

May/June 2015



the

connecting the community of st. francis xavier parish

Navigator

Dino Paoletta is ordained as deacon

Longtime parishioner Dean R. “Dino” Paoletta joined a special order of the church with his May 2 ordination to the diaconate by Bishop Richard G. Lennon.

Dino was one of nine men ordained at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Cleveland. These men are the first deacons ordained in the diocese in five years.

He has been assigned to serve at Holy Martyrs Parish in Medina Township.

Dino is married to Gabrielle and is the father of four children: Lauren, 23; Raymond, 21; Dean, 17; and Anthony, 11. The family lives in Medina, and Anthony attends the SFX day school.

Dino’s ordination came after a year of aspirancy and four years of intense discernment and study, including twice-weekly classes at the Center for Pastoral Leadership in Wickliffe.

His ordination was tinged with a little sadness, considering his mother Thelma died that week after a long illness and was buried the previous day. During the same week, his father suffered a stroke and was hospitalized. But there were happy memories too – the day of his ordination, a niece also made her First Communion.

“All I know is that our loving Lord is with me, and there is only one set of footprints in the sand at the moment,” Dino says.

As deacon, Dino may proclaim the Gospel and preach, as well as baptize, officiate at wedding ceremonies and preside at funeral services.

He celebrated by assisting in a Mass of Thanksgiving at noon on May 3, followed by a reception in the church basement. He begins his duties at Holy Martyrs on May 16.

Dino admits being a little nervous about beginning his ministry, but adds: “I feel very blessed.”



Bishop Richard Lennon ordains Dino Paoletta on May 2. Dino and his wife, Gabby, have been parishioners for 14 years.



PSR moves to Monday afternoon

Sue Rohe-Brooks, our director of religious education, is always trying to tweak the Parish School of Religion program to try to find the best and most convenient way to educate our children about Jesus.

This fall brings yet another change, as PSR classes will be available on Monday afternoons.

In the not-so-distant past, PSR classes were offered for grades 1 to 5 on Saturday mornings only. But that proved difficult for our public-school families who wanted their children to also have an opportunity to play recreational sports, including soccer, which often scheduled games for that time. Families were forced to choose – and, many times, soccer won.

In recent years, then, parents were given the choice to enroll their children in PSR classes on Thursday evenings or Saturday mornings. This option proved so popular that, this past year, only about 80 children were registered for Saturday classes, compared with about 200 on Thursday nights.

Since so many families prefer a weekday class, Sue has decided to shift the schedule again. This fall, parents will have the choice of enrolling their children into class on Monday afternoons, 4:30 to 6 p.m., or Thursday evenings, 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. Forms are available on the website, www.sfxmedina.com.

Sue says she hopes this will suit busy families who still want to raise their children in the faith. “We pray this will give a choice for religious formation,” she says. “We need catechists for the new year and classroom helpers. Help is given, so please pray and consider joining this important ministry for our parish youth.”

Meanwhile, the Edge program (faith education program for grades 6 to 8) will remain on Wednesday evenings, 6:45 to 8:15 p.m. Group facilitators are needed for the 2015-16 school year.

Vacation Bible School: Everest – Conquering Challenges with God’s Mighty Power

In mid-June, the SFX campus will transform into a mountain adventure

– and not only because of anticipated construction of the new entrance on the church’s west side.

Sue and her small-but-mighty Vacation Bible School team are preparing for a week of Scripture stories that will come alive for our children ages 4 through sixth grade, with crafts, music, games and, of course, snacks.

The sixth-graders also will have an opportunity for hands-on service during the week.

“We are in need of adult help in all areas of crafts, music, games and serving in the snack area,” Sue says. “High school students are always a big help in groups and with activities.”

The next two meetings will be May 12 and 26 at 7 p.m. in the school.

Edge Summer Camps I & II

This year’s popular Edge camps are earlier in the summer and held in consecutive weeks.

