

WORDS AND WORKS

quarterly newsletter for Holy Infant Parish
Ballwin, MO

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

By: Monsignor Mike Dieckmann



Almost everyone that reads this has most likely seen the movie *A Christmas Story*. When I was about eight or ten this actually happened on Christmas Eve. Dad loved decorating our tree, and his specialty was tinsel. We kids could hang ornaments, but he did the tinsel. Remember in the movie how the “Old Man” was finicky about his turkey? Well, my dad was finicky with his tinsel. After the or-

naments were all on the tree, Dad would start with the tinsel, and he was VERY methodical. To a nine-year-old it seemed like two or three hours, but looking back, I’m sure it was 45 minutes to an hour (we always had a big, tall tree). My sister and brother and I were worried that Dad would still be hanging tinsel and Santa would pass us by.

Finally, Dad was satisfied with his masterpiece. Yay! All that was left to do was to close the drapes in front of the large picture window

where the tree was stationed, so we could go to bed (you know what’s coming already, don’t you?). Dad (thank goodness he was the one to do this and not me) started to close the drapes slowly and carefully, but somewhere a tree branch got caught on a drape, and almost in slow motion, the entire masterpiece fell to the floor. We heard the popping of some of the glass ornaments, but Dad was horrified that his Tintoretto in tinsel had been jumbled and was now a tangled, sorrowful mess.

Before we kids started to laugh, Mom had the wisdom to whisk us out of the living room and off to bed. I’m sure Dad had some choice things to say, but I don’t remember that part. Thankfully, by the next morning the tinsel was repaired, and Santa had left our presents at last. To this day, I get a chuckle whenever I see tinsel. I also have a great story about Mom and a Christmas that wasn’t a waste, and one about me serving Midnight Mass, but those will have to wait for another year.





HOLY INFANT CATHOLIC CHURCH
627 Dennison Drive • Ballwin, Missouri 63021 • (636) 227-7440

December 2018

Dear Parishioners,

Grace and peace to you and yours during this blessed season of Advent! Throughout this season, we anticipate the celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus, the Holy Infant of Bethlehem, the newborn Savior of the world!

We are delighted to have you as part of our parish family! We are blessed beyond measure by the goodness of so many in our community who faithfully join us for Sunday Mass. It is such a crucial part of our spiritual growth that we gather weekly to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Thank you for your faithful participation in the life of our parish!

On behalf of the parish, we offer a word of sympathy to all who may find these days to be painful. If you have buried a loved one or suffered some other loss, we know that the joy of the holidays can be mixed with heartache and pain. Please know that we care for you and will hold you and your loved ones in prayer throughout these days.

We will have our regular weekend Mass schedule on Saturday, Dec. 22 and Sunday, Dec. 23.

Our Mass schedule for Christmas is as follows:

- **The Nativity of the Lord Vigil Masses: Monday, December 24th:**
4:00 p.m., 4:10 p.m. (in the Parish Center/Gym), 6:00 p.m. and
12:00 Midnight
- **The Nativity of the Lord Tuesday, December 25th:** 8:00 a.m. and
10:00 a.m. (Note the new times.)

On **Tuesday, January 1**, we will celebrate **the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**. We will have Masses at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. This is a day of holy obligation.

We pray that you and your family will have a joyful and memorable Christmas and a New Year that is filled with peace!

Rev. Edward J. Stanger

Rev. Edward J. Stanger
Pastor

Msgr. Michael E. Dieckmann

Msgr. Michael E. Dieckmann
Sr. Associate Pastor

Rev. Andrew V. Burkemper

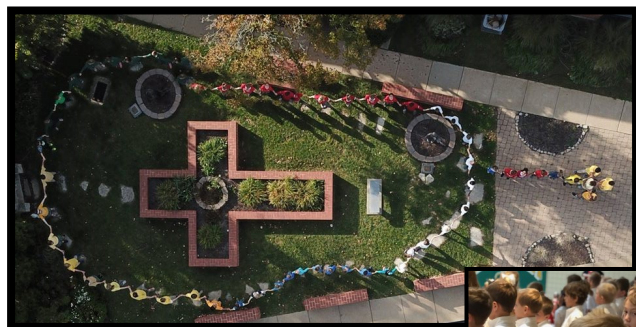
Rev. Andrew V. Burkemper
Associate Pastor

Holy Infant School Highlights

By: Christy Forrest and Kathee Lenger



The voices of our school community joined in prayer to say the World Mission Rosary on October 30th. This beautiful Holy Infant School tradition was inaugurated by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in 1951. He



said, "We must pray not only for ourselves, but for the world." Each decade of the Rosary, which he designed, calls to mind a different area of the world.



