

BART'S HERALD

Saint Bartholomew Church 45 Ludlow Road, Manchester, CT 06040

June 2008

Serving at the Funeral Mass

By Henry Poirier

The last act the Church provides to a member is the funeral Mass. This ancient ritual goes on throughout the Church. At St. Bartholomew, funerals are held twice a month, on average. Almost always, the Mass is celebrated by Father Tom Sievel, who in this role, is both an official representative of the Church and also the pastor of our parish. The laity of the parish is there as well, either in the pews as friends or relatives of the deceased, or represented by the organist and the server from our community. Currently, we have a roster of two servers: Neil Coogan and Anthony Strauss – both long-term members of the parish and both well qualified and experienced. What is equally important, they both recognize the significance of their role as servers in the funeral Mass – the last thing we as a community do for a fellow parishioner.

A funeral Mass requires special preparation by the servers. The votive candle must be moved to the front and middle of the altar. The incense and censer are prepared and placed on the altar. In the case of a cremation, a table on which the cremains will be placed is set in front of the votive candle. Otherwise, the pall and holy water are placed at the entrance of the church. If members of the family will be presenting the gifts, the bread and the wine are placed on the stand at the entrance of the church. If the family has not designated a lector, the server does this as well. If there are many people at the Mass, the server helps to distribute Holy Communion. Both Neil and Anthony are Eucharistic ministers.

The normal duties of a funeral Mass server require arriving at church no later than a half hour before the Mass is scheduled to start. In addition, the occasional, unexpected event must be dealt with. Anthony recalls shoveling the front steps when a heavy snowfall hit just before the hearse was about to appear. Sometimes a server is required to go above and beyond the normal - and Neil and Anthony are up to it!

PASTOR'S CORNER

By Father Tom Sievel

As you know, Pope Benedict XVI recently completed his first pastoral visit to the United States, spending time in Washington and New York. His visit was one of several “firsts”: he is the first pope to visit and pray at Ground Zero in New York, the first pope to celebrate Mass in St. Patrick Cathedral in New York, and the first pontiff to meet with the victims of sexual abuse by priests.

Benedict XVI is a very vigorous man of eighty-one. His grueling schedule was handled with ease by this generous and intelligent successor of the Apostle Peter. I now focus on some of his remarks to our bishops, and his homily at St. Patrick Cathedral. There is much material for meditation in the Holy Father's reflections. “America is also a land of great faith...” the pope told the U.S. Bishops. Yet, he mentioned three trends in American society that are challenging for the Church:

First, a growing secularism - “Any tendency to treat religion as a private matter must be resisted,” he said. We often hear people say, “I'm spiritual but not religious.” Religion and spirituality are joined together and faith always has a public face.

Second, Pope Benedict warned us about materialism. The ultimate purpose of our lives is our thirst for God; without God our lives are empty. Benedict reminded us “...to continue to welcome the immigrants who join your ranks today, to share their joys and hopes, to support them in their sorrows and trials, and to help them flourish in their new home.” (Address to Bishops) Material prosperity needs to be shared with the poor and marginalized.

Third, the pope warned against an exaggerated individualism. There are those even in the Church who pray and act as if they could be independent of others. We all need the community of the Church to keep our faith alive and in conformity with the tradition.

In his homily at St. Patrick Cathedral in New York, the pope reminded all of us that it is our task to help people today find God. We need to reach out, especially to the young, and help them see that the most urgent longings of their hearts can be found in God. Lastly, Pope Benedict urged us to “communicate the joy born of faith and the experience of God's love.” In the end, we are all called to be beacons of hope to a waiting world.

Father Tom

WE'RE GOING ... Where?... to Haiti?

Margaret and Al Dumas serving others

By Bob Albert

WE'RE GOING!! declared St. Bart's parishioners Margaret and Al Dumas after attending a presentation on the plight of Haiti and gaining an understanding of the work that would await them as volunteers for the Haitian Health Foundation (HHF). They knew it wouldn't be a "typical vacation" when they made their first trip to Haiti with other volunteers from St. Bart's in October 2003. As she stepped out of the plane upon landing in Haiti's capitol, Port-au-Prince, Margaret remembers thinking, "This is the hottest day of my life!" but she and Al are quick to point out that it was also "a turning point in our lives." Subscribing to the philosophy that "you get so much more out of giving than receiving", the couple will have made their fifth trip to Haiti this May. Now, let's learn a little more about these two members of our parish family...

