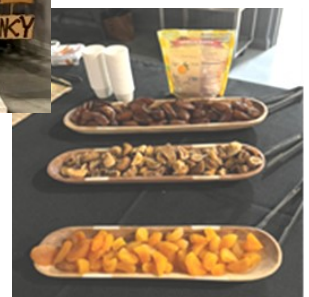


BETHLEHEM MARKETPLACE

Ever wonder what it might have been like at the time of Jesus' birth? On December 10th, over 100 people came to Bethlehem (otherwise known as the Immaculate Conception Parish Hall) to be counted for the census. They walked around the Bethlehem Marketplace where they visited the woman at the well, snack and spice shops, wood shop, artisan, clothier, woollier, scribe shop and map maker. The tax collector also visited each shop owner with the Roman soldiers to demand payment to Caesar and himself. They played games and made joyous music & more. They enjoyed a fire pit, coffee and hot chocolate & Christmas music. Thank you to our Evangelization and Catechesis team and our many volunteers who made this event so amazing!

Please make a mental note to plan to attend next year! We would love to have you experience the Bethlehem Marketplace!



See page 4 for more pictures of the Bethlehem Marketplace.

Ministry Updates

Bethlehem Tree

By Vivian and Lynn Swank



Because of your generosity, the Bethlehem Tree was blessed again this year. We were able to provide gifts through our St Vincent de Paul Society, about 75 gifts to St. Mary's Outreach in Albany, more than 100 gifts to Birthright of Schenectady and about 75 gifts to the Equinox Residences. Many of the personal gift requests left on the trees were covered by a very generous monetary donation from a parishioner.

Special thanks to: Tom Bigos and Laura Foster, who printed the request cards; Julie Ashcroft, who helped purchase the unfilled gift requests; the parish staff of Kathy, Fran and Chris; Christine Gross, who addressed unanticipated room conflicts; Caitie Lashbrooks and the Youth Ministry volunteers, who helped sort, label and bag the gifts for distribution to the charitable organizations.

Thank you for your continued support, and may you all enjoy the New Year and be blessed with health, peace and joy.

A side note: We have been involved in the Bethlehem Tree since our daughter was in middle school. (She is now 37!) We are ready to pass on the Bethlehem Tree "branch" to any volunteer(s) interested in coordinating this ministry. We will continue to help during the transition phase next year. Please contact us at 518-399-4903 or 518-441-5439 if interested. It's been a rewarding experience these many years. Thanks!!

St. Vincent De Paul Holiday Update

By Joan Bunn

What an amazing sight to see hundreds of gifts waiting for 200 children to open on Christmas morning! St. Vincent de Paul Society is eternally grateful to our Church families for all their help each year! This year, we were able to provide food for 60 families at Thanksgiving, and food and presents to 70 families at Christmas! Your generosity inspires us to continue our mission to help the needy!



Bakers Dozen

By Mary Beth Frewin

Several bakers have come forward to join the group. We welcome more volunteers to lighten the load for everyone. Contact Mary Beth at 518-669-7374 or beasel58@gmail.com if you are interested.

There have been several requests for recipes of the goodies served at hospitality. They will be included in future Pipelines.

Cranberry Pecan Bars (Mary Beth)

For the crust, combine 1 c. flour and 2 T. sugar; cut in 1\3 c. butter and stir in 1\2 c. chopped pecans. Press into 9 x 13 greased pan and bake in a 350 degree oven for 15 minutes.

For the filling, combine 1 1\4 c. sugar and 2T. flour; stir in 2 eggs, 2 T. milk, and 1 t. vanilla. Fold in 1 c. chopped fresh or frozen cranberries, 1\2 c. coconut and 1\2 c. pecans. Spread carefully over baked crust, and bake for 30 minutes until golden. Cut into bars while still warm.



Ministry Updates

Respect Life Ministry Update

By Larry Smith

Respect for life from conception to natural death is a tenet of our Catholic faith. Your parish Respect Life Ministry strives to help parishioners educate themselves on respect life issues.

Why We Focus on Abortion in January: Fifty years ago on January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court legalized abortion throughout the United States in its companion decisions *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. Since that time, 60 million children in this country have lost their lives (more than the population of Italy), and millions of women and families have been wounded by abortion.

Encouraging Milestone: On June 24, 2022, the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision overturned *Roe v. Wade*, and we praise God for the great opportunity state and federal legislators now have to protect preborn children.

Our Work is Not Done: While God, in His mercy, ended the nearly fifty-year nationwide regime of abortion on demand, right now, many state and federal laws, including New York State laws, are still hostile to preborn children. The laws in our state convince us all the more to spread the message that all life is precious and women have options.

