brings”

2. Lectors

A lector proclaims the Word of God during the liturgy and should be able to do so clearly and with reverence and conviction. Lectors are required to prepare carefully beforehand so that the Word of God is proclaimed in a fitting manner. Training is provided and lectors are scheduled every 3 to 4 weeks.

If you desire to grow in your understanding of scripture and want to enable others to do the same, please consider offering your service as a lector.

3. Commentators

Commentators provide the first welcome to the Mass, offer the prayers of the faithful, announce hymns and communicate important parish messages to the congregation. Training is provided and commentators are scheduled every 3 to 4 weeks.

4. Altar Servers

The Altar Servers are very important in the liturgy. During Mass they assist the celebrant and

help prepare the altar as well as add to the solemnity of the liturgy. This is a great way to become involved and learn about the Eucharist. Boys and girls who have made their first communion and are in Grade 5 or above are invited to join the team. Training is provided.

5. Ushers

Ushers should warmly greet all who come to our Church so that every visitor and regular or occasional attendee is made to feel welcome. In a quiet and efficient manner, they take up collection and ensure that the offerings are ready to be taken to the front by a pre-selected family. Ushers direct parishioners to the reception of the Holy Sacrament and, once mass is completed, they offer each family a copy of the bulletin and again, wish them a pleasant day/week. This ministry is open to men and women, high school age and older. Training is provided.

Testimony from Bill Carr:

"The one thing I never counted on when I agreed to be an usher was the opportunity it would give me to meet so many great people. Each week it's like seeing family again - the friendly smiles, the handshakes and every now and then, the over exuberant laughter."

6. Children's Liturgy

The Liturgy of the Word for children is a wonderful opportunity to help children to joyfully know the Lord, through hearing the Word of God at their level of understanding. This ministry is offered at the 10:00 a.m. Mass where children from grade 1 to grade 6 are welcomed to a special liturgy before the Lector begins to read. They then return to their seats during the Offertory.

7. Altar Society

The duties of the Altar Society are not demanding. It calls for a team of two people a week who are responsible for cleaning the vessels, altar area and other items for Sunday worship. Working with a partner would mean that Sacristy cleaning should take no more than 1 hour of your time. These faithful workers provide a very valuable service, which helps to ensure quality liturgy.

Testimony from Francine Gawadzyn:

"I take pride in my work at the church. Being a part of the Altar Society is all behind the scenes however, I do believe that it is as important as the other ministries within the church. This experience has made me feel so comfortable and so welcomed in the church and it gives me such joy to be involved in this ministry."

8. Music Ministry

Has God blessed you with a love of music? Liturgical music involves the congregation and inspires us as we praise God in song. Singers and musicians are invited to join one of our choirs.

The **Resurrection Choir** provides the music at funerals. This ministry is an important way to express support for a grieving family.

Piano music is provided at the **8:00 a.m.** Mass

The **Traditional Choir** provides the music at the **10:00 a.m.** Mass. The choir practices every Wednesday evening from 7:30 until 9:00 p.m.

The **Celebration Singers** provide contemporary praise and worship music for the **5:00 p.m.** Mass on Saturday and other special occasions such as Sacramental Enrollment Ceremonies, Ash Wednesday, Confirmation Masses, etc. Rehearsals are approximately 1 ½ hours every Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in the Church Proper. The focus of the Celebration Singers is on the encouragement of participation and evangelization to the youth of our church and the young at heart!

Testimony from Courtney Meloche:

“Since joining the Celebration Singers my perspective on religion has changed. Going to Mass every week and actively participating has reacquainted me with my faith and has helped me to build a beautiful relationship with God that I deeply cherish”

9. Liturgy Advisory Team

The Liturgy Advisory Team meets to discuss upcoming Liturgical services in the parish. Along with the weekend masses and the schedules for the Eucharistic ministers, lectors and commentators, preparations are made for the Advent, Christmas, Lenten and Easter celebrations. The Liturgy Team also prepares two special celebrations - a mass at St. John the Baptist Cemetery that is held in September and a memorial mass in November that is held for families who have had a loved one pass away during the previous year. The team meets approximately 6- 8 times a year and advises the pastor on the liturgical celebrations.