Green for the forests and grasslands of Africa; blue for the oceans surrounding the islands of the Pacific; white symbolizes Europe, the seat of the Holy Father; red for the fire of faith that brought the missionaries to the Americas, and yellow for the morning light of the east, Asia.

Monsignor Mike and Mrs. Hacay surprised some classes by dropping in during our All Hallow's Eve parties for a 'sing-a-long'.

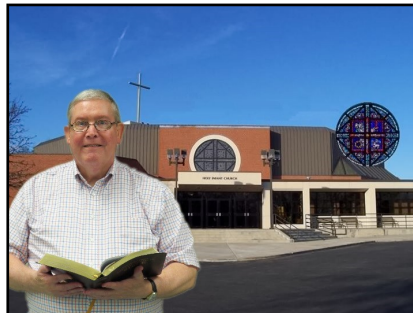


The sixth-grade students will perform "Rockin' Robin Hood" on February 8 and 9 in the Monsignor Buchheit Center.



Deacon Ken's Corner

By: Deacon Ken Clemens



There resides within the human heart an untiring curiosity to probe beneath the surface, to explore the mysterious. We want to understand ourselves, other people,

the world, and beyond. Christmas is a time when we can all be starry-eyed and lost in wonderment, but, unfortunately, many stop at the surface level with songs, lights, presents, and of course the Christ Child. This should capture our minds and imaginations and carry us off in flights of joy and glory.

We often hear the slogan "Keep Christ in Christmas," which is good advice, for many lesser things can crowd Him out. In reality, it is the birthday celebration of the world's most important Person. In that sense, we need to keep Christ in Christmas. Too many of us, however, keep Him there so we know exactly where to find Him next year. These are the Christmas Christians. For them, Jesus is always the cute Baby, quietly sleeping in His little crib. They fail to see beyond the manger or hear His voice echoing through the ages. If we can keep Him in His crib, He won't threaten our life style and it will be easy to be a good Christian. It is with the mature Christ that we find the answers to the tough questions in our lives. Here, we must turn to the Christ of Good Friday and Easter.

Christmas is a birth, a beginning, a first step, but the road leads from an empty crib. We can stop and pause there, but we are not meant to stay. That road winds its way through villages and mountains, in success and failure, in tears and prayers. The road winds from an empty cross and on again from an empty tomb. We are invited to pursue those divine footprints and echoes into the mysterious future. And so, it is that we can find Christ in Christmas, but we cannot keep Him there. It's only the beginning—the easy part of life. The heroic challenge is to follow Him.

The Infancy Narrative: Youth Ministry Updates

By: Dan Angel, Youth Minister



The world of youth ministry rarely slows down, and there is never a shortage of youth to reach out to. This past fall has been especially eventful with our annual retreats and events, along with some new

and share their thoughts about how that particular passage affects their lives as teens. Afterwards, we take time for personal prayer and praise & worship music. On Sunday Life Nights, prepared and presented by our adult core team, we dive into different aspects of our faith, the struggles teens face in the world, how to be evangelizers, etc. This semester we covered the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the break down of the Mass and its importance as the source and summit of our faith, discussed the reality of angels and demons, and more.

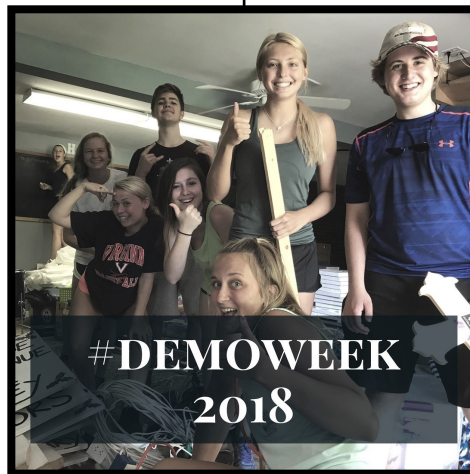
We put on many retreats for our high schoolers, as well. This past November, we had our annual fall retreat, Abide, which was based on Henri Nouwen's book, *Life of the Beloved*. We discussed our identity as beloved, how we have

dreams that have become reality. If you are not familiar with what we do at youth ministry, let me take a moment to tell you because it is far more than the "pizza and games" stereotype it is generally given!

