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ST. ANTHONY *of* PADUA

Meet 2017 Diocesan Woman of Distinction Dorothy Parn

Over the years, Dorothy Parn has given much of her time and talent to our parish. As an active parishioner of 11 years and former parish bookkeeper, she has found great joy in serving the St. Anthony of Padua community. This year, Fr. Tom Donovan selected Dorothy as our parish honoree for the 2017 Woman of Distinction Awards presented by the bishop on behalf of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.

Dorothy was born and raised in Monroe City, Mo., as the sixth of eight children. Raised Catholic, she attended Catholic school for 12 years and then attended Gem City Business College here in Quincy. She began her working career here with the Electric Wheel Company, and met and married her husband, Harold, here as well. They moved back to Dorothy’s hometown and had five children, who have now added 13 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren to the family. Sadly, Harold passed away on June 11.

Dorothy worked at the St. Anthony Parish Office as the bookkeeper for almost 11 years, retiring in October 2016.



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Dorothy Parn

Good Stewardship of Our Social Media

Remember that there are many ways to share the Gospel without writing out its words. Gospel living has to do with the positive way we approach this life and bring God's light and love to others – and it couldn't be easier than sharing an uplifting status on Facebook, a Tweet of gratitude to a friend, or a beautiful image of God's inspiring creation on Instagram. What a great way to build the Kingdom of God!

When we are talking about the idea of stewardship and how we care for the tools and gifts we have been given, it is not often that we stop to have a conversation about how we are caring for and using the gift of social media to positively spread Gospel values. However, this is an appropriate topic for us to consider when we are talking about the many young people, as well as adults, who gather online on a frequent basis. Therefore, it is important for us to think about how we are using the amazing gifts of technology.

If you are frequently online – especially on Pinterest – there is a popular acronym that you may have already come across: T.H.I.N.K. It invites us to consider what we are saying and sharing, and whether or not it should be said! It seems very appropriate to follow as we share statuses, pictures, and opinions on social media sites. I first saw T.H.I.N.K. in one of the classrooms of our school, reminding our children of how to interact with each other. But young or old, T.H.I.N.K is an important set of questions to ask ourselves before we speak or post!

Is what we are posting:

True? Are we sharing factual information or a rumor that we heard, and if we think our information is factual, what is our source? Is it trustworthy?

Helpful? Is the information we are sharing something that can be useful to another person? We don't need to over-examine all of our content to consider its "educational factor," but is the content we are posting going to help someone learn about us, learn about a place or an activity, think about the world, reflect on life, engage us in laughter, and so forth?

Inspirational? There is certainly no requirement to be a poet or an artist, but social media has become a wonderful outlet for positive self-expression. "Positive" is the key word – are we posting to inspire others about the good in our world, or are we posting to cut someone down or to simply rant?

Nice? Have we considered the feelings of others when we include them in a status or post a picture of them? Will they be embarrassed? Are we using social media to humiliate

and intimidate others, or are we using it to try to better the world and the lives of others?

Kind? What a great tool to compliment, show gratitude, and build the self-esteem of those you care about!

People often speak of social media in a negative way because of the content they see posted. T.H.I.N.K. is a great way for us to remind ourselves that we can be good stewards of our own social media use. Remember that there are many ways to share the Gospel without writing out its words. Gospel living has to do with the positive way we approach this life and bring God's light and love to others – and it couldn't be easier than sharing an uplifting status on Facebook, a Tweet of gratitude to a friend, or a beautiful image of God's inspiring creation on Instagram. What a great way to build the Kingdom of God!



ST. ANTHONY of PADUA



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

“Here I Am, Lord.” But Are You Really There? Are You Responding to God’s Call?

Dear Parishioners,

Throughout the Bible we hear people say, “Here I am, Lord,” or something similar. Normally, it is a response to a communication, a call, from God. In the Old Testament Book of Exodus, for example, it states, “God called out to him from the bush: ‘Moses! Moses!’ He answered, ‘Here I am’” (Exodus 3:4). We often speak in the Church about the fact that we have each received a calling from God. We also regularly say that one way to respond to that call is to live a life of stewardship.

