

DEC
2016

ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

SENIOR BINGO NIGHT

More Than Just Winning the Game

If you've ever attended a Bingo Night, you likely know just how exciting it can be. The anticipation of winning something, however small, is what brings people back to play time after time. But as any good player will tell you, Bingo isn't really about the game – it's about the people you spend time with, as a spirit of laughter and friendship make the game all the more fun.

Jo-Ann Hoopii and Liz Sakamoto have one such friendship. As coordinators of the yearly Senior Bingo — held this year on Dec. 2 — Jo-Ann says their hope for the event each year is to bring people together for fun and fellowship.

"We were high school friends and we parted after high school, but we got back together because of the church," Jo-Ann says. "We go to breakfast almost once a month together and we talked about how we've got this big church, and you see people every week at Sunday Mass but you don't know who they are. We thought we might get people together to get to know each other."

Last year marked the first of two Senior Bingo Nights, and according to Jo-Ann, both were well attended, with more than 70 parishioners over the age of 55 showing up to play. Held in the



St. Anthony cafeteria, participants were asked to bring a small gift in lieu of admission. Those same gifts could later be won as prizes.

Food, door prizes, dessert, and plenty of fellowship round out the evening.

"We have a dinner and relax a little bit, and then we start the Bingo," Jo-Ann says. "In between, we have lucky numbers that we provide prizes for. Art Fillazar does the Bingo calling. He is excellent because he's really funny."

Jo-Ann says high school students were encouraged to bring their parents or attend to sit with older Bingo players who might need

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STEWARDSHIP

Hannah, the Good Steward

What should we do when our prayers are answered?

Is there anything left to do after we have sincerely thanked God for His favors? If God were a human peer, we would probably try to reciprocate by granting Him a favor in return. But the truth is that God cannot be made greater by anything that we do for Him. Instead, God receives our thanks and tells us to “go and do likewise.” That is, He tells us to share with others the

good that He has bestowed on us. And in doing so, we are really sharing God Himself. That is the definition of stewardship!

The Old Testament Book of Samuel contains one of the most poignant examples of stewardship in the entire Bible. The first chapter teaches us of an unhappy, barren woman named Hannah. Desperate in her barrenness, Hannah prays that God will give her a son, vowing that she will raise him to be a man of God.

Imagine Hannah’s elation when she was granted her prayer! When Samuel was born, her heart’s desire had come true! Imagine further the pang of motherly sorrow, as Hannah kept her promise to God by taking Samuel at a young age to be the servant of Eli, the high priest. The Book of Samuel tells us that once Samuel became Eli’s servant, Hannah saw her young son just once a year.

Indeed, Hannah knew that Samuel was truly a gift from God – an answered prayer. Hannah’s response is that of the Good Steward – with an attitude of both gratitude and sacrifice, she gave up her son to honor God. One imagines that Hannah probably struggled with this sacrifice during those first years. She probably did not know what God had in store for her son. Yet, through her faithfulness, God used him as a gift to an entire nation. Samuel would, in time, become one of the greatest prophets of Jewish history.

Sometimes it is difficult to understand the sacrifices we make in the name of stewardship, while the results may just be impossible to miss! However, He asks that we continue to be faithful in either case. God has undoubtedly bestowed gifts on all of us – at whatever the cost, we are to “go and do likewise.”



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

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. Roland Bunda

Fr. Roland Bunda, S.M.

“THERE IS A GREAT NEED FOR THE WOMEN’S PRISON MINISTRY”

In the spring of 2015, parishioner Monica Morakis heard a conference speaker describe a prison ministry on Oahu, and the inspiration for a new ministry here at St. Anthony was sparked! After receiving Fr. Roland’s blessing to begin a similar ministry here in our parish, Monica, joined by Hiedi Elizares, got right to work. Now, not even two years later, these two women have developed a growing ministry that serves women at the Maui Community Correctional Center (MCCC) just down the road from our church. Through their work with this ministry, Monica and Hiedi have been given the opportunity to act as the hands and feet of Christ, immersing themselves in the important works of mercy that the Holy Scripture so clearly outlines for us in Matthew 25:31-40.

According to Monica, this ministry – Malama Na Wahine Ke Akua, or the Women’s Prison Ministry – fills a gap in service to incarcerated women here on Maui.

