



St. Francis de Sales Parish
Holland Michigan

September 2014

Priests victorious over Grand Rapids Fire Fighters in annual Pray and Spray baseball event

Event held August 21 in Grand Rapids



On August 21 priests of the Diocese of Grand Rapids played the GRFD in the 26th Annual Pray and Spray. This year the priests took home the trophy of victory. Our own Fr. Charlie Brown and Fr. James VanderLaan contributed to the victory. Other priests who played included Fr. Dave Gross, Fr. Steve Cron, Fr. Scott Nolan, Fr. Chuck Schwartz, and Fr. John Geaney made an appearance as well. The charity event raised funds for a summer camp for children who are burn victims. A fun time was had by all.

Outreach and Social Justice news



Meijer's Fall SIMPLY GIVE Program

Meijer's is giving us the opportunity to share in feeding the growing number of hungry people in our community. Our partner store is the 746 E. 16th Street where you can ask the cashier to put \$10 from your credit card onto the *St. Francis de Sales Food Pantry*; this (St. Vincent de Paul Center) is a shared ministry of both Catholic parishes in Holland.

The Center has been part of this Simply Give Program for several years; through it we are able to provide healthy food including fresh fruit and meat to those in our community who are experiencing hard times. Today this includes many who are the "working poor". It only takes one unexpected medical emergency, a major car repair or having one's hours

cut at work to move some into needing our assistance for the first time in their lives.

The SIMPLY GIVE program runs thru Sept. 27. Double Match Days (Sept. 4-6) mean that our "food pantry" will receive \$20 in addition to every \$10 you give toward this program on these three days. Be sure to name the *St. Francis de Sales Food Pantry* as your designated center. To ensure that we receive credit for your donation, you must purchase donation cards at the 16th Street Meijer's.

Thanks to each of you who help our Outreach/Social Justice ministry at both Holland Catholic parishes. This program is an easy way for any of us to actively share in ministry to the hungry.

Remember that you can also serve through volunteering an hour or two on a regular basis at St. Vincent Center, 191 W. 13th St. - or by helping with furniture pickups on occasion – or doing food pickups when the Feeding America deliveries come to Holland

JUST FAITH

will be happening again. Firmly rooted in the Catholic Church's social teaching and tradition, this program engages everyday Catholics in prayer, reflection, and in action that reflects the love of Jesus Christ. It will run from Sept. 11 – April 30 on Thursday nights 7-9pm at St. Francis de Sales. Both Our Lady of the Lake and St. Francis have run this program in past years; participants have said that it has transformed their lives. Time is running out but contact Sr. Noella at 392-6700 or npoinsette@stfrancisholland.org to sign up and still get in on this fantastic experience of continuing on one's faith journey.

THE CATHOLIC ADVOCACY NETWORK

Sign up at www.micatholic.org/can/ to be part of this network who receive e mails with background information asking you to contact officials when critical issues arise that require our Catholic voice. Join thousands of Catholics across the state of Michigan to promote policies that protect the human dignity of all people. The Catholic Advocacy Network provides public policy updates on a multitude of issues and facilitates communication between elected officials and Catholics across Michigan. Through this we can work towards bringing about a more just society, one that is rooted in the gospel values of our faith. Pope Francis has written in "Joy of the Gospel", "an authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it."

It's been an interesting first few months!

By Sister Noella Poinsette, osf



It's been an interesting, exciting, challenging two months as your new Pastoral Associate for Outreach/Social Justice here at St. Francis de Sales parish and now also with Our Lady of the Lake parish. With Sr. Pat retiring, or more correctly focusing part time on immigration, and with Sr. Brigid at Our Lady of the Lake moving on to ministry for her congregation, I am serving both parishes in this shared outreach/social justice ministry.

So what's been happening? There have been meetings with many councils and agencies on issues related to food security, prison/jail ministry, migrants, immigration, services available to the homeless and at risk populations as well as staff meetings. There are people coming in to the office for assistance with utility bills, rent, car repair, etc. It only takes a medical emergency or unexpected car repair to throw an individual or a family into a situation where they are at risk of being evicted or without heat.

