

November / December 2016



the

connecting the community of st. francis xavier parish

Navigator

Building and Rebuilding, in Gratitude

A letter from our pastor



As 2016 draws to a close, I want to thank you for your generous support throughout the year. With your help, we have been able to accomplish a great deal. Your contributions have allowed us to preach the Gospel and offer the Eucharist at our church and eight or nine nursing facilities, extend comfort and aid to the sick and dying, educate our children, teens and families, provide shelter to the homeless, and reach out to the community.

We even opened our doors for four nights to welcome all to be inspired by Father Larry Richards during the parish mission.

Here at the campus, last year about this time we started using our beautiful new west vestibule, which allowed us to make a safer, covered and more accessible entrance into our church from the parking lot. The addition of a lift satisfied the government's requirement of a second handicapped-accessible entrance (the other being our elevator), and the two-story entry offers a bright and welcoming passageway into the church. All this work was made possible through the generosity of everyone here who contributed to the diocesan Rooted in Faith, Forward in Hope campaign.

A lot of the work to our physical plant here hasn't been nearly so exciting. We replaced windows in the rectory, air conditioning units in the church and school, and sound systems in the church and Xavier Room. We repaired mortar joints between the bricks and resealed crevices to keep the school and church from crumbling and air from leaking out and water leaking in. It's not the kind of thing to "write home about," but, quite honestly, it was long overdue.

We're in much better shape today, but we're not done. The east entrance to the church – the exterior steps leading to the parking lot – must be addressed very soon. The outdoor steps have taken the same beating from the weather and salt as the old ramp that disintegrated on the other side. You know I remain very concerned

about the tricky first step as people leave – too many people have missed it and taken a tumble. Fixing it must involve updates to and expansion of the original kitchen below, where hefty wooden beams are holding up the ceiling.

To accomplish all that, I am considering options that would extend the east vestibule toward Washington Street. Such a plan could create space for restrooms on the main level. I'd also like to update the restrooms in the basement, and add a covered entry way and stairway into the church. I've begun to meet with an architect to see what all this might cost, but it could easily top \$1 million.

This is where you come in: If you are thinking about making charitable contributions this time of year to reduce your tax bill in 2017, I'd like to ask you to consider donating to this major capital improvement.

Your contributions make it possible to extend the life of our church building, improve accessibility and add much-needed amenities that are no longer wants but needs today. Sixty years ago, no one perceived the need for more reasonably located restrooms, and the kitchen size was adequate. But today, we continually encounter obstacles by our lack of such things.

People are always thanking me for making improvements at the parish, to the parking lot, to the this, or that, or whatever. It's only possible because you financially supported the endeavor. And, to the extent that you continue to do so, we can make improvements to all the buildings for worship, gathering, education, and service to those in need.

Peace,

Fr. Tony

Fr. Tony



Saturday Vigil – 5 p.m., Sunday – 8 & 10 a.m., noon & 5:30 p.m.
Weekdays – 7:30 a.m. Monday through Saturday; 7 p.m.
Monday, Thursday & First Friday of the month

Legacy gifts honor deceased, continue God’s work

By Jennifer Webb

Susan Morrissey grew up in St. Francis Xavier Parish and lived most of her adult life as an active parishioner here. Her father, Bernie Coudriet, even helped build our church in the late 1950s.



So, when Sue died Sept. 13 of cancer at age 59, her family says it was only natural to honor her by directing memorial contributions to St. Francis Xavier Parish.

The Morrisseys are among the most recent examples of families who have arranged lasting tributes as a way to not only remember their loved ones but contribute to continuing the important work of building Christ’s kingdom here in Medina. These gifts reflect their gratitude for a lifetime of pastoral care by the Church in ministering to loved ones through the sacraments, personal growth and spiritual enrichment.

St. Francis Xavier Parish was a source of community and strength throughout Sue’s life, says her husband, Tim. She attended the parish school through the fifth grade, Sue and Tim were married in our church, and both their children attended the school through the eighth grade. During Sue’s illness, Tim says, the parish community – including her renewal sisters and many other parishioners – was “constantly looking out for us.”