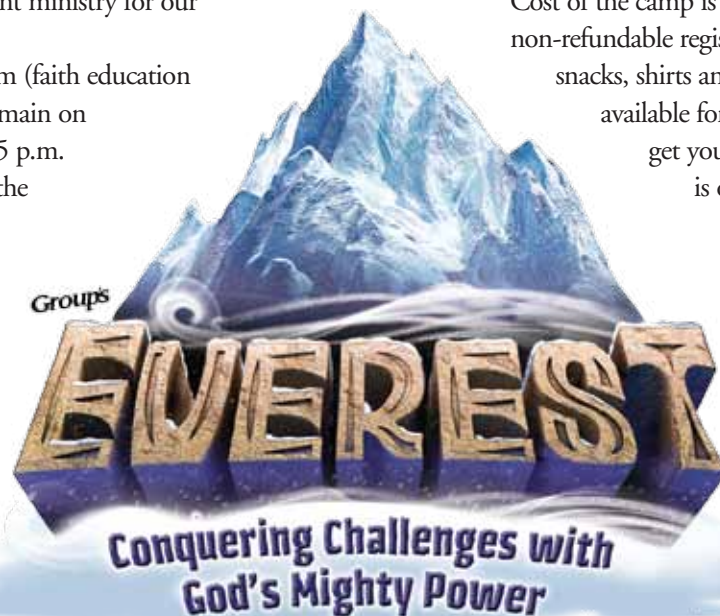
Camp I will be held June 22 to 26; campers in the second session will attend the June 26 fellowship day, plus service projects June 29 to July 2.

“Our days will be service to various organizations and locations in Medina and Cleveland,” Sue explains.

Teens who are entering their junior and senior years of high school are invited to be counselors.

Cost of the camp is \$40 for the week, including a \$15 non-refundable registration fee. The fee covers a bus, snacks, shirts and all activities. Only 25 spots are available for each camp and they do fill up, so get your registration in ASAP. The camp is open to all parish teens (PSR, day school or home school) completing the seventh and eighth grades.

For all these activities and opportunities, call the PSR office at 330-722-7700, email Sue at sbrooks@stfrancisxavier.info or visit www.sfxmedina.com.





Navigators ready to set sail on first Parish Day of Service

Got gloves? Plans are in motion for our first Parish Day of Service on Saturday, May 23. Won't you join us?

We have lined up hundreds of opportunities for parishioners of all ages to dig in and get involved in helping our neighbors in need. You're sure to find something you can do!

Projects range from painting the exterior of Cups Café to painting an interior wall at Birthcare. A number of agencies and even some of our homebound residents are hoping for help in cleaning up their flower beds and yards after the long winter.

Some of our homebound friends are most interested in seeing a friendly face; join them for conversation or an afternoon craft and ice-cream sundae. It will be Memorial Day weekend, after all, and some of these residents are veterans who won't be able to join in

patriotic activities in the community that commemorate their fallen comrades. Let's bring a little sunshine to them, instead.

And we hope those who aren't physically able to scrape wallpaper or rake a yard will join us at church for prayer.

Thanks to help from our sponsors – Sportsworld Custom Imprinted Apparel; Knights of Columbus; Edward F. Bugner, CPA; Sweet Lawns; State Farm agent Keith Wright; and one anonymous donor – we will have custom T-shirts for all who participate in this wonderful day of giving back to our community.

We'll begin on the Randel House deck at 8:30 a.m. (for morning projects) and 12:30 p.m. (for afternoon projects). Get your shirt, water bottle, instructions and we'll send you forth with a short prayer. Then, after the work is done,

we'll return to the church for 5 p.m. Mass, followed by a pizza dinner and a chance to relax, view pictures and swap stories about the day.

Didn't get a chance to sign up? It's not too late!

Visit sfxmedina.com/parish and click on the link to the sign-up form. All ages are welcome!

Invite your friends and neighbors to join us as we share our gifts with the world and give thanks to God for our parish's 155 years of history here in Medina.