Here, at Holy Infant our youth ministry supports middle school youth (7th & 8th graders) through our EDGE program and high school teens through our Life Teen program. Our EDGE group meets every Thursday morning for what we affectionately call EDGE Café, where the youth gather before school for a time of community, prayer, and donuts! We also meet once a month for an EDGE Night when we break-down certain areas of our faith, meet in small groups, enjoy fun, community building activities, and pray together. This semester, we began to look deeply at what makes true and faithful friendships; we looked at examples from Scripture and heard from our adult core team and high school volunteers who gave witness to the faith of our teens. At the annual EDGE Retreat in early fall, we focused on God the Father's relentless pursuit of us and our response as beloved sons and daughters.

Our high school Life Teen program has even more opportunities for our teens to encounter Christ and build community. Every week we meet on Tuesday evenings for, what we call 4:12, based on 1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no one

have contempt for your youth, but set an example for those who believe, in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity." The teens volunteer to prepare a reflection based on the upcoming Gospel reading



been chosen and blessed by God and are meant to be given back to him and the world to help others realize their belovedness. Our Life Teen program hosts events for the parish such as Trunk-or-Treat, which gives children and parents a safe and fun place to trick-or-treat. We also host O, Holy Night, which just took place, offering a spiritual reflection on the story of the Nativity followed by a meal to build up our community at Holy Infant.

This year, youth ministry was also able to expand its reach and offer its first ever parent retreat, which minis-

tered to many of the parents of youth within, and even some outside, our ministry. It was a fantastic day where our parents were spiritually fed, refreshed, and given tools to help lead their youth along the journey of faith together.

We also built a new gaga pit, cleaned out our basement and created new environments for our youth house with the help of the Knights of Columbus and many parents willing to give of their time and talents in support of our youth.

As youth minister, I am forever grateful for the prayers and support of all our parishioners and ministries who help lift up our youth group. It truly takes a community, especially in supporting, teaching and loving the youth. They are not only the future of the Church, but are called to build up the Kingdom here and now. Please, do not ever hesitate to contact me in order to find out more about our program, or visit our website at <https://www.holyinfantyouthministry.org>



My Twisted Road To Faith

By: Ron Sides

We all have different faith journeys. Some seem simple (e.g., cradle Catholic parents to cradle Catholic children). Then there is me, with a journey that was (to paraphrase an old Beatles song) "A Long and Twisted Road." It is said that God works in mysterious ways, but in my case, God seemed to work with nudges and flashes of insight.

My story began as a young Lutheran boy, growing up in Jackson, Missouri raised by devout Lutheran parents. I remember this as a time of devout reverence to God. But I also developed a strong interest in science. My firm foundation of faith in God lasted through most of grade school. But cracks began to appear in that foundation beginning in perhaps seventh grade. I began to ask questions. How do we know there is a God? How old is the Earth, really? There seemed to be puzzles that the bible did not answer.

There was a defining moment in my life toward the end of eighth grade. The teacher at that time was distinctly anti-science. One day in religion class, he singled me out in front of all of my class mates to pose challenges to science. Being a shy young man, I was very angry about this and the cracks deepened.

When I was a sophomore in public high school, I developed a strange "affliction." It was unheard of then, but is now not uncommon: Social Anxiety Disorder. I prayed fervently to God for help to end this "affliction," but found no help (at that time) and felt abandoned. I was done with God, but God was not done with me yet.

During my very first college class, I happened to sit next to a pretty brunette named Dotty. By middle college years, I was a confident atheist, and my "affliction" had been taken away. I unexpectedly chanced upon Dotty at the Jackson Homecoming celebration and shortly thereafter asked her out. (Decades earlier, my parents had their first date at this same celebration.) This nudge eventually lead to my marriage to my cradle Catholic wife.

Another nudge came years later after we had two children that I loved dearly. I had little faith in God at the time, but did place great value on my religious upbringing

and its emphasis on morals and ethics, regardless of the "God" question. I agreed to raise the children as Catholic, and began to attend church regularly (sort of).

I will now fast forward to 2000-2001. I received two more nudges, one of which was to join the Joyful Noise Choir. The second was when a good Holy Infant friend invited me to a Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) Team 7 retreat. As an agnostic, I foresaw a disaster in the making but said yes anyway. CRHP turned out to be a truly defining experience. I discovered, that I was far more similar to these cradle Catholic men than I would have ever imagined. Like me, they had questions about their faith and like me, were still seeking answers. Also, through them I learned about books such as *"The Case For Faith"* and others, which took on some of the objections to religion and provided answers.

