

MARCH
2017

ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

“THE CANDIDATES AND OUR TEAM ARE LEARNING TOGETHER”
RCIA in Our St. Anthony Catholic Community

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA, is the method by which people desiring to seek full initiation into the Catholic Church can do so, as a process through which people are formed as disciples of Jesus Christ. There are two groups of people included in the RCIA process – the unbaptized, who are called “catechumens,” and the baptized, who are known as “candidates.”

For lifelong St. Anthony member and RCIA coordinator Chiree Souza, the opportunity to guide those seeking the truth of our faith was not an opportunity to be taken lightly.

“I came to an understanding of how important it is for me to share and participate in the life of my parish some time ago,” Chiree says. “I know that the Lord has called me, called all of us really, to serve Him in some way. Nevertheless, when this call came, I accepted it, but not without some reservations.

“When I was asked to serve as the RCIA Coordinator for St. Anthony, I was scared,” she continues. “I did not question my knowledge or experience, as I have a Master’s in Catechism and have served as a catechist for children for many years. However, to serve in such an important position with adults



seemed a bit threatening. The truth is, though, that as much as I thought I really understood the Church and the faith, this has been a learning experience for me. I feel that the candidates and our team and I are learning together.”

This has been an exciting year for Chiree from a number of perspectives.

“At the Easter Vigil last year, we had no one being initiated into full communion in the Church,”

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Stewardship of the Cross

The liturgical year is such a gift to us. As we turn the pages of the calendar, reflecting on the life of Christ, we have the opportunity to consider the most sublime events in the history of mankind. Of these events, perhaps none is more beautiful and worthy of contemplation than the one we are about to commemorate — Jesus' sacrifice of Himself for us on the Cross.

It is fitting and, at the same time, paradoxical. It is fitting that God should do it, because only an infinite God could rid us of the infinite debt we owed by our sin. It is paradoxical that He not only did it, but wanted to do it out of pure love for us, His lowly creatures. What is Jesus trying to show us? Even more staggering, what is He really asking when He exhorts us, in turn, to take up our cross and follow Him?

Jesus freely gave His life for the Church, and He calls us to do the same. Some of us may, in fact, give our entire lives for the Church. But for most of us, this giving takes place by a series of daily actions, both large and small, of Christ-like, sacrificial love — specifically, by giving our time, talent, and treasure for the good of the Church. And yet, by joining these actions with His, we have the chance to participate in that very same sacrifice. This month, let us take the time to examine our hearts and actions in light of Jesus' as we journey with Him toward the Cross.

Jesus gave Himself unselfishly and excessively.

Consider the manner of His sacrifice — one drop of Christ's blood would have been more than suf-

ficient to save the entire human race, and yet Our Lord Jesus chose to shed every last bit. From start to finish, Jesus showed us by His passion that He wanted to do more than what was merely sufficient. If there was more He could give, He gave it. He never stopped to count the cost or to look for what He could get in return.

Jesus made His sacrifice a supreme act of love for the Church.

Counter-cultural even to this day, Jesus actually upheld sacrifice as desirable — the most perfect way to show our love: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13). In His infinite wisdom, Jesus now offers this path to us as the way to holiness: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me" (Lk. 9:23).

Jesus gave Himself willingly and even joyfully.

"No one takes [My life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again" (Jn. 10:18). At the first Eucharist, Jesus even went so far as to say, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you" (Lk. 22:15). Needless to say, the Passover sacrifice to which Jesus referred was not a symbolic one, but was in fact His very Body and Blood He would give for us through the sacrifice of the Cross.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts more like Yours.

A Lenten Stewardship Prayer

"O my God, teach me to be generous:
to serve You as You deserve to be served;
to give without counting the cost;
to fight without fear of being wounded;
to work without seeking rest;
and to spend myself without expecting any reward,
but the knowledge that I am doing Your Holy will."

— St. Ignatius of Loyola

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Lent Is More Than Preparation for Easter

Dear Parishioners,

In 2013, Pope Francis issued his first significant work. It was what is called an “apostolic exhortation” titled *The Joy of the Gospel* (*Evangelii Gaudium* in Latin). While Rome may use fancy words for some of these things, an “exhortation” of this sort does not change any official Church rules or traditions. However, it does offer advice and encouragement about how we should live our lives.