Of course, the truth is that many do not hear God’s call because they are either not listening or they do not want to hear it. Of course, that is not how we should feel. I could write about my own call, but right now, I would rather address your call.

This is a time of year when there are calls from those in need all around us. Some of those calling are ministries right here in our parish. Before I address our response, it is important to emphasize that we need to hear the call. To hear something, we have to be listening.

The second issue is our response to the call. Do we indeed say, “Here I am”? Or, do we choose to say and do nothing? Stewardship is a call to action, a call to do something to share with and to help others. In the Old

Testament passage cited above, Moses responds, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11) – meaning he feels unworthy and unable to fulfill this call from the Lord. God’s answer is everything, as He says to Moses simply, “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12). Thus, we receive the call; we are to respond to God making it clear that we are ready. We may quite likely feel (as Moses did) that we are unprepared for what God may be asking us to do, but His response to Moses was the same as His response to us – “I will be with you.”

That is enough to empower us and strengthen us to try to serve God and fulfill His desires for us. Of course, there is one other call to which we need to respond. It is, as Christ said many times, “Come follow Me.”

As we enter this part of our personal year, this part of our calendar year, and this part of our Church year, may we be ready to listen, to respond, and then to do – full with the knowledge that the Lord is with us always!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Tom Donovan".

Fr. Tom Donovan
Pastor



Exploring our Faith

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

“Seeing What You Believe” with the Power of the Anointing of the Sick

About three years ago, Rich Rakers came across a touching prayer by St. Augustine that has stuck with him ever since.

“I remember seeing a picture of St. Augustine in a book about Christendom, and next to it was the prayer – ‘Faith is to believe what you can not see. The reward of this faith is to see what you believe,’” he says. “The prayer really struck me.”

It turns out, coming across this prayer was rather providential.

“I have been saying this prayer ever since then, and I especially thought about it when we found out in January that my wife, Alice, had ovarian cancer,” he says. “So many people prayed for her. Now that she is healed, we feel that we are seeing the ‘reward’ of what we all believed.”

Soon after Alice’s diagnosis, on a Sunday after mass, Fr. Tom Donovan conferred the Anointing of the Sick on her, which gave both her and Rich tremendous peace of mind.

“Even when you feel afraid, you have to put things in God’s hands,” Rich says. “During the anointing, Father said something about faith. You hear so much about faith throughout life – such as, that it will sustain you. You have to believe that.”

In February, Alice underwent a six-hour-long surgery, followed by six chemotherapy treatments.



Rich and Alice Rakers

In July, her doctors did a CAT scan and found that, amazingly, the cancer was all gone.

“Rich was praying a lot to Fr. Augustus Tolton, whose cause is up for canonization,” Alice says. “He is buried locally, so my husband would go to his grave and pray for me. My husband’s father had a real devotion to him, so that is where Rich’s interest in him came from.”

Servant of God Fr. Augustus Tolton was born a black slave, and became the first black man in the

United States to be ordained a Catholic priest. Through the grace of his intercession, as well as the generous prayers of numerous others, Alice believes she was healed.

“There were people all over town interceding for me,” Alice says. “There were even non-Catholic Christians who were praying for me. It gave me a lot of faith, hope and peace. Their prayers helped me ‘let go and let God,’ which is something that can be very hard to do.”

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Further, Rich recently received the Anointing of the Sick due to a knot in one of his lymph nodes that needed to be removed.

“Before my surgery, I received the sacrament, and it gave me comfort, peace and courage,” he says. “We are all supposed to have faith in tough situations, but it’s hard to do so when we have much anxiety about what lies ahead. That is where the grace of the sacraments can help us.”