One day, while I, the ex-Lutheran, ex-atheist, was singing in the Choir, I had a sudden flash of insight. Here I was leading this Catholic congregation in song, and yet I was not one of them. How really stupid was that? And so late in 2004, I announced to my patient and loving wife, that I had decided to become a Catholic. I can still see the look of shock on her face. But my faith journey does not end there - Does anyone's really end?

Based on comments from another Holy Infant friend of mine, I finally dug into the heart of the science versus God "problem" and discovered that there is no conflict between science and religion, at least not for Catholics. So after my long and twisted road, I found that the "science problem," which had destroyed my faith so long ago, was not a problem at all. In fact, I now consider science to be yet another wonderful way to worship God.



Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) retreats are usually held twice a year. The men will gather the weekend of January 12-13, 2019 and the women's weekend is March 30-31. The retreat starts on Saturday morning and ends on Sunday afternoon. Watch the bulletin for more information.



The ladies, guided by artist, Christy Machellet, painted artwork of dandelions blowing in the wind. The Adult Faith Formation Committee coordinated this event.



Words and Works is a quarterly publication of Holy Infant Parish, informing parishioners of events and activities of interest to the parish, with a further goal of fostering unity within the Church and drawing all together into a closer warmer Church family.

Copy Editor

Lauren Hawk

Lhawk6774@gmail.com

Layout Editor

Pam Miller

(314) 498-6730

pam@vizkids.org

Writers

Eileen Buehrle

ebuehrle@charter.net

Deacon Ken Clemens

k.clemens@charter.net

Judy Giblin

judvanddan4@charter.net

Kathie Hanneke

gkhanneke@gmail.com

Dennis Heder

djheder@charter.net

Dolores Kaemmerer

artoto@juno.com

Mary Jane Zust

marjan343@charter.net

Holy Infant School Contributors

Christy Forrest

cforrest@holvinfantschool.org

Kathee Lenger

kathee.lenger@holvinfantschool.org

When Life is an Anvil and You Want it to be a Feather

By: Judy Giblin



Sometimes life is heavy—too heavy. Don't you wish you could go to the local pharmacy and buy a lozenge that eradicates any illness, or buy a relationship guide that would fix all of your communication woes, or snap your fingers and have a discount card magically appear making everything you buy 50% cheaper? Alas...it's fantasy.

Why aren't these solutions available? I wish I could tell you that they're in the works. However, that would be a lie. It's okay to fantasize, but that won't solve real-life problems. Instead I'm going to let you in on a not-so-secret secret: turn to your church to help you find the answers. If you find yourself reaching the end of the proverbial rope, then it may be time to call Holy Infant and inquire about Stephen Ministry.

I know—I've been there; in the lowest of lows and the darkest of darkness. For me, it was illness: an elusive, pernicious, stalker that lingered by day and haunted by night; a stranger in my home who wasn't welcome there, flicking the lights off and on and peeking at me around every corner. If only I could have gotten a restraining order. But, you have to know your stalker's name to follow the proper procedures to distance them. To be held hostage by something without a name, added injury to injury upon my person: my psyche, my body, my spirit.

Injuries to body, mind, and spirit can occur for many reasons: money problems, marriage woes, raising (I'll be nice here) difficult children, addiction, caregiving, divorce, loneliness, illness, and the list goes on.

Like most people, I desperately wanted to be independent, to do it all by myself. I mean, that's what adults do, right? When things get tough, you should get tougher. Well, I was tough. And I han-

dled it, with my family's help, for a long time...and still...I'm here to tell you that it's okay to need help and to ask for help. Because, unless you're Harry Potter and you've got a magic wand, the day will come when you'll need help. Accept that, and the tough times will be easier to handle.

Accepting help is not a sign of weakness. Making the right decisions is a sign of strength. It is being strong enough to know that when life is too heavy there are others available to help you carry the anvil. In my opinion, the new Stephen Ministry moniker should be, "We'll carry your anvil." Okay...well...I took a little creative license there, but you get what I mean.

In all honesty, we are part of a huge church community that offers many resources few of us will ever take advantage of. I don't mean take advantage of in a negative sense. We tend to think these resources are "for other people." Right? (Insert long satisfying *beep* here). Nope. Wrong. (Insert a big fat *gong* here). Sometimes we are the givers, but sometimes we should be the takers. So, it's a wonderful thing when you can contribute...by all means...be a giver. But...if you need...then take.

I wish for you, that your troubles will be in the rearview mirror; mine are. I walked the journey with two Stephen Ministers at different times in my life. They were both lovely to me and never judged me. They listened, offered communion, read Bible passages with me, and would have assisted in the utilization of other ministries, had I a need. It was by no means a cure for what ailed me. It did, however, make my journey to health a little lighter.