Pope Francis offers this kind of guidance on a regular basis, but this one in particular seems to present us with suggestions that are worthy of our consideration, especially during Lent. The pope called us to become missionary disciples: “The Church which ‘goes forth’ is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 24).

Speaking about his exhortation, Pope Francis said, “One of the riches of the Second Vatican Council was to remind the Church of the two ‘lenses’ of the season of Lent: baptismal and penitential.” In fact, Vatican II noted specifically, “The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent – the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and pen-

ance – should be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. It is by means of them that the Church prepared the faithful for the celebration of Easter, while they hear God’s word more frequently and devote more time to prayer” (*Companion to the Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1348).

It might be well for us to keep these in mind during Lent. There were vows made during our baptism, and this is the time of year to try to fulfill those vows, in addition to reaffirming them. We are given various opportunities to renew these vows, and we may tend to do it automatically without a thought. Now, however, is the time to think. Perhaps during Lent, we can renew these vows as families – and we must not necessarily do it in church or at a Mass. Then, we need to do something during Lent to help each of us understand what that renewal means.

The other important part of Lent pointed out by Pope Francis has to do with penance. Most of us have heard the traditional practices of Lent – fasting, prayer, reception of the Sacraments, and almsgiving. These are things that may bring us closer to Christ. By fasting,



we may gain a greater understanding of the hunger the Lord feels for our souls; by increased prayer, we join in union with God; through the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, we become a greater part of that union with God; through giving alms, we empty ourselves in part, just as Jesus emptied Himself for us on the cross.

This is a time to do more than prepare for Easter. This is a time to change how we may approach living and our faith. God bless you now and throughout this holiest of seasons.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Roland Bunda

Fr. Roland Bunda, S.M.

Thrift Shop Provides B

Our parish Thrift Shop at 1627 Mill St., Wailuku, is much more than an affordable place for our community to shop. It might be a place where the Spirit calls you to service.

Josette Barrett and her daughter, Rachel, are volunteers at the Thrift Shop.

“The Thrift Shop provides the community with a place to drop off their donations and it offers affordable prices for those who shop there,” Josette says. “All kinds of people come through the doors. Everyone is welcomed and treated with respect, no matter their situation. Many people come by just to talk with Trish and the volunteers. Helping people in the community who come through the doors of the Thrift Shop who are in need, or who just want a sympathetic ear, leaves you with a great feeling that you are living the Gospel message.”

The Thrift Shop hours are 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Our parishioners and others in the community are encouraged to donate during business hours. Items accepted are clean, usable donations, but beds, furniture, appliances or large bulky items are not taken.

Volunteering at the Thrift Shop has special meaning for Josette and Rachel.

“Working at the thrift shop has allowed Rachel, who has



Josette Barrett and her daughter, Rachel, volunteer regularly at the St. Anthony Thrift Shop.

special needs, to feel that she is an active and valued member of her church community and that she has much to offer,” Josette says. “She has learned a lot of job skills since she began volunteering, and both the staff and the customers who walk through the doors are very welcoming and accepting of her. As Catholics, we know all life is precious and a blessing from God. Rachel is the perfect example of how people with disabilities can, and do, give back to their communities. I know from the comments and compliments I receive from customers and staff that she is do-

ing a great job and that she has touched their hearts in a very positive way. The whole experience has been so amazing that we are both looking at other programs in the parish that we could become involved in.”

In looking beyond the Thrift Shop, Josette encourages others with disabilities in our parish to become involved.

“There are many other young people with disabilities in our parish,” Josette says.

“Hopefully other parents will look into the many opportunities that our church community here at St. Anthony has to offer, and

Bargains, Opportunities

sign your sons and daughters up. Get them involved. Those who know of families with young persons with disabilities, encourage them to get out there and volunteer. Be supportive.”

Josette encourages us all to volunteer at the Thrift Shop.

