

Spirit & Life

The Call to a New Evangelization: Go and make Disciples.

Winter 2018

From the Desk of the Pastor

I have always enjoyed the line "pride in ownership" when reading a listing for a home that is for sale. That phrase indicates the current owner has really invested themselves into caring for the property and keeping it updated and in good repair. Although I am not a realtor, I would suppose a "pride in ownership" designation helps to sell a home as the potential buyer will have comfort in knowing that they are purchasing a well-cared for property.

This New Year I encourage you to see our parish of St. Gregory's with a "pride in ownership" mentality. At St. Gregory's we are blessed to have a good number of founding parishioners who have been here from the first turn of the first shovel of dirt to begin to build what is today an awesome parish. Whether you are one of the founding members, or if you just joined the parish family this week or if you fall somewhere in between, do you see a "pride in ownership" for our parish family? Regardless of how long or short we have been at St. Gregory's, we all must take an ownership share for our parish family.

We are a large family! St. Gregory the Great Parish has over 6,300 registered families. That is large and that is awesome! On one hand a large parish can accomplish many things that a smaller parish cannot. We are proud to have over 80 vibrant parish ministries. St. Gregory the Great is also "St. Gregory the Many." I jokingly say that, but also seriously say "many" because it is the "many" who allow so much to be accomplished here. A large parish family is a blessing to be able to have a "pride in ownership," as we live the Gospel of Jesus today and serve the needs of our parishioners and larger community.

On the other hand, a large parish family can be a challenge. It is easy to adopt the mentality of "others will take care of it." This type of thinking is not a "pride in ownership." St. Gregory's is very much like any other Catholic Parish in our Diocese or Country. A study a few years ago concluded that about seven percent of Catholics are accomplishing the work of the Church today. This means that about seven percent are really living the "pride in ownership" to the fullest extent. As I look at those who make things happen at St. Gregory's, it is around that seven percent mark.

This New Year I humbly ask and urge you to reflect on your "pride in ownership" of St. Gregory's. For those who already are always here in faith, prayer and service, I thank you! For those who may be thinking "others will take care of it," I humbly ask you to consider becoming involved deeper in your faith, prayer and maybe just one activity or ministry at St. Gregory's. Can you begin to imagine how greater St. Gregory the Great would be if all 6,300 families participated in just one ministry or activity in addition to weekly Mass? It would be awesome and powerful and a huge moment of "pride in ownership" of our Church!

May God bless you, our Mother Mary watch over you and St. Gregory the Great intercede for you always.



Save the date!!!
Lenten Healing Mission: March 12-14
See page 6 for more details



What's Happening At Youth Ministry?

We are excited to be in a place where our ministry to the youth has expanded to young adults as well. Richard Patti, our newest member to the team, is getting settled into his new role as High School Youth Minister. We're excited for what he brings to the team and where he will take the high schoolers. In addition, I have finished our rebranding effort and new website for SGYM3, a labor of love, designed to better approach the youth and young adults of the Parish. SGYM3, being our condensed logo for St. Greg's Youth and Young Adult Ministry among three age groups. I'd like to direct you to the new, attractive, and clean site at www.stgregsYM.org to check it



ages of 18-30s; Students, Professionals, Discerners, Vocations. For these four groups we have five types of offerings and opportunities, 1. Pray/Learn, 2. Events, 3. Service, 4. Digital Continent, and lastly 5. Local Young Adult Community.

For those of you reading this as a 18-30something, we're here for you and are building something great in the name of Jesus. Follow us on your favorite social media to keep up with what's going on because we're moving fast and won't stop anytime soon. This is a call to arms. Take ownership of your faith and jump on. The Lord and the world need you.

In Christ,

Adam Jarosz
Director
St. Greg's Youth & Young Adult Ministry



out for yourself. Along with that effort is the rollout of the new Young Adult Ministry here at St. Greg's.

As our mission is to lead people closer to Christ through authentic faith and radical hospitality, we want to strive to build a community and approach them where they are at, whether in-person or online. Essentially, we are creating an effort to recapture a whole missing age group in the pews by going above and beyond anything we've done before. Thanks to the opportunity given by Fr. Leon and the parish, we are able to expand into this vital age group. We are breaking down four demographics between the

Middle School

Feb. 15 - Brookdale Valentine's Day Party
Mar. 17 - 8th Grade LockIn
May 4 - Middle School Retreat
July 1 - Hidden Lake, Dahlenega, Georgia

High School

Mar. 2 -4 - Youth Convention
Mar. 18 - Life Teen Lasertron
April 13 - 15 - Spring Retreat, Varysburg, NY

Young Adult

Feb. 9 - XLT Adoration
Feb. 15 - Exodus 90
July 14 - 21 - Mission Trip to Moneague, Jamaica



St. Gregory the Great Mobile App

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St. Gregory the Great Parish App

*Allow notifications and you'll receive a spiritual message
each morning to start your day on the right track.*

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the Great Parish and School**

Twitter: @StGregsBuffalo





Students Give Rave Reviews of Overnight Retreat

“An amazing religious experience!”

