



ST. ANTHONY of PADUA

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Church Decorators Ministry Creates a Special Atmosphere Year-Round

In our day-to-day lives, it's always helpful to have visual reminders of tasks, activities or special events. Here at St. Anthony, the Church Decorators Ministry helps to give us a visual reminder of what we are celebrating throughout the liturgical year. Through their attention to detail, we are able to worship in a space that enhances the beauty and meaning of each season.

Jackie Dreyer and Vicki Whittland took over the ministry from the previous volunteers, who had served for more than 30 years – Jackie's husband, "Jr.," and Vicki's husband, Mike, join them as they decorate the church year-round. From simple floral arrangements during Ordinary Time, to more elaborate decorations for holidays like Christmas or Easter, the ministry takes care to make the decorations unique.

"We like to change it up, and sometimes go more modern," Jackie says. "For example, one year we decorated the Christmas trees in royal blue and silver. Another year, we didn't do the traditional Advent wreath, and instead had the candles arranged in front of the altar. I always like seeing something different instead of the same thing over and over. Fresh and new is always good!"

Whether the decorations are traditional or non-traditional, however, they are always fitting for the season.



"Right now, the church is decorated beautifully for the fall," Jackie says. "We use pumpkins donated by a local farm, and we decorate with mums. During Christmas, we use a lot of poinsettias, and we have a manger scene that a priest made that we have used at our parish for over 50 years."

"During Ordinary Time, we have green banners, and we will often put different flowers behind the altar," she adds. "We

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Church Decorators Ministry Creates a Special Atmosphere Year-Round *continued from front cover*

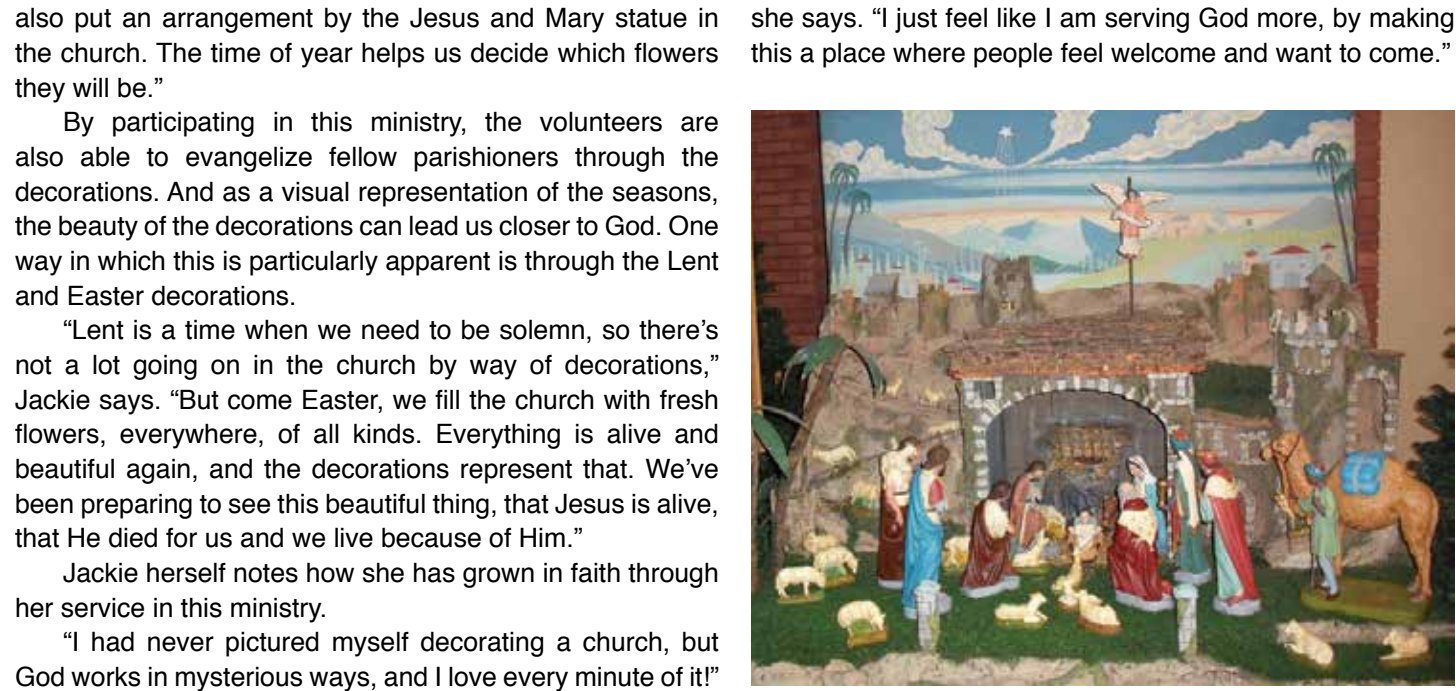
also put an arrangement by the Jesus and Mary statue in the church. The time of year helps us decide which flowers they will be.”