“Fr. Tony and Deacon Joe visited her, brought communion and prayed with us,” Tim says. “During an extended stay

at Medina Hospital, several ministers of Holy Communion visited and distributed the Sacrament. The beauty of the funeral Mass Fr. Tony presided over is beyond words.”

“I shudder wondering how anyone would get through an experience like this without faith and a faith community,” he adds. “Asking that memorial contributions be made to St. Francis Xavier was our way of supporting a community that supported us, in good times and bad, throughout our married life.”

Memorial and legacy gifts are a way to express Christian stewardship as coworkers with God and sharing our gifts in love and justice with others. Ideally, that stewardship impacts all phases of our life, including our plans for the use of our worldly goods and resources even after our death.



Many parishioners, such as Julie Gaume, who died April 1, 2015, at age 75, have remembered St. Francis Xavier in their estate. Such a gift allows individuals to demonstrate their commitment to God’s work through the Church by making a meaningful financial gift that might have been hard or even impossible during their lifetime.

Julie had started the Sunday School program many years ago at our parish, served on the Stewardship Committee, shared her faith as a Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults sponsor and belonged to a parish Women’s Bible Study group. She felt blessed by God and wanted to share those blessings with others.



Friends of the Matia family chose still another way to establish a lasting tribute following the death last year of 25-year-old Paul Matia.

Paul, who had attended St. Francis Xavier School from the second grade through the sixth grade, died Nov. 9 from a congenital heart defect. Paul, who had severe dyslexia, went on to become valedictorian of his 2009 class at the Lawrence School in Sagamore Hills and captain of its basketball team. He graduated in 2013 from Xavier University, where he was the mascot for two years while studying accounting and international business.

Gary Unsdorfer and Ric Benninger, whose own sons had attended school here and played CYO basketball with Paul, raised money to establish an annual \$500 scholarship at St. Francis Xavier School in Paul’s name. The scholarship will be awarded to a seventh-grader who has done something to help his peers, as Paul often did, and who plans to complete the eighth grade here.

Continued on next page.

“When I heard the news that Paul had passed away pretty unexpectedly, it hit me pretty hard, knowing I have a son that age and knowing how devastating that can be,” says Gary Unsdorfer, DPM. “You want to do something, and the thought was this is a good way to keep his memory alive and his memory around.”

He hopes that, one day, Paul’s classmates may have children enrolled in our school who may come to know Paul Matia through the scholarship. “It was a really easy decision as to where we were going to have the scholarship,” adds Gary, whose wife Jane has taught many years in our school. “It made his parents happy to know that people cared enough.”

Paul’s father, Dr. James Matia, DDS, says he hopes the scholarship rewards the student who is “the good kid in the community who will always help the younger ones out, who’s not a bully, who doesn’t make fun of other people, who’s inclusive. We think that was how Paul was.”

St. Francis Xavier Parish offers a variety of ways to demonstrate the importance of your faith by making a lasting expression of gratitude to the Church. For more information, please contact Fr. Tony Sejba at 330-725-4968.

#weGiveCatholic

Help us modernize St. Francis Xavier School!

Do you know that many of the desks and lockers in our school are more than 50 years old? Have you seen your child try to stuff her winter coat into a skinny locker – then try to do the same with her backpack? Alumni, do you remember having to share a locker with one or two other students?

On Tuesday, Nov. 29, known globally as “Giving Tuesday,” St. Francis Xavier School will participate in the Cleveland Diocese’s first-ever day of Catholic giving. We will use the money donated this day toward much-needed updates to the school. For example, a donation of \$350 will purchase a new desk and chair for one of our students.

Organized by the Catholic Community Foundation, #weGiveCatholic allows participating Catholic parishes, schools, Catholic Charities sites/programs and other Catholic organizations affiliated with the diocese to accept online, tax-deductible, financial contributions on the secure website weGiveCatholic.org during this 24-hour period. Every gift entirely and directly benefits our school.

At least \$50,000 in prizes will be awarded to a school or parish in each of three size categories (with 505 students, we are in the “large school” category) that receives the highest number of individual donors on Nov. 29. The more people who donate, the better chance we have at winning additional cash for our school.