What We Can Do: No matter the legality, there will be unplanned pregnancies and moms, dads and babies who need help. We can advocate for these people by supporting them and local resources like *Birth-right*, *Gabriel Project*, *Alpha Pregnancy Care Center*, and *40 Days for Life*. Please pray for strength to help someone in need when the opportunity arises. Here are some prayer activities from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops that we can use:

This year's "**Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children**" is Monday, January 23. The USCCB calls on each of us to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or almsgiving. (<https://www.respectlife.org/january-22>)

To surround this *Day of Prayer*, the USCCB also sponsors an annual, nationwide novena called "**9 Days for Life**." Each day for nine days from January 19 to January 27, a different intention is featured, accompanied by a short reflection, suggested actions, and related information as we pray for the respect and protection of every human life. (Sign up for this novena at <https://www.respectlife.org/9-days-for-life>).

Please consider joining the respect life ministry. For more information, contact Larry Smith at lpjtsmith6@msn.com or 518-384-0882.

Source: <https://www.usccb.org/resources/respect-life-action-guide-anniversary-roe-v-wade>

BETHLEHEM MARKETPLACE



Knights of Columbus Fish Dinners Return

by Mike Groves, Grand Knight, Council 10013

Members of the Knights of Columbus are presently working to prepare and plan for the return of Fish Dinners on Fridays during Lent. Many hours go into the planning and then the execution of the plan. We work with our Ladies Auxiliary and with the parish to make sure these are community events that are well received and provide an opportunity for get together by our parish and the greater community.

We are cognizant of the need for good safety in the food preparation and the protection of diners. We expect to see some price increase in the cost of the dinners because of the high inflation that is causing the products to soar in price, but are working to contain these cost increases.

Events such as our fish dinners and our successful C and B Raffle help enable us to fund our charitable works. One example is our Coats for Kids activity. With the help of the St Vincent DePaul Society we were able to distribute just over 100 coats to those in need this past year.

Thanks for your support.

**“Ignorance of Scripture is Ignorance of Jesus”
– Saint Jerome**

By Gerard Havasy

It’s a new year and time for a challenging resolution. Most Catholics and most Christians would love to be able to say that they have read the Bible from cover to cover. Ascension Press in conjunction, with Fr Mike Schmidt and bible scholar, Jeff Cavins, have consulted to bring us the Bible read in 365 episodes. The program was started in January 2021. It’s been America’s #1 Religion Podcast and the type of podcast that one can jump into at any time and go at one’s own pace.

It took me 20 months to listen to the entire Bible in a year. It was a great joy and insightful to read the Bible in a historical context. Fr Mike Schmidt starts with Genesis, but does not read straight through to Revelation. The Bible is read in a historical manner from the beginnings (Genesis), through the Exodus, the period of Judges and Kings to the Babylonian Exile and into the New Testament. He reads 2 to 3 chapters a day and also reads from the Psalms and Proverbs. Fr Mike likes to point out the importance of letting God’s Word “wash over” us daily even if we don’t understand all that is discussed.

You will learn lots of tidbits like the Psalms are the prayer of the church and how important they are. Also, the why of the many Jewish holidays like Passover and Yom Kippur and the importance of understanding the context of the readings and the style and for whom a book of the Bible was directed. Why are there 73 books in the Catholic Bible and seven fewer in the Protestant Bible?

Each podcast is about 20 to 25 minutes. I would like to challenge fellow Parishioners to give this podcast a 10-episode trial and see if it works for you and your prayer life. I listened to most of the podcasts in my car with local driving, sometimes for 6 -7 minutes at a time. Other times, I would binge-listen to two or three episodes at a time. Ideally, I liked to follow along with the Ascension Press outline and make notes.

Go to the link, [bible in a year sign up](#) and get started.

You’ll be happy you started and you will deepen your understanding of Church history. You’ll learn how the “New Testament is hidden in the Old Testament and the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament.” This could be a great year for your spirituality, so give it a try! Just press play! Remember, “being perfect is not the goal” and also note that “the hardest day to listen is the day after you miss a day.”

- Saint Jerome translated the scripture in the fifth century from the ancient Hebrew to Latin, the vernacular of the times. It was the translation used until the 16th century by all Christians until the Protestant Reformation. Bible scholars continue to review details and revisions have occurred in the understandings of the Bible and the times since then.
- *You have known (the) sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 3:15)*

Good luck!

Times of Joy

Congratulations and welcome to these children who received the Sacrament of Baptism from October 8, 2022 to January 8, 2023. We pray for the grace these families need to grow in their faith.

Sophia Santina Frisone, child of Michael & Jennifer

Eden Ava Contini, child of Robert & Adrienne

Griffin Timothy Larcom, child of Jonathan & Zahia

Gwen Elizabeth Leupold, child of Michael & Katherine

Julien Paul Donabella, child of Paul & Krista

Archer David Battiste, child of Scott & Kayla

Damian Louis Staucet, child of Justin & Jennifer

Euan James Duncan, child of Adam & Casey

Peyton Kimberly Burke, child of Richard & Anna

Andrew Robert Hennion, child of Kevin & Jennifer



Spotlight on Rear Admiral Timothy Zakriski (Ret.)

by Annette Botsford

In this *Pipeline* series, we hope to familiarize parishioners with those among us whom we see often but know little about. Readers are invited to contact Annette Botsford at annettemarie829@gmail.com with suggestions of future subjects for this feature.



