

ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

“SOMETIMES, YOU JUST TAKE A LEAP OF FAITH” *Parishioner Juliette Rodrigues Reflects on the Importance of Trusting in God’s Call*

Juliette Rodrigues has been a parishioner here at St. Anthony ever since she first moved here in 1982. In these past 35 years, she has faced her share of changes and challenges. And yet, one constant has been there with her through it all – her unwavering trust in the Lord. Juliette has always sought to answer God’s call when she hears it, and He has certainly been keeping her busy here in our parish!

Currently, Juliette is a member of the Parish Council, participates on the Prayer Line, serves as a lector, sings with the choir, and cantors. In addition, her desire to invest in the future of the Church by reaching out to its young people has recently led her to become a member of the Youth Ministry team. Now, at Fr. Roland’s request, she is also preparing to head the parish’s Liturgy Committee. When each of these various opportunities to serve have arisen, Juliette has always tried to keep in mind the words of Mary when she said ‘yes’ to God’s call: “Be it unto me according to Thy word” (Lk 1:38).

Juliette’s willingness to serve in the Church comes largely from her Catholic upbringing and the example of her parents. When she was a child, priests were often guests in her family’s home, and her mother would bring the priest’s vestments and



Juliette and her family as she is recognized on the occasion of her retirement for her years of service to the County of Maui – (from left) daughters Jody and Jaime, husband Colin, Juliette, Mayor Alan Arakawa, and sons Kurt and Kyle

linens home to wash. Juliette’s grandfather would lead novenas at parishioner’s homes. She remembers cleaning church and polishing candleholders at Holy Rosary Church in Paia with her older sisters. During her college years, when she saw many friends drift away from the Church, Juliette continued to make an effort to attend Mass on Sundays and live the values that had been instilled in her by her parents and grandparents.

Later, following a divorce that left her with two small daughters to care for, Juliette faced the challenge the



Cultivate Your Personal Garden for Christ this Spring

Everyone loves springtime. The weather is warmer and beautiful flowers are blooming all around us.

But anyone with a beautiful garden will attest that the flowers do not magically appear as if the season change itself miraculously makes the flowers bloom. Beautiful flowers and lush gardens are the result of the gardener's hard work.

Imagine that a man is given some flower seeds. The man then buries the seeds in the ground and leaves them on their own. As the months pass and rain falls, some seeds may receive enough nourishment to bloom. But simply burying seeds in the ground will hardly make for a gorgeous garden. Rather, if the man truly wants to enjoy many beautiful flowers, there is much care and work ahead. Recognizing the hidden beauty within these simple seeds, he must cultivate the ground, plant the seeds in a solid foundation, then water

and fertilize them throughout the year. Only then will he see the proper fruit these seeds were made to bear.

This simple illustration speaks to the heart of us this season – not only as we look around at the flowers, but more importantly as we reflect on the springtime of the Church. We are celebrating the great feast of Easter when, through His death and resurrection, Christ offers us the greatest gift of all – eternal life with Him forever. This celebration leads us to reflect on the many gifts God has given us in this life and the fruit they will bear, especially as we look to life eternal.

He has given each of us a multitude of gifts so that we can better serve Him and bring others to Him. Do we notice the hidden potential of our gifts? Do we see them, like the seed – as seemingly small, yet so full of fruit? Everything we have – our time, talents, and treasure – is a gift from the Lord. Do we accept gifts in gratitude, then

put them to use by cultivating and nourishing them so they will bear the proper fruit?

Just like springtime flowers that we enjoy, our time, talents, and treasure need to be cared for. Our gifts need to be cultivated and nourished. Only then will we see them for what they are – wonderful gifts given by God meant for His greater glory.

Like the seeds, if we use our gifts flippantly, we may see some fruits here and there. But we are called to so much more – we are called to build a beautiful garden. We are called to offer God the most beautiful flowers of all.

This season, as we look at all the beautiful flowers around us and enjoy God's creation, let us think about the seeds in our own lives. Ask yourself if you have accepted the gifts God has given you – your time, talents, and treasure – and have cultivated and cared for them properly. Or, do they just sit dormant within you yearning to bloom?