By participating in this ministry, the volunteers are also able to evangelize fellow parishioners through the decorations. And as a visual representation of the seasons, the beauty of the decorations can lead us closer to God. One way in which this is particularly apparent is through the Lent and Easter decorations.

“Lent is a time when we need to be solemn, so there’s not a lot going on in the church by way of decorations,” Jackie says. “But come Easter, we fill the church with fresh flowers, everywhere, of all kinds. Everything is alive and beautiful again, and the decorations represent that. We’ve been preparing to see this beautiful thing, that Jesus is alive, that He died for us and we live because of Him.”

Jackie herself notes how she has grown in faith through her service in this ministry.

“I had never pictured myself decorating a church, but God works in mysterious ways, and I love every minute of it!”



The Church Decorators Ministry is always looking for volunteers! If you are interested, please call Jackie Dreyer at 217-222-8049 or Vicki Whittland at 217-223-3610.

Join Us for the Pancake and Sausage Breakfast!

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St. Anthony Parish Hall
Dec. 11 – 7:30 a.m. to noon

Butchering of the fresh, whole-hog sausage will take place on Dec. 9, starting at 6 p.m. at St. Anthony Parish Hall. We welcome those who can assist in this effort!

Take-home meat orders are available by pre-order. We cannot guarantee enough sausage for carry-out on the day of the breakfast.

For more information, please contact Jackie Dreyer at 217-222-8049.

ST. ANTHONY *of* PADUA



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTORAL ADMINISTRATOR

Advent: Moving Toward a Time of Fulfilled Hope

Dear Parishioners,

There is never a time during the year when we cannot pause and reflect on who and what we are and how we conduct our lives, both as a parish and as people of God. But this time of year in particular lends itself to just that.

Advent is often called “a season of hope.” However, it is more than that. We have choices and decisions to make at this time. This is the time when we must acknowledge the need for us to change attitudes and to welcome the light of Christ’s presence. In this way, we can contribute to bringing hope to a world that is starved for hope.

Of course, we approach this time of year with a spirit of confident expectation, but now is the time for us to be awake to Christ, Whose presence is revealed as forgiveness, Whose peace reconciles our differences, and Whose hope should strengthen and lift up our hearts.

We have pointed out that each and every day is an opportunity for a new beginning. Our new Church liturgical year began on the First Sunday of Advent. We understand that Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord – Christmas – but I would remind you that it is much more than that for us Catholics and Christians.

It is a time for us to prepare for Christ’s Second Coming, as well. Much of what we do, our Scripture readings, our prayers, our traditions are built on that reality. One of the traditions in our Church and in many of our homes is an Advent wreath. That custom is filled with meaning. The wreath tends to be circular in shape with four candles – three purple and one rose. The color purple is very evident at this time of year, just as it is during Lent. Purple represents prayer, penance, sacrifice, and good works.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, though, we light the rose candle. That is Gaudete Sunday, a day of rejoicing.