Stephen Ministry is there for all of us. Stephen Ministers are trained members of our congregation who will meet with

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued: When Life is an Anvil . . .)

you in private, once a week. They are professional care givers who keep your information confidential. If you're an empathetic person, consider being a minister for others. If you are in need of an anvil carrier—contact:

- Patricia Foley, 636-227-0802 Option 3 or email pfoley@holysinfballwin.org
- Gene Bestgen, 636-527-5385 or email

bestgenstl@aol.com or

- Mary Emke, 636-751-5051 or email maryemke@att.net

Stephen Ministry represents more than 170 Christian denominations and organizations that come from all 50 states. To learn more about the ministry and its mission, visit www.stephenministries.org or <http://holysinfballwin.org/ministries/community-outreach/christian-service/stephen-ministry/>



JOIN US FOR OPEN HOUSE

For Prospective Students
Entering Preschool - 8th Grade

Friday, January 25, 2019

Join our Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade students at their 8:00 a.m. Class Mass, followed by tours of our School and refreshments in the cafeteria.



Can't make Open House? Call to schedule a tour: 636-227-0802

www.holysinfballschool.org

America's Next Top Model to Role Model

Holy Infant Church
January 13, 2019 at 7 pm

*Teens, Young Adults
and their Families*

Leah Darrow first gained international attention with her debut on the reality television show, America's Next Top Model. As one of the 14 finalists, Leah's foray into the world of modeling aired in late September of 2004. Following her time on the reality show, Leah continued to work in the world of modeling making appearances in many national and international publications. As she neared completion on what was to be her last photo shoot, Leah had an experience that set her life on a different course. Realizing her profession placed her in situations in which she was not truly comfortable, Leah left the modeling industry and has devoted herself to speaking about Gospel of Jesus Christ and helping people find their love, acceptance, and beauty in Him.

*Tickets on Sale
in November*

Teens: \$5 • 18+: \$10



WEBSITES FOR CATHOLIC INFORMATION By: Eileen Buehrle

Here are some websites that you might like to look into for some answers of questions you may have. The website for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has many other websites you can log into from their website.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
<http://www.usccb.org/>

3211 Fourth Street NE
Washington DC 20017
202-541-3000

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is the episcopal conference of the Catholic Church in the United States. Founded in 1966 as the joint National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). The Gospel of Christ and the teachings of His Church guide the work of the USCCB.

EWTN
<https://www.ewtn.com>

5817 Old Leeds Rd
Irontdale AL 35210 216
205-271-2900

Eternal Word Television Network, more commonly known by its initials EWTN, is an American basic cable television network which presents around-the-clock Catholic-themed programming.

Regular Mass Schedule

Sunday Obligation

Saturday: 4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
Sunday: 7 a.m., 8:30 a.m.,
10:15 a.m. and noon

Weekday Masses

Monday-Friday: 6 a.m. and
8 a.m.; Saturday 8 a.m.

Holy Day Masses

Please check the bulletin or
call the rectory to check
times for Holy Day Masses.

Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration

24 hours, 7 days a week.
Enter the chapel through the
main lobby.

Holy Infant Church

627 Dennison Drive, Ballwin MO 63021-4898

Rectory: (636) 227-7440 FAX (636) 227-4548

Website: www.holyinfantballwin.org



Pastoral Staff

Rev. Edward J. Stanger Pastor

Rev. Monsignor Michael Dieckmann Sr. Associate Pastor

Rev. Andrew Burkemper Associate Pastor

Daniel Henke Deacon

Jim Powers Deacon

Rectory Office Hours

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Closed for lunch from noon -1 p.m.

Ministry to the Homebound

Please call the rectory if you are ill at home or in the hospital or
nursing facility and would like Communion brought to you. Volun-
teers also are available to help in other ways.



NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BALLWIN MO.
PERMIT NO. 2

Holy Infant Parish
627 Dennison Drive
Ballwin, MO 63021-4898

INFORMATION PAGE ONLY—DO NOT PUBLISH THIS INFORMATION

Send newsletters to this mailing address:

Holy Infant Catholic Church
HOLY INFANT WORDS AND WORKS NEWSLETTER
627 Dennison Drive
Ballwin, Missouri 63021

PARISH NUMBER—292950

Contact Information:

Pam Miller
314-498-6730
Pam@vizkids.org

Printing information:

of copies: 3000
Copy and Fold
of pages for this newsletter: 9 which includes this information page. Do not
print this information page.