



ST. JOSEPH PARISH & NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

PARISH NEWSLETTER

Inside

- 2 Sharing the Good News
Evangelization as an Expression of Stewardship
- 3 A Letter from
Our Pastor
- 4 The Colors of the
Liturgical Year
- 6 Why We Renew
Our Stewardship
Commitments Each Year
*Listening for God's Call
in Prayer, Service, and
Giving*
- 7 St. Joseph, the Good
Steward *Parish Retreat
Offers Time for Reflection,
Fellowship and a Renewed
Call to Stewardship*
- 8 Making Prayer a Daily
Priority *Responding to
God's Invitation Each Day*
- 9 Praying With the Saints
*Learning Stewardship
Through Holy Examples*

St. Joseph Parish
200 Saint Joseph Drive
Amherst, OH 44001
(440) 988-2848
stjosephamherst.com

Nativity of the BVM Parish
333 South Lake Street
South Amherst, OH 44001
(440) 986-7011

OCTOBER 2026

Supporting Future Priests: *The Knights of Columbus and the Gift of Vocations*

When Fr. Nathan Frankart was ordained to the priesthood, parishioners at St. Joseph and Nativity had plenty of reason to celebrate. For the members of Knights of Columbus Council 4891, there was an added sense of pride. Fr. Nathan is one of their own, and the Knights had supported him throughout his years of formation for the priesthood.

Supporting seminarians both financially and spiritually has long been an important part of the council's mission. Grand Knight Rob Stipe knows the years of education and formation required of men preparing for the priesthood, and he is grateful the Knights can help ease some of that burden. During his time in seminary, Fr. Nathan received financial support each year from the council.

"When we give a check to Nathan Frankart, I think, 'this is our man, this is our boy,'" Rob says. "We are making this easier for a kid who is doing something amazing."

That support is made possible through the Grace Martello Fund, named in memory of the mother of the late Fr. Larry Martello. Grace was a devoted supporter of seminarians and priests. Even after her son was ordained, she continued welcoming seminarians into her home for weekly dinners.

Following her death, the fund was established in her memory so that her commitment to future priests could continue.

"We created this fund in her honor to give back to seminarians because she was so



*Fr. Nathan Frankart and
Fr. Lawrence Jurcak, pastor at
St. Mary Parish where
Fr. Nathan is assigned.*



Members of Knights of Columbus Council 4891

continued on page 5

Sharing the *Good News*

Evangelization as an Expression of Stewardship



The word “evangelization” can sometimes sound intimidating. Many Catholics hear it and immediately think of public speakers, missionaries, or people with extensive theological training. Yet at its core, evangelization is much simpler. It is sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with others and inviting them to encounter His love.

Most people first learn about faith through the witness of others. A parent teaches a child how to pray. A friend offers encouragement during a difficult time. A parishioner extends a warm welcome. A coworker demonstrates kindness and integrity rooted in faith. These everyday moments often become opportunities for God to touch someone’s heart.

Stewardship helps us understand why sharing our faith is so important. Everything we have comes from God, including the gift of faith itself. We have been blessed with the opportunity to know Christ, participate in the life of the Church, and experience His love and mercy. Stewardship calls us not only to receive these gifts with gratitude but also to share them generously.

Sharing the Good News does not require having all the answers or delivering a perfect explanation of Church teaching. More often, it involves living our faith authentically and being

willing to speak about the role God plays in our lives. A personal invitation to Mass, an offer to pray for someone, or a simple conversation about faith can have a lasting impact.

Evangelization is most effective when it grows naturally from relationships. People are often more open to hearing about Christ when they first experience His love through the actions of others. Acts of generosity, compassion, hospitality, and service become powerful witnesses to the Gospel.

Parishes thrive when parishioners embrace this responsibility. Stewardship creates communities where people feel welcomed, supported, and encouraged in their faith. As parishioners share their gifts and live their faith openly, they help create an environment where others can encounter Christ.

Every Catholic has a role to play in this mission. God has entrusted each of us with unique relationships and opportunities that no one else can fulfill. Through our words, actions, and example, we can help bring the Good News to those around us.

As Christian stewards, we are called to share the gifts we have received. The gift of faith is among the greatest of those blessings. By sharing the Good News through our daily lives, we participate in the mission of the Church and help others discover the hope, joy, and purpose found in Jesus Christ.