Alexander, or "Al" as he's known to most of us, was born in Hartford, Connecticut, and grew up in Manchester. After serving with the US Marines in Viet Nam, he returned to Connecticut, earned a BA degree with a major in math from the University of Connecticut and began a career in computer technology with IBM. He is currently employed by the Town of South Windsor in their information technology operations. Born in Waterbury, Connecticut, Margaret grew up in Waterbury and graduated from Waterbury Catholic High School. She earned her BS in nursing from the University of Bridgeport and then her MS degree in management from the Hartford Graduate Center (now RPI). After a career in the emergency department with Johnson Memorial Hospital in

Stafford Springs, she has retired from her nursing career, but not from her volunteer activities. Al and Margaret reside in Bolton and have been members of St. Bart's for fifteen years, although Al grew up in St. Bridget's parish. Margaret taught a third grade CCD class until she retired last year and shares with us an unexpected question put to her by one of her students: "Mrs. Dumas," the youngster asked when discussing Holy Eucharist, "last week you told us that the bread is the Body of Christ and that the wine is the Blood of Christ." Margaret confirmed that the student was correct but became stumped a moment later when the student asked, "But, where are the bones?" Even with such a challenge, she loved interacting with the youngsters. Both Margaret and Al are Eucharistic ministers, are active in our parish's St. Vincent DePaul Society and have served meals for the homeless at MACC's Samaritan Shelter. Their commitment to their volunteering efforts is deep as evidenced by the St. Vincent DePaul Society where Margaret holds the position of vice president and Al, treasurer. Once, while working the overnight shift at the Samaritan Shelter, Al and fellow volunteer – Stefan Wawzyniecki – decided to prepare a hot, home-cooked breakfast of bacon & eggs and home fries for the clients, rather than the usual cold breakfast. Needless to say, it was a hit, and Al has transferred his skills as a cook to become one of the cooks for St. Bart's men's breakfasts.

Meeting on a blind date, Margaret and Al like to reminisce on their courtship and the "bitter-sweet" moment of their wedding. They actually met on their second blind

date, since their first date had been cancelled. After being introduced to Al, Margaret remembers telling her girl friend that she would some day marry Al. This, in spite of fact that Al, who had his airplane pilot's license, invited Margaret for a ride in his plane shortly after their first date. After that flight, Margaret thanked Al for the ride but refused all of his requests for another ride with the comment, "Once is enough!" The "bitter-sweet" came suddenly when Margaret learned that her dad was dying but desperately wanted to give his daughter away at the wedding. It was already March and they set the wedding date for May 1st. Anyone knows that's not enough time to find a church and a restaurant for the wedding reception – but Margaret didn't know that! And so, on May 1st, Margaret, with her mother and father at her side, walked down the church aisle. Margaret recalls that her dad was "lucid that night." What a loving memory! (Who says *God-incidences* don't happen?)

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Volunteering has become a way of life for Margaret and Al whether it's for the church or the community. One of the key elements that both appreciate about the St. Vincent DePaul Society is its work in helping those individuals who might otherwise "fall through the cracks" of government safety nets. For example, suppose someone who is barely making it requires immediate assistance – say, money to repair a car that is desperately needed for transportation to and from work and for grocery shopping. If it is covered by a governmental agency, help might be too late in coming. The Society can step in immediately and provide assistance. In Haiti, Margaret and Al have worked to minister to the needs of people in and around the city of Jérémie. One particular concern is the lack of an effective sanitation system. Crude by the standards of today's sanitation systems, the ground becomes ripe with disease-bearing germs that cause children to become infected by merely dragging their fingers through the dirt. The simple act of cutting the fingernails on a child's hand – which Margaret has done – can eliminate getting and spreading a disease. Can you guess how children are encouraged to keep their nails cut and clean? (See the end of this article.) Imagination can be key in helping the people of Haiti improve their quality of life. For example, Al and another St. Bart's parishioner, Bob Kostek (who also has made the mission trip to Haiti), gave a presentation at an area middle school showing the deplorable conditions in Haiti. The efforts of Al and Bob encouraged the students to raise a \$150 for the purchase of a goat for a family in Haiti. This school has continued its outreach to raise even more donations for Haiti.