“There is a great need for this,” Monica explains. “The men in prison tend to get the attention, and the women not as much.”

Looking to fill that need over the past two years has often been an exercise in patience for Monica and Hiedi. The process to become approved as a volunteer in the prison system is a fairly lengthy one, requiring special training and the completion of a test administered by the state prison system. Having fulfilled all of the requirements, Monica and Hiedi finally received approval to enter the prison for the first time last month!

The two women view this long waiting period as the Lord’s way of fully preparing them for their new ministry. As they waited on approval to enter the prison, they were able to find other ways to begin serving the women at MCCC by welcoming



(From left) Cindy Lee, Hiedi Elizares, Kathy Shimada, and (kneeling) Monica Morakis after completing the Volincor training and testing that allows them to volunteer in the prison.

prisoners as they are being released, and gifting them with a basket of essential items.

“It ended up that Monica and I going through this whole process was like a cocoon stage where God was molding us until we were really ready,” Hiedi says. “You know the saying – ‘in His time.’ The process of getting here has really made me humble. In the meantime, we needed to do something while we waited for the call. So, we joined a group called the Maui Coming Home Group, and they needed somebody to give something to these ladies as they were coming out. They have nothing – no slippers, deodorant, anything. So, we now do the baskets.”

When Hiedi and Monica asked the parish for donations to create baskets of essential items for the released prisoners, the response was overwhelming. After speaking at just two of the Masses, they received so many items that they ran out of places to store them! Since Hiedi began organizing deliveries in April, the ministry has already given out 14 baskets, and she has been touched by the surprised gratitude of the women.

AT NEED FOR THIS”

MINISTRY AT ST. ANTHONY

“We are the initial welcome that these ladies receive [upon their release],” she says. “The look on their faces – I see it in every single one of those ladies. They say, ‘I was so worried, I didn’t know what was out in the world and a complete stranger welcomed me.’”

Now that Monica and Hiedi have been approved to enter the prison, they are finally able to fulfill their vision of providing a Bible study for the prisoners. They are allowed to visit for one hour on Mondays, and will fill that time with Scripture study, worship songs and life lessons.

“I want to bring church to them,” says Monica, who has led several Bible studies and small groups in the past. “We want to lift them out of any despair or frustration and encourage them. We hope to build relationships and connect with them through the word of God, and hopefully they will be able to see Jesus shining through us. I think when folks come into jail, they have a lot of time to think, so hopefully



Hiedi Elizares and Monica Morakis.

we’ll give them good things to think about, and hope for the future – open their eyes that their future can be bright and they can change their lives if they know Jesus and the Holy Spirit strengthens them.”

In addition to the welcome baskets and Bible study, Monica and Hiedi hope to continue to build this ministry by finding even more ways to help these vulnerable women. They look forward to the possibility of developing a spiritual mentoring program for the women who have participated in the Bible study and been released. They are also inspired by a group on Oahu

that holds “Family Days” of food and entertainment for recently released women prisoners to enjoy with their children, and hope to someday hold a similar event here on Maui.

As the Women’s Prison Ministry continues to grow, Monica is thankful for the support of all our parishioners.

“If you ask our parish, they are so generous and so loving,” she says. “Our parish has a lot of beautiful people in it who love Jesus. I’m really excited about how the parish is responding because it’s a new ministry and we can’t do it alone!”

In addition to the supportive parish community, Hiedi is grateful for the help of the Divine Mercy group, anonymous donors, and people the women know only as “Janet,” “Kauai” and “Helen,” among others. And she is thrilled that Monica took a leap of faith to begin leading this ministry. What an amazing opportunity to share God’s infinite love and mercy to some of the most vulnerable of His people!

Are you interested in becoming involved with the Women’s Prison Ministry? Those who wish to help out with the Bible studies should contact Monica Morakis at 808-281-1441 or monimorakis@aol.com. To help with basket donations and deliveries, talk to Hiedi Elizares any Sunday after the 9 a.m. Mass.