A Letter from Our Pastor



Living the Gospel in *Ordinary Moments*

Dear Members of our Saint Joseph and Nativity Parish Families,

There is a tendency to think that living our faith requires extraordinary moments — a life-changing mission trip, a dramatic conversion, or some remarkable act of sacrifice. While God certainly works through those experiences, most of our journey with Him takes place in much quieter ways. It unfolds in the ordinary moments of everyday life.

The Gospel is lived in the patience we show a family member after a long day. It is reflected in the integrity we bring to our work, the kindness we extend to a neighbor, and the time we set aside for prayer even when life feels busy. It is found in our willingness to forgive, to encourage someone who is struggling, or simply to be present for a friend in need. These moments may seem small, but they are often the very places where Christ is asking us to follow Him.

As Catholic stewards, we recognize that every day presents opportunities to respond to God's grace. The gifts He has entrusted to us — our time, our abilities, our resources, and even our experiences — are meant to be shared for His glory and the good of others. Stewardship is not reserved for special occasions or community events. It is woven into the countless decisions we make each day as we seek to love God and serve those around us.

Our communities are strengthened when ordinary people faithfully live the Gospel in ordinary ways. Every prayer



offered, every act of service, every ministry supported, every encouraging conversation, and every quiet sacrifice becomes part of the mission Christ has entrusted to His Church. While these acts may never receive public recognition, they help build parish communities where faith is lived, hope is shared, and God's love becomes visible.

October is a wonderful time to renew our commitment to that daily mission. As routines settle into place and parish life continues to flourish, we can ask the Lord to help us see the opportunities He places before us each day. We do not need to accomplish extraordinary things.

We simply need to remain faithful to the opportunities He gives us to love, to serve, and to reflect His presence in the world.

May we never underestimate what God can accomplish through hearts that are willing to serve Him in the ordinary moments of life. As we continue walking together in faith, may each day become another opportunity to live the Gospel with joy, humility, and gratitude.

Gratefully in Christ,

Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor

Fr. Timothy J. O'Connor
Pastor



The Colors of the Liturgical Year

The Catholic Church engages all the senses, and the visual environment of our churches is no exception. At both St. Joseph and Nativity, members of the Environment Ministry help change the colors and decorations in the church to reflect the seasons of the liturgical year.

Green is used during Ordinary Time and represents growth and life. Violet or purple marks the seasons of preparation and penance during Advent and Lent. White is used during the joyful seasons of Christmas and Easter, as well as many celebrations of Christ, Mary, and the saints. Red signifies the Holy Spirit and Christ's Passion and is used on occasions including Pentecost, Palm Sunday, and Good Friday. Rose may also be used on Gaudete Sunday in Advent and Laetare Sunday in Lent, signaling joyful anticipation in the midst of these seasons.

Of course, the colors don't change on their own. It takes dedicated people at both parishes to prepare the church for each season. Sue Cotton has been doing this work for decades at St. Joseph. She also enjoys incorporating seasonal decorations, especially in the fall.

"We decorate the altar, sanctuary, gathering area, and entrances," she says. "It helps people see a little bit of a difference, welcomes them and brings them into the church."

Sue enjoys working with live plants, such as palms for Easter

and Norfolk pines for Advent. Parishioners will sometimes bring them home to help keep them thriving. She hopes more people will consider becoming involved in the Environment Ministry and helping keep the churches beautiful.

"There's no right way or wrong way to do this," Sue says. "It's a behind-the-scenes ministry, and we try to work with people's schedules. They can help in the evening or on the weekend and make it work."

Sue is especially grateful to Lois Tarnowski and Helen Goodell, who led the ministry for years and helped her as they passed the responsibility on to her.

"They were beautiful ladies who took care of God's house," she says. "They gave me some words of wisdom and written instructions, and then they let go, and I've been doing it since."

For Sue, following the colors of the liturgical year is about much more than decorating the church. The colors are part of the language of the Church, visually connecting Catholics to the season being celebrated.

Sue is also grateful to Sue Rumpler for the altar cloth she made in 2007. In 2025, it was altered to fit the larger altar at St. Joseph.

"It's a beautiful piece of her handwork that is back on the altar," she says. "It's really neat because her heart and soul are in it."

continued on page 5

The Colors of the Liturgical Year *continued from page 4*

The priest's vestments also reflect the color of the liturgical season, creating another visual connection between the celebration of the Mass and the church environment.

Sue is always on the lookout for parishioners with skills in decorating and sewing who might enjoy putting their talents to use through the Environment Ministry. For her, the ministry is a way to share those gifts while helping parishioners recognize and enter more fully into each season of the Church year.