Throughout Advent, the candles are lit in progression each week. This builds on the idea of expectation and hope that we may see as Christ’s first coming into the world, but we must also keep in mind that, at the same time, we are anticipating His Second Coming. We cannot ask ourselves often enough, “Are we ready?” Jesus and St. Paul and others remind us often that we do not and cannot know the time and the place.

The point is that the time is now for us. Yes, this is a time of hope, but we are heading toward a time of fulfilled hope. God bless you and yours at this special time of year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Tom Donovan
Pastoral Administrator



The Blessings of a Catholic Education

Mrs. Joann Ellerman Reflects on Teaching at St. Dominic

“When you think about it, we set our expectations high for academics, but I feel I almost set them higher for the expectation of serving others. We want the students to know these basic things in life – how we treat others and how we do for others.” – Mrs. Joann Ellerman

“Let us thank all who teach in Catholic schools. Educating is an act of love; it is like giving life.”

These are the words of Pope Francis, reminding us of the great treasure our Church has in the countless educators dedicated to serving Catholic schools around the globe. Right here in our parish, we are blessed with a wonderful teaching faculty at St. Dominic School, including Mrs. Joann Ellerman, who has been teaching fifth grade at St. Dominic for 26 years!

Mrs. Ellerman didn't always know that she would one day be a teacher. For a while, she had plans to pursue a degree in accounting. But as the youngest of four siblings, Mrs. Ellerman had the experience of becoming an aunt early on, and spending time with her young nieces and nephews kindled her interest in primary education.

“I just loved being around them and seeing all of those ‘ah-ha’ moments when they figure something new out,” Mrs. Ellerman recalls of those early experiences with her siblings’ children.

Now, after more than a quarter century in the classroom, Mrs. Ellerman still loves seeing the moment when a new idea or interest is sparked in one of her students. And beyond the academic education she is able to impart to her students, Mrs. Ellerman is thankful to be able to bring her faith into her teaching as well.

“In a Catholic school, you’re able to share your faith with the kids,” she says. “There are so many times during the day – and not just in religion class – where you can share a story and all of the sudden you’re talking about God and why we do things in life.”

The kind of faith-based life lessons that unfold at St. Dominic are particularly important for the kids Mrs. Ellerman teaches, as the fifth-grade students are at the age of experiencing many changes and transitions.

“They’re just starting to grow up and mature and go from being kids to being adolescents,” Mrs. Ellerman says. “It’s just a fun age when they still like you and want you around,



Monica Drotar and Brianna Steinkoenig, fifth-graders in Mrs. Ellerman's class at St. Dominic School, stand with a veteran during their first visit to the Illinois Veteran's Home, where they got acquainted with their “buddy” in the Adopt a Grandparent program organized by the Quincy Exchange Club.

but they are also yearning to be on their own and learning a lot of new things. This is usually the time when parents start questioning if they are going to keep their kids in Catholic school, and it's neat because the majority of them [see the benefits] and stay in Catholic schools.”

As they learn to navigate the world in the midst of this time of transition, Mrs. Ellerman's students are constantly being taught one of the most important lessons of all – what it means to actively live out our faith every day. Through various service projects and events, stewardship remains front and center at St. Dominic School.

For over 20 years now, Mrs. Ellerman has had her students participate in “Adopt a Grandparent” with the Exchange Club of Quincy, a program that allows them to build relationships with veterans at the Illinois Veterans Home.

“We go [to the home] once a month, and we pair up with a veteran,” she explains. “We spend the afternoon doing some activities and spending time with them. We do Bingo with them, gingerbread houses at Christmastime, and all different

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The Blessings of a Catholic Education

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Joann Ellerman with her husband, Jerry, and their daughters, (from left) Jamie and Jordan

things. It's awesome seeing the kids looking to do something for someone else. And that's part of Catholic school – doing for someone else, learning to be the hands and feet of Christ.”

