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The Cathedral Star

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CLOUT aims to stop “school to prison” pipeline

The statistics are sobering: 25% of all Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) students who begin high school don't graduate. Nationally, students who do not graduate are three times more likely to be incarcerated. In Kentucky, a large number of juvenile court cases are initiated in the school system.

Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together (CLOUT) is determined to change things. At the organization's annual Nehemiah Action Assembly, held March 22 at the Kentucky International Convention Center, CLOUT members began the process that will plug the “school to prison” pipeline as part of the 2010 focus issue of Juvenile Crime and Violence.

Each year CLOUT, an interdenominational organization, chooses one social justice issue to research and then influence political and civic leaders for support and solutions to that problem. In 2009, the organization targeted payday lenders and other unfair financial practices. The newly announced “Bank on Louisville” program for previously unbanked people was a direct result of this action.

The 2010 Assembly drew over 1600 representatives from more than 20 CLOUT member congregations, including a contingent of 64 representing the Cathedral of the Assumption CLOUT Network. Father Fichteman offered the convention's prayer of invocation.

Several community leaders addressed the convention, including Louisville Metro Police Chief Robert White, District Court Judges Angela McCormick-Bisig and David Holton, Jefferson County Attorney Mike O'Connell, Jefferson County

Teachers Association Board member Edith Yarbrough, and Deputy Director of Kentucky Youth Advocates DeWayne Westmoreland. Speakers gave their support to CLOUT and vowed to use their resources to implement the proposed restorative justice practices that CLOUT recommends as an alternative to jail for juveniles who commit minor offenses, and to suspension and alternative schools for students with discipline issues. Re-

storative justice practices involve bringing together the offender and the victim to hold the young person more accountable, to provide the opportunity for restitution to the victim for the harm that was done, and to help the healing of relationships.

CLOUT members follow up after the Assembly to assure that these commitments result in action.

“The Cathedral has been a member of CLOUT for about a year,” said Social Concerns Coordinator Sarah Scheibe. The Cathedral CLOUT Justice Ministry network has about 50 members, including 5 Team Captains, and is steadily growing as more people hear of this social justice action opportunity. According to CLOUT Cathedral Committee Chairperson, Barbara Knebelkamp, “Now is a good time to think about joining CLOUT as the exploratory process for next year's issue will begin with house meetings in September and October.” For more information contact Sarah Scheibe at sscheibe@cathedraloftheassumption.org or 582-2971.

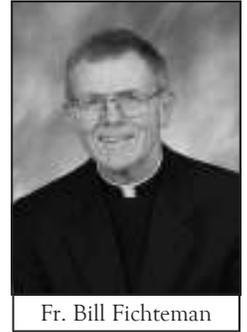


Top two photos: 2010 Nehemiah Assembly. Bottom photo: 2009 CLOUT press conference in Cathedral's Patterson Education Center.

~Ashley Medley

Welcome, New Parishioners!

Will & Katie Adamchik, Ira
Victor Agruso
John Alegnani
Keith Atchison, Celeste, Gregory
Lyanne Blazquez-Acosta, Sophia
Leslie Buddeke, Charles, Emily
Mary Ellen Buning
Hylton & Karen Dayes, Brandon
Deacon Robert & Bonnie Dever
Larry & Amy Droege, Tyler, Abby
Donna Dupont
Charles Fickentsher
Bill & Babe Glasser
Gwen Godfrey
Shelly Gubser
Andi & Danielle Hajdini, Isabelle
Marilyn Hanish
Sarah Hardison
Rudy & Chris Havira, Steve, Phil
Mark & Kimberly Hawkins, Ayden
Sara Heitzman
Brother Silas Henderson
Joe & Stacy Hettich
Gregory & Kimberley Hillis, Isaac, Samuel
Patty Hughes
Wendy Hyland
Mark & Elizabeth Kaminski, Lisa
Mary Beth Killingbeck
Julie King
Ron & Bobbie Kmecak
Chris & Lynn Lee
Juanita Lentini
Donald & Diane McAllister
Joseph & Barbara MacDonald, Joey, Noah
Trevor Mahoney
Ellen Means
Justin Meiman
Rachel Mersch
John Moore
Mary Carol Mosley
Jessica Nord
Joshua & Jessica O'Bryan, Riley, Jack
James & Joanne O'Malley, Amanda, Allyson
Brenda Rabiteau
Sean Raley
Jenny Schinke
Jim Schmidt
Russ & Rosalind Scott
Mark Shelby
Christen Steiner
Peter & Lisa Steiner, Julia, Paul, Molly, Beth
Bob Stewart
Suzanne Taylor
John Thompson
Tony & Connie Wheat, Stevrecia, Kayden, Roblynn
Denise Wyatt
Rob & Theresa Young, Kaitlin, Kevin
Dan & Kathy Ziegler, Austin, Danielle



