

Spirit & Life

Celebrating a Year of Faith! "Your Faith makes us Strong in Christ"

Fall 2013

From the Desk of the Pastor

A classmate of mine from the North American College – Fr. Michael White – recently co-authored a book that is making its way into parishes across the country. I would like to highly recommend it, not just for reading pleasure but as a tool by which we can together see St. Gregory's with new eyes of faith and graced desire to make church matter. Our entire staff has been asked to read the book, Bishop Malone has recommended it to all the priests of the diocese, and I believe it will offer us many keen insights into ways to awaken ourselves in Christ and become a living invitation to those who are searching for God.

**The Story of a Catholic Parish:
Rebuilt – Awakening the Faithful – Reaching the Lost – Making Church Matter
Michael White and Tom Corcoran**

If we could establish a starting point from which every member of St. Gregory's agree, I would want it to be the following: *"Disciples Make Disciples: From the beginning, the whole pattern for being a disciple is making disciples. When Jesus called the first disciples, he made a single promise to them: They'd be disciple makers (cf. Matthew 4:19). That's what they did and that's what disciples always do. The Church is in the disciple making business, because we live our faith and grow in our faith by sharing our faith."* (Rebuilt p. 70) May I encourage you to pick up a copy of the book and as the Lord inspires you - read it. The graced result would be that everyone will know that we are His Disciples.

As we reflect on the goal of Rebuilt it compels us to reach out in invitation.

If you know of anyone who has been away from the Church and may be wondering about coming back or has questions about the Catholic faith, please be that disciple who reaches out to them to invite them to meet with myself or any of our staff so that we can help them take those next steps. ALL our welcome at our parish! Whatever place people are at in life, let them know that they are welcome and we are here to help them sort things out and come home to the Lord.

Christus super omnia – Christ above all things!

St. Gregory's Great Dinner Auction Celebrates 15th Anniversary

The Crystal Ball

Join us at Samuel's Grande Manor on Saturday, October 26, for the 15th Anniversary Great Dinner Auction and a spectacular evening of dinner, dancing and bidding!

"The Crystal Ball" evening of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and a grand silent auction begins at 5:30 pm. A gala dinner follows afterward with a live auction and live music by Joy Ryde and the Hitmen Horns. Please invite your family and friends to attend this year's auction. Tickets are \$100 per person.

The Auction Committee and Chaircouples Amy and

Mike Gilbert and Mary and Jody Lomeo have been hard at work all summer planning this fantastic event. We are truly blessed to have such dedicated volunteers. The spirit and commitment of our volunteers are true examples of living one's faith in Christ.

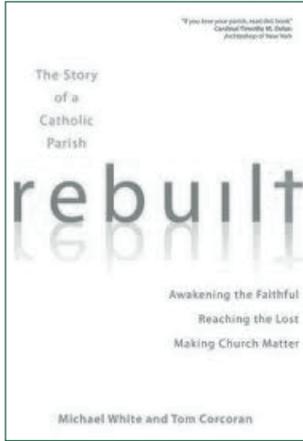
Once again we are selling tickets for the Car or Cash Raffle. Tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased in the parish office anytime.

The auction benefits our entire parish family. We hope you will be part of making it a success! If you have any questions or would like to purchase a ticket to the event or Car or Cash Raffle tickets, please contact the church office or the Auction Office (688-5678 ext. 337 or at dinnerauction@gmail.com).



REBUILT: AWAKENING THE FAITHFUL, REACHING THE LOST, AND MAKING CHURCH MATTER

By Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran. Foreword by Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan



Father Joe has been very inspired by this book and would like as many folks as possible to read it. In fact he made it “required” reading for all staff! In the months to come, we will be learning more about how this book, and the parish renewal it catalogues, has affected Fr. Joe’s vision for St. Gregory the Great. Get your copy of Rebuilt at our parish bookstore!

in the Eucharistic center of Catholic faith, Fr. Michael White and lay associate Tom Corcoran present the compelling and inspiring story of how they brought their parish back to life. Rebuilt: Awakening the Faithful, Reaching the Lost, and Making Church Matter is a story of stopping everything and changing focus. When their parish reached a breaking point, Fr. White and Corcoran asked themselves how they could make the Church matter to Catholics, and they realized the answer was at the heart of the Gospel. Their faithful response not only tripled their weekend Mass attendance, but also yielded increased giving, flourishing ministries, and a vibrant, solidly Catholic spiritual revival. Fr. White and Corcoran invite all Catholic leaders to share the vision, borrow their strategies, and rebuild their own parishes. They offer a wealth of guidance for anyone with the courage to hear them.”

