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ST. ANTHONY *of* PADUA

Building Up Our School and Community *The PTO of St. Dominic School*

Our parish is blessed to have a wonderful community in St. Dominic School! Along with an academic and spiritual education, the school provides students and their families with a true community experience through dozens of activities and events throughout the year, including family and community building events, fundraisers, various holiday activities – and the list goes on! Have you ever wondered how the school makes it all happen?? In addition to the dedicated staff and teachers at the school, the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) at St. Dominic is instrumental in helping the school offer so many activities and events.

Tera Smith, this year’s PTO President, is excited about all of the enriching experiences the organization brings to the school and parish families each year.

“We do special events like Muffins with Mom and Donuts with Dad; we sponsor the Trunk or Treat at the school; and we provide a Christmas luncheon for faculty and staff,” she says. “We also have a Family Wellness Night, a Family Reading Night, and a Trivia Night, and help with the Fish Fries.”

While the fundraising activities are essential to the PTO – helping the school provide additional resources to teachers and students – the spirit of faithful stewardship that the



St. Dominic students have fun at the 2016 Back to School Night
organization embodies also serves as a valuable example to the children.

“It’s important to show the kids how service is a very important part of our faith, and to model that for them,” says Tera, whose eldest two children, Kinsey and Liam, attend

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Building Up Our School and Community

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“It’s such a family-oriented school. When you go, you know everybody, and everybody is just there to support each other and the children. I feel it’s important to show our kids that we’re here for them, and that we want them to have a good education and good faith foundation. We’re showing them that their education and their faith is important to us.” – Tera Smith, PTO President

St. Dominic. “The kids love to get involved and help out a lot. It’s important for them to realize that God gives us all our gifts and wants us to use our gifts to help others. It’s not just about our relationship with God, but helping others and our relationship with them, and helping them find their gifts to strengthen their own faith. It’s about working together and having that faith community.”

Through her work with the PTO, Tera has been happy to see how readily St. Dominic parents and other parishioners have stepped up to lend a hand in the spirit of stewardship.

“I think one of the best pillars that our school and parish have is the pillar of stewardship,” she affirms. “Both at St. Anthony and at the school, people really do give their time. If you call them, they will step in and help. Even at events, if people are there enjoying the event and haven’t signed up to help with it, they will often just jump in and help to take things down at the end.”

“It’s an awesome environment,” she continues. “Helping with the PTO really is a good way to be a part of the stewardship.”

Beyond the essential support that the PTO provides the school, Tera and her husband, Todd, have found that the organization also offers parents a great way to feel even more connected to the school community while supporting their children’s academic and faith lives.



Back to School Night at St. Dominic

“It’s such a family-oriented school,” Tera says. “When you go, you know everybody, and everybody is just there to support each other and the children. I feel it’s important to show our kids that we’re here for them, and that we want them to have a good education and good faith foundation. We’re showing them that their education and their faith is important to us.”

Next month, the PTO will host a Christmas luncheon for school faculty and staff, and on Jan. 19, they will hold their third annual Family Wellness Night. At this special event, medical

and fitness vendors from throughout the community will set up booths at the school to educate students and parents on various health and fitness-related topics. There will also be several giveaways, including both a boy’s and a girl’s bicycle!

The academic year is full of fun and enriching activities sponsored by our St. Dominic School PTO, and we heartily thank all parishioners involved for helping to make this school year a great success!

ST. ANTHONY of PADUA



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTORAL ADMINISTRATOR

Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Time

Dear Parishioners,

The next several weeks are certainly a busy time for us as Catholics, good stewards, good citizens, and faithful members of the Church and our parish. There are celebrations and commemorations both inside and outside the Church that are momentous in terms of faith, citizenship, and living as people of thanksgiving and gratitude.

On Nov. 1 and 2, we celebrate All Saints and All Souls' Day. These days remind us that the Church includes the entire human family—those victorious in the glory of heaven, and those who await the resurrection of the dead. Having a parish cemetery draws us closer to this mystery, giving us pause not only to consider our mortality, but also to call to mind the timeless hope that is at the center of our faith.

We have the privilege to vote in the General Election on Nov. 8. Our Church considers it the “duty of citizens to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom. The love and service of one’s country flow from a duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2239). This is “stewardship,” is it not? While this election cycle has perhaps aggravated the cynicism in even the most temperate among us, we cannot be absolved of the duty to maximize the good and minimize the evil within our society, as we can best discern it. As Christians, we have an extraordinary opportunity – at all levels of government, from dog-catcher to President of the United States – to use our vote to protect the dignity of all human life, to defend the sacredness of the family, and insure the freedom of all citizens to practice the faith without undue interference from the government.

We celebrate Veterans Day to honor and thank all those men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces in one capacity or another. Indicative of the importance of this day, every year at 11 a.m. Eastern, the President of the United States lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

On Sunday, Nov. 20, we culminate the Jubilee Year of Mercy on the Feast of Christ the King. In this Jubilee Year,

our Holy Father Pope Francis has invited us to love, be kind, be generous, and to forgive boundlessly. How have we done? We all understand this is what we are supposed to be doing every day and every year, but this year reminds us of that, and hopefully renews us all in that reality and that hope.