Fr. Bill Fichteman

This summer has seen a continuation of the work to restore the exteriors of the Cathedral, residence and office building. You will see pictures elsewhere in this issue of *The Cathedral Star*. The Church work is complete, and now we are moving on to the residence work. I would love to see us complete the office building restoration and the plaza repaving and landscaping this summer also. The sidewalk in front of Church is particularly unsightly, and also, in places, dangerous. Its completion, however, is dependent on more funds coming as part of the *Building a Future of Hope* capital campaign effort.

And, have you noticed the new lighting of the sanctuary area in church? I have always thought that the “back-lighting” of the sanctuary almost “washed out” the areas where the important action takes place. The altar, ambo and presider’s area are now highlighted visually. The new system is flexible and can be programmed for several different combinations of lighting. This will be particularly helpful when we have choral groups who sing from the steps in front of the altar.

Other new things happening at the Cathedral in the days to come include a Renew International program called *Why Catholic?* This is a four-year program, made available through the Archdiocese and the Renew International group, whose main feature is seasons of six weeks each of structured small group sessions that typically are held in parishioners’ homes. The first session will be in Lent, 2011, and will be focused on the theology of the Christian sacraments. You will be hearing much more about this in the near future. Small group prayer discussion was one of the needs expressed by Cathedral parishioners in the survey we did several years ago.

Fr. Dale Cieslik, Tim Tomes, and I met recently with Mike and Patricia LaPaglia, museum consultants, to plan the next phase of development of the Archdiocese of Louisville History Center in the Patterson Education Building. With the help of our parishioner, retired librarian Ilona Franck, and book appraiser Charles Bartman, we are moving toward evaluating and eventually selling some of the old book collection we have in the History Center. We have some valuable old books. We will keep the ones of historical importance to the Archdiocese. Now, a personal note or two: I have been named a Distinguished Alumnus of Bellarmine University and will receive this honor at a dinner in September. Also, I have accepted an invitation to serve a three-year term, beginning in October, on the St. Meinrad Seminary Board of Overseers. I continue to appreciate the spiritual support and help I have received from St. Meinrad for many years and hope I can contribute in some small way to the school’s continuing work in forming priests, deacons, and lay leaders in the church.

One last request from your pastor: Get your picture taken for our latest Pictorial Directory. WE WANT YOU in our family album!!



Cathedral capital projects commence....



Photos by Beth Babcock, Pat Sexton, and Barbara Stein.

.... and elsewhere, the adventure begins...



Photos by Ashley Medley

Little did parishioners Bill and Barbara Gist know what they were getting into when they received a phone call from their daughter, Beth Babcock, a Cathedral staff member. She had learned from Father Fichteman that the discarded limestone buttresses from the exterior of the Cathedral would be available for “recycling.” The offer was made to parishioners in the weekly bulletin. Pieces of broken marble from the Cathedral renovation in the early 1990s had been stored and were also being made available.

The Gists thought they could incorporate this material into the garden of their home, Springfield, built in 1790. Springfield, the boyhood home of President Zachary Taylor, is a designated National Landmark.

When the Gists viewed the stone buttresses stored at the Cathedral, Father Fichteman reminded them that each stone weighed approximately 900 pounds. Most of the stones were stored at River City Development off of National Turnpike, and the Gists contacted Wayne Spalding there. Mr. Spalding graciously showed them the stored limestone buttress caps and educated them on Kentucky and Indiana limestone. In what the Gists now describe as perhaps overzealous, they decided to take 12 of the buttress caps – and thus their adventure began!

They first had to get 900-pound stones, all 12 of them, from the National Turnpike area to their home in the St. Matthews area. They were referred to

Johnson Trucking Company. A few days later, the stones were delivered in a very large truck and transported on a palate with a piece of heavy equipment to the back of their cobblestone driveway. The Gists were then referred to Frank Merifield, who would use heavy equipment to place the stones in various places in the yard. They made several drawings and got several opinions, trying to envision how the stones would look. After moving the stones around several times, Mr. Merifield noted to Barbara, “Remember, these are not made of Styrofoam.”

The Gists also made a trip to St. Anthony’s for some of the stored marble. Dave Jewell showed them the various pieces. The Gists carried several pieces to their car for transport to Fair’s Marble Shop, where the pieces were cut. Bill Gist then used several pieces of marble to form the tops of garden benches he made from the stone buttresses. Other pieces were placed among pine trees as garden art, and four pieces were positioned as the backdrop for a shade garden. The Gists report that the project is a work in progress. In the words of the Gists: “What seemed so simple in the beginning became very different. But to be surrounded by pieces which have been in our Parish for 160 years, and were a part of the floor of the Cathedral, is a special privilege for us. We feel very blessed having a part of the Cathedral as a part of our historic home.”