Margaret and Al are amazed at the people of Haiti and their beautiful outlook on life - never complaining, taking pride in what they have (e.g. the way they dress for church, always in their Sunday best), their humility and belief in God. Perhaps, Margaret sums it best when she says, "Be true to yourself and your faith; live it and be happy with what you have."

(Answer: children are rewarded by having their finger nails polished if they will allow them to be cut; cut nails mean pretty polish and clean hands mean fewer germs and less disease.)

MARY AND MARTHA MINISTRY FUNERAL MASS RECEPTIONS

By John Garoppolo

When I interviewed Eileen Riccio for this article, I knew a little about what the *Mary and Martha Ministry* offered because we used their services when my sister-in-law passed away. However, I soon learned that there was a lot of work and organization involved.

To host a funeral reception most families use a restaurant, a hall or their own homes. However, at St. Bart's, Father Hussey Hall is available in those instances when a family makes a request. When a family wants to use the church's facilities, Diane Gluhosky in the church office calls Eileen and she, in turn, contacts members of the ministry. Working with a family member, Eileen learns the number of guests expected, the name of the caterer, the food to be served, and the time of delivery of the food. She also asks the family for the kind of seating arrangement that they would like: tables where guests can sit down to eat or chairs set around the periphery of the hall. The committee checks to see that needed paper supplies are on hand and, if more are needed, they are purchased. All beverages and cream and sugar are supplied by St. Bart's (a donation of \$35 is suggested to offset expenses).

Before the reception, ministry members set up the buffet, dessert, and beverage tables. Floral centerpieces are placed on each table where guests will eat, as well as a floral arrangement on the buffet table. When the food is delivered, it is checked to be certain that it is what the family ordered. Upon arriving, guests find the buffet table set. Two committee members manage the beverage table, while Eileen and other committee members keep an eye on the food and dessert trays and replenish them as needed.

After the reception, clean up begins. This takes some time, even though there are a couple of trash cans set up at strategic locations in the hall. Eventually, Father Hussey Hall is left just as it was found. Any food that is left over is wrapped, packaged, labeled, and offered to the family. Sometimes, the family doesn't want all of it but will designate someone who should receive it. The volunteers of the *Mary and Martha Ministry* work quietly behind the scenes to help families get through what can be a very trying day. *(Please see photo of volunteers on page 4).*

ST. BART'S FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

By Ed Rowe



50 Years
1958 -2008

The celebration of St. Bart's fiftieth anniversary is about halfway done, and there have been some interesting and informative events and displays. But now the energy of the various anniversary committees is focused on two capstone events for the late summer and early fall: the August 24 "birthday" Mass and October 5 anniversary Mass to be celebrated with Archbishop Henry Mansell. Recently, I had a delightful conversation with Jane Peacock, who gave me the background on events to date as well as plans for summer and fall.

To date the emphasis has been on parish history. Three major projects, covering large chunks of the past, are in process: first is a fiftieth anniversary booklet, which contains some events from the twenty-fifth anniversary booklet and some important additions. One addition is a list of changes over the past twenty-five years. This will include a chronology of the clergy – pastors and weekend priests – since the beginning of the parish. Lay leaders for the many parish ministries will be acknowledged. And, there will be an article on the liturgical and sacramental changes that have evolved in the Catholic Church since 1958. Certainly, it is a demanding task to create the fiftieth anniversary booklet. A second project is a review of prior and current parish censuses to identify the names of the "founding families" of the parish. Currently, fifty families have been located as original members who are still listed in the parish. Invitations to important anniversary events will be extended to this group. The last of the ongoing projects is the display case by the mural in the corner of Father Hussey Hall. The first display has featured artifacts and pictures chronicling the founding of the parish. Future displays will outline the Father Scholsky years and the 1990s, including the formation of youth ministry at St. Bart's. During the course of our interview, Jane made a request for parishioners to donate an artifact. "Don't worry if it is personal," Jane says. "These objects represent an important slice of life from the times." Jane also noted that many long-time parishioners enjoyed the display as a way to bring back memories, while newer parishioners enjoyed the historical points of interest.