We all understand that Americans celebrate a day of Thanksgiving on Nov. 24. What more can we say about this? It is a day that was faith-based from its very beginnings, and it is an indication of how much we have to thank God for in terms of the gifts we have received – our lives, our families, our Church, our Lord and Savior – everything we are and everything we have.

No sooner are Thanksgiving Day celebrations concluded, than we begin that glorious season called Advent on Sunday, Nov. 27. This prepares us for and leads to Christmas. Indeed, this is both a busy and extraordinary time of year! There is, of course, much more on which we could focus and about which we could think, meditate and pray, but that is more than enough for us to consider and absorb.

From a stewardship perspective, I would like you to not only participate and focus on all the particular things that are about to happen, but also on one of our special gifts – the gift of time. The gift of time, which we all receive from God in equal amount, is precious because it is a non-renewable resource. Although some of our time is committed because of family responsibilities, work responsibilities or simply personal needs, we have an element of freewill with how we spend a certain amount of it. We need to spend some of that time in prayer, in thanksgiving, in worship, and in works of mercy and ministry. Our time is perhaps more precious than any material gifts we receive from the Lord. How are we doing with that gift?

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Tom Donovan
Pastoral Administrator

Five Generations, One Great Catholic Education



All of Jim and Karen Obert's seven children attended St. Dominic School – also pictured, their daughter-in-law and son-in-law.

For Karen Obert, there was no doubt that her children would receive a Catholic education.

“It wasn’t a question at all – it was assumed, in both of our minds, that this is where [our children] would go to school,” Karen says. “[My husband and I] loved our own experiences in the Catholic school system and wanted them to have that too.”

Although Karen didn’t grow up in Quincy, she attended a Catholic school in her hometown, and all seven of her children graduated from St. Dominic School. Which was only fitting, as she married into a family with over 100 years of family history at local Catholic schools.

“I heard stories about my great grandmother and grandfather helping build St. Michael’s School [in the early 1900s],” says Jim Obert, whose grandfather and father both attended St. Michael’s School, before it became St. Dominic’s. Jim, and his seven siblings, also attended St. Dominic School.

“Then I had the opportunity for my own kids to go through those doors,” he adds.

The Oberts have been strong supporters of Catholic education in Quincy, through five generations.

“St. Dominic’s is near and dear to my heart,” says Jim, who served on the PTO as a coach, and with Boy Scouts. Karen was also very involved during her children’s time at St. Dominic’s, serving on the PTO, as Room Mother, with Girl Scouts and, on special occasions, working with the children in the choir.

Jim and Karen are thankful that their children, who now range in age from 16 to 30, were able to grow up surrounded by a community that supported and encouraged them in their faith.

“For myself and for my kids, I could say that having gone to school where religion was important, it was something that was valued, going to church all the time,” Karen says. “For me and for my kids, I didn’t ever feel like it was ever,

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‘Oh, do I have to go to Mass?’ It was never like I was forced – I wanted to do it.”

She also appreciated the smaller size and “family feel” of St. Dominic’s.

“When the kids were there, I think they really built a good relationship with their teachers,” Karen says. “I think they always felt their teacher was someone they could trust and go to or talk to. I think, even now, if they would run into those teachers they would be happy to see them and have a conversation with them, knowing ‘This was a person who helped mold me into the person I am today.’”

Jim also encourages families who were part of the combining of St. Anthony of Padua School and St. Dominic School to work together to ensure the future of Catholic education in Quincy, particularly with the expansions being made in the local public school system.

“It takes everyone coming together and realizing we’re going to have to change – if we don’t change, we’re going to fall behind,” Jim says. “Hold on to the memories you’ve had in the past, but for the students today, they don’t care what happened in the past. The adults need to forget about how it was and look forward to say, ‘What kind of memories do we want to create today, and what kind of spiritual upbringing do we want our kids to have today?’”

“We can pass the history on, and come together and make sure our Catholic education and faith is strong into the future for generations to come,” he adds. “We have a strong base and we’ve all got to pitch in and do our part to keep this going.”

Karen encourages parishioners to pray for the students, teachers and staff at St. Dominic’s and support the school in whatever ways they can.

“Looking at the kids in the Catholic school, that’s the future of the Church,” she says. “A strong school with a lot of children, you can look ahead and see there’s hope for our Church to continue in the future.”

Jim and Karen also encourage other parents to consider sending their children to St. Dominic School.

“Sending a kid to a Catholic school is going to give them that firm base in their faith,” Karen says. “Every day, they’re there amongst people who are positive about religion, who are supporting the faith.”

“Some people say, ‘Wow can you afford to send your kids there?’” Jim adds. “I say, ‘How can you afford not to?’ There are so many benefits. The school and the faith is put first, and then everything else falls into place.”