“It can be a lot of work, but it is also fun,” Josette says. “Trish, the coordinator, and the other volunteers are really great to work with. Everyone has ideas and many different gifts to offer, and collectively, the job gets done. There is always some-

thing new and interesting things going on and you can make your own hours. I would recommend volunteering. Everyone has something to offer. Let the Spirit move you!”

In closing, Josette offers this thought, from 1 Corinthians 12:4-7: “There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit, there are different forms of service but the same Lord, there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.”

If you would like more information about the Thrift Shop, or would like to volunteer, please call the parish office at 808-244-4148.

RCIA in Our St. Anthony Catholic Community continued from front cover

she says. “This year is a different story, as we have five catechumens and 10 candidates who will come into the Church as part of our St. Anthony Community at the Easter Vigil Mass.”

Traditionally, it is at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday when the elect are initiated into the Catholic Church through their reception of the Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, the Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation. As stated, those already baptized enter into full communion in the Church and celebrate the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist. It is a joyful occasion for the whole Church, but it does not conclude the RCIA process.

RCIA continues to meet throughout the season of Easter – through Pentecost Sunday, on June 4 this year. This is a time of reflection during which the new members of our Church can meditate

upon their initiation and seek to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith and way of life through the new experience of being fully practicing members of our Catholic community.

Bishop Larry Silva has commented on the fact that we as the members of the community have an important, continuing role.

“If we talk to all the people who come into the Church through RCIA, they indicate to us that someone evangelized them,” he says. “It is usually a family member, a co-worker, a friend. Somebody reached out to them, and it was not, in most cases, a priest or a bishop. It was somebody closer to them, that they rub elbows with every day. We have to learn how to do that, and we have to have a way of training our people to actually do that.”

The 2018 RCIA classes will begin in September. Anyone who is interested or who has questions may call Chiree Souza at 808-269-8178 or contact the parish office at 808-244-4148.

What Is the Chrism Mass?

The Chrism Mass celebrated throughout the Catholic world is traditionally held on the morning of Holy Thursday, unless for pastoral reasons the local bishop or archbishop moves it to another suitable day during Holy Week.

There are basically two purposes for this annual High Mass. At the Chrism Mass, the archbishop (or bishop) blesses three oils — the oil of catechumens (*oleum catechumenorum* or *oleum sanctorum*), the oil of the infirm (*oleum infirmorum*) and holy chrism (*sacrum chrisma*) — which will be used in the administration of the sacraments throughout the diocese for the following year. In addition, archdiocesan and religious order priests renew their vows.

Anointing with oils has been a practice in the Church since Old Testament times. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says this about holy oils: “Anointing with oil has all these meanings in the sacramental life. The pre-baptismal anointing with the oil of catechumens signifies cleansing and strengthening; the anointing of the sick expresses healing and comfort. The post-baptismal anointing with sacred chrism in Confirmation and ordination is the sign of consecration. By Confirmation Christians, those who are anointed, share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which he is filled, so that their lives may give off ‘the aroma of Christ’” (1294).

Each of us Catholics already has received some of the benefits given through these holy oils — namely, in the Sacrament of Baptism and in the conferring of the Sacrament of Confirmation. We hope to someday obtain further graces through them in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (formerly called extreme unction). Yet, most of us know very little about these sacred oils. Moreover, few of us are able to be present when the solemn blessing of them takes place in a cathedral church.

The whole concept of “anointing” has a strong Church tradition. Throughout the Bible, various references indicate the importance of olive oil in daily life. Oil was used in cooking, particularly in the making of bread, that basic food substance for nourishment; as



a fuel for lamps; and as a healing agent in medicine. Moreover, with oil, the Jews anointed the head of a guest as a sign of welcome, beautified one’s appearance, and prepared a body for burial.

Sacred Scripture also attests to the spiritual symbolism of oil. Psalm 45:7 reads, “You love justice and hate wickedness; therefore, God your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellow kings,” signifying the special designation from God and the joy of being His servant. Moreover, to be “the anointed” of the Lord indicated receiving a special vocation from the Lord and the

empowerment with the Holy Spirit to fulfill that vocation: Jesus, echoing the words of Isaiah, spoke, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore, He has anointed me” (Lk 4:18). St. Paul emphasized this point as well, “God is the one Who firmly establishes us along with you in Christ; it is He Who anointed us and has sealed us, thereby depositing the first payment, the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Cor 1:21). Therefore, the symbolism of oil is rich sanctification, healing, strengthening, beautification, dedication, consecration, and sacrifice.