Early in the pandemic, I had the opportunity to sit down with Tim Zakriski of our parish and he shared some of his background and experiences which I found might be of interest to fellow parishioners. Recently, Tim joined staff as the Director of Facilities for all three of our parishes.

Tim is a Schenectady native and has been a member of The Church of the Immaculate Conception since it was established. His family originally attended St. Mary's Church on Eastern Ave. in Schenectady and later moved to Glenville. His sister and brother-in-law, Sue and Bob Vielkind are active members of our parish.

Tim is a Niskayuna High School graduate, studied at Hudson Valley Community College and finished his formal education at Union College, receiving a degree in Civil Engineering. He is a registered professional engineer in New York.

After graduating from Union, looking at a potential career change, Tim enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve and subsequently accepted a commission

in the Navy Reserve, as a Civil Engineer Corps officer. As the Navy became more reliant upon its reserves to meet unexpected requirements, Tim was challenged balancing his time between his family, his fulltime civilian job as an engineer, and his Navy work. Over time, the naval career became more demanding and he found himself on assignments in places such as Guantanamo Bay, Panama, Germany, Finland, the Balkans, Bahrain, Diego Garcia, Africa, Kuwait and Iraq. At the height of the Bosnian Civil War he was assigned to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees where he was responsible for engineering related to maintaining main supply routes, water and power supply, and

providing humanitarian aid for refugees. Over a decade later he was again returned to active duty where he served a year in Iraq supervising the reconstruction of the Iraq Naval Base at Umm Qasr.



After retiring from both his Navy and civilian careers, he took a job with FEMA as a technical specialist in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. Subsequently, he became active in the New York Naval Militia (the maritime arm of New York's Military Forces)

See Rear Admiral Timothy Zakriski, page 7

Rear Admiral Timothy Zakriski, continued from page 6

and in 2018 was promoted to Rear Admiral and made Commander of the Naval Militia by the Governor.

Tim retired from all service in 2019 and now spends his time as our Facilities Director -- but still making time for the gym, saltwater fly fishing, and focusing on completing long overdue home projects and repairs. As Facilities Director, he hopes to assist all three parishes, in maintaining and improving their respective facilities. He is working toward establishing forward looking planning by which future budgets can be formulated. Tim believes, in this way, the parishes can insure that facilities are properly maintained, equipment is replaced when necessary, and that funding of the work is adequately planned and provided.



Tim and his wife Kathy have two sons. Their older son Tim, is a Navy aviator, is married to a naval aviator; they have a young son and newborn daughter. Their younger son Joe, is married and runs a Jujitsu academy in Glens Falls. Tim coached both his sons in ice

hockey, and Little League/Babe Ruth baseball. He also served as president of Schenectady Youth Hockey.

It is no surprise that Tim is patriotic, and has traditional values. He maintains a positive attitude toward

life; after serving in some of the most impoverished and war-torn areas of the world, he takes little for granted and appreciates even the smallest freedoms that we enjoy here in America. He is an advocate of what he refers to as intergenerational responsibility. Tim believes that our youth are the future of our nation and we must help in every way we can, as parents and role models, by providing examples of compassion, fairness, respect, and leadership. One of his favorite documentaries is a DVD entitled "Irreplaceable – What is Family?" of which he has purchased multiple copies and provided to parish members. Tim concluded our discussion by sharing a poem that expresses his philosophy.

The Bridge Builder

BY WILL ALLEN DROMGOOLE

An old man going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening cold and gray,
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.
Through which was flowing a sullen tide
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fear for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting your strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day,
You never again will pass this way;
You've crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
Why build this bridge at evening tide?"

The builder lifted his old gray head;
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,
"There followed after me to-day
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been as naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!"

Source: *Father: An Anthology of Verse* (EP Dutton & Company, 1931)

Immaculate Conception Book Club

By Simone McGuinness

Book Club continues to meet regularly each month reading and discussing books, life and our faith. While our books may not be typical church books, we reflect on them with a Catholic lens. Additionally, each December we participate in a Christmas Service Project. This year we collected 107 bras for the women at the Family Life Center of City Mission. Bras are a significant clothing item, as many of the women only have one. The staff and women were so grateful for our support, both literally and figuratively!

Enjoy the photos of the decorated Bra Tree and Dona Fragnoli and Karen Ronca delivering the bras to Angela Williams, Executive Director of the Family Life Center.



Here is the list of our future meetings and reads which can be found on the Parish Website:

February 1

Every Breath by Nicholas Sparks

March 1

I, Eliza Hamilton by Susan Holloway Scott

April 5

The Good Earth by Pearl Buck

May 3

Finding Dorothy by Elizabeth Letts

June 7

Following Atticus by Tom Ryan

July 5

TBD

New readers are welcome. For more information please contact Simone McGuinness 518-928-6954.