Which brings us to the major event on August 24 – a Mass to celebrate the feast of St. Bartholomew. Every year, no matter what day it falls on, Father Tom Sievel remembers the feast of St. Bartholomew in some special way. Since the feast will be on a Sunday this year, the whole parish is invited to celebrate at the 10:15 a.m. Mass. This year is special, since nuns, who taught at the parish school, and the school's alumni are invited. The Congregation of Notre Dame (CND), an order based in Montreal with several convents throughout Connecticut and primarily a teaching order, had been requested by Father Hussey to staff the St. Bartholomew parish school. They came, taught and are remembered by their students as "...young and kind sisters who were excellent teachers and fine role models." In 2006, parishioner Nancy Downing took her final profession into the Congregation here at St. Bart's. In the reception that followed in Father Hussey Hall, many of the former nuns attended. What followed were conversations, updates and remembrances at the comings and goings of alumni, families and friends and a desire to celebrate with us on the fiftieth anniversary. One of the interesting anecdotes of the afternoon was the "change" in one of the former mother superiors. Her former students remembered her during their schooldays as a stern, imposing figure. When they talked to her at the reception, they found a warm, engaging woman!

From the invitation extended to the sisters, it was not long before word-of-mouth campaigns started among the "founding families" to locate alumni. Right now, a former organist, Harry Carr, will return from Florida, and two former students living in California have planned their vacations around the celebration. This is truly a festive year for the parish! Hopefully, this article will inspire you to donate to the display case and fill the church on August 24. Please keep your eyes and ears open for upcoming announcements. **CELEBRATE!**

BSA 362 - AND THE SPIRIT OF SCOUTING AT ST. BART'S

By Harry Robinson

What follows is not "breaking news" but that which is never old – the importance of spirit, with reference to boy scouting in our parish. Many facts of this article come from the Saint Bartholomew Parish Twenty-fifth Anniversary booklet, from articles by Vern Hauschild in *Bart's Herald*, and from interviews with former scoutmasters and scouts. The inspiration for the article came from *Bart's Herald* meetings and from a photograph that Adelaide King, a parish founder, discovered as she was re-organizing papers – a newspaper photograph of scouts Joseph Langer and Tom Robinson with Father Martin Scholsky, second pastor of St. Bartholomew Church, at an Ad Altari Dei ceremony.

Ed Ward became the first scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 362, founded by Father Hussey. Ed, steeped in Boy Scout lore, had been an assistant scoutmaster at St. James parish and a delegate of the Hartford Archdiocese Catholic Committee on Scouting in Washington D.C. He attended the Catholic Training Conference at the Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico, and became a certified instructor for Catholic scout awards. Ed was awarded the St. George medal, "the highest award presented by the Archdiocese for outstanding contribution to Catholic scouting."

The troop developed further under scoutmasters Frank Keegan, Jim Jones, Dick Cichowski, David Sombric, and Greg Hoch. Scoutmasters Cichowski and Sombric and scout Tom Robinson reminisced about the variety of activities in which the troop participated. The scouts met every week - working on merit badges, training in CPR at the Manchester Fire House, touring the Manchester Police Department, and hearing speakers such as Tony Gorman talking about mountain climbing. They sold pies and Christmas trees for the holidays, collected newspapers for recycling, attended camp-o-rees and first aid-o-rees, camped out once a month including winter in the northwest corner of the state, attended summer camp at Lake of Isles in North Stonington. They continued religious activities: preparing for the Ad Altari Dei award (a six-month study of the sacraments), each year attending a weekend retreat at Holy Apostle Seminary in Cromwell, each year observing Scout Sunday with a special Mass. Some of the boys attained the rank of Eagle scout: Bill Keegan, Jeff Frithsen, Doug Stevenson, Doug Hauschild, John Blake, Michael Hickey, Greg McDermott, Greg Hoch, David Sheridan and Tom Robinson.

The Lake of Isles summer camp for Connecticut troops was especially helpful for advancement. Scouts went their separate ways to the classes that they had selected,

usually for specific merit badges, including badges in canoeing, sailing, life saving and water safety related programs. Daily swimming was required, building up to a mile swim. At the end of the week, a campfire was held with troops choreographing skits and scenes on humorous anecdotes about the week.