At the Chrism Mass, the archbishop will bless three different oils: the oil of catechumens, for adult and infant Baptisms; the oil of the sick, for the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick; and the oil of chrism — a fragrant oil blessed only by the bishop for Baptisms, Confirmations, ordination, and the consecration of sacred spaces. After Mass, each priest receives a sufficient amount of all three oils to be used at parishes, schools, hospitals, and other places where they may be assigned and functioning.

In addition, the priests renew their vows at this Mass. The archbishop will ask the priests as a group, “Beloved sons, in remembrance of that day when Christ our Lord conferred His priesthood on His Apostles, and on us, are you resolved to renew, in the presence of your bishop and God’s holy people, the promises you once made?” To this, the priests respond in unison, “I am.”

Please consider attending the Chrism Mass as part of your Lenten journey.

“GIVE BACK WHEREVER WE FIND OURSELVES”

Diamonds in the Rough

Valerie Standing will pass a beautiful and important milestone this year. As she prepares to celebrate her 75th birthday, Valerie reflects on her faith journey and those who mentored and nurtured her along the way from her upbringing in postwar England to Maui in the middle 1970s.

“As life moved on and my working career took me to other countries with many challenges, I always remembered my core faith,” Valerie says. “At the time, I did not realize that during these years, I was practicing stewardship.”

Valerie is one of the members of an informal faith community group affectionately called Diamonds in the Rough. The seven, and now eight, members of the group all celebrated their 70th birthdays together on May 15, 2012.

“We invited all those having birthdays along with their families for an opportunity to gather, enjoy fellowship and talk story,” says Fr. Roland Bunda, a fellow member of the group. “We said ‘no gifts’ because it was a moment not of presents, but of presence.”

The program for the event celebrating the “seven soaring seventies” was simple and full of family and fellowship.

“We gathered for dinner and set up a stage for entertainment and music,” Fr. Roland says. “We prayed together and had catering and a potluck.”

Each member of the Diamonds in the Rough contributes to St. Anthony’s faith community in different ways. Valerie’s stewardship journey began in a loving and close Catholic family unit.

“Born in a convent hospital and baptized on the Feast of St. Anthony and having a priest in my mother’s family, I think I was off to a good start,” Valerie says. “With no Catholic schools in my area, I attended Protestant church schools, but our parish priest was diligent with our catechism studies.”

When Valerie arrived in Maui and joined St. Anthony’s welcoming community, her desire to be an active participant in the church was strong.



Diamonds in the Rough member Valerie Standing

“Now, still experiencing those desires, I look back with gratitude and fondness remembering those parishioners, pastors, brothers, and sisters who inspired and taught me so much,” Valerie says. “I am rich in friendships with my Diamonds in the Rough companions.”

This year, the Diamonds in the Rough – now eight members strong – will once again come together for fellowship in celebration of their 75th birthdays. Fr. Roland has invited them to the clergy’s residence to dine together, talk story and usher in this next year on March 27.

“All life is a gift, and we are really blessed,”

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Fr. Roland says. “We all still have energy to serve the parish. I feel blessed that I have good health to serve as the pastor. We can give back wherever we find ourselves.”

Valerie hopes that the example of the Diamonds in the Rough and all those who quietly live their lives loving and inspiring the parish family will encourage others to join them and lead the next generation of stewards.

“Each one of us prays that those who are a tad younger than us are filled with the Holy Spirit and answer the call to active stewardship,” Valerie says. “My biological family may be 8,000 miles away, but in prayerful gratitude I am blessed to be surrounded by my St. Anthony family.”

Let us join together in celebrating the 75th birthdays of the Diamonds in the Rough and thanking them for their living examples of stewardship!

“I look back with gratitude and fondness remembering those parishioners, pastors, brothers, and sisters who inspired and taught me so much. I am rich in friendships with my Diamonds in the Rough companions.” – Valerie Standing



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.