

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

COLUMBUS, GA

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FEBRUARY 2016

Holy Family Welcomes Fr. Finbarr Stanton!

You may have noticed that our sanctuary has been filled with the sound of a soft Irish brogue coming from the pulpit during recent Masses. This melodious voice belongs to Fr. Finbarr Stanton, but don't let the lilting accent fool you – Fr. Stanton, while a native of Ireland, is no stranger to Georgia. In fact, Fr. Stanton has been serving parishes in the Diocese of Savannah for nearly 50 years now, and Holy Family is delighted to welcome him to our parish!

Fr. Stanton – or Fr. Barry, as he is often called – has served the diocese in many different locations, including Augusta, Macon, Warner Robins, Waycross, Port Wentworth, and Albany. Indeed, it seems there are few places in Georgia where Fr. Stanton has not served! All of these experiences, in towns large and small, have been a special part of God's call in his life.

"I went to a college called All Hallows – meaning All Saints – in Dublin," Fr. Stanton says. "The reason you go to that college is



to serve the church, and afterward you go wherever they send you."

Fr. Stanton knew as he entered college that his ultimate destination would be the Diocese of Savannah. Following his ordination in June 1967, he spent some brief vacation time with his family before packing his bags for the United States to serve in parishes across Georgia. Born and raised in Cork City, Ireland, he became one of several priests from Cork to make their way to our diocese – both Bishop J. Kevin Boland, former bishop of the diocese, and Fr. Frank Patterson, former pastor of Holy Family, hail from Cork County.

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How Can We Model the Faith for Our Children?

The Church has made it clear that parents are primarily responsible for the spiritual and cognitive development of their children in matters of the faith. As the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, states, “Husbands and wives find their proper vocation in being witnesses of the faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children” (Chapter 4, Section 35). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* further emphasizes this vocation, by pointing out that the moral education and spiritual formation of children is not only the right, but the responsibility, of their parents: “The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable...Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children” (CCC 2221, 2223).

But how can we as parents create an environment in the home conducive to spiritual and moral development? As busy adults, how are we to disseminate the knowledge and understanding of the tenets of the faith to our children in the way that a trained and experienced catechist can? Furthermore, how do we strike a balance between teaching our children in the home and not interfering with the faith formation and sacramental preparation they are currently receiving through their parish school or religious education program?

The answer to all of these questions is stewardship.

Indeed, it is important that we reinforce the lessons that our children



learn in school and at religious education classes by talking to them about the faith, reading Sacred Scripture with them, and spending time in family prayer. And there are several authoritative resources online that can help parents in this task, including Catholic Parents OnLine – www.catholicparents.org – which links parents to numerous websites and documents that can help them in talking to their children about the faith.

But the best way that we can teach our children is by serving as a living example to them of how to live as disciples of Christ. If we want our children to grow up as strong Catholics and to display a lifelong commitment to their faith, then it is important that we ourselves live a committed faith life. This includes an ongoing commitment to our own faith formation as adults and active

participation in the sacraments. It also includes the giving back of our time, talent and treasure in service of our community in thanksgiving for the gifts that God has given us.

Parenting can be a tough vocation, and children deal with many influences in their lives that exist in stark contrast to the values that their parents often hope to instill within them. Fortunately for parents, the stewardship way of life provides a simple and effective model for teaching our children in matters of the faith. By living as stewards of God’s gifts and reaping the spiritual rewards that accompany this lifestyle, we are tangibly showing our children that sharing of our gifts and talents leads to a life of happiness and spiritual fulfillment. In doing this, we give them a good opportunity to follow in our footsteps and make their faith a top priority for the rest of their lives.

A Letter From Our Parish Administrator

Lent – A Time of Preparation, Introspection and Change

Dear Parishioners,

This is the holiest time of year for Catholics. Lent, of course, officially begins on Ash Wednesday. Most of us are familiar with the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Those are important in relation to repentance and renewal. Everything we do should remind us that Lent is a penitential season.