Questions? Contact Jennifer Webb at 330-764-8946 or jwebb@stfrancisxavier.info.



Want to see the Pope?

The parish's Saturday morning men's faith-sharing group is working on a plan where parishioners may travel by bus to see Pope Francis when he makes his first visit to the United States to take part in the eighth World Meeting of Families in September.

Held every three years and sponsored by the Holy See's Pontifical Council for the Family, the World Meeting of Families is the world's largest Catholic gathering of families.

The pope is expected to make two public appearances. It's anticipated that Pope Francis will be part of the meeting's closing ceremonies, including the Festival of Families on Saturday, Sept. 26, and will celebrate Mass on Sunday, Sept. 27. Both events will be held on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and will be open to the public.

The Fishers of Men team is trying to gauge parishioners' interest in attending the Mass.

The Mass is expected to draw 1 million people to Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Getting to the site in Philadelphia will not be easy, Jim Petros warns.

Preliminary plans call for the group to leave St. Francis Xavier late Saturday, Sept. 26, arriving Sunday morning. Following the Mass, the group would depart the area and arrive back at St. Francis Xavier late Sunday night. It is estimated to cost \$100 to \$200 per person, depending on the number of people going.

If interested, send an email to popevisit2015@aol.com. Please include your name and cell phone number. "I have a handful who have emailed me and seem very interested," Jim says. "For us to do this, we will need a lot more."



Scouts project is good, clean fun

Seven girls in a St. Francis Xavier School sixth-grade Girl Scout troop are getting the chance to participate in an Akron-area tradition by building and racing a soap box derby car.

Troop 90469 was one of three in all of Northeast Ohio to respond to a first-ever opportunity of racing a Girl Scout-sponsored car in a soap box derby race. The girls got the chance to build, design, market and race it as part of the International Soap Box Derby's Gravity Racing Challenge.

The troop was directed by Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) to design the car around one of the iconic Girl Scout cookie varieties, and they voted to be the Trefoil team. They reasoned that the Trefoil cookie was a popular cookie that had visual appeal, and would look very good in their design.

The "Trefoilers" will race May 16 at Akron's Derby Downs. If they do well, they could qualify for a spot in July's FirstEnergy All-American Soap Box Derby.

The racing challenge emphasizes science, technology, engineering and math education in the design and experimentation required to develop the "super stock" car for racing. The soap box derby dates back to 1934, and now has grown to more than 600 races in 115 racing districts throughout the world each year. Participants between the ages of 7 and 20 build gravity-powered cars in hopes of qualifying for the world championship finals in Akron. This racing challenge is the derby's school-based STEM initiative, providing educational opportunities for K-12 youth worldwide.

Winning the kit set the tone for the

troop's year, which then included meetings with various professionals to learn the steps required to complete the project. The girls learned about logo design and marketing as they collaborated on their unique team logo with the help of parishioner and graphic designer Missy Froman. They learned first-hand about T-shirt screenprinting at Sportsworld, a Medina custom-apparel shop owned by parishioners Aameena and Bill Hoshaw. The troop collaborated on the design of the vinyl wrap, donated by Evolution Edge Graphics, that covers the aerodynamic plastic car. The girls learned about writing letters to solicit sponsorships and press releases to gain media coverage. They also sold Girl Scout cookies to earn \$500 toward the project.

The girls say they were excited to be chosen as a recipient of the car, which was built over the course of two weekends.

"It sounded fun and we could all do it together," says Evie McGowan.

Anna Fletcher says building the car, which must weigh as close as possible to 240 pounds (including the driver), was reminiscent of her brother Jack's Cub

Scout project. "It was like a life-size Pinewood Derby," she says.

With the help of Evie's dad, Chris McGowan, the girls created a PowerPoint "infomercial" about their project that will be shown in one of the optional GRC STEM Team contests. The video shows the troop's journey through the project and has the girls singing their original theme song, "This Cookie's On Fire."

"These girls are spirited competitors who want to win," says Mickie Getz, who, along with Germaine Wilson, leads the troop.