10. Church Environment

The Ministry of the Church Environment is responsible for the decoration of the church proper. Liturgical guidelines must be adhered to, for example, specific colors are to be used for specific feasts and seasons. Consideration must also be given to the pastor’s wishes and those of the congregation, previous traditions and what is available seasonally. Because of the time spent putting up decorations, taking them down and maintenance of the various plants, it is a ministry that needs flexible hours.

Testimony from Bonnie Deslippe:

“This ministry has presented me with a wonderful opportunity for reflection and a chance to just “be” with God. There are times when I’m almost running in and out of the church because of other demands in my life, but I treasure the moments when I can take it slow and offer my service as a prayer. This ministry has given me a greater appreciation for the tradition and symbolism of the Catholic Church and presented me with another way to worship.”

11. Sunday School

The Sunday school program is held during the 10:00 a.m. Mass and welcomes children from age 3 to the end of grade one. Parents leave their children in the parish center in the Father Ware room before mass where the children will participate in liturgically oriented activities until after Mass.

Testimony from Heather Nodello:

“The Sunday school program has enriched my life by letting me share my time and knowledge of Jesus with children. The thing that brings me the most joy is just getting to experience their lack of doubt and confusion surrounding the presence of God. Instead of teaching the children about God as I had intended, they are teaching me what it really means to trust in God in our everyday life.”

YOUTH MINISTRIES

12. Youth Groups

Weekly youth group meetings are offered for students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. Youth group is a safe place to ask questions, look for answers and find Spirit inspired guidance. Each meeting is developed from recognizing what is important in the member’s lives and showing where Jesus can be found in any and all of these.

Testimony from Jessica St. Pierre:

“Being a leader in youth ministry has taught me to find Christ in other people, even when they don’t see Him in themselves. I have gained experience that has helped me as a camp counselor and a big sister. It reminds me every week that there is a reason to keep trying to make a difference.”

13. Faith Buddies

Children 7-9 years of age meet on Wednesday evening for a children’s catechesis where they play games, make crafts, share faith stories and learn about the Catholic Church.

Testimony from Christine Yeomans:

“Faith Buddies began from a desire to teach catechism to more than just my own children. With the help of some wonderful fellow parishioners, we started with a 4 week pilot program in the spring of 2009. The response has been overwhelming and very encouraging.”

14. COR Weekend

This weekend is for young adults’ grade 11 and older and is held once every year. The focus of the retreat is the presence of God in our lives and in the people around us.

15. ENCOR Reunion

This group meets prior to the COR weekend for alumni members to focus on the upcoming COR weekend and to strengthen their faith through Eucharist and prayer.

16. Breath of Heaven Liturgical Dance Team

This team expresses their faith and their prayer through movement to modern music as it can be applied to the Gospel. Using modern creative dance the team choreographs and prepares prayer services for Diocesan and public events, retreats and specific occasions of worship. Their work presents the Gospel through a medium they love - music and dance! The junior team members are from grade 4 to grade 7, and the senior team members are from grade 8 through all of high

school and beyond.

Testimony from Nicole Delmore:

“Being on the dance team has brought me closer to my faith and my understanding of it. For every performance the dance team does, we interpret stories of the Bible and other messages that are important to our faith into movement and dance. I don’t normally express and share my faith verbally to others. I can never seem to find the right words. But when it comes to dance I feel that I can express anything I want.”

17. Drama Team

Through drama and skits, the Drama Team proclaims a gospel message for various parish events, including Holy Thursday, Confirmation, First Communion, etc. It is a way for youth group leaders to present a message in a fun and interesting way to the members of our parish.

Testimony from Kateri McGuire:

“The Drama Team has helped me to improve my personal skills. I have become more confident in my leadership abilities as well as being able to communicate my faith to others.”

18. High School Ministry

The focus of this ministry is to help high school students grow in their faith and prayer lives, while adding social time and fun gatherings. The team hopes to reach out to the youth who are lost and are searching for meaning in their lives as well as offer an opportunity for those already involved in youth ministry to take time to re-fuel.

SACRAMENTS

19. Baptism

Each month our parish is blessed with many new members by way of infant Baptism. Parents requesting Baptism for their child are required to participate in 2 preparation sessions. In the first session, team members help the parents to focus on the obligations that they are accepting, help them to understand infant Baptism and Christian parenting and encourage the parents to prepare themselves spiritually for this event. During the second session, the parents will meet with all of the other families who are having their child baptized that month and the team will walk them through the ceremony.