"This ministry unites us not only in our parish, but in our diocese and around the world," she says.

To get involved in the Environment Ministry, contact Sue Cotton at (440) 986-1725.



Supporting Future Priests *continued from front cover*

involved and provided so much for men studying to be priests," Rob says.

Each year, the Knights use the fund to support seminarians from St. Joseph and Nativity. When possible, that support is extended to other seminarians from Lorain County.

The council helps replenish the Grace Martello Fund through its annual Steak Fry, while surplus money is invested in CDs to help the fund continue to grow. Over the years, the fund has grown to nearly \$100,000, helping ensure that the Knights can continue supporting future generations of priests.

The council's commitment to Catholic education extends beyond seminarians. The Knights also offer \$250 scholarships to eighth-grade students who plan to continue their education in a Catholic school.

Supporting vocations and Catholic education are just two ways the Knights serve the Church and their community. Throughout the year, Council 4891 holds fundraisers benefiting a variety of charitable causes. In the process, members also build friendships and strengthen the bonds of fraternity that are at the heart of the Knights.

"There's a sense of happiness and brotherhood when a group of men takes on a large feat," Rob says. "To go through the planning stages and carrying out the event and then to see the fruits of our labor is very rewarding."

For Rob, that brotherhood is one of the greatest gifts of belonging to the Knights. Members come together through their shared Catholic faith while finding opportunities to serve their parishes and one another.

"The bonds that are created on the simple idea of being a Catholic man are massive," Rob says. "Some of my best friends are the men that I've met in the Knights of Columbus."

Catholic men of the parish age 18 and older are invited to join the Knights of Columbus. Follow the council on Facebook at K of C Holy Family 4891. To join the Knights, scan the QR code.

Why We Renew Our Stewardship Commitments Each Year

Listening for God's Call in Prayer, Service, and Giving

"I already pray. I'm involved in parish ministries. I give regularly to the offertory. Why do I need to fill out another Commitment Card?"

It's a fair question — and one that comes up every year during our Stewardship Renewal at St. Joseph and Nativity.

The answer begins with understanding what the Commitment Card really is. It isn't simply a form for signing up for ministries or changing your offertory contribution. And completing one doesn't mean you have to add another activity to an already-busy schedule.

Instead, our annual Stewardship Renewal gives each of us an opportunity to stop, pray, and ask a much more important question: "Lord, what are You asking of me now?"

That question is especially appropriate for this year's renewal theme, *Speak, Lord, Your Servant Is Listening*.

When the young Samuel heard the Lord calling him, he responded, "Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Sm 3:10). His response reminds us that Christian stewardship begins not with activity, but with listening. Before deciding how we will use our time, share our talents, or give of our treasure, we first listen for God's direction.

And that is important even — perhaps especially — for those who are already active in parish life.

Think about any important relationship. A husband and wife who have been married for many years don't assume that because they made their vows once, nothing more is required of them. Their commitment remains, but the relationship continues to grow and change. They make time for one another, express their love, and find new ways to live out the promises they made.

Our relationship with God also deserves that kind of attention.

Perhaps the prayer commitment you made last year has become an important part of your day. Renew it. Maybe a ministry continues to bring you joy and draws you closer to Christ. Recommit to it.

Perhaps your circumstances have changed and God is asking you to serve in a different way. Or maybe this is the year to take a small step forward in prayer or offertory giving.

The Commitment Card provides a concrete way to put those decisions into writing.

It also helps our parishes. This year's card asks parishioners to identify both the ministries in which they are currently involved and those they are interested in learning more about or joining. That information helps St. Joseph and Nativity understand where parishioners are serving and connect people with opportunities to become more involved.

The card also encourages each household to make specific commitments in all three areas of stewardship — time, through prayer; talent, through parish ministry; and treasure, through consistent offertory giving.

Most importantly, completing a Commitment Card gives us a reason to stop once a year and examine our response to God's generosity. Stewardship is not something we decide once and then place on autopilot. As our lives change, so may the ways God is calling us to pray, serve, and give.

Our Stewardship Renewal Commitment Weekend was Oct. 3-4, but the opportunity to participate did not end that weekend. If you have already returned your card, thank you for taking part in this year's renewal. If you haven't, there is still time — and your commitment still matters.

Maybe your card is still sitting on the kitchen counter or tucked away with the renewal materials you received. Take a few minutes to find it and pray over it. Listen. Consider where God may be calling you to continue, where He may be inviting you to grow, and then make your commitment.