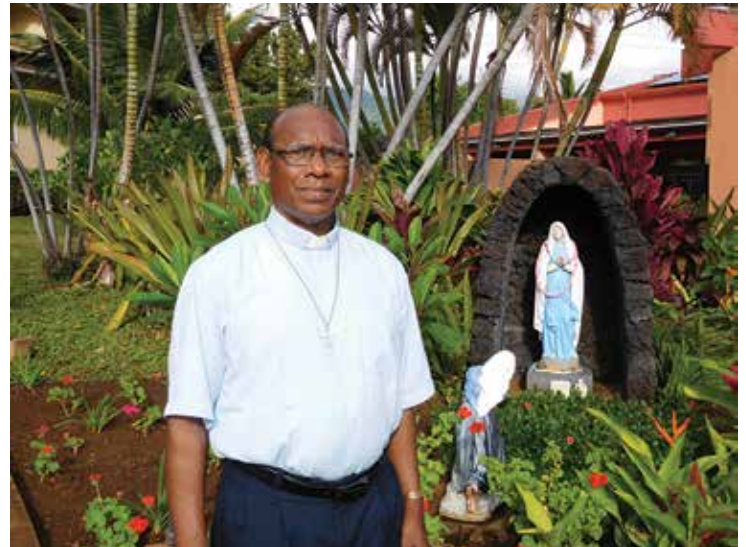
“Your Will Be Done” A Journey of Surrender

“I am very much inspired and challenged by the people’s active participation in the church’s ministries and activities. I believe that God has opened up a new window for me to experience his blessings in the coming days. I am sure that the Lord will bless me abundantly.” – Fr. Sylverius Kerketta, S.M.

Fr. Sylverius Kerketta, S.M. was born in a small, rural village in India where life was often a struggle for him and his family. Though most villagers in the area farmed, Fr. Syl’s father was too poor to own large enough land. So, he was forced to take odd jobs throughout the year in order to support his wife and seven children. When jobs were unavailable, food and money became scarce.

Though Fr. Syl’s family may have been poor in earthly possessions, they were rich in many other ways. Fr. Syl can remember his father reading the Bible often, drawing strength and comfort from its sacred words, and his parents always made a point of gathering their children together each evening for family prayer. Fr. Syl was further blessed to have grown up within a community where the Catholic faith was central to village life. During the month of May, for example, the entire village would gather together each evening to pray the Rosary. There would also be Marian processions, hymns and other festivities aimed to honor our Lord’s mother. The third commandment was also strictly followed by villagers, reserving Sunday as a day for worship and leisure.

“The priest was only able to visit each village in the parish only once a year,” Fr. Syl says. “But we all participated in the Sunday prayer each week, which was run by the catechist in a hut constructed for the purpose of a prayer hall. No one went to work in the field on Sundays and



Fr. Sylverius Kerketta, new Associate Pastor, feels tremendously blessed to be at such a “warm, welcoming and hospitable” community.

on the days of obligation. Most Sundays, people went fishing or enjoyed other leisurely activities.”

Because primary schools were anywhere between three to seven kilometers away, Fr. Syl and his siblings were older when they began attending school. These village schools also only went through the fifth grade, so Fr. Syl had to travel to one of the four diocesan high schools, living in a hostel for a minimal fee. There, the Catholic faith was further instilled in Fr. Syl through further religious instruction, frequent reception of Holy Communion, and communal prayer.

Surrounded by these positive influences, Fr. Syl became increasingly attracted to the religious

Meet Our New Associate Pastor Fr. Sylverius Kerketta, S.M.

life. However, being the oldest son, he felt responsible for caring for his parents and helping his younger siblings through school. So, Fr. Syl began working first as a primary school teacher and then as a mechanical fitter and draftsman. During this time, shares Fr. Syl, he struggled with God – torn between the growing call in his heart and his sense of responsibility. This all changed, however, following a dramatic experience when a fellow employee’s arm got stuck between a machine belt and a pulley, causing it to be torn from his body.

“It really caused me to reflect on my own life,” Fr. Syl says. “I remember saying, ‘Lord, I am thinking about my family situation, wanting to be a support to my parents. But if I had lost my hand or any of my limbs, rather than supporting them, I would become a burden. Even if do not lose my limbs, I know without You, I can do nothing.’ I asked the Lord to take care of my family and I said, ‘Your will be done.’”