What have I been learning about needs in the area and ways that you are needed in this ministry? There are many ways to get involved and to help in this service to our sisters and brothers. Most of you are aware of the St. Vincent de Paul Center; here healthy food, clothes, furniture are available for those who need this assistance. Frank and Maria Casteñeda are the on-site coordinators of St. Vincent; with their dedication and that of other volunteers this ministry happens. Perhaps you would be interested in joining this group; clothes are sorted, bulk food is broken down into smaller packages, furniture and food donations are picked up. There is a lot of work that goes on in the background.

The Ottawa Co. Juvenile Detention Center is another place of ministry that I learned about a few days ago. There are children (8-17 yrs.) who have no visitors; in this ministry you could be the one who comes as a caring presence in prison/jail ministry.

It's great to be here with you in these ministries and you are essential to us together carrying on this mission of Jesus. I give thanks for all of you who have been and continue to volunteer in so many ways. With Sr. Pat you've got a well oiled organization in place but there is need to do even more if we can together and so I hope that more of you will feel called to this ministry of service to our sisters and brothers. Contact me at 392-6700, ext 114 or e-mail npoinsette@stfrancisholland.org. Blessings!



Frank and Maria Casteñeda run the St. Vincent De Paul Center.

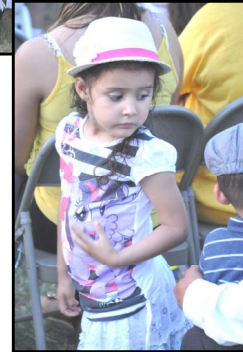
Bishop David Walkowiak celebrates Mass with the Holland Migrant Ministry in July

The migrant housing at Pine Acres on the north side of Holland welcomed Bishop David Walkowiak on Friday, August 1. The residents of Pine Acres lined the driveway with beautiful plants and streamers and balloons of yellow and white, and at the end of the driveway, a make-shift altar was erected and decorated beautifully with handcrafted doves and a canopy of colors. It is hard to imagine a more heart-felt lovely way to welcome a guest. Bishop David in turn was gracious, saying a Mass and preaching with the tenderness of a pastor. St. Francis de Sales parish, along with the Diocese of Grand Rapids, has been ministering to our visiting farm workers in the Holland area for many years, but this is the first time of memory that a bishop has gone to a camp to say Mass.

Bishop David ministered to the people of the camp, and they shared their witness of love and fiesta with him. Pope Paul VI spoke of the role of immigrants in society, honoring them with places of privilege within the heart of the Church, in his encyclical named *On Evangelization in the Modern World*. He notes that “all Christians...can be real evangelizers. We are thinking especially of the responsibility incumbent on immigrants in the country that receives them.” Truly the people of Pine Acres camp were evangelizing all present—were preaching (through their actions) to the bishop while at the same time, Bishop David evangelized them in Word and Sacrament. It was a very moving scene.

This year through the catechetical work of parishioner Maria Padron, there are three children from Pine Acres preparing for baptism, seven more preparing for their first communion, and three more getting ready for Confirmation. The Spirit of God is alive and well in Holland, Michigan!





Photos by Sister Noella Poinsette



Annual Picnic with Third Reformed Church. August 26, 2014





Photo by C. Ayling



St. Francis Youth hit the Big Apple

Mission Trip takes youth to New York City to volunteer for a week.



By Kevin Hilgert, Youth Director

This past July 26th through August 3rd, 29 high school students, 5 adult leaders, and I journeyed to New York City for this year's Youth Ministry Mission Trip.

Our trip began on the morning of July 26th as we traveled to Brooklyn, New York. Through a local connection here in Holland, we made our way to South Bushwick Reformed Church which would be our home away from home for our time in New York. This small community was so generous, welcomed us with open arms, and were so excited for us to be there with them.

Our first day consisted of attending Mass at St. Barbara's in Brooklyn, and attending South Bushwick's worship service before leaving for our first work project of the week.

Service project one was working with the Damayan organization. We assisted in canvassing their neighborhoods to bring awareness to issues in regards to workers rights, human trafficking, and the like. To further explore the issues of justice surrounding this mission work, we traveled into Manhattan that evening to attend a viewing of the movie "Transit" at the Asian American International Film Festival.