On fun weekends fathers chaperoned camping at Bernie Hickey's place at Lake St. Catherine in Poultney, Vermont, and at Clint Greene's place near Rutland. The men and the boys enjoyed fresh campfire-grilled cuisine prepared by the scouts. Scouts hiked portions of the Long Trail, stopping at the Clarendon Gorge to swim in remarkably good, and even more remarkably cold, water. They visited a local dairy and the Mount Bromley alpine slide. Other years, the troop traveled to New Hampshire, again plying the frigid waters for swimming, camping, hiking and fishing.

Scoutmasters David Sombric and Dick Cichowski see scouting as a teaching opportunity. The boys learn relationship skills, such as being honest and fair, not picking on people. The very act of attendance helps develop self-sufficiency. Scouts see the camaraderie among adult leaders and make strong father-son connections. They learn how to deal with the scrapes and bruises of life and come to enjoy the fun of outdoor life.

Today, Troop 362 is no more, but boys from St. Bart's have joined other troops and continued the scouting spirit. At least three – Todd Henkel, Andrew Wheeler and Ian Snyder - have become Eagle scouts. Parishioners have already read about Todd's Eagle project and have visited the handsome labyrinth for meditation. Andrew, now in college in Boston, joined Vernon Troop 86 and belonged to the track team at Rockville High School. He "wanted to give something back." He built a 10' x 20' base storage shed with a garage door for storing track equipment. He organized the funding for and led other scouts in completing the project. Ian, a Rockville High junior, also joined Troop 86 and for his Eagle project built a pathway for a memorial garden at First Congregational Church in Vernon. The pathway, constructed of gray pavers, circles a fountain and garden memorializing the deceased of the church. Ian also organized the fund-raising for the project.

The scouts of St. Bart's Troop and the boys who joined other troops are now men who have gone beyond the Boy Scout manual. Their leaders – including their parents - have given them wise counsel. With the right spirit the boys came to understand what the Boy Scout motto "**Be Prepared**" truly means.

Edna Schuetz – a bundle of energy!

By John Garoppolo

Edna Schuetz grew up in Rockville, attended St. Joseph's School and graduated from Rockville High School. She then worked as secretary to the treasurer of Hamilton Standard Propellers in East Hartford. Edna met her future husband, Henry, and they married two months before he was sent overseas in WWII. Upon his return two years later, their son John was born. Both father and son went on to teach the handicapped at Harkness Memorial State Park in New London. Now a widow, Edna lives in the same house she and Henry shared for twenty-eight years. Son John is an artist in Germany.

Edna has been very active in the community. Retired after thirty years of selling insurance, and, encouraged by her husband, she enrolled at Manchester Community College (MCC) and graduated with straight A's. While at MCC, her gerontology professor asked her to organize and coordinate an older adult association for about seventeen people. This was to be a "temporary" post. Before long, the group numbered 500! Ten years later, after starting numerous academic, social, and recreational activities, Edna once again retired. Still not able to sit still for long at age seventy-two, Edna jumped at the chance to direct an adult fitness program at Court House Plus, using the same name for the group she started at MCC - *Silver Sneakers*. It was a program designed for the lifestyle of the 50+ age group. Edna also worked at the Manchester Senior Center as a part-time director of classes and various entertainments.

At St. Bart's, Edna is a member of a Small Church Community (SCC) that meets each Monday at 9:30 a.m. Each week, the group discusses the readings of the Liturgy for the next Sunday and also collects food donations for the MACC food pantry. Edna feels that the SCC helps considerably with her spiritual needs and practical living skills. She also serves as a greeter for Mass at the parking lot entrance to St. Bart's. She enjoys seeing and talking with people. You may also see Edna at the serving table on "coffee Sundays". Earlier, she was editor of the weekly bulletin for two years.

Those of us who live in Edna's neighborhood know how she continues to keep fit and trim - she walks to and from St. Bart's for daily and Sunday Masses - not an easy walk with the steep hills. Edna believes learning is a life-long process but says that getting older has made her realize that she can't do as much and she can't do it as quickly as in the years after her "first" retirement. *Way to go, Edna!*

this summer's treat?...

Vacation Bible Camp "Power Lab"

August 11-15 at St. Bart's

By Debi Ashmead

Give your children a new enthusiasm for God's Word - and for Jesus! "Power Lab" is packed with deep-impact Bible learning that opens young hearts to Jesus. Your children won't just learn God's Word — they'll live it and you'll feel their excitement every day of this week.

We've got The Miraculous Power!!!!