Prizes will be awarded at various times of day:

Prize Name	Hours	Amount	Qualifications
Largest Donation	All Day	\$3,000	To the entity that receives the largest single donation of the day
Night Owl	2-6 a.m.	\$1,000	Highest number of unique donations received between 2 and 6 a.m.
Coffee Break	10-11 a.m.	\$1,000	Highest number of unique donations received between 10 and 11 a.m.
Lunch Break	12-2 p.m.	\$1,000	Highest number of unique donations received between 12 and 2 p.m.
Sunset Special	7-8 p.m.	\$1,000	Highest number of unique donations received between 7 and 8 p.m.
Midnight Madness	11-11:59 p.m.	\$1,000	Highest number of unique donations received between 11 and 11:59 p.m.

We encourage you to look at our web page, which can be found on weGiveCatholic.org, and see more about how your donation can help our school. Stay tuned for more information about these exciting opportunities for our school!



Choir lifts hearts, voices to God

Music is a very personal thing.

Every note brims with hope that it glorifies God and helps to elevate our worship. It takes preparation and dedication to the team and the craft.

Those who belong to the music ministry here at St. Francis Xavier Parish, though, say it is an experience like none other, and they are grateful for the opportunity to spend time together worshipping God through song.

Judy Gainard joined choir 28 years ago, after her renewal sister Donna Bica invited her to join. “Singing in the choir gives me an opportunity to express my love for the Lord,” Judy says. “The words to the songs jump out at me. Sometimes when we sing certain songs, I get emotional and have tears in my eyes. There is a lot of joy in fulfilling the calling to give praise to the Lord.”

Carl and Kathy Becks have belonged to the choir nearly as long as Judy. Rehearsals became a sort of “date night” for the couple, as it was a ministry they could do together. “I feel singing well at Mass and praising God while leading the congregation in song is a great joy,” Carl says. “The choir members are caring people who love to sing. I enjoy the social contact and choir get-togethers – great food!”



Not everyone has been in the choir for decades. Marcia Hill joined less than two years ago because she thought the choir sounded beautiful, and she was annoyed that those sitting in the pews around her weren't singing. “I enjoy singing with a group,” she says. “I never did that before.”

Pete Danszczak, a cantor and member of the traditional choir, sees his singing as an opportunity to fulfill his stewardship commitment by using the gifts with which God's blessed him to benefit our parish community. “I enjoy praying this way,” he explains.

Ryan Neal, our director of music, would like more parishioners to join the ministry. He envisions a large traditional choir that, on occasion, can sing multi-part harmonies and elaborate compositions. Singers need not be experienced – they just need a love of singing and willingness to prepare.

“If you're unable to make the weekly commitment for the traditional choir, there are opportunities to join us for Christmas and Holy Week,” he adds.

The traditional choir sings at the 10 a.m. Mass, September through April, and rehearses at 7:45 p.m. Thursdays in the choir loft. The youth choir sings at the noon Mass twice each month. Cantors sing at the 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. Masses, although a group could be formed for either Mass if singers are available.

The daughter of a trained vocalist who sang throughout Cleveland, Lucy Mahoney recalls her father's “magnificent” voice and says she enjoys sharing God's message through music. “It seemed natural for me to participate in the music program at St. Francis Xavier,” she says. “I wanted to do what I could to help.”



The Winter Rose

On Dec. 3, the feast of St. Francis Xavier, our parish will host a Lessons and Carols program of music preceded by the blessing of our new patronal saint statue near the church's west entrance. A catered meal of heavy appetizers and desserts will be served in our lower church hall following the 5 p.m. Mass.

Thanks to a generous donor, “The Winter Rose,” arranged by Joseph Martin and directed by Ryan Neal, will be accompanied by a full orchestra and about 60 singers. It's not too late to join us! Rehearsals are Sundays from 7 to 9 p.m. in the church. For more information or to register, contact Ryan at rneal@sfxmedina.org or 330-725-4968.