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Give Thanks to the Lord, It Is Right and Just

Dear Parishioners,

Every time I prepare my monthly letter to you in this newsletter, I am reminded how blessed I am. Being a priest truly is a blessing. While the job is not always easy — a pastor has many responsibilities — the rewards are equally humbling.

As we complete our preparations and then share in our celebrations of the Triduum and Easter, I am also prompted to think about the holiest things I do. By far, the holiest is celebrating Mass, and especially consecrating the holy bread and wine so Christ is present among us. The very word “consecration” literally means “association with the sacred.” To have that duty is incredible. I have never taken it for granted,



and although it may appear at times to be somewhat automatic, it never is for me.

Almost all of us are familiar with the Mass, and with what we do and say leading up to the high point – the Eucharist. But I think we must guard against becoming too casual in our responses and what we say. That is what I work to avoid, but I believe you need to work just as diligently to make sure that you are listening, hearing, and being aware of what you are saying. For us as Catholics, the Mass is the most important sacred act in the Church.

I suppose I could write a whole series of letters or articles on the meaning of everything we say and do at Mass, but I was thinking of one exchange in particular during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. It is something we may say in sort of a habitual way, but I firmly believe each of us must truly consider what we are saying.

I say to you, “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,” and you respond, “It is right and just.” Think about what that means, because it is very much at the heart of stewardship. I am saying we need to thank God, show gratitude for everything we are and everything with which we are gifted – and you, at least in words,



acknowledge that doing that is exactly what we need to do. The Mass is filled with statements and exchanges of that sort, and I would ask that we really think about what they truly mean.

Even the simple exchange between the Eucharistic Minister and you at the actual reception of the Host is heavy with meaning. We say, “The Body of Christ,” and you reply “Amen.” In that instance, “Amen” means “Yes, I do believe this is Jesus.” Like myself, you are blessed. Sometimes we just need to realize it. Happy Easter!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Roland Bunda

Fr. Roland Bunda, S.M.

CRAFTING FOR A CAUSE

Hui Na Lima Kokua

You may be familiar with St. Teresa of Calcutta's famous quote, "Do small things with great love." And that's just what our Hui Na Lima Kokua group does here at St. Anthony.

"If the world could be like our craft group it would be a wonderful place," says Valerie Standing. "It doesn't matter where we come from. We all have the same end goal."



"Uncle Reggie" Cabacungan is the inspiration for the craft group's new Rosary Project.

Hui Na Lima Kokua, or "a group of helping hands" is known by most people simply as "the craft group," – or, as member Br. David Quigley affectionately calls it "the arts and crafts crowd." The group, which began in the late '70s, was initially formed to help raise money to help rebuild the church after the devastating fire of 1977. From its humble beginnings with a bake sale, to now raising money by selling crafts at the annual Christmas Bazaar, the group has always had one purpose in mind, to support the parish community.

The group's members compose a variety of talent, from sewing, knitting and quilting, to leatherwork and beadwork. While there are many seasoned crafters, those who would like to learn are also very much welcome to take part.

"Sometimes, there are younger ladies who come in who have not

done these things before, and they want to learn," Br. David says. "By having the group, they can learn how to do some of these things."

"Some of the original members have passed on, but they handed on to us their skills, they were very beloved parishioners, they gave everything to our church," adds Valerie, who serves as the Chair of the ministry.

Br. David mentions the great joy that comes from being able to bless someone else through the work that you've created.

"You put yourself into making it, and whoever is buying it really wants it and the joy they have in having it and using it," he says.

"I feel like we're all asked to give of our time, talent, and treasure, and there is something that I can do to contribute in some small way," Valerie adds.

The group meets once a month, usually on the last Friday

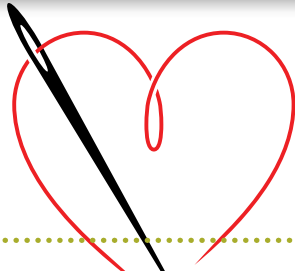


(From left) Br. David, Fr. Steve Tutas, "Uncle Reggie" Cabacungan, June Borges, Eleanor Fukuda, and (seated) Mary Tom with our quilt project.