Testimony from Bev Bondy:

“I have been involved in this ministry for many, many years and it is a great honor and privilege to be able to participate in this very wonderful and happy occasion in our young families’ lives. I feed my faith by sharing it with these young parents and I pray that we, as a team, are able to give them the encouragement and the tools they need to follow through on their commitment to raise their children in the Catholic faith.”

20. Children’s Sacramental Programs

Family based preparation programs are used to prepare children for **Reconciliation, First Eucharist** and **Confirmation**. A volunteer team assists parents in preparing their children for

the sacraments through the use of resources and by providing a retreat day prior to celebrating the sacraments.

Testimony from Debbie Gibb:

“This ministry enables me to share the joy of the precious gift of the sacraments while contributing to the future of our parish by assisting families in their faith journey. It also provides me with a deeper sense of belonging within the community by being the visible “hands and feet”, bringing God’s love to the candidates and their supporters.”

21. Marriage Preparation

Team members are married couples who believe in the true commitment, fidelity, wonder and challenge of life within the Sacrament of Marriage. These couples are willing to share their gifts and relate their experience of married life with those planning to marry in the Catholic Church.

Testimony from Jackie and Anthony Leardi:

“We enjoy meeting engaged couples, sharing our experience and learning how other married couples deal with the challenges of married and family life. The Marriage Preparation Ministry has allowed us to spend quality time together as a couple while focusing on improving our relationship in a Christian setting.”

22. R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults into the Church)

Journey with an RCIA candidate and help him/her grow towards full initiation into the Catholic Church. Be part of a team that welcomes, encourages, and supports those who inquire about our faith. You will also revitalize your own faith and make new friends. The program is ongoing and people can join at any time.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

23. St. Vincent de Paul Society

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organization whose mission is “to live the gospel message by serving the poor with love, respect, justice and joy.” The Mission of the Society implies that its members, who are called Vincentians, see Christ in anyone who suffers, come together as a family, have personal contact with the poor and help in all possible ways. Among other things, the Society sponsors the Giving Tree every Advent. The meetings are held the 1st Sunday of every month in the assembly Room.

Testimony from Denise Bondy:

“As a Vincentian I have received so much more than I have ever given. Meeting families who have been forced to ask for help is a humbling, personal experience. I know that children and adults, right here in Amherstburg, have food to eat and a bed to sleep in, thanks to the generosity of my fellow parishioners. I am so privileged to be the vehicle that brings these gifts.”

24. Social Justice Committee

Are you willing to work for change locally and globally, through education awareness and

positive action according to the Gospel message? The Social Justice Committee works to heighten the consciousness of parishioners about issues of justice and to encourage meaningful involvement in social action. The committee's mission is to help us to SEE, JUDGE and ACT in response to injustices in our world.

25. Eucharistic Ministry for the Sick and Homebound

The members of this ministry provide friendship and spiritual support to the homebound and persons in assisted-living and nursing homes. These Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist take the Eucharist to those unable to attend services at the church.

Testimony from Josephine Bolger:

"I feel so blessed that I have been given this opportunity. When I enter the homes of these people I feel awed at the pleasure they feel knowing they are going to receive the Body of Christ. When they tell me "I needed that - I have been waiting for you", I feel I have accomplished a wonderful service for these people."

26. Adult Team Ministry

Many adults, especially young adults, don't know where to turn for help, guidance or even for a fun night out. The Adult Team Ministry is an opportunity for anyone out of high school to come together, to share and grow spiritually while having fun at the same time. The members meet monthly for discussions based around Catholic beliefs and to enjoy some social time.

Testimony from Alan Roehler:

"We hope to reach out to all adults, especially those who feel they are missing something from their lives. Since we started this ministry, many of us feel a stronger relationship with God and that we can still use our gifts in a ministry. We don't have all of the answers, but with prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit we can grow with God and enjoy our time together."

FAITH FORMATION

27. Cursillo Weekend

Cursillo (pronounced KUR-SEE-YO) is a Spanish word meaning "short course". A Cursillo in Christianity experience originated in Spain. During the weekend a team of ordinary Catholics and 2 spiritual directors speak about how their faith has impacted their lives. Participants learn about God's love and how to relate to Jesus in a personal way. The men and women weekends are held separately and, for the last 2 years, have been held at the House of Shalom in October and November.