From www.rebuiltparish.com: “Drawing on the wisdom gleaned from thriving mega-churches and innovative business leaders while anchoring their vision



Sabbath ... Learning to Stop *Doing* and Start *Being*

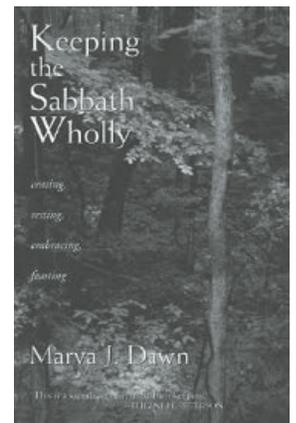
By Suellen Brewster

In her book, “Keeping the Sabbath Wholly,” by Marva Dawn, the author teaches us, in the tradition of our Jewish “elder brothers and sisters” in faith, to enter more fully into the life God has given us by celebrating Sundays more fully. By taking us through four steps of reorienting the “crowning” day of God’s creation: ceasing, resting, embracing and feasting, Dawn shows us that the Sabbath is indeed made for us, not us for the Sabbath. This is not a book about rules and regulations, but about being set free from a culture that values us only for what we do, how much of it we do, and how fast we do it. Sabbath is offered as the culmination of our week, not as a day to rest up and get ready to jump back on the grinding treadmill of weekday life.

After reading this book I could not help but draw a parallel from the current culture which elevates and honors people for how busy they are, to the Nazi slogan of Arbeit Macht Frei (work makes you free). How is it, that nearly 70 years after this regime was defeated by the blood of our soldiers, the Nazi ideal has managed to enslave us to the harsh rule of productivity over humanity? The saying goes, “we are human beings not human doings.” Yet how many of us tend to value others by their worldly functionality?

Another saying is going around these days, describing our three most recent popes. It goes like this: “Pope John Paul II told us what to do, Pope Benedict XVI told us why we do it, and Pope Francis says, “now go do it!” In the great gift of the culture we live in, which simultaneously seems to push aside all things God while betraying a media fascination with our new pope and Catholicism in general, we are called to “go do” whatever God is calling each of us to do, but in a truly Christian way. We are not called to change the world by working ourselves into an early grave. “The Culture of Life” is about living fully, enjoying the way, serving the poor, all for love of Jesus. We cannot do this in a constant state of burn-out. By more fully keeping the “Sabbath” we are reorienting ourselves to God’s plan, to His order, to His love, to His peace.

This Sunday, say a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking Him to help you to begin to enter the Sabbath as He meant it to be for you. It will change your Sunday and your every day.





“To Serve Rather Than Be Served”

By Marilyn Leslie

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of one of St. Gregory the Great Parish’s outreach ministries, the Ladies of Charity. On June 21, 1993, a small group of women met in the school cafeteria to plan the first enrollment of 46 members.

The motto of the national organization, the Ladies of Charity USA (LCUSA), “To serve rather than be served in humility, simplicity and charity,” has been the driving force behind an organization that was founded by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac in France in 1617. In 1857, Ladies in St. Louis started what became the mission of the LCUSA: “to provide Vincentian leadership to women acting together against poverty.”

To carry on the work of service to those in need, the Diocese of Buffalo established its own Ladies of Charity (LOC) association in 1941. At St. Gregory’s, the LOC enjoys a close relationship with the St. Vincent de Paul Society, striving to address the needs of the community.

For the past 20 years, Ladies at St. Gregory’s have

contributed their time, talent and treasure to many parishes, food pantries and individuals through goods and food drives. Parish LOC volunteers assist at the Diocesan LOC Collection Center’s Thrift Store, Fresh Start (household goods), Christmas Children, Backpack, Shut-In and Layette programs. The LOC makes and distributes stoles for newborns, remembrance bracelets for deceased babies, wheelchair/walker bags for the elderly and rosaries for our First Communicants. The care of St. Gregory’s altar linens and the interior appearance of our church have been weekly undertakings for years.



It is not all work! Throughout the year, luncheons, excursions and other opportunities to support LOC programs are held. For more information on the local (<http://www.locbuffalo.org/>) and national (<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us/>) organizations, visit their websites. New members who are looking for ways to serve others are always welcome!

“Come & see what St. Gregory’s offers you”

ST. GREGORY’S PARISH MINISTRY FAIR

After all Saturday & Sunday Masses on September 28 & 29
in the School Gym

St. Greg’s parishioners will get to see many of our parish ministries on display over this weekend.