Work days two and three our group combined all of our talents to perform work on the church and parsonage of South Bushwick Reformed. The church only has a membership of 27 people, and their church built in 1952 requires constant upkeep which they cannot accomplish on our own. We did plaster repair, demolition, flooring projects, extensive cleaning, and similar other projects.

Wednesday was our day earmarked to explore Manhattan. We began our day spending time in quiet prayer at old St. Peter's Church, the spiritual home of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. We then visited the Ground Zero 9/11 memorial before making our way uptown. By the end of the day we had spent a 14.5 hour day traveling from one tip of Manhattan to the other and back again, taking in all the city had to offer!

We closed our final two days in New York working with Catholic Charities of Brooklyn & Queens. Our first day consisted of working

in a Senior Center where our group prepared, served, and cleaned up lunch. Outside of lunch we also facilitated bingo and joined in with the seniors at the center in a great time of fellowship.

Our final work day Catholic Charities had our group of 35 act as the core of their efforts in a Kids Day street fair for the families in Astoria, Queens. Our students and leaders led games, dancing, assisted with bike helmet fittings, food distribution, and more. It was a fabulous day, and Catholic Charities were extremely grateful for our assistance. They estimated 1,300 people would participate in the Kids Day, and without us were unsure of what they would have done!

We left Brooklyn on Saturday August 2 to make our way home, stopping in central Pennsylvania “Amish Country” along the way, to attend Mass at St. George Catholic Church and spending time with youth from their parish.

The trip was a resounding success, filled with the Holy Spirit, prayer, working, learning, growing, camaraderie, and loads of fun! We are blessed as a parish to have had such an amazing group of students and adult leaders go out to serve God by His people; they are outstanding Catholic witnesses, disciples, and evangelizers of faith.

It took a tremendous amount of effort from our entire faith community in seeing this project come to fruition (Christmas Wreath Sales, Tulip Time parking, Egg Roll sales, bake sales, and our Miles for a Mission campaign) and we are extremely grateful for the prayers and support of our parish.

We pray to build on this trip’s success, and we are looking forward to this year’s mission trip!



“Son Treasure Island” theme for Vacation Bible School

Event was attended by over 60 children this past July 14-18.

By Guillermo Flores

Our Parish of St. Francis de Sales had its Vacation Bible School (VBS) from July 14—18, 2014. The theme for this year was “Son Treasure Island”, there was a real tropical flavor to the whole atmosphere of VBS, and the children had a wonderful time singing, doing crafts, playing games, making snack foods with a tropical flavor, and the most important thing, praying and learning about Jesus love for all of us. We had an average attendance of 65 children per day and they were divided in groups according to their ages. The staff here at St. Francis de Sales would like to give a great Thank you! to all our volunteers, we also like to thank the parents of the children for sharing your children with us and for allowing us to walk together with them in their faith journey. Finally, we thank God for another successful year of Vacation Bible School.



“Go forth and make disciples...”



From the desk of Ricardo Veldez, director of Faith Formation

“Go forth and make disciples...” A really easily said commission that can get complicated in practice. Christ, through the Great Commission (Matthew 29:19), challenges his disciples to not only live to know, love, and serve Christ, but to help others to do the same. While faith formation is not the beginning and end of discipleship, it is an important component. How are we to continue to share Christ if we don’t know him ourselves? How are we going to teach other’s to pray if we ourselves have not grown in our own prayer life? How are our children going to become disciples if we don’t guide them to know, love, and serve Christ?

Have you heard of the word “catechesis?” It’s a word the Church has used for thousands of years referring to the process of teaching people what it means to be a disciple. It’s an important part of becoming and growing as a disciple. There are many opportunities for catechesis in our parish for adults, youth, and children and I’d like to run through some of those.

Adults

As adults, we’re busy, right! Life is busy, but how, in the busyness, can you carve out time for you and God? We all need it. Just as spouses and families need time together. Also, it’s important that this isn’t just prayer time (though by all means important). Here are a few upcoming opportunities that may be able to help you in carving out time.

Bible Study (September) - Acts: The Spread of the Kingdom, Tuesday Afternoons

Bible Study (September) - Matthew: The King and His Kingdom, Wednesday Evenings

Bible Study (TBA) - Quick Journey through the Bible

Study (October) [Catholicism Series](#)

Study (October) [Spiritual Autobiographies](#)

Retreat - [Toward a Deeper Spiritual Journey, November 1, 2014 @ Our Lady of the Lake](#)

More information can be found on the parish website (www.stfrancisholland.org/node/87).