"This project was one of those once in a lifetime projects where we just decided to go for it," Mickie explains. "I don't think everyone realized all the work we would have to do to accomplish it, but when it came up, all the troop moms and dads jumped in with all this energy and support. The soap box derby is something special; it has a history and it's recognized all around the world. I'm really proud that our girls get to be a part of it."

As the girls are putting their finishing touches on the car, among the decisions yet to be made is which one of them will get to drive it. The car can reach a top speed of 35 mph, which is enough to dissuade Alex Dillon from throwing her hat into the ring. "It makes you feel like you're flying," says Marian Getz.

They could have more than one chance to race. The Trefoilers car is the property of GSNEO and will be used by other troops, but, as long as these girls remain Girl Scouts, they get first dibs on racing it in future soap box derbies, Germaine explains.

"It's been a good experience," Anna says. "We've learned a lot."





Ushers extend parish hospitality, 'spread a little sunshine'

When you come to Mass on weekends or holy days, an usher could be the first person you encounter. These important ministers of hospitality may hold the door open for you as you shake off the rain, then smile and welcome you to St. Francis Xavier.

An usher may help you find a place to sit, open windows if the church feels stuffy, or invite you to join the communion line. And, at the end of Mass, one of these individuals will offer you a bulletin to keep you informed of events at the parish.

In short, ushers represent us all by extending the parish's hospitality and Christian love to strangers and all who seek the Lord within our church building.

Not long ago, the role was considered so important that it was included in the rite of ordination. As early as the third century, the clerical order of "porter" was responsible for guarding the door of the church against intruders. More recently, they were commissioned to "ring the bells, open the church and sacristy, (and) to open the book for the preacher." In 1972, Pope Paul VI abolished the order of porter, and this important task was given to the laity.

Here at St. Francis Xavier Parish, the ministry is led by Pam Reese, who says the parish needs a few more ushers.

"Ushers are such an important part of St. Francis Xavier," she says. "They are the first face you see and, as a new parishioner, that could be the smile that keeps you coming back. The ushers assist the sick, give support to those who are grief-stricken, and help the physically challenged and children to their destination. They are more than just a pretty face; they provide a peace to all who enter the church from their chaotic environment."

Jim Sienawski says he joined the ministry 15 years ago following the example of his father, a longtime usher at Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Cleveland. He says he enjoys meeting everyone as they come for Mass.

"I love to see people," he says.

Joe Dutko says he became an usher soon after joining the parish 15 years ago. "I got to meet a lot of new and different people," he says.

Ushers arrive about 30 minutes before each Mass to ensure that bulletins are in place and the pews are in good order. They stay 10 to 15 minutes after each Mass to clean up stray bulletins, pick up trash, and set aside any items that were left behind.

"You get to see the families with new babies," Joe says, adding that he has enjoyed watching those babies grow up over the years. "It's a fun, social thing, and you give back to the church."

About 52 parishioners are part of the usher ministry; normally they serve once or twice a month, and more often during holy days. For example, between five Easter Masses at the church and Medina High School Performing Arts Center, some 50 slots were available for ushers – so Jim says he helped at three of those Masses. "I like ushering," he says with a shrug. "Sometimes I do it every week."

Pat Neuendorff joined the ministry at the suggestion of Donna Ruswinkle, a former co-worker who also is an usher, and discovered that she enjoys contributing in this way. "I like to help people and tell them where to go and to welcome them," Pat says.

"You never know when you're entertaining angels unawares, do you?"

"I try very hard to make every person feel welcome," Pat explains. "I feel it's an opportunity to spread a little sunshine."

Pam calls the ushers "dedicated and loyal."

"They take from their family time and their own relaxation to attend to their ministry at various hours, days and special occasions," she says. "They truly are unsung heroes."

For more information about this ministry, contact Pam Reese at cntrymam@aol.com or call 330-334-3985.