(From left) Eleanor Fukuda, June Borges, Mela Dickson, Norma Visitacion, and Catherine Giamenelli work on various crafting projects.

Kokua



of the month. For the crafters, this is not only an opportunity to come together and share their projects, working together, but it's also an opportunity to enjoy each other's company.

"We eat, we laugh, and we get together and exchange our skills – it's a social ministry!" Valerie says. "If there's any sickness in our group, any problems, we help each other out. We're living our faith through our companionship. They are like my sisters. When we pray, we always say how grateful we are for these friendships that have blossomed from this project. We're like a family related by our faith, and our love for one another and our parish."

The group is also beginning an important new project, The Rosary Project, in honor of one of their beloved members, "Uncle Reggie" Cabacungan, who recently passed away. A prolific

maker of crafts, Uncle Reggie was most famous for the rosaries he made for other parishioners and newcomers. Although they may no longer have his skill, the other members of the craft group hope to keep his memory alive, as they begin to create and donate rosaries in his honor.

"He was a quiet and unassuming man," Valerie says. "He sat in the back row at church, he never made a fuss and he was a true inspiration to us. Even in the face of adversity, he carried his cross and he still gave to everybody. He gave in his friendship and love and he gave in what he created."

Valerie and Br. David encourage other parishioners to come see what the craft group is all about and enjoy fellowship, whether you already have a skill or are looking to pick up a new one.

"We welcome anyone who wants to come," Valerie says. "People say, 'Oh, I don't do crafts,' but there isn't anybody in our parish who doesn't have the skills to join us if they want."

"Come along, join the meeting and see



Despite living in California, for years, Lena Wachnicki has graciously sewn these beautiful quilts. Her remarkable dedication has made such a difference to our efforts all these years.

what's going on," Br. David adds. "Spend a day with us and see what it's like. Any time you learn a new skill and you work with people, you're gaining something."

And importantly, as Valerie points out, involvement in the craft group is a real reflection of what stewardship truly means to our parish at large.

"If everybody in our parish stepped up with their individual talents, we would be overwhelmed with marvelous things," Valerie says. "The more people we have, the more fun we have."

"I would say we're the most fun group in the parish," she concludes, with a smile.



Elizabeth Sakamoto and Mary Tom work on a quilt.

If you would like more information on Hui Na Lima Kokua, please see the parish bulletin or contact Brenda Phillips at the parish office, brendamaui@hawaii.rr.com or 808-244-4148.

“WE WANT TO SERVE AND GROW CLOSER TO GOD”

Pat and Ramon Garcia Reflect on Stewardship

Parishioner Pat Garcia has been known to tell her husband, Ramon, “If you are ever looking for me, you can find me at the church!” And indeed, this couple is involved in so many parish activities and ministries, it seems they spend most of their free time right here at St. Anthony.

Both Pat and Ramon are members of the St. Anthony Filipino Catholic Club and the Marianist community, serve as Eucharistic Ministers, clean the church monthly, help out with the Rosary month in October, and regularly donate items to the Prison Ministry. Ramon also serves as a cantor at the Saturday evening Mass. Pat participates in the Divine Mercy Devotion group, the Thursday Bible Study and the Wednesday Novena, in addition to coming to the church each weekday morning to help clean the candle holders before daily Mass. So, chances are very good that if you are looking for this pair on any given day, you may find them



Pat and Ramon Garcia

here at the parish!

Throughout their 36 years of marriage, Pat and Ramon – who were both raised Catholic in the Philippines – have always been faithful churchgoers. Here in Hawaii, where they have spent their entire married life, they found many more opportunities to study Scripture. After learning more about the faith and making two pilgrimages in recent years, their desire to serve the Church continued to grow.

“In 2012, we went to Europe to witness the canonization of the seven saints,” Pat says. “We also got to see where Our Lady of Fatima appeared. It was a good reminder that you always have to trust in the

Lord and that prayers are very strong. In 2014, we traveled to the Holy Land and renewed our vows in Cana. That was really a blessing. It also helped me understand more about the Bible. We got to see where Jesus was born, where He died,

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“It is a lot of running and running, but this is all for God. We want to serve and grow closer to God. It can be hard, but we make a point to find the time. We always do that because we want to thank the Lord for all our answered prayers. We offer Him our daily intentions and pray the Rosary every night. This is all to thank Him for the many blessings that we receive each day.” – Pat Garcia

Pat and Ramon Garcia Reflect on Stewardship

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and we did the Stations of the Cross there.”