Jesus gives us the power: Day 1: to be thankful; Day 2: to help others; Day 3: to be brave; Day 4: to live forever; and Day 5: to tell others about God. Each of these bible points will be covered in five days of fun in August throughout a great morning of activities. St. Bart's parish family volunteers are all about making this fun vacation bible camp happen for another year. The message for each of these five days will be delivered through prayer, games, crafts, snacks, music, acting and video. Kids from preschool age through fifth grade are welcome to participate. Sixth graders and above are most welcome to come and help out. We are still in need of volunteers and you can help with your time, energy or resources. Please contact vacation bible camp director, Mary Falotico.

Many of the teenagers who have helped us in the past are back this year: Becky Mears will be heading up the pre-school program; Anna Piggott and Liana Pagano will be coordinating the awesome "Hyper speed Games"; Katie Ashmead and Jenny Mears will lead "Sonic Sing and Play"; Jimmy Donohue will act out "Bible Blast Adventures"; and Ricki Kim will present "Test Tube Treats." "Wacky Works Crafts" will be handled by Deb Ashmead. Kathy Piggott will handle decorations and all those "behind the scenes" tasks that keep the program going.

Each year, the bible camp program has participated in a community service project. This year the service project will be helping both MACC and Haiti in their basic need - **FOOD**. Watch for more details in the bulletin. Plans are for fifty kids, so register early. Forms are available on St. Bart's website or in the parish office.

CHURCH IMPROVEMENTS – WHERE WE ARE

By Henry Poirier

When the *Repair My Church* campaign ended in December of 2007, the first of three planned projects in the first phase was completed. The replacement of windows in the school wing and Father Hussey Hall is not only an improvement in the appearance of the building, it is more fuel efficient, while at the same time providing greater comfort. While cost over-runs are often expected, this project came in under budget! Although there may not appear to be much activity in recent months, much has been going on. The re-pointing of the building has been delayed by the difficulty in matching the new mortar with the old. As of this writing, we are getting close to resolving that issue and bids will be sought. The addition of storm windows to the church, the third and last part of the first phase, is in the design stage.

The next phase in the program is also in the beginning stage. Both entrances need work. The side entrance needs a ramp for the handicapped to bring us up to code. The front entrance, however, is much more involved. The doors have been an annoying problem since they were installed and must be replaced. The exterior lighting is inadequate and the handrails are not up to code. Both of these items are safety items that need to be fixed. Father Tom Sievel hopes that when we are doing these projects at the front entrance, our financial situation will allow us to put in a ramp as well.

Father Tom has been helped in all these projects by Jim Aldrich, a parishioner and an experienced building contractor. Thank you, Jim!

From a dollar standpoint, Father Tom hopes money left over from the completed window project will be enough for the re-pointing work. The cost of the remaining projects will come from the parish savings. This is in keeping with the original plan to fund all of the capital improvements from the *Repair My Church* campaign and the savings account. The newly introduced monthly "Maintenance" envelope is being supported to the level that Father Tom and the Finance Committee hoped. This is expected to take care of routine expenses and will help indirectly the funding of the major projects as well, particularly if we don't skip any envelopes during vacation time! While all these financial matters are going on in our community, we must recognize what is going on at the Archdiocese. Currently, all four Manchester Catholic churches are discussing how best to respond to the priest shortage by recommending to the Diocese a course of action that will involve the linking of parishes. Although we do not know when this will happen – we know that it will. However, the actual closing of parishes is not on the table and clearly has not been the practice of the Archdiocese in other communities where linking has taken place. At St. Bart's, we are continuing to maintain and preserve our physical plant, as we must.

Youth Ministry - making a difference

By Debi Ashmead

We are all called to share the love of Jesus and to serve others who are less fortunate. Our youth ministry group makes it seem so easy as they become part of the solution to poverty. This summer many of our teens will put their heart into the Catholic Heartwork Camp (CHC) during the first week of August. Last year, over 9,000 people from 350 parishes participated at various CHC camps around the nation. This is a national effort where Catholic youth from around the nation come together to serve as they participate in prayer and service. For more information on CHC please see www.heartworkcamp.com. This year, Patrick and Megan Duffy, along with Linda Hamlin, will be leading a group of teenagers from St. Bart's parish family to a mission in Mobile, Alabama. Every summer, St. Bart's Youth Group puts their faith into action serving those in need. What a great summer tradition! Youth Ministry is grateful and thankful to all members of St. Bart's parish family for their support through prayers and fundraising events. The money raised from all the activities, such as car washes, pancake breakfasts, a dinner dance, and can and bottle drives, help offset the costs for our teens for this expensive trip.