In the midst of this serious time, however, we must keep in mind that the word “Lent” comes from a Middle English word, which means “springtime,” and the time of lengthening of days. When we think springtime, our thoughts tend to be lighter and brighter. That is how we need to view Lent, just as we recognize the joy, colors and brightness of Easter.

In the Church over the past few decades, we as Catholics have come to the insight that Lent is more than a time to give something up. It is also a time to add something, to take action about our faith in ways that make it more meaningful and real. This does not mean we should not make sacrifices – we need to consider that while sacrifices may mean denying ourselves something, they can also mean we are filling that denial with a positive action.

We are talking about conversion again. We are speaking of stewardship again. This is a time when we should be looking within ourselves. It is a time for introspection. How can we improve? Maybe we need to

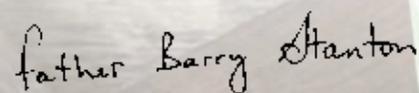
be a bit more patient with people in our lives – perhaps we need to adjust some of our attitudes. One thing we all need to do is to see and find the good in many small things in our lives.

Do we spend quality time with God, and with our families? Do we help someone in need? Do we set aside a time each day to pray? The possibilities for change and positive action seem quite endless. The point is to do it. Stewardship is a life of action – Lent should be a time of action.

Rather than being concerned about how others see us, this is a time for us to look at ourselves. We may need to rethink and re-evaluate our faith and especially our relationship with God. The Lord has called each of us to love and serve. Every day and every season is a time for us to carry out that call – but now, during Lent in preparation for Easter, this is very important indeed.

The 40 days of Lent are a time for us to live life as a disciple and as a steward of our God-given gifts.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Father Barry Stanton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Barry Stanton,
Parish Administrator



LISTENING TO GOD: *The Jeswalds*

For most people, when thinking of Las Vegas, the concept of “stewardship” isn’t the first thing that comes to mind. But for Bob Jeswald, Las Vegas became the first place that he really started becoming involved in service to the community around him.

But Bob’s faith story begins in Buffalo, N.Y., where he was raised in the Catholic faith. During his teenage and young adult years, Bob fell away from the faith. It was after meeting his Columbus-native wife, Teresa, when he began attending Mass once again.

“We started dating and she invited me to come to Mass with her,” Bob says. “I loved the priest and started going again. I felt the fellowship again, I felt a part of something. So, I then came back into the Catholic Church in a whole new way. Teresa brought me in and introduced me to [my faith] again.”

Shortly after, the couple moved to Las Vegas, where Bob worked as a meteorologist for local news stations. It was there that he started volunteering and becoming engaged in meeting the needs of the community around him. For Bob, this was just the start of what would become even more of a passion in the years to come.

In 2006, Bob and Teresa arrived “back home” in Columbus, where Bob now works as the chief meteorologist at the local CBS affiliate, WRBL. Working to serve those around him – from helping organizations that reach out to teens in crisis, to women’s shelters, to promoting unity within the community – Bob sees these opportunities as a chance to make God present in the world.

“I see it as a form of tithing,” he says, “It’s a way of giving back. Whenever I say the Lord’s Prayer, I ask God



“My life is changed. Prayers are now answered because I’m listening to God. It’s truly a blessing when you follow His word and pray every day and mean it, and listen when He answers.” – Bob Jeswald



Bob and Teresa Jeswald, along with their daughters, Eva (10) and Sophia (8), are happy to be a part of the community at Holy Family.

‘How can you use me as your tool today? Your will, not mine.’ It’s a good way of giving back and being a Christian steward, leading by example.”

For the Jeswald family, it’s equally important to find ways to be involved in their parish community. Starting each week with Mass and faith formation is habit for Eva, 10, and Sophia, 8, but they aren’t the only ones going deeper in their faith each Sunday.

“Sunday school is that foundation of the week, the kids look forward to it,” Bob says.

Bob and Teresa take advantage of the time that they’re in class to enrich their own faith with a group of parents. Having pinpointed the local restaurants with the quickest breakfast service, the group enjoys a time of fellowship with other parishioners.