Liturgical Ministries, Spiritual Ministries, Knights of Columbus, Mission, Service & Outreach, Respect Life, Pastoral Care, Hospitality & Fellowship, Catholic Store/Cafe, & Youth Ministry tables of information and ways that parishioners can grow in our Faith Community. Maybe there is something for you ! Maybe God is calling you to become active in one of these ministries! All are welcome to attend this lively parish event!

Co-ordinated by Adult Faith Formation

Craft Show Coming up!



The St. Gregory’s Annual Craft Show will be held on Friday, November 29, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Saturday, November 30, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. The emphasis continues to be on the show’s hallmark of quality handcrafted items. We are grateful to be able to host a show with more than 140 vendors who have earned a reputation of quality among themselves and with shoppers as well.

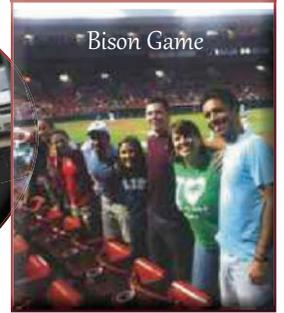
To continue the tradition, we need YOU! Quality vendors and many shoppers are the keys to our success. The show is a great way to support the local economy while purchasing unique Christmas gifts or home décor. Come and see what is new! Admission remains \$2 with no charge for children 12 and under.



Summer Re-Cap Photo Album



Vacation Bible School



Youth Ministry



Store/Cafe



Car Wash



First Anniversary



Summer Mission Retreat



Wine-Tasting Party



Ladies of the Lord Summer Picnic



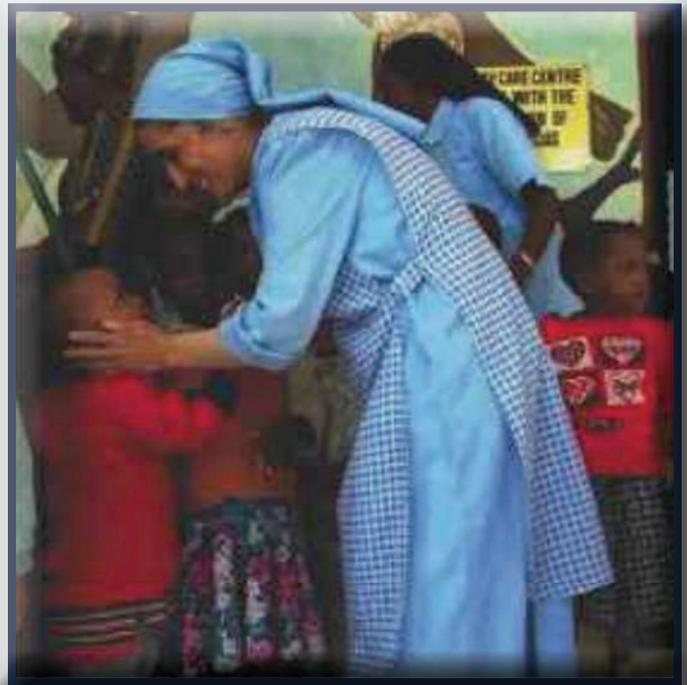


SAVE THE DATE! - December 6

An Advent Evening of Reflection with Mother Olga

Our Parish is hosting an Advent Evening of Reflection on Friday, December 6. We are thrilled to welcome Mother Olga of the Sacred Heart from Boston, Mass., as our guest speaker. Her deep faith and spirituality, inspirational story, and dynamic speaking style will make this a memorable event. Mother Olga is the foundress of the Daughters of Mary of Nazareth, located in Chestnut Hill, Mass., and serves on the Campus Ministry Team at the University of Boston, where she inspires and evangelizes hundreds of young people with her stories of faith and hope!

All are welcome to join us in the church as we begin our evening with prayer and uplifting music to prepare our hearts and lives to welcome the Christ Child this Christmas. We are grateful to our Women's Enrichment Ministry for sponsoring this parish-wide evening of prayer. Please watch the bulletin and website for more details.



Is it possible that some of you folks still don't know about or have yet to visit our Catholic Store and Café?? Well please stop on by!



Come into the *Catholic Store* for special gifts, sacramentals, Catholic household items, artwork, greeting cards, books, prayer cards, pocket items, wedding gifts, family DVDs and CDs. Christmas is coming and what better way to help loved ones "keep Christ in Christmas" than with a gift that is also a "holy reminder" of the real reason for the season? Check us out on Facebook and Google maps.