Our group will be staying in a school where they will most likely be sleeping in bags on the floor. So, what is a typical day like? It begins with a quick breakfast and a group prayer service before heading off to a day of work. Most of the work done on this mission will be of manual labor, construction type work, such as painting or building wheelchair ramps. There is also an adult mentally handicapped facility and thrift shops that will need help with organization and sorting. Opportunities abound for social interaction by helping members of an impoverished community.

Evenings will be full of programmed activities for faith sharing, prayer and reflection. Patrick Duffy sums it up well for those that are on the fence about going as he says, "There are no words that can put this experience into a sentence. There is not one event that captures it, but if you use the analogy of getting ready to go for a swim, instead of putting your toes in slowly to extremely cold water and easing your way in, Jesus would want you to just jump in!" We are so blessed that our youth ministry group jumps in and lives as disciples of Jesus Christ through serving others.

Mission to Mobile

Leaders : Megan and Patrick Duffy; Linda Hamlin.

Students : Audrey Arel, Austin Bernaiche, Dottie Cadullo, Victoria Cadullo, Kelly Cocco, Jimmy Donohue, Megan Donohue, Libby Hamlin, Renata Krach, Becky Mears, Anna Piggott, Josh Piggott, John Sihavy, Ian Snyder and Matt Wheeler.

MAKING THE INTERNET WORK FOR YOUR FAMILY

By Jen Arel

Over the years, I have saved many helpful website links that have greatly encouraged and aided me as a parent and as a Catholic trying to grow in my faith. Raising a faith-filled-family at these times is no small task and many times one feels as though he's swimming against a very strong tide. This is our cross. It would be so easy to just float and be taken out to sea. But, carrying our cross, sometimes dropping it, sometimes only dragging it, is something we are all called to do. Some of these websites have been my "Simon of Cyrene" - they have helped me bear this burden. I hope by sharing them with you that you, too, may get some help in different areas.

Two sites that I use often are those of the U.S. Bishops - www.usccb.org/movies/ and www.decentfilms.com. I use these to help me review movies that my family wants to see. I have come to believe strongly that the "garbage in, garbage out" computer line pertains very much to our own brains. As Archbishop Fulton Sheen said, "If you don't behave as you believe, you will end up believing as you behave." What we watch is a function of our behavior. If we claim to be Christians, then that must spill over with what we want our eyes to view. This is not easy, mind you. Along this same line is that of discerning the kind of pop/rock music you are willing to let into your home. Again, this is easier said than done and can almost seem an impossible task when you consider how many songs and groups are out there. Mostly, we rely on other parents to help warn us. But the website, www.azlyrics.com, is one that can give you the gist of the content/lyrics of certain songs and albums. Helping us get more out of Mass is another area for

which I've sought help! Having a family can be distracting at times (eh-hem). There are a few websites with everything from a brief description of that week's scripture to fun worksheets and family activities. I will admit that I don't manage to do this every week but on the weeks that I have, we have all gotten more out of Mass. Some sites: www.catholicexchange.com (click on family night), <http://darientel.net/~schoettl/openwed/> (great for younger children), www.cathcom.com (this has all SORTS of stuff including movie ratings, teen/kid sections, etc) and the USCCB site from above.

Growing in my faith is another area that, with the noise and constant busyness of our lives, has become a bigger challenge than I'd like to admit. I have realized over the years that if I don't "schedule" time for prayer, contemplative reading and other things that can help me grow spiritually, my day will whiz on by until I drop of exhaustion in the evening with the realization that I've done precious little in the area of my spiritual life. So, besides getting up earlier to pray and read some scripture or other materials, there are some wonderful websites that have helped me tremendously in this area. I cannot mention them all, but my favorite is run by the Franciscans of the Immaculate in Griswold, CT. Since I don't get to daily Mass, I can hear their excellent homilies (www.airmaria.com) each morning that give me much on which to reflect during the course of my day. There is much more on this website including links to their main website and other sites, and a GREAT reflective blog (my favorite) by one of the Franciscan priests at www.maryvictrix.com.

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