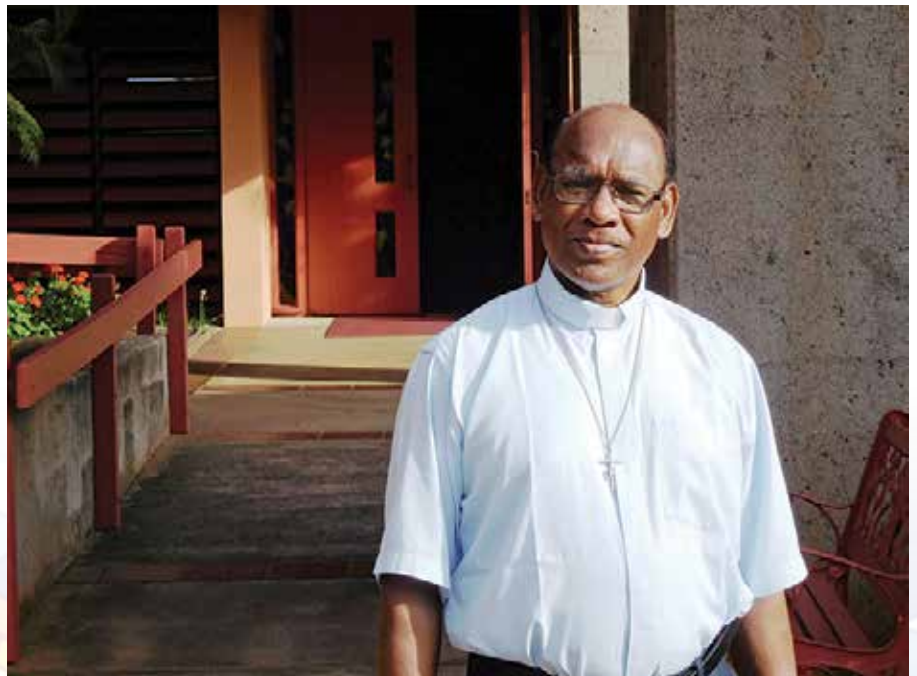
God was faithful and Fr. Syl later joined the Society of Mary at the age of 31. Now nearly 20 years later, Fr. Syl has spent his life trying to continue echoing those same words to Christ. Though at times he feels unworthy of his sacred calling, Fr. Syl is reminded of Christ’s words – “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you” (John 15:16).

“I am glad to be a priest of Jesus,” Fr. Syl says. “I am glad to be able to become an instrument of Christ to carry out his mission and to have a share in his priesthood.”

This past October, Fr. Syl began a new chapter of his priesthood when he became the Associate Pastor here at St. Anthony Catholic Community. Since then, Fr. Syl has been repeatedly blessed by the “warm, welcoming, and hospitable” attitude of parishioners toward him. This has been a great encouragement to him, making him feel at home and inspiring him in his own priestly vocation.

“I am very much inspired and challenged by the people’s active participation in the church’s ministries and activities,” Fr. Syl says. “I believe that God has opened up a new window for me to experience his blessings in the coming days. I am sure that the Lord will bless me abundantly.”

Fr. Syl looks forward to continuing to get to know parishioners, working together in the heavenly vineyard.



Having entrusted his life to God long ago, Fr. Syl is eager to continue doing his best to become “an instrument of Christ” to others.

ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

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Senior Bingo Night continued from front cover

some assistance from a few sets of young eyes. In the past, members of the St. Anthony School community have also come out to help.

“Last year, Mrs. Anne Bailey brought a few of her math students from St. Anthony School, and the students helped the elderly people with their Bingo cards,” Jo-Ann says. “Ms. Teri Tavares was also there with helping the elderly and serving desserts. For our first Bingo night, Mr. Ernie

Mendoza came with some students and sang Christmas carols.”

Jo-Ann says seeing younger members of our parish community helping their more senior counterparts really demonstrate what is important about each Bingo event. She and Liz hope to host Bingo Nights more frequently in the future, and hope it inspires parishioners to get involved and spend more time volunteering with the church.

If you missed this year's Bingo Night and you would like to help in the future, contact Jo-Ann Hoopi at 808-244-7348.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

CHURCH CENTER :: **Saturday** 5:00 p.m. | **Sunday** 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.

SAINT DAMIEN CHAPEL :: **Monday - Friday** 6:30 a.m. | **Saturday** 7:00 a.m.