“Even when you feel afraid, you have to put things in God’s hands. During the anointing, Father said something about faith. You hear so much about faith throughout life – such as, that it will sustain you. You have to believe that.” – Rich Rakers



Rich and Alice Rakers

Meet 2017 Diocesan Woman of Distinction Dorothy Parn *continued from front cover*

“Working for St. Anthony has been a very happy and rewarding experience,” she says. “I have been privileged to work with some of the finest people that St. Anthony has to offer. The parishioners and volunteers here are the greatest people and the best friends that anyone could ask for.”

Although she has retired professionally, Dorothy continues to be active in parish life. She serves as a Key Minister and as a greeter, she irons altar linens for the parish,

and she also volunteers a few hours of time at the parish office each week. She is also a member – and a past president – of the Ladies’ Society, has worked on the annual Parish Picnic, and is active in the Over 55 group.

Going forward, Dorothy plans to continue developing her personal spiritual life.

“I want to take some much needed time to reflect on my own prayer life, do some spiritual reading, and make the necessary adjustments

in my life to adapt to an empty house after 64 years of marriage,” she says. “I look forward to spending more time with my children, grandchildren and greats. I’m sure that St. Anthony parish and the parishioners – along with the grace of God – are going to be an important part of my prayer life and adjustment process.

“Thanks to all at St. Anthony for the opportunity to work, play and pray with all of you,” she adds. “You will always be in my prayers.”

“Working for St. Anthony has been a very happy and rewarding experience. I have been privileged to work with some of the finest people that St. Anthony has to offer. The parishioners and volunteers here are the greatest people and the best friends that anyone could ask for.” – Dorothy Parn

Join the Ranks and Honor the Dignity of Life in October

All Catholics are summoned to action. However, not all of them respond.

Pope Benedict XVI's homily during the April 2008 Papal Mass, held at St. Pat-rick's Cathedral in New York, directed all Catholics to respond when they are called to action:

"The Church ... is called to proclaim the gift of life, to serve life and to promote a culture of life ... this is the message of hope we are called to proclaim and embody in a world where self-centeredness, greed, violence, and cynicism so often seem to choke the fragile growth of grace in people's hearts."

October is Respect Life Month. Respect Life Sunday, as designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is celebrated each year on the first Sunday of October.

And as we face the looming culture of death, we are all summoned to action. An apostolic exhortation by Pope St. John Paul II, titled *Ecclesia in America*, described this culture of death's effects on the "powerless" within American society:

"I am thinking here of unborn children, helpless victims of abortion; the elderly and the incurably ill, subjected at times to euthanasia; and the many other people relegated to the margins of society by consumerism and materialism. Nor can I fail to mention the unnecessary recourse to the death penalty ... Faced with this distressing reality, the Church community intends to commit itself all the more to the defense of the culture of life" (*Ecclesia in America* 63).

Respect Life Month is the perfect time to prayerfully examine our consciences in light of these critical issues, which directly violate the dignity of the human person. This includes not only the evil of abortion, but also euthanasia, stem cell research, capital punishment, and contraception – all of which are vital contributors to the pervasive culture of death.

So we must individually ask ourselves, "Do I, in my personal, day-to-day choices, respect life? If so, do I boldly proclaim this belief or merely stand idle? Do I exercise my right to vote and support candidates who promote a culture of life? Am I known within my home, family, and/or workplace as someone that respects life?"

As with every movement of a Christian heart towards goodness, it is imperative that our efforts issue forth from a prayerful foundation. The work of the Holy Spirit allows us to receive the zeal necessary to promote the sanctity of human life, even in the face of suffering.

This October, please pray for a revitalization of the culture of life. Every night, as a family, meditate on the prayer from John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. As you pray, allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with apostolic boldness, and ask the Lord to guide your heart towards ways in which you can personally contribute to the culture of life.

The call is clear, the stakes are set, and all Catholics are summoned to action. How will you respond?

Pope St. John Paul II's Prayer for the Revitalization of the Culture of Life

O Mary,
bright dawn of the new world,
Mother of the living,
to you do we entrust the cause of life
Look down, O Mother,
upon the vast numbers
of babies not allowed to be born,
of the poor whose lives are made difficult,
of men and women
who are victims of brutal violence,
of the elderly and the sick killed
by indifference or out of misguided mercy.