**Pat
Neuendorff**



**Joe
Dutko**



**Jim
Sienawski**



Never too late: Adults join teens

Barbara Black was baptized Catholic, made her first Communion and Reconciliation and raised her children in the faith.

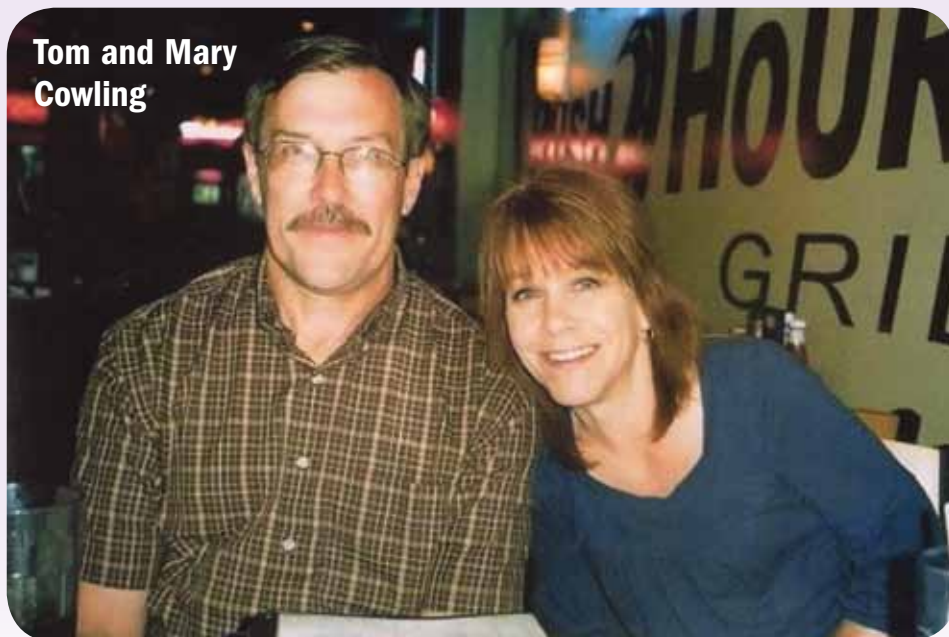
Although she was careful to make sure her daughter and son celebrated their sacraments, Barbara never was confirmed herself. “My family were Christmas and Easter Catholics,” she recalls. “I had to pursue the Catholic religion more or less on my own.”

That changed last fall when, at age 72, Barbara completed her third sacrament of initiation and became a full member of the Catholic Church. She is one of five adults who completed classes last fall with Father Thom Kowatch to prepare to receive the sacrament, alongside 100 teens, from retired Auxiliary Bishop Roger Gries on Oct. 24.

“Religion has always been



Barbara Black



Tom and Mary Cowling

important to me,” Barbara says. But, several years after the death of her husband, she was feeling very low – until a recent encounter with God during Mass grabbed her attention.

“We were singing the ‘Holy, Holy, Holy,’ and for some reason tears came to my eyes,” she says. “It’s all I can say: He came to me.”

“I came home and said, it’s just not complete. My relationship isn’t complete. I know it’s because I haven’t been confirmed. I felt this closeness. I can’t explain it.”

Because Barbara doesn’t drive, she didn’t know how she would get to church for classes. So, Father Thom brought the classes to her Medina home. “He did it himself, for which I was eternally grateful,” Barbara says. “It was such a relief, and he’s a great teacher.”

She asked her friend and neighbor Nancy Taylor to be her sponsor, and took “Mary” as her confirmation patron

saint because of the special relationship she feels with the Blessed Mother.

“I feel like it’s a very sacred sacrament. It is a strengthening sacrament,” she says. “I am so grateful. I am so complete. I know my job’s not done. He has other jobs for me.”

Tom Cowling, 62, was baptized Catholic and celebrated reconciliation and first Eucharist, but his family moved away before Confirmation, and eventually he stopped going to Mass. He and his wife, Mary, were married 31 years ago by a justice of the peace.