Jim and Karen’s first grandchild, Timothy James Jr., was baptized earlier this year.

If you would like more information on St. Dominic School, please visit www.stdominicquincy.org.

The “Thanksgiving Spirit” Shouldn’t End at Thanksgiving

Giving thanks to God in gratitude for the gifts we have received isn’t an attitude we should save for this annual holiday alone. When we live lives of stewardship – sharing of our time, talents and treasure in thanks to God and at the service of others – we can sustain life in the Thanksgiving spirit throughout the year.

The origin of the first Thanksgiving feast is a matter of some debate among historians. But since 1863, Americans have annually set aside the fourth or fifth Thursday of November to give thanks to God for a bountiful harvest. The holiday became a matter of federal law in 1941, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint congressional resolution to observe Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday of November. Even as our society has become less agrarian, families continue to gather each November to give thanks to God for each other, and for the many blessings they have received throughout the year.

Most people associate this “spirit of Thanksgiving” with the fall holiday and its many recognizable symbols – brisk weather, cornucopias, family gatherings, and plenty of delicious food. But giving thanks to God in gratitude for the gifts we have received isn’t an attitude we should save for this annual holiday alone. When we live lives of stewardship – sharing of our time, talents and treasure in thanks to God and at the service of others – we can sustain life in the Thanksgiving spirit throughout the year.

The Church teaches that this daily response of gratitude is an important element of living the life of a Christian disciple. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states,

“Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory. The thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head” (*CCC*, 2637).

And how can we express this spirit of thanks? We can serve others, living the virtue of charity by reaching out to our brothers and sisters in need through acts of kindness. We can give back to God from our “first fruits,” sharing of our treasure in thanksgiving and recognition of the need to return a portion of our gifts to God. We can utilize our unique talents to make our parish and local communities better places. And, as the *Catechism* also points out, we can even express thanks through prayerfully offering up our daily activities to God – “Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving” (*CCC*, 2638).

This Thanksgiving, take a moment to think of ways that you can live in the “spirit of Thanksgiving” on the fourth Thursday of November, and every other day throughout the year. Living the stewardship way of life may not always involve a precisely carved turkey, decorations or a family viewing of *It’s a Wonderful Life* – but it will provide lifelong fulfillment and joy rooted in an attitude of perpetual thanksgiving.



ST. ANTHONY *of* PADUA



Modeling Stewardship for Our Children Through Service



For parishioner Todd Klauser, serving as an usher is an important to model stewardship for his three sons.

For parishioner Todd Klauser, stewardship is more than a personal way of giving back to the Lord. It's also a way of becoming a real part of the faith community and, perhaps even more importantly, showing his sons how to become holy and committed Christians.

"As the father of three boys, I want my sons to see me taking up opportunities to do my part and to share the faith with others," Todd says. "I think any time that a young person can see an adult take an active role in the Mass, it shows them what it means to be part of a community – how you have a responsibility to take part and actively join in."

So, when Todd realized there was a need within the parish for additional ushers and greeters, he eagerly added his name to the list of volunteers.

"I noticed there were days when the ushers were shorthanded and I felt this was a way I could commit to becoming that example for my children," Todd says.

Ever since, Todd has served as a regular usher for the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass, helping parishioners find seats during crowded liturgies, assisting with the collection, and passing out bulletins at the Mass' conclusion. In the process, says Todd, he has learned to appreciate even more the beauty of service, often receiving far more than he gives.

"What I have found over the years is that when I say 'no' to any volunteer opportunity, I'm always the one who ends up missing out," Todd says. "If I'm sitting in the pew listening to the Scriptures but am not actively sharing it, then I'm missing out on an essential ingredient of what it means to be Catholic – I'm missing out on an experience to share in and be blessed by the community."

Seeking to fully invest himself and his family in that spirit of community, the entire Klauser family serves as greeters for Sunday liturgies, as well. Tasked with greeting each individual or family as they enter the church doors,

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CONFESSIONS: SATURDAY 5:15 - 6:15 P.M.

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the greeter is responsible for representing the entire faith community to parishioners and guests alike, helping them feel the warmth of Christ's Church.

"We need to make sure that people realize when they are attending church, that they aren't simply entering a building," Todd says. "They are joining a living group of people gathered in worship of God. As greeters, we need to make sure that the first thing they see is a warm, welcoming face and not simply a warm-looking door or entrance way."

For Todd, a tremendous benefit of this ministry is that the entire family can serve together. In this way, not only is he exemplifying stewardship to his sons, but he is also able to participate in it with them. And the fruits of that service have been manifold, most especially in the Klauser boys themselves, who have begun to truly take ownership of their faith.

"In the past two years, I've been blessed to see my teenage boys have their faith truly become important to them," Todd says. "And I don't think that would have happened if I was simply a bystander in church. I like to think that my

involvement in the parish, especially through ushering and greeting, has made them more open to exploring how they are called to serve."

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To learn more about stewardship at St. Anthony of Padua, please contact the Stewardship Committee at stanthonystewardship2015@gmail.com.