Grant that all who believe in your Son
may proclaim the Gospel of life
with honesty and love
to the people of our time.

Obtain for them the grace
to accept that Gospel
as a gift ever new,
the joy of celebrating it with gratitude
throughout their lives and
the courage to bear witness to it
resolutely, in order to build,
together with all people of good will,
the civilization of truth and love,
to the praise and glory of God,
the Creator and lover of life.

—Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*

ST. ANTHONY of PADUA



New GriefShare Program Designed to Comfort Mourners

When a loved one passes away, grief can become overwhelming. Long after the funeral has ended, those closest to the deceased must find a way to carry on. In these difficult moments, it can be comforting to seek solace in the company of others who have also lost someone and to realize that we're never alone.

GriefShare is new to St. Anthony, but coordinator Jim Liesen says the initial response demonstrates that it is a ministry that is quickly fulfilling a need.

"We're very blessed to have an abundance of people attending – we have people from all around the area, from our parish and others," Jim says of meetings, which began in August. "It must have been needed in our parish at this time. God has really anointed us in abundance."

GriefShare is a biblically based national program that connects the recently bereaved through local support groups. Meetings follow a video-based format and offer those who attend a time for sharing and reflection. Jim says anyone who has lost someone close to them – whether it is a parent, child, spouse, sibling, family member, or friend – is welcome to attend.

"I developed a team of four people to help me with this, because we're very fortunate that we can break into smaller groups to talk about what they're going through," Jim explains.

The program will continue for an initial 13 weeks, and as the holidays approach, special programming will



equip GriefShare members with the tools necessary to cope through parties and family traditions without their loved one at their side.

"We have a special evening where we go over what it's like to go through the holidays the first time," Jim says. "It's to help people know what to do when they don't feel like they can celebrate."

Jim, who lost his wife RoseAnn in 2016, began attending GriefShare at Calvary Baptist church in Hannibal with a friend whose wife had also passed away around the same time.

"We were looking for some way to help us get through our grief," he explains, saying he continued to attend

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PLEASE JOIN US FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS AT ST. ANTHONY PARISH!

- *Crafting Card Party: October 3, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Come make beautiful greeting cards!*
- *Blood Pressure Checks: October 7, after the 4:00 p.m. Mass.*
- *Blood Pressure Checks: October 8, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.*
- *Hospitality Sunday: October 8, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass. Come for donuts, coffee and juice.*
- *Fall Card Party: October 22, 11:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Invite family and friends for lunch and a fun afternoon.*
- *Diamond Dinner: October 15, in Parish Hall. Anyone over the age of 75 is welcome to come.*
- *Trunk or Treat: October 29, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in St. Anthony Parking Lot. Decorate your trunk, car or truck. Please bring treats for at least 100. All are welcome!*

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DAILY MASS: MON, TUE, & THU - 7:30 A.M.

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.

New GriefShare Program Designed to Comfort Mourners *continued from page 7*

sessions there for 32 weeks. "Going into the last session, I thought, 'This is something I want to do.' God put on my heart that I needed to lead other people who are grieving. That's what led me to start the GriefShare program at St. Anthony's."

From there, Jim approached Fr. Tom Donovan about getting a ministry started at the parish, and says Father has been overwhelmingly supportive of this opportunity to serve the emotional needs of our parish.

"It blows me away, the support that he's given this," Jim says. "It helps to know that your priest is concerned with it."

Meetings are held every Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. at the parish. There is no cost to join, and parishioners and friends are welcome to join at any time.

"When the evenings are long, it has given me great inspiration to sit down and draw closer to God," Jim says. "I hope this will also help those people who are lost and don't know where to turn."

If you would like to learn more about this wonderful ministry of faith, fellowship and love, please contact Jim Liesen at 217-257-8147 or visit www.griefshare.org for more information.

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