Last year's inaugural Lessons and Carols program was a special evening of prayer and beautiful music. Join us as we prepare our hearts for the birth of the Savior.



Ministry seeks to support marriages

Pete and Mary K. Rakytiak are on a mission to help parishioners strengthen their marriages.



They say more couples need to make time for one another and put God at their center.

Too often, they have seen couples' relationships suffer and dissolve because they let other things take priority. Broken marriages have a lasting impact on children, who most often get shuffled between

homes and lack the security of a stable family.

“The sacrament is so important to us,” says Mary K. “We see so many families divided. We want what we have to be the norm again. It feels like it's slipping away. We want to do something.”

The couple, who have been married 25 years and have three children (Justin, 22; Maddie, 18; and Elise, 14), are the leaders of the St. Francis Xavier Parish Marriage Ministry. The ministry exists to offer support through enrichment activities, such as an annual book study, a Mass and reception celebrating marriage, World Marriage Day and more.

“I see a lot of times the kids are first, but it's the excuse to take Billy to the soccer game and Sally to dance, and God's not first,” says Pete. “We want to put God in the center of marriages first.”

The couple hopes more parishioners will want to join them as they plan ways to help good marriages get even better, and suffering marriages to find the resources they need. The ministry is working to plan programs and promote conversation about common challenges within marriage, such as dealing with conflict, relating to in-laws, communicating effectively, navigating personality differences and more.

The Rakytiaks says they were drawn to the ministry because it gave them an opportunity to meet new people, establish friendships with other couples and do something together.

“I was getting a lot out of the men's renewal thing, and we were doing individual ministries, when we thought, we've got to find something we can do together,” Pete says.

The Rakytiaks encourage and invite all married couples to get involved and join them in this ministry. “Marriage is a blessed sacrament,” Mary K. says. “Let's celebrate our marriages together.”

For more information or to join the ministry, call or text 216-346-0415 or email jprpanda@yahoo.com.



St. Francis Xavier Balance Sheet

As Of June 2016

ASSETS	2016	2015
Checking Accounts - Parish & School	\$143,612.91	\$124,386.68
Savings & Investments - Parish & School	658,743.09	1,009,856.97
Other Assets	1,284.00	5,890.14
Parish & School Assets	\$803,640.00	\$1,140,133.79
Endowment Funds - Parish & School	\$243,807.06	\$242,352.72
Randel Scholarship Fund	115,194.95	115,001.77
Restricted Investments	145,071.93	92,629.83
Bank Accounts & Investments - Cemetery	257,047.94	257,254.89
Total Assets	\$1,564,761.88	\$1,847,373.00
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable & Other Liabilities	\$172,332.18	\$261,591.57
Income Received in Advance	190,831.06	157,340.50
Diocesan Assessments	189,332.08	183,394.00
Loans Payable	68,900.00	76,000.00
Parish & School Liabilities	\$621,395.32	\$678,326.07
FUND BALANCE		
Parish & School Fund Balance	\$250,505.29	\$489,323.72
Endowment Fund Balance	243,807.06	242,352.72
Randel Scholarship Balance	115,194.95	115,001.77
Restricted Fund Balance	76,811.32	65,113.83
Cemetery Fund Balance	257,047.94	257,254.89
Total Liabilities & Fund Balance	\$1,564,761.88	\$1,847,373.00

Capital (Non-recurring)
Disbursements

ASSETS	
Architectural Fees	\$6,548.59
Spring Grove Entrance	426,010.10
New Rectory Windows	24,528.86
Parking Lot	2,952.85
Tuckpointing Buildings	5,275.00
Pave Driveway off Rt.18	21,170.00
Sound System - Church	28,411.00
School/Gym Roof Replacement	50,500.00
School Roof Replacement	9,580.00
School Video Security System	4,913.00
Classroom Furniture	4,956.36
Computers - School	10,163.31
A/C Rooftop - Xavier Room	8,775.00
Total Year to Date	\$603,784.07
Budget for the Year	\$661,350.00