Visit the St. Gregory *Café* to meet up with friends for coffee, breakfast, lunch, dessert, Wednesday pizza night or just for some company.



Watch the bulletin and www.stgregs.org for our new fall hours and special events!



SPIRIT & LIFE CHANGES WITH THE SEASONS



Have you noticed that Spirit & Life has switched to quarterly issues? As postage costs rise, and electronic media usage skyrockets, S&L will be publishing spring, summer, fall and winter issues only. However, we are currently planning a blog area of the parish website under the S&L banner, to be used to highlight any and all ministries/parish events/offices that would like to participate. As demographics change and print is decreasingly used, we want to move into this more dynamic method of “spreading the good word” through www.stgregs.org. Ministries will be able to submit schedules, photos, articles, notices, prayer requests, recipes - you name it - with very short turnaround time for “publication” to the website. The true, lively nature of our parish life will be much more accessible, in much closer to “real-time.”

Please watch for details and a planning meeting open to any parishioners, especially ministry chairs, who would like to get involved. We are very excited about this long-dreamed-of avenue of outreach becoming reality!

“Freedom always comes at a high price. It requires a generous heart, ready for sacrifice. ... We cannot excuse ourselves from our own personal responsibility for freedom. There is no such thing as freedom without sacrifice.” Blessed John Paul II

Prayer for Veterans Day

by Fr. Austin Fleming

God of peace,
we pray for those who have served our nation
and have laid down their lives to protect and defend our freedom.

We pray for those who have fought,
whose spirits and bodies are scarred by war,
whose nights are haunted by memories too painful for the light of day.

We pray for those who serve us now,
especially for those in harm’s way.
Shield them from danger and bring them home.

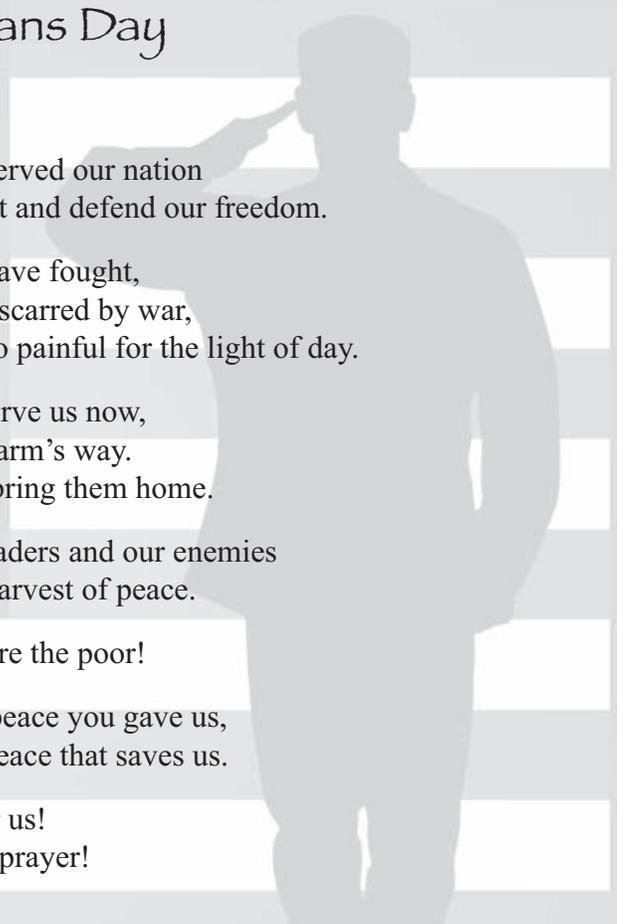
Turn the hearts and minds of our leaders and our enemies
to the work of justice and a harvest of peace.

Spare the poor, Lord, spare the poor!

May the peace you left us, the peace you gave us,
be the peace that sustains, the peace that saves us.

Christ Jesus, hear us!
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer!

Amen





TECHNOLOGY AND FAITH

By Jenny Golinski



Did you know that Faith Formation has joined the digital age? We had the privilege of attending an e-formation conference in Alexandria, Va., in May. Amazing things are happening in the faith-formation world that are just waiting for you to experience. There

are websites, blogs, videos and phone apps that can coach or provide a spiritual break from the world in the midst of a busy day. It is amazing how fast technology is developing and how it can be incorporated creatively into our lives. “Historically, the church has patiently waited for new technologies to settle into people’s normal rhythms. We do not have that luxury today,” said Bishop John Wester, Communications Committee chairman, at the USCCB General Assembly meeting in June 2012.