In addition to their monthly time with the veterans, the class participates in countless other school-wide service projects throughout the year. This fall, they helped collect and package items to be sent to a school alumnus who is stationed in Kuwait. In November, they packed shoeboxes with small Christmas gifts for children in war-torn countries. For Mrs. Ellerman, all of these opportunities to create a love of service in her students are some of the greatest aspects of teaching at a Catholic school.

“When you think about it, we set our expectations high for academics, but I feel I almost set them higher for

the expectation of serving others,” she says. “We want the students to know these basic things in life – how we treat others and how we do for others.”

As a teacher at St. Dominic, Mrs. Ellerman feels blessed to spend her days at a school centered on stewardship and the faith family.

“It's such a warm feeling and nice family setting at the school,” she says. “I feel like we're all just family. Being able to share our faith with students, day in and day out, all day long – that's definitely a huge positive.”

How blessed are we to have a thriving Catholic school in our parish, with dedicated and faith-filled teachers like Mrs. Joann Ellerman! Have you thanked a Catholic school educator today?

A Modern Model of Sainthood

St. Teresa of Calcutta

In the dark final years of the Cold War, a small woman — standing at barely five feet tall — offered a living counternarrative to the inhibiting fear undergirding our daily lives and our foreign affairs. Instead of living in fear, Mother Teresa acted out of love. Instead of withdrawing and isolating herself, she gave tirelessly to others.

Many of us harbor a personal connection to this saint, for we lived during the height of the media coverage of Mother Teresa's work and her friendships with Pope St. John Paul II and the beloved Princess Diana.

Long before she received the name Mother Teresa and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born on Aug. 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia, the crossroads of the Balkans. The youngest of three children, Mother Teresa was raised predominately by her mother after her father's death, when she was about 8 years old. Dranfile (Drana) Bojaxhiu, Mother Teresa's mother, undoubtedly became a strong influence on her daughter's vocation, since Drana herself was a devout Catholic and known for her prayer life and her charity.

Agnes attended a Catholic primary school and, following the example of her mother, became active in their parish and sang in Sacred Heart's choir. As a young person, Agnes enjoyed reading the lives of the saints — while immersing herself in the stories of these holy men and women, Agnes first felt the stirring call to become a missionary.

At the age of 18, Agnes traveled to Dublin, Ireland, to join the Sisters of Loreto. She became Sr. Mary Teresa, named after St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and began to learn English. Within a few months of arriving in Ireland, she left for India.

In India, Sr. Mary Teresa lived at the Loreto Entally community in Calcutta, where she served as an educator and taught at St. Mary's School. After her final profession, she became Mother Teresa and, a few years later, began serving as the school's principal.

On an ordinary day, Mother Teresa received an extraordinary call. While on a train ride to her annual retreat, Mother Teresa felt what she would describe as Jesus' thirst for souls. Soon, Jesus called her to found the Missionaries of Charity, an order devoted to serving the "poorest of the poor."

The order formally began on Oct. 7, 1950, and has grown from one woman tending the sick and dying in the streets of Calcutta to over 4,500 religious sisters helping the poor in over 130 countries around the world. Additionally, the order grew to include the Missionaries of Charity Brothers,



the Missionaries of Charity Fathers and the Lay Missionaries of Charity.

Though externally Mother Teresa joyfully and indefatigably served the poor for nearly 50 years, during the majority of this time, she experienced a "dark night of the soul," an extensive period of not feeling God's presence or hearing His voice. Other saints, notably St. John of the Cross, similarly experienced a dark night of the soul. Despite this spiritual struggle, Mother Teresa continued her work joyfully throughout her sickness and until her death on Sept. 5, 1997.

Pope St. John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa in 2003. Fittingly, this year, a pontiff who has underscored the importance of social justice celebrated her canonization. On Sept. 4, 2016, Pope Francis canonized Mother Teresa, the "Saint of the Gutters," at the Vatican.