“We just get together and talk, have some good fellowship,” Bob says. “Sometimes we talk about Scripture, sometimes we talk about our jobs. It’s just fellowship. It’s our time with our fellow parishioners at Holy Family. Being around people of faith will help tremendously to keep you on the right path.”

After being away from the Church for a while as a young person, Bob encourages others to become active

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and engaged in their faith, emphasizing the difference it has made in his life.

“My life is changed,” he says. “Prayers are now answered because I’m listening to God. It’s truly a blessing when you follow His word and pray every day and mean it, and listen when He answers.”

Helping their children understand and embrace their faith has been a priority to Bob and Teresa, who strive to make faith an important part of their daily lives.

“We had a pastor a while back who talked about how you don’t just show up on Sunday and call it a week,” Bob says. “It’s every day, so what can you do to continue to serve and be a Christian every day?”

Bob and Teresa also make a priority of sharing the faith in a way that is accessible to their kids.

“If you had a question, the answer was just, ‘Well that’s the way it is,’” Bob laughs, explaining the way that he was taught the faith. “These traditions are great, but we need to know and understand these traditions. We need to explain our traditions to our kids.”

So, if you are looking to go deeper in your faith and better share it with your kids, or if you are just hoping to find some fellowship on a Sunday morning, look for Bob and Teresa. They gather with people outside of Sunday school before heading to breakfast.

“All are welcome!” Bob says.

Holy Family Welcomes Fr. Finbarr Stanton!

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“The connection between Cork and Columbus is very strong!” Father quips.

Fr. Stanton comes to Holy Family after spending 25 years as the pastor of St. Teresa’s Catholic Church in Albany. He looks forward to serving the parishioners here, and is thankful for their warm welcome.

“I’m happy to be here,” Father says. “Bishop Hartmayer asked me to be here and I’m happy to respond. I like Holy Family, and the people are very hospitable.

“I’m glad to be here while they undergo a renewal of time, talent and treasure,” he continues. “[I am] happy to serve the parishioners in whatever capacity I can – to baptize, marry them, celebrate funeral [Masses], and most of all, to celebrate the Eucharist and proclaim God’s Holy Word.”

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– Fr. Finbarr Stanton

Fr. Stanton enjoys being able to serve the Church however he can, and loves most of all celebrating the Sacraments and preaching God’s Word. He looks forward to getting to know the parishioners at Holy Family better and being a part of their faith journey.

“[I hope to] promote and deepen the faith of Holy Family and be of help to the people,” he says.

And how best to experience this renewal and deepening of faith? If Fr. Stanton could give just

one piece of advice to parishioners, it would be this:

“Love God and people, and do your best.”

The parishioners of Holy Family welcome Fr. Finbarr Stanton and thank him for coming to serve God’s people here in Columbus!



Lenten Practices: *Penance and Abstinence*

For many Catholics, the practice of fasting and abstinence during Lent is as much a part of our faith as is our sacred liturgy. Catholics know that when Lent arrives, it's time to say "goodbye" to meat on Fridays and "hello" to fish sticks and bean burritos. It's almost as if our Lenten obligations were hard-wired into our biological clock at the moment we were baptized.

If there is one thing that Catholics definitely understand, it's adhering to the laws of tradition. Indeed, the tradition of fasting and abstaining from meat during Lent draws its lineage from the early days of the faith.

But why, exactly, do we fast and abstain from meat during Lent? And what are the Church's guidelines for this tradition?

In November 1966, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a pastoral statement on penance and abstinence. The statement outlines the Scriptural significance behind fasting and abstinence, and directs the faithful on when it is encouraged and appropriate to do so.

According to the statement, there are four main points the Church wants to make about the tradition of penance and abstinence.

First, all humans are sinners. Second, penance and abstinence are ways to turn away from sin and back to God. Third, the Church is constantly in a stage of ongoing renewal and penance. And finally, Advent, Lent and the vigils of certain feasts are the primary penitential seasons of the Church.