They discussed returning to Church one day, especially after she was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. “We talked about how, when she got feeling good, we would go back to church,” Tom says. “We never got the chance to do that.”

Mary died in February 2014 at age 57, just eight weeks after doctors informed them that the cancer had returned. When Father Tony visited



for sacrament of Confirmation

them at the Hospice of Medina County, he suggested Tom join the adult formation classes at the church.

Tom began attending Mass every week and says he sees many signs that he is on the right path. Now, his stepdaughter also is taking classes to join the Catholic Church.

“It was something I wanted to do,” Tom says. “I wanted to do everything I could so I could be with her again, because that’s the focus of my life.”

Both Barbara and Tom are finding ways to live out their faith, using the gifts they’ve received.

Barbara takes a shuttle bus from her apartment complex to church on Sunday mornings. She has joined a weekly group with Nancy, her sponsor, and nine to 12 neighbors who study the Bible and pray the rosary and

Divine Chaplet.

Tom has formed a nonprofit organization, called Service Dogs from Mary, which aims to raise money to provide service dogs who are trained to detect fluctuations in diabetic patients’ glucose levels. He had hoped to get a dog for Mary after her cancer surgery made her diabetic, but her illness progressed too quickly. (For more information, visit servicedogsfrommary.org.)

Now, Barbara encourages all adults who never were confirmed to complete their sacraments.

“I wish I could encourage them because it is well worth it, and it’s not as hard as people might think,” she says. “Once the Lord is on your side, you’ve got it made. And He’s always on your side.”

ADULT CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Are you an adult in need of Confirmation? Classes will be held on five Sundays, after the 10 a.m. Mass, in the rectory conference room, starting Sept. 13. Call the rectory at 330-725-4968 for more information or to register.

When you’ve got a church building that’s 55 years old and a campus this large, there’s always something that needs to be fixed.

This summer, we will be addressing the deteriorating and hazardous exterior ramp to the Spring Grove church entrance. Beginning the week of May 18, construction will begin on a new enclosed entrance off the parking lot that will include a wheelchair lift and stairs to both the church and the basement social hall.

Middleburg Heights architect Robert Zarzycki says the addition’s architectural character is meant to match the character of the existing church. A canopy will extend toward the parking lot to minimize the door’s exposure to rain and snow.

The project also includes upgrades to the church’s air conditioning system, with new ductwork that will extend through the church sanctuary. The work is expected to take three to four months to complete.

Meanwhile, a number of windows in the school and roofs over the gym and the oldest section of the school will be replaced as part of ongoing upgrades and improved energy



efficiency. And, several sections of the parking lot that developed cracks during last summer’s project will be removed and replaced once school is out May 28.

Thank you for your patience and support of these improvements!

St. Francis Xavier

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 12 & 26

Vacation Bible School
Planning Meeting
7 p.m., Xavier Room

May 17

LifeShare bloodmobile
9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.,
Priests' Driveway

May 18

Confirmation class
7 to 8:30 p.m., Xavier Room

May 23

Parish Day of Service
Meet at 8:30 a.m. (for morning
projects) or 12:30 p.m.
(for afternoon projects) for shirts,
instructions and prayer,
Randel House
Return for 5 p.m. Mass
and pizza dinner

May 27

8th Grade Graduation
7 p.m., Church

May 28

Last day of school!
Have a great summer!

June 3

Seniors Club
1 p.m., Xavier Room

June 4

Life Teen Thursdays begin
All teens welcome!
7:30 to 9 p.m., Randel House

June 15 to 19

Vacation Bible School
9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., School

June 22 to 26 and June 29 to July 2

Edge Camp 1 & 2
9 to 3 p.m. (most days), School

June 27 to 28

Life Teen's Cardboard City
overnight
9 a.m., Randel House

July 3

First Friday Mass & Adoration
7 p.m. through 7 a.m.,
Church
Stop in church before or
after you watch the fireworks
from our front yard!

July 25

Knights of Columbus pig roast