Sharon Mattingly



youth group
scrapbook



TRINITY
WRESTLING
LOVE

logo
by
Noah
Karman



30 HOUR FAMINE

FRIENDS



Starbucks!



~ Samantha Thomeczek



A Vocation Story

After asking Deacon John Parks for an interview, I puzzled over the best place to talk. He had answered me in an e-mail that he could work it into his schedule on the last Sunday that he was to preach at all Masses at the Cathedral, sometime between the 9:30, the 11:00, and the 5:30 Mass. We decided on 3:00 P.M. at the downtown Panera Bread. This proved to be a good place because it was Sunday, there were not many customers, and nobody else knew we were there, allowing us both to concentrate totally on the project at hand: to cover his entire life story in one hour.

When I arrived early at Panera Bread, I found Deacon Parks settled in a private corner sipping a Latte. We decided to begin chronologically with the story of how John's life progressed, eventually leading to the priesthood.

He is the second youngest of six kids, who all attended St. Theresa's in Phoenix, Arizona, his home parish, from Kindergarten through the eighth grade. After that, John attended Brophy College Prep, a Catholic Jesuit school. For the first two years, he didn't like the school, perhaps because many of his friends went to public school, and because discipline was the order of the day. He began to appreciate the experience more when he realized that out of 1200 applicants, only 300 were accepted. "There are three kids that want to be in my seat," he realized. "It helped my sophomore mind to know 'Hey, they mean business.'"

After graduation, he attended Arizona State University where he studied to be an actor. "Ever since I was a young kid, I wanted to be a film actor." His interest in plays and the stage led to his B.A. in Theater. (Isn't God's plan amazing? What a great preparation for a future preacher!)

"I never really thought about becoming a priest until my last couple years of college," he said. Having been raised Catholic, receiving the sacraments, and going to Mass every Sunday, he had his real conversion to the Catholic Church in the first part of high school. "I didn't really know the kind of relationship God wanted to have with me, and I realized what it was because people took the time to tell me about God's basic love for me. I have such a heart for high school and college ministry because that's when I had my conversion," he recalled. "It was kind of hard to reconcile



Photo by J.D. Long-Garcia, courtesy of *The Catholic Sun*

what I wanted in those years with my life and the gospel message these people were kind of preaching to me. The Ideal life would be to have a cute girl friend and to borrow my parent's car for the weekend. This business about the Savior, well, OK." John was a member of a youth group all four years of high school. One thing that impressed him was that the leaders (called core members) of the youth group were the most joyful people he had ever met. They were not doing the things the world tells us makes us happy, yet they were happier. He noted that there had to be something to that. He had a great youth group, great youth minister, good leaders, and good priests, people

who presented the Church's teaching well. They told it as the good news that it is.

When John graduated from high school, he became a core member. Also, at this time he became a speaker to youth along with a friend named Melanie. They spoke to their own youth group and eventually were invited to talk at other parishes on chastity and pro life. It grew so much that they were invited to Washington, D. C. for an event called Chastity Day. They gave six talks in three days, in the morning to junior high and high school kids and in the evening to kids and their parents. He is proud of this experience in his life because it gave him a chance to use his gifts: his love for theater, and his ability to connect with people on a grand level. Also, he quipped, "Being a national speaker at twenty-two years of age would look great on my résumé." At this point in his life, he thought he would marry a girl like Melanie and travel around giving talks. "As they say, 'If you want to hear God laugh, tell him your plans.'"

He continued to describe a turn of events. "The last couple years of college, I would date a young lady, and things were really going really well, and I would think about marrying her, and that would be exciting, but I felt something else in my heart, knowing that marriage is beautiful, but I felt I was built for something else. I thought 'Maybe I'll be a priest.' At the time, there were a lot of vocations coming from my parish. I decided to call the vocations director, and I went on this retreat called 'Thinking of the Priesthood,' and actually a monk from St. Meinrad flies out to Phoenix, and he gives this presentation on the

priesthood.” The main point of his talk was that you don’t have to have everything figured out, that sometimes when God asks us to follow him, he only shows us the next step. If you think you might want to be a priest, he advised, go to the seminary and find out. “You don’t go to the seminary and be ordained the next day,” John laughed. “Part of me said, “I’ll just go to the seminary and get this crazy idea out of my head, and then at least I can say I went. I tried it,” so he went to St. Meinrad.