The statement makes clear that the practices of penance and abstinence are tools created to help lead us to Christ – they are not stringent laws designed to cause discomfort and pain. Fasting, abstinence and penance help

us to reflect on, and in some way understand, the suffering and selflessness our Lord experienced during His passion and death.

Traditionally, Catholics must abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday, which falls on Feb. 10 this year, and Good Friday, falling this year on March 25. And, because Christ died on a Friday, the Church asks us to also abstain from meat on all Fridays during the season of Lent.

Lent is also a time of penance. In preparation for Jesus' death and resurrection, the Church encourages all Catholics to seek forgiveness from sins and to renew their spirits in accordance with the Father's spirit. The overarching goal of all Christians is to become "one with the Father," and penance and abstinence help us attempt to do that.

But Lent isn't just about what we aren't "allowed" to do. The Church encourages us all to seek ways to alleviate the pain and suffering of others – just as Christ lifted the burden of sin from the spirit of humankind – "by special solicitude for the sick, the poor, the underprivileged, the imprisoned, the bedridden, the discouraged, the stranger, the lonely, and persons of other color, nationalities, or backgrounds than our own" (*Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence*, 15).

This Lent, as the world prepares for the anniversary of Christ's death and resurrection, take on a few Lenten practices of your own. In addition to abstaining from meat on Fridays and Ash Wednesday, find a way to share the love of Christ with others through gifts of time, talent and treasure. The life of a disciple, as outlined in the Gospels, requires a renewed heart and a penitent soul. Seek to understand this Lent, in some small way, the magnitude of our Lord's suffering and love.

Allowing Our Love for God to Fuel Our Love for Others

There are many ways to live out stewardship by sharing time, talent, or treasure with others in the community. While it is true that a life of stewardship leads us to demonstrating true charity to our neighbors, we must also remember that the source of love for neighbor comes from a deep love for God. Deacon Arnold Goodman, facilitator of the Bible Study group at Holy Family, shares with us a different aspect of our call to stewardship.

“The best way to be a steward of your faith is to live your faith,” Deacon Arnie says. “It’s important if you live a sacramental life that you understand what a sacramental life is. We should, as Christians and Catholics, feed ourselves. The secular world is very dry.”

Spending time meditating on Scripture and Catholic theology



allows the faith to take root in one’s heart, gives understanding on the “why” behind certain aspects of our faith, and provides new ways of application in our daily lives. It

allows our actions and thoughts to be rooted in a deeper love and knowledge of God, which in turn allows us to interact with and treat our neighbors with love.

“My job isn’t so much to be the guru, but to guide them,” Deacon Arnie says. “Everyone’s journey is individual and personal.”

All are welcome at the weekly Bible Studies on Wednesday evenings. Each year, Deacon Arnie shares a list of studies and allows the group to choose their focus for the year – sometimes, they are able to cover two or three studies a year. Each study also comes with a

“You read books to study things. People buy cookbooks to learn how to cook. Why not get a book to figure out how to live your life? We have to go out into the world and live the Gospel. We need to be catechized on how to do that.”

– Deacon Arnold Goodman

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Weekend Mass

Saturday Vigil

5:00 p.m. Mass

Sunday

8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Daily Mass

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

12:10 p.m. Mass

Reconciliation

Saturday

4:00 p.m.

Allowing Our Love for God *continued from page 7*

series of take-home questions for participants to answer daily.

“You read books to study things,” Deacon Arnie says. “People buy cookbooks to learn how to cook. Why not get a book to figure out how to live your life? We have to go out into the world and live the Gospel. We need to be catechized on how to do that.”

As couples and families come to the studies together, Deacon Arnie shares that they experience new levels of community and

fellowship. Attending the Bible Study with fellow parishioners and with your family members gives you the tools to go home and pray with others, both family members and friends. And importantly, it fosters opportunities for new conversations on living out the faith – being able to pray with others and converse about the faith provides a deeper sense of community and greater camaraderie on our Christian journey.



The Bible Study meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. Please contact Deacon Arnold Goodman directly to inquire about the group or to ask any questions – he can be reached by e-mail at cephas314@aol.com or by phone at 706-575-6837.