Testimony from Isabelle Bastien:

"I made my Cursillo weekend in Chatham in February of 2005. This weekend opened a new world of prayer and friends for me. With Cursillo I have made new friends who live for Christ and who understand that we are one body in Christ."

28. Parish Retreat

A Parish Retreat is held annually at Oxley Retreat House. It starts on Friday night and ends

Sunday afternoon. The retreat has a different theme every year and it allows parishioners to come closer to God.

29. Weekly Bible Study

A Bible Study class is held every Wednesday morning after the 9:00 a.m. Mass in the Father Ware room in the Parish Center. The participants break open scripture and other books that are related to the faith. The pastor leads it and it is very interesting, inspiring and enjoyable with plenty of sharing. The class lasts approximately one hour.

30. 24 Hours of Adoration

With great reverence the volunteers prepare the Adoration Chapel for the Holy Blessed Sacrament to be exposed in order for people to come and pray silently before the Lord at whatever time they chose. The Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is every Monday from 9:30 a.m. until Tuesday at 9:00 a.m.

31. Advanced Adult Catechesis (Home Study Group)

One Sunday evening a month, a group of parishioners meet at the home of one of the parishioners to journey through the great richness of our Catholic faith in a deeper and more complete way. The pastor leads the discussion.

32. Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee helps parishioners to grow in their faith by becoming good stewards of the gifts they have received from God. It guides and nurtures the stewardship process within the Parish. This includes providing education about the theology and practices of stewardship, organizing a stewardship renewal of time, talent and treasure and collaborating with other ministries.

Testimony from Shelly Bondy:

“My involvement with the Stewardship ministry has taught me that I need to take on the heart of Jesus. It has taught me at a deeper level to want to do the things that Jesus did, freely. It has moved from an obligation to give, to a need to give because I want to”

33. Centering Prayer

A small group of parishioners has begun to learn about and practice Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is a way of cultivating a deeper relationship with God. It is a way to quiet the mind and simply rest in God beyond thoughts, words and emotions. The weekly Centering Prayer group encourages the members to persevere in their individual practices, provides an opportunity for further input and discussion and offers an opportunity to support and share the spiritual journey. This Centering Prayer is Christian based on the writings of Fr. Thomas Keating, a Trappist Monk.

34. Rosary Ministries:

The Rosary Cenacle is an informal gathering of those wanting to pray together. They gather together once a week in their homes to say the Rosary. Their prayer intentions are for world peace, the parish community, the sick and suffering and for all in need.

Another group of devoted parishioners meet with residents of the nursing home to pray the rosary with them.

The Legion of Mary, a group of Italian parishioners, gathers every Wednesday at 1:00 p.m. in the home of one of the parishioners to pray the rosary and read scripture.

Every Thursday, senior Italians meet at the Verdi Club at 11:00 a.m. to pray the rosary.

The rosary is prayed every week day before morning mass.

PARISH SERVICES AND ORGANIZATIONS

35. Hospitality Committee

If you enjoy meeting people, the Hospitality Committee could be the ideal ministry for you. The Hospitality Committee hosts "Coffee After Mass" on the third Sunday of the month. These monthly events offer a great opportunity for parishioners to get to know one another better and for new parishioners to learn more about our parish. The Hospitality Committee also provides refreshments for other parish events.

36. Wake Service Ministry

One of the parishioners involved with the Wake Service Ministry meet with family members of the person who has died and then prepares a wake service. They have to choose the readings and write a Reflection/Homily. Every effort is made to personalize and connect the readings to the person for whom the prayers are being said. The Prayer/Wake service allows an opportunity to reflect on the life of the deceased and share our support for the family and friends who have gathered at the funeral home.

Testimony from Carol Ouellette:

"I am grateful for my involvement in this ministry. I feel honoured to be a voice for the parish at the Wake Service, to offer solace, support and a promise of continued prayers for the family. I believe this ministry contributes to the vitality of the parish, supports the mission statement and is appreciated by our families."

37. Offertory Counting Ministry

This ministry meets each week to count the various collections and record donations.

38. Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic men's organization with the main focus on Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Knights of Columbus Hall at 190 Richmond St.

39. Columbian Ladies Auxiliary

The Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary work closely with the Knights of Columbus to support them and our parish. They provide services, funds for various charities and projects and they have social functions for the members.

PASTORAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

40. Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council is a consultative body that assist the Pastor in guiding the overall care and ministry of the Parish. It develops and implements priorities for the Parish based on the Diocesan Pastoral Plan. The Council strives to exercise responsible leadership, provide for the formation of leaders, formulates and sets goals that reflect the needs of the parish and serves as a communication channel between the council, the Pastor and the Parish as a whole. The council meets monthly.

41. Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee sells grocery and other useful cards before and after the weekend masses. The cards are also available at the parish office. We can all help pay down the church's steeple debt by being a seller and/or by purchasing the cards.

Testimony from Larry and Jean Allen:

"It is a ministry that is easy to learn. It only takes a couple of hours of our time each month and it gives us the opportunity to greet and meet parishioners."

42. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is a consultative body that provides advice and recommendations to the Pastor concerning the overall fiscal operations of the Parish. It determines what is financially feasible, prudent, and sound financial practice. The Committee prepares an annual budget and monitors the financial performance during the year.

43. Parish Web Site

This ministry is responsible for building and updating the parish web site.

44. Historical & Parish Improvement Committee

The Historical Committee works at preserving the history of St. John the Baptist Parish by collecting, compiling and documenting the history of the parish. "Led By The Shepherd", a 250 page history of the parish, was published in 1992. A chronological update for the years from 1992 to 2008 is now available. The Parish Improvement Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Historical Committee, raises money for such things as the stained glass windows, new flooring and other projects.

Testimony from Rick Bondy:

"I love my church and my parish and I think that it is important that we do all that we can to

preserve its history. Through my participation on this committee I've learned a lot about our parish and about the importance of taking care of what we have, not only for ourselves but also for future generations."

45. Called, Gifted and Sent Ministry

The Called, Gifted and Sent program has been implemented by the Diocese of London so that every parish has information on every person who is involved in ministry within the parish. If there is a ministry that deals with vulnerable people such as young children, youth, elderly, sick, homebound or mentally incapable, the people involved with these ministries must have a police clearance done for the safety of the vulnerable person as well as the volunteer. All information is confidential and is kept in the church safe.

Testimony from Julie Gauthier:

"In doing the work of this program, I have had the privilege of meeting many new people and gaining their trust, as confidentiality is of utmost importance in this ministry. People have expressed their thanks as they feel more secure knowing that efforts have been made to keep the vulnerable of our society as safe as we can. It is also interesting learning about the different gifts and talents that people have to share.

46. Building Committee

A group of parishioners advise the Pastor on the condition of the buildings of the parish and any repairs that are needed.

47. Capital Campaign Committee

This group comes together when a large sum of money is needed to be raised in the parish.

48. Seniors Council

The Seniors Council is a group of parishioners who gather together once a month to look at the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of seniors in our parish, to raise awareness of those needs in our parish community and to assist the seniors in these ongoing needs.

49. Evangelization Committee

The committee meets once a month to develop and create ways to reach out and foster a spirit of evangelization both within and beyond our parish community.

POTENTIAL NEW MINISTRIES

50. Greeters

Your smiling face and warm welcome will help the ushers greet the members of our parish family as they come to Mass. If God has blessed you with the gift of hospitality, we invite you to share it with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Your entire family can be involved in this ministry.

51. Telephone Ministry

The people involved with this ministry would contact fellow parishioners to inform them of

various parish needs and to assist the committees and other ministries of the parish when needed. This ministry can be done from home and training would be provided.

52. Newsletter Team

Has God blessed you with skills in creative writing, editing, photography, graphic design or marketing? A parish newsletter, which would be published a couple of times a year, would keep parishioners informed about parish activities, feature stories about good stewards in our parish, and be a means of connecting parishioners to the Parish and their faith.

53. Catholic Women's League

The CWL is a national organization rooted in gospel values, calling its members to holiness through service to all God's people. The CWL has been inactive in our parish but it is hoped that a new chapter can be established. Meetings would feature guest presenters to address areas such as spiritual development, Christian family life, and education. The CWL also engages in fundraising to support its charitable initiatives.

54. Single, Widowed or Divorced Group

This group would meet in Christian companionship to discuss the concerns and issues pertinent to their situation as a single, widowed or divorced parishioner.

55. Married Couples

This group would meet to share, discuss and support each other regarding the issues that are relevant Christian married couples.