Children & Youth

We have a number of programs that reach out to our youth and children to help them and their families grow as disciples. We continue to develop these programs and look to see how we can better support families in the future. You can learn more about our programs by visiting our parish website (www.stfrancisholland.org/node/108).

One of the great programs we have in place is our Family Program which meets on Sundays. It’s a time for the entire family to grow together, grow as adults and youth individually, and share a meal together. Our theme this year is Discipleship where we will be exploring the topics of “called to...be disciples, prayer, forgive, be family, holiness, vocation, humility, service, and to go forth.” Our adult breakout, which is a third of our time together, will include parishioners speaking on their experience of living as disciples, reflecting on scripture and the catechism, and discussing our experiences in small groups. For more information, please feel free to contact me in the parish office.

Action

Our parish is blessed with many hands that have tirelessly shared their gifts, talents, and time to help make disciples by sharing the Gospel through children’s and adult programs. I encourage you to pray about how you could best use your hands to support our commission to make disciples. Many more hands are not only needed, but welcomed. Please contact me in the parish office to learn how you could help by serving as a catechist, children’s liturgy of the word leader, assisting in one of our weekly classes, helping in our infant baptism preparation, or a number of other positions.

It has been a great joy getting to know parishioners and how the parish works over the last few months. I continue to ask for your prayers as together we look to move where God is calling us, and please know that you are in mind.

New staff members Valdez and Poinsette join St. Francis over the summer months.



By Fr. Charles D. Brown

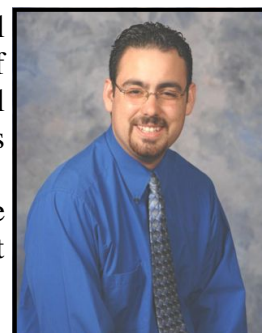
Ricardo Valdez has begun as new Director of Family and Adult Faith Formation that Marilyn Torborg has held.

Ricardo was raised in Adrian, Michigan and graduated from Siena Heights University. Since then he has ministered at Holy Family Catholic Church in Middletown, Maryland.

Ricardo has had an extremely busy spring and summer since he accepted this position. In addition to completing his responsibilities at his former parish, he has been busy selling his home, packing, finding a place to live in Holland and moving his wife, Belem and three children here. They have recently arrived after spending time with extended family throughout Michigan. I know he is happy to be here and be closer to his family.

Ricardo is busy learning about and getting ready for a busy year of programs. One additional challenge that we face together is that we are unable to hire the position for coordinator of children's programs due to our budget deficit. Ricardo and our entire Faith Formation will staff will need the support and involvement of many of you to make sure all of our ministries to children, youth and adult continue in a vibrant way.

Overall what we have been putting in place recently and will continue to do is focus on the essential role that evangelization and discipleship have in all our catechetical programs. That is the base on which our mission as church rests.



Sr. Noella Pointsette is taking over the Social Justice/Outreach position that Sr. Pat Lamb has held.

Sr. Noella is blessed in having Sr. Pat here to guide her through this transition. She is very thankful for this because there is much for her to learn; especially now that one change in this ministry has recently developed. This will now be a position that returns to be a combined one between Our Lady of the Lake and St. Francis de Sales Parishes. One of the reasons for this is because of the budget deficit in this new fiscal year does not allow this to be a full time one exclusive to us. But more importantly, however, this is an opportunity to focus on how we can join together the efforts and generosity of our Catholic community of Hol-

land/Zeeland to address the needs of charity and social justice in our community. A door has also been opened at Our Lady of the Lake in that Sr. Brigid recently has announced that she will be transiting to a position at Dominican Center in Grand Rapids. I am very grateful to Fr. Charlie Hall and Our Lady of the Lake Parish to be so willing to collaborate.

One of the first changes that we will see is that the food distribution that has taken place at Our Lady of the Lake Church will soon be distributed at the St. Vincent de Paul Center. The generosity of so many from their parish will continue as will their volunteers who have organized this ministry.

More things are in the works for us to build up, strengthen and grow our outreach ministries which lie at the heart of our Gospel and our mission as disciples of Christ.