St. Teresa of Calcutta offers us an example of ceaseless prayer and selfless service. She is a modern model of sainthood that we can emulate in our daily lives starting with how we serve and treat the other members of our family, our faith community and all those with whom we interact on a daily basis.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, Pray for Us!

ST. ANTHONY *of* PADUA



Support of Our Clergy, Protection of Our Catholic Values, Service to Our Parishes and Community *Knights of Columbus Council 583*

All the good works done by the Knights of Columbus are based upon their four core principles – Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. Describing what our local Council 583 does, the Knights also state, “Our Catholic faith teaches us to ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself.’ Our members show love for their neighbors in many ways, both spiritually and materially. We recognize that our mission, our faith in God, compels us to action. There is no better way to experience love and compassion than by helping those in need, a call we answer every day. We promote social and intellectual fellowship among our members and their families.”

To be sure, charity and service are hallmarks of the Knights. In the past decade, worldwide the Knights have donated \$1.475 billion to charity and given almost 700 million hours in support of the Church and charitable works. At a recent audience, Pope Francis commended and thanked the Knights – “On this occasion, I wish to express my gratitude for the unfailing support the Knights of Columbus have always provided to the Church, to the Holy See, and to me personally. This support is both financial and spiritual. It can be seen in your daily prayers, sacrifices, and the apostolic works of so many Knights in their local councils, in their parishes, and in their communities.”

Thanks to the efforts of Father Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Connecticut, the Connecticut State Legislature chartered the first Knights of Columbus Council in 1882. From that one Council, the Knights have grown from a few members to more than 14,000 Councils and almost two million members in the United States and 16 other countries.

Our own Council was established in 1901. The Quincy Knights of Columbus Council serves eight parishes in the Quincy area, with a beautiful Club House located at 700 South 36th St. Kurtis Fischer, a St. Anthony of Padua parishioner, currently serves as the Deputy Grand Knight.



“The mission of the Knights of Columbus, among many efforts on our part, includes supporting our priests and seminarians, protecting our Catholic values, and providing service to our parishes and to our community,” Kurtis says.

Also using the Club House as a base of operations is the Bishop William A. O’Connor Assembly #200 – the Assembly is for Knights who have achieved the Fourth Degree level of membership.

Our local council hosts many activities and conducts various fundraisers throughout the year to benefit groups in our parish and community. In August, they held their annual Quincy Knights of Columbus Barbecue, which included carnival rides for kids. This month, the Knights will host their Christmas Cheer event, where they buy and give out Christmas presents to children of the Knights. They also will host Christmas with Santa for all children on Dec. 3. Some of the other events they host throughout the year include a weekly breakfast, held every Sunday from September through March at the Knights of Columbus Club. The Fourth Degree Assembly also runs a TV Mass, broadcasting the

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SATURDAY: 4:00 P.M. & 6:30 P.M.

SUNDAY: 8:00 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.

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

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weekly Mass at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings on KHQA for the sick and infirm who cannot attend in person.

The Knights also contribute to the efforts of a number of charity organizations. They work with the Family Life program, and they oversee a program in which they give \$500 scholarships to local families to send their children to Quincy Notre Dame High School. Last September, the Knights began their annual Tootsie Roll Campaign to benefit intellectually handicapped children. During this campaign, members of the Knights of Columbus stood in front of retail stores and on sidewalks, handing out Tootsie Rolls and accepting donations.

With almost 900 members, Council 583 is able to be a real participant in our parishes and community. The Knights of Columbus organization not only provides its members with the opportunity to serve, but it also builds a sense of camaraderie and unity among the men in the community while enhancing their faith.



The Knights Council meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m., and the Fourth Degree Assembly meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. Any Catholic man age 18 or over is eligible for membership. Just talk to a current member of our Council – you will sense their joy in serving and being able to be an important part of our parishes and the Church. Interested men should contact Deputy Grand Knight Kurtis Fischer at 217-316-2767 or fisch1998@gmail.com.

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