After all, the most important part of this year's Stewardship Renewal comes before we ever check a box.



"Speak, Lord, Your Servant Is Listening."

If you have not yet returned your 2026 Commitment Card, please bring it to Mass, mail it to the parish office using the envelope provided, or complete it online at stjosephamherst.com.

If you have already returned your card, thank you for your participation.

St. Joseph, the Good Steward *Parish Retreat Offers Time for Reflection, Fellowship and a Renewed Call to Stewardship*

Parishioners from St. Joseph and Nativity of the BVM gathered on Saturday, Sept. 12, at Nativity for the Annual Parish Retreat. Led by Msgr. Robert Tucker, the retreat focused on St. Joseph, the Good Steward, inviting participants to step away from the demands of everyday life and spend time with God and one another. Through inspiring talks, quiet reflection, and small-group discussion, participants reflected on how God is at work in their lives and how He is calling each of us to use our gifts in service to His people.

The day also provided an opportunity for fellowship as members of our two parish families gathered for breakfast and lunch and shared time together. Msgr. Tucker, whose own experience with stewardship has grown through years of parish ministry and his work with Catholic Stewardship Consultants, encouraged participants to continue growing as stewards in the love of God.





Making Prayer a *Daily Priority* Responding to God's Invitation Each Day

Most Catholics understand the importance of prayer, yet many struggle to make it a consistent part of daily life. Busy schedules, family responsibilities, work commitments, and countless distractions can easily crowd out time with God. Even with the best intentions, prayer sometimes becomes something we plan to do rather than something we actually do.

Yet prayer is not simply another item on a spiritual checklist. It is the foundation of our relationship with God. Through prayer, we listen to His voice, express our gratitude, seek His guidance, and open our hearts to His grace. Just as healthy relationships require regular communication, our relationship with God grows stronger when we spend time with Him consistently.

Stewardship begins with recognizing that everything we have comes from God. This includes the gift of time. Each day offers opportunities to choose how we will use the hours entrusted to us. When we intentionally set aside time for prayer, we acknowledge God's place at the center of our lives and respond to His invitation to draw closer to Him.

Prayer does not need to be lengthy or complicated to be meaningful. A few quiet moments in the morning, reflection on Scripture, grace before meals, the Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration, or an examination of conscience before bed can all help cultivate a deeper relationship with Christ. The key is consistency rather

than perfection.

Regular prayer also shapes the way we live stewardship. As we spend time with God, we become more aware of His blessings and more attentive to His will. Prayer helps us recognize opportunities to serve others, use our gifts wisely, and respond generously to the needs around us. It reminds us that stewardship is not simply about what we do but about becoming the people God calls us to be.

Many saints viewed prayer as the source of their strength and mission. They understood that fruitful service flows from a relationship with Christ. Without prayer, even our best efforts can become disconnected from the One who gives them meaning and purpose.

Establishing a habit of prayer often begins with small steps. Setting aside a specific time each day, choosing a quiet place, and committing to a simple routine can help transform good intentions into lasting habits. Over time, these moments become opportunities to encounter God and experience His presence more fully.

Each day, God invites us into conversation with Him. As Christian stewards, we are called to respond to that invitation with grateful hearts. By making prayer a daily priority, we deepen our relationship with Christ and become better equipped to share His love with the world around us.

Praying With the Saints

Learning Stewardship Through Holy Examples

One of the great blessings of the Catholic faith is the Communion of Saints. The Church teaches that those who have gone before us in faith remain united with us through Christ. They continue to pray for us, encourage us through their example, and remind us that holiness is possible in every age and circumstance.

For many Catholics, asking the saints for their intercession is a familiar part of prayer. Whether seeking the prayers of St. Joseph, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Monica, St. Francis de Sales, or another beloved saint, Catholics have long turned to these holy men and women as companions on the journey of faith. Their lives point us toward Christ and offer practical examples of discipleship.

The saints are not simply historical figures to be admired from a distance. They are models to be imitated. Each saint responded to God's call in a unique way, using the gifts and opportunities entrusted to them for His glory. Some were priests or religious, while others were parents, workers, teachers, or community leaders. Their paths were different, but each sought to live faithfully according to God's will.

This is where the saints provide valuable lessons in stewardship. Stewardship begins with recognizing that everything we have comes from God. The saints understood this truth deeply. Rather than focusing on their own accomplishments, they viewed their lives, talents, resources, and relationships as gifts entrusted to them by God.