The May conference encouraged the use of technology as an extension of what we are already doing in gatherings. Workshops were led by people in various Christian faith traditions. They led us through an intense daylong “boot camp” during which we acquired basic technology skills. The presenters demonstrated how they apply these tools in their parish ministry settings. This included everything from blogs to a “welcome” video from their pastor on the parish website, iPad apps for classroom use and video conferencing for Bible studies from the comfort and convenience of people’s homes

Practically speaking, these bits of media technology are right at our fingertips. If you have not already tapped into these pieces, be sure to check them out. Did you know that Pope Francis has a Twitter account? He shares spiritual tidbits, messages and prayers with his followers. Our very own Bishop Malone shares a short recorded video message each week that can be found on YouTube or the Diocese of Buffalo website. “Faith Moments,” a segment where priests, seminarians and laity share spiritual messages, is broadcast on WBEN radio (930 AM and 107.7 FM) each week.

There are numerous easy-to-use websites and apps with a wealth of information, articles, facts and spiritual tools. Here are more examples:

- <http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org/> - site for families with kids of all ages
- <http://www.lifeteen.com/> - readings, articles, and reviews for high school teens
- <http://www.bustedhalo.com/> - an online magazine for young adult spiritual seekers
- <http://www.littleiapps.com/> - Catholic apps for your phone.
- <http://www.cpyu.org/> - Center for Parent Youth Understanding, designed to bridge the gap between generations
- <http://www.loyolapress.com/> - sign up to have their three-minute daily retreat sent to your email
- http://www.appszoom.com/android_applications/rosary - rosary apps for Android system phones and tablets
- <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/family-rosary-mobile-rosary/id476564520?mt=8> - rosary apps for iPhone and iPads
- <http://sisterrosemovies.com/> - for families, movie reviews with Catholic morality in mind

Here is what we are doing at St. Greg’s already: Did you know Fr. Joe sends group texts to the college students? Did you know our homilies are on YouTube? If you have missed a class for Faith Formation, the makeup work is on the website. Family Faith Formation has a Facebook page – “like” us! Our textbook companies offer more information and games on their websites. Even our Vacation Bible School has an online Bible buddies app. Our youth ministers have a Twitter account; do you? St. Greg’s Youth and Young Adult ministries are on Facebook – “like” us, too.

Where will we go from here? Now that we have new online video skills, blogging knowledge and texting abilities, we’re sure new things will develop!



200 St. Gregory Court

Williamsville, NY 14221

716-688-5678

www.stgregs.org

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*Mother Olga of the Sacred Heart,
Daughters of Nazareth - See page 5*



Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church

Mark Your Calendar For These Upcoming Events:

September

- 6 - MOMS Play Group
- 8 - Parish Gift-Gathering after morning Masses
- 9 - Senior Citizens Meeting
- 14, 15 - St. Vincent de Paul Fall Harvest Food Drive
- 15 - Catechetical Sunday
- 15 - Youth Ministry JRev Kick-Off night
- 19 - Great Adventure Bible Study Begins
- 28 - Women's Enrichment Retreat Day

October

- 5, 6 - Respect Life Weekend
- 13 - Pancake Breakfast
- 18 - Family Bingo Night
- 19 - Food Shuttle 24th Annual Luncheon

- 19, 20 - St. Vincent de Paul Fall Clothing Drive
- 22 - School Open House
- 26 - Great Dinner Auction: The Crystal Ball - Samuel's Grande Manor

November

- 6 - Mass of Remembrance
- 10 - UNYTS Blood Drive
- 24 - RCIA - Rite of Acceptance
- 25 - GBYSO Concert
- 29, 30 - Craft Show

December

- 6 - Advent Evening of Reflection

Spirit & Life Staff: Elizabeth Astridge, Trish Beagle, Suellen Brewster, Mrene Corra, Donna Callaghan, Dawn Curazatto, Fr. Joseph Gatto, Bill Grunert, Jacqueline Hanley, Felix Labaki, Carla Mangone, Mike Pesarchick, Camille Pontrello, Rick Reinhart, Joan Rischmiller, Mary Toerne and Eileen Warner. Published quarterly by St. Gregory the Great Parish. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Parish Office at 688-5678 or write the *Spirit & Life* Newsletter c/o St. Gregory the Great Church, 200 St. Gregory Ct., Williamsville, NY 14221. We are grateful to Liturgical Publications, whose generosity and benevolence allow us to provide *Spirit & Life* at minimal cost to our parishioners.