John admires this seminary for its balance among academics, pastoral and spiritual development, and its interest in the seminarian as a person. John felt it was a blessing to be there, and in a very short time he “got in a groove” and adjusted well. He explained that for the first years he was not positive he wanted to be a priest, but he evaluated his experience at the end of each year with such questions as “Did I grow?” “How did God speak to me?” He said that he had such a good time that he had to go back.

Since he had a college degree, John completed his preparation in five years: one year philosophy and four years of theology. He has spent two years with us at the Cathedral as an intern, focusing on catechesis, such as RCIA, teaching youth, and helping them prepare for Confirmation. The second year the concentration was on liturgical concerns, such as preaching. He delivered homilies for all three Masses for four or five weekends.

To prepare a homily, on the Sunday or Monday before it is delivered, using the *Lectio Divina* approach, he spends time with the readings and the gospels for the week, allowing the words of scripture to “marinate” in his mind and soul. Then on Thursday or Friday, he starts taking notes, recalling images or stories, and looking for a key that will pull the homily together. As we who heard him preach know, his homilies always show his devotion and careful preparation. Another of his activities was becoming a member of the Academy of Preachers, an interdenominational organization open to young preachers from the age of sixteen to twenty-eight. They held a Festival of Preachers, a Lily-endowed event, at St. Mathew’s Baptist Church, attracting ninety-three preachers composed of four Catholics, one Orthodox, and eighty-eight Protestants.

When we discussed his vision for the Church, he remembered what happened in Phoenix when he applied to go to the seminary. “You go through an interview with a board of people. One of the members of the board said, ‘What is it that you see missing that you would

make a point in your priesthood to talk about?’” John remembers saying, “trying to help Catholics acquire the mission mindset - that it is the job of every Catholic to evangelize. That’s why the Church exists. That’s why we are here - to evangelize the whole world, to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.”

Deacon John went on to explain, “Evangelization always comes first. The more you love somebody, the more you want to know about him or her. And so if we can let people know how much God loves them and they have experience of that, then they naturally want to know more about God. Love always comes first. St. Augustine used to ask ‘Do people follow the commandments and then they learn to love God, or do people love God and then follow the commandments?’ Pope Benedict in his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est*, said that Christianity is . . .not an ethical choice or a lofty idea. It’s an encounter with the living God. It changes the horizon of one’s life.

How fortunate we have been to have the future Father John Parks with us for this brief time. We regret that we have to give him back to Arizona, but we wish him much happiness and many blessings as he begins his priesthood.

At his graduation from St. Meinard on May 8, Deacon John Parks earned an M. A. in Catholic Thought and Life, and a Master’s in Divinity. He was ordained on June 5 in Phoenix by Bishop Thomas Olmsted, and he is assigned to St. Daniel the Prophet Church in Scottsdale, Arizona – actually the parish where he was baptized!

~ Martha Villiger



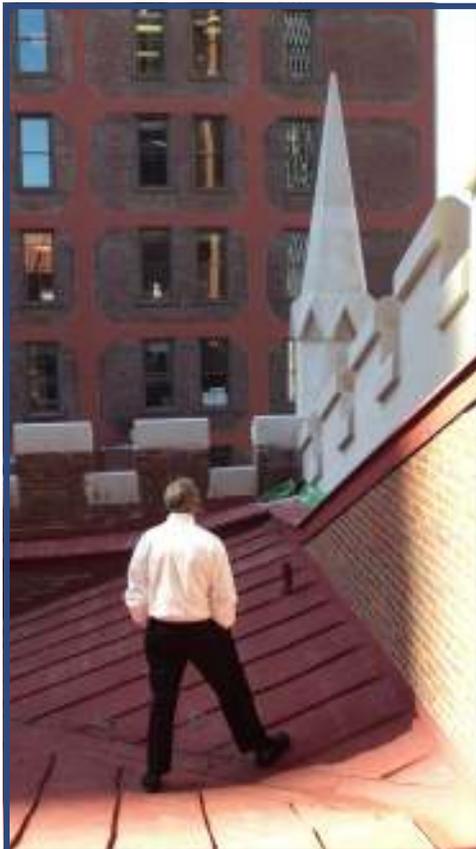
Photo by Ambria Hammell, courtesy of *The Catholic Sun*



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Cathedral Capital Project

Fr. Bill Fichteman on lower Cathedral roof checking out newly installed spire and battlements.

Photo by Beth Babcock

below

Recycling? Art? Historic Preservation?

What would you do with old 900-pound buttress caps and broken marble slabs? See the story on page 3.

Photo by Bill Gist



*The
Cathedral Star*

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