St. Francis Xavier Expenses

Actual year ending June 30, 2016

	2016	2015	BUDGET
CHURCH RECEIPTS			
Offertory Collections	1,316,938.00	1,299,927.00	1,324,046.00
Donations, Bequests and Grants	87,505.00	65,316.00	-
Miscellaneous	184,719.00	307,412.00	165,722.00
Total Church Receipts	1,589,162.00	1,672,655.00	1,489,768.00
SCHOOL RECEIPTS			
Tuition and Registration Fees (K - 8)	1,507,936.00	1,634,809.00	1,453,230.00
Pre-School Tuition and Registration	81,285.00	96,857.00	84,910.00
Scrip Program	5,000.00	21,101.00	5,000.00
Government Assistance	184,059.00	162,249.00	184,058.99
Bingo	71,994.00	48,000.00	54,000.00
Miscellaneous	167,379.00	104,406.00	100,321.01
Total School Receipts	2,017,653.00	2,067,422.00	1,881,520.00
TOTAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL RECEIPTS	3,606,815.00	3,740,077.00	3,371,288.00
CHURCH EXPENSES			
Salaries & Wages	496,711.00	462,200.00	498,268.00
Payroll Taxes & Fringes	164,449.00	135,260.00	165,509.00
Bldg. Maintenance	49,723.00	146,784.00	59,335.00
Utilities	81,409.00	-	98,200.00
Insurance & R.E. Taxes	22,951.00	21,479.00	23,000.00
Diocesan Assessments	172,835.00	171,964.00	171,822.00
Capital Expenses & Improvements	642,856.00	567,146.00	250,000.00
All Other Expenses	191,036.00	223,576.00	234,421.00
Total Church Expenses	1,821,970.00	1,728,409.00	1,500,555.00
SCHOOL EXPENSES			
Salaries & Wages	1,417,161.00	1,361,223.00	1,390,025.00
Payroll Taxes & Fringes	444,448.00	470,949.00	442,983.00
Bldg. Maintenance	53,934.00	43,789.00	56,285.00
Insurance & R.E. Taxes	18,000.00	17,456.00	20,000.00
All Other Expenses	157,914.00	115,510.00	164,521.00
Total Expenses	2,091,457.00	2,008,927.00	2,073,814.00
TOTAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL EXPENSES	3,913,427.00	3,737,336.00	3,574,369.00
Total Operating Receipts Over (Under) Expenses	(306,612.00)	2,741.00	(203,081.00)

St. Francis Xavier

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330-725-4968

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOV. 4-6

LifeTeen Retreat

Camp Cheerful, Strongsville

NOV. 5-6

Respect Life Diaper Drive

Bring packs of diapers to church for babies in need!

SUNDAYS THROUGH NOV. 27

"The Winter Rose" rehearsals

7 p.m., Church

NOV. 21-28

We host Operation Homes

Randel House

NOV. 24

Thanksgiving Mass

9 a.m., Church

Bring food donations

NOV. 25-27

St. Francis Xavier Basketball Tournament, Gym

NOV. 28

LEAF Ministry to families of incarcerated

6:30 p.m., Loyola Room

NOV. 29

Giving Tuesday!

Visit weGiveCatholic.org to donate to our school!

DEC. 3

Feast of St. Francis Xavier Parish Reception, 6:15 p.m.,

Lower church hall

"The Winter Rose" Lessons & Carols, 7:30 p.m., Church

Christmas Mass Schedule

Saturday, December 24

4 p.m., Church

4:30 p.m., Medina High School

Performing Arts Center

6:30 p.m., Church

10:30 p.m., Church

Sunday, December 25

8 a.m., Church

10 a.m., Church

12 noon, Church

DEC. 9-10

First Reconciliation

DEC. 18

Parent-Teacher Club Cookie Walk

9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Xavier Room

DEC. 19-JAN.2

School & PSR Closed for Christmas Break

DEC. 26

Rectory office closed

The Navigator newsletter is brought to you by the Stewardship Committee of St. Francis Xavier Parish. Want to help? Have feedback?

Contact Jennifer Webb at <mailto:jwebb@sfxmedina.org>. Find us online at facebook.com/St.FrancisXavierCatholicChurchMedina