While the Garcias serve the parish in many capacities, one of the ministries that is closest to Pat’s heart right now is the Filipino Catholic Club. As treasurer, she is enjoying helping the president with membership building and fundraising. The club – which is open to people of all nationalities – meets once a month, and Pat looks forward to more and more parishioners becoming a part of this wonderful group.

Like his wife, Ramon is active in several parish activities, but there is certainly one ministry that has had the greatest impact on his faith life – music ministry. Serving as a cantor for the past four years has been an incredible blessing for Ramon.

“I had started singing in the choir after being invited to a choir practice,” Ramon recalls. “Then one night we were practicing and someone said, ‘Ramon, I think you could cantor.’ I couldn’t say no, so I tried. Back then, I didn’t even know how to read notes. The following week, I was the cantor and I was so inspired by it. So now, I am growing – I’m learning.”

Having just recently retired after a career of service with Child Protective Services, Ramon is enjoying having more time to spend getting things done in the home and staying active in the parish. Although Pat is still working full time

as a surgical assistant at Maui Oral Surgery, it doesn’t seem to slow her stewardship activities down one bit! On weekday mornings, she begins her workday at 7:45 a.m. – but not before coming to the church at 5:30 a.m. to clean the candle holders. Much of her free time on evenings and weekends is also spent at the parish.

“It is a lot of running and running, but this is all for God,” Pat says. “We want to serve and grow closer to God. It can be hard, but we make a point to find the time. We always do that because we want to thank the Lord for all our answered prayers. We offer Him our daily intentions and pray the Rosary every night. This is all to thank Him for the many blessings that we receive each day.”

Side by side, this loving husband and wife pair continues to walk the path of service that the Lord calls us all to follow, and their greatest hope for the future is to be able to serve God and His people for many years to come.

“My wife is always inspiring me,” Ramon says.

“When I was asked to cantor, I told her I didn’t think I could do it, and she said, ‘You can, you can, you can!’ So, I asked God to help me, and the choir of angels to help me. Now, there is only one thing I truly ask from God – to help me have a longer life so I can serve Him in many ways. I don’t wish for money – I just wish to be given a longer time to serve Him.”



The Garcia family – Patrick, Ramon, Pat, and John Ray

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“Sometimes, You Just Take a Leap of Faith” continued from front cover

same way she has always approached both the good and bad in life – by trusting in God’s plan.

“In life, I found that things don’t always go as planned,” she says. “You always need to be open and pray and listen for God to tell you what to do. Sometimes, you just take a leap of faith and say, ‘Okay, Lord, I don’t know how I’m going to do this, but I know I can do anything as long as you lead me.’”

Indeed, the Lord did have a wonderful plan in store for Juliette, and in 1984 she married a dear old high school friend, Colin, here at St. Anthony.

“Colin came from a strong Catholic family as well, so that really helps to strengthen your relationship and your marriage and the way you bring up your children,” Juliette says. “Colin loves my daughters as he loves me and raised them as his own. Even my in-laws showed me and my girls unconditional love from the very beginning. I was so blessed and thank God every day for my blessings.”

Juliette and Colin were blessed with two sons

to join the girls, and the couple found that trusting in their faith became even more important over the years as they raised four children.

“We just had so many blessings along the way that came up unexpectedly and things that fell into place,” Juliette says. “And for that, we are so thankful. For that, we try to give back. Sometimes I look back on things in my life and just know – that was the Lord. We have to be thankful and not take things for granted, so we always try to give back in some way.”

Juliette strives to keep her heart and mind open to embracing God’s plan for her.

“You just need to trust,” she affirms. “Everything happens for a reason, and it might be good or bad, but it’s all to make us better – to make us stronger and able to persevere. You have to live your life according to what God planned for you – you never know what direction it will take you. You just have to trust Him.”

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.