St. Teresa of Calcutta used her gifts to serve the poorest

of the poor. St. Vincent de Paul devoted his life to caring for those in need. St. John Paul II used his leadership and communication skills to share the Gospel throughout the world. Countless other saints demonstrated generosity, humility, courage, hospitality, and service in ways that continue to inspire the Church today.

Praying with the saints helps us grow in our own stewardship way of life. As we learn about their examples, we begin to see how God might be calling us to use our own gifts more faithfully. The saints remind us that stewardship is not reserved for extraordinary people. It is a calling for every Christian.

The Communion of Saints also reminds us that we do not walk alone. The spiritual life can sometimes feel challenging, but the saints encourage us through their prayers and witness. They demonstrate that a life centered on Christ is both meaningful and fruitful.

During the month of October, as the Church reflects on prayer, mission, and the witness of holy men and women, we are invited to deepen our connection to the Communion of Saints. By seeking their intercession and learning from their examples, we grow closer to Christ and gain a clearer understanding of

how to live stewardship in our own daily lives.

The saints show us that holiness begins with faithfully using the gifts God has given us. Their examples continue to inspire us to live with gratitude, generosity, and a desire to serve God and others.



St. Thérèse of Lisieux

AD SPACE

AD SPACE

This newsletter brought to you by the Catholic Communities of:

& ST. JOSEPH PARISH & NATIVITY OF THE BVM PARISH

NON PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID

PERMIT 58
AMHERST OH

200 Saint Joseph Drive, Amherst, OH 44001

Address Service Requested

Fr. Tim O'Connor Serving Both Parishes

Mass:

Monday, 9:00 a.m. - *St. Joseph*

Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. - *Nativity of the BVM*

Thursday, 7:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*

Friday, 9:00 a.m. - *St. Joseph*

Saturday, 4:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*

5:30 p.m. - *Nativity of the BVM*

Sunday, 8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m. - *St. Joseph*

Confession at St. Joseph:

Thursday - Individual Reconciliation 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday - Individual Reconciliation 11:00 a.m. - noon

Eucharistic Adoration (Chapel) at Nativity of the BVM:

Monday-Friday 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Upcoming Activities and Events

First Friday Rosary

Friday, Oct. 2

11 a.m. at Nativity Church. Luncheon to follow in Nativity Parish Hall

First Saturday Rosary

Saturday, Oct. 3

9 a.m. at St. Joseph Church

Stewardship Renewal Weekend

Saturday, Oct. 3 and Sunday, Oct. 4
at all Masses

Hospitality Tuesday

Tuesday, Oct. 6

8:30 a.m. at Nativity Church
(following the 8 a.m. Mass)

Altar and Rosary Society Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 6

6:30 p.m. Rosary, followed by meeting in
Nativity Parish Hall

Men's Group Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 6

6:30 p.m. at St. Joseph School MPR

Candlelight Rosary Service

Wednesday, Oct. 7

7 p.m. at Nativity Church. Refreshments to follow in Nativity Parish Hall

No School

Friday, Oct. 9

Dinners on the Go pick-up

Tuesday, Oct. 13 and 27

5 p.m. at Nativity Parish Hall
(drive-thru service only)

**Views and Pews – A Journey Through
Amherst Architecture of Faith**

Tuesday, Oct. 13

Parent Club

Tuesday, Oct. 13

7 p.m. at St. Joseph School MPR

Polka Mass

Saturday, Oct. 17

5:30 p.m. at Nativity Church in South
Amherst. Dinner and social to follow in
Nativity Parish Hall

Knights of Columbus Meeting

Tuesday, Oct. 27

7 p.m. at St. Joseph School MPR

P.S.R.

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 14, 21, and 28
5:30 p.m. at St. Joseph School

Sacred Sisters Prayer and Study Group

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 14, 21, and 28
6:30 p.m. at O.S.E. Community Center

Vincentians Meeting

Thursday, Oct. 1, 15, and 29

9 a.m. in St. Joseph Conference Room

Holy Ground Youth Group

Sunday, Oct. 4, 11, and 18

6 p.m. in St. Joseph School Gym (Event
begins with 5 p.m. Mass — meet near the
choir before Mass.)

OCIA (formerly RCIA)

Monday, Oct. 5, 12, 19, and 26
7 p.m. at Nativity Parish Hall

Chair Yoga Flow Classes

Tuesdays and Thursdays in October
9:30 a.m. at Nativity Parish Hall