“A burst of light in a dark world...”

“An inspirational journey”

These are some of the terms used by Eighth Grade pupils at St. Greg’s School to describe their overnight retreat at Christ the King Seminary, which took place on October 10 and 11.



“The goal of the retreat was to provide our teens with a chance to develop a close personal relationship with Jesus, to complement their academic knowledge of the Faith,” explains Father Leon Biernat, Pastor, who led the retreat. “We also spent some time on what we call ‘apologetics’, that is, being able to explain and defend what we believe as Catholics.”

Grade 8 students had a choice this year of attending the overnight retreat or taking part in a Day of Recollection in March. About one-third of the 72 students opted for the overnight.

“I learned many things about the Catholic Faith, such as Lectio Divina,” noted M.K. Hartigan. “I made many friends that I wouldn’t normally hang out with.” Isabella Judge reported that she gained a deeper understanding of her faith and learned different ways to pray. Elsie Hilmey liked having Eucharistic Adoration before bedtime and the small group discussions. Ben Grande was grateful for “a learning and self-discovery experience.” For Stephen Zelazny, “the retreat was one of the best experiences I’ve ever had in terms of bringing me closer to Christ.

Eighth graders share their impressions of the retreat. From the left are Ben Grande, Bella Judge, M.K. Hartigan and Angie Lillis.





Fun at St. Greg's School



4th Graders wrapped dog treats to deliver to the Buffalo Animal Shelter wrapped in blue paper and ribbon in honor of Buffalo Police K9 Officer Craig Lehner.

St. Greg's students created a hat, glove and scarf tree to donate to the Good Neighbors Organization in downtown Buffalo. This not only strengthens their faith, as well as the faith of others, but they spread the loving spirit to others in need.



1st Graders collected toys to be donated to Children's Hospital. The toys were donated in January when many donations typically subside.



Early-Kindergarten students enjoy a day of fun while building snowmen.



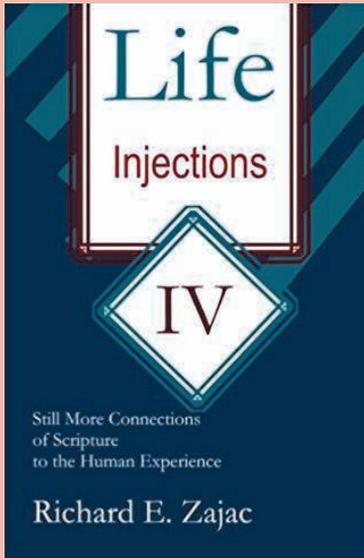
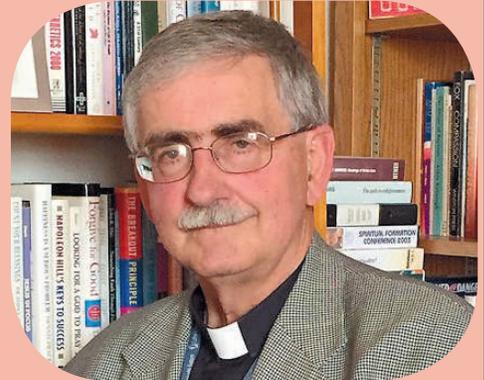
Principal Julie Gajewski and Assistance Principal Eric Roy get into the Christmas spirit.



Longtime Hospital Chaplain to Lead Lenten Healing Mission

St. Gregory the Great Parish will host the popular and peripatetic Father Richard Zajac for a three-day Healing Mission this Lent. The Mission will take place on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, March 12 - 14, with identical services at 12:00 noon and 7:00pm. Services consist of the Eucharist, including an extended homily on some aspect of healing, individual prayer for healing and opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Father Zajac, better known as “Duke,” has been involved in healing ministry for 33 years, chiefly as Staff Chaplain at Sisters Hospital, where he has chaired the Hospital Ethics Committee. He has published four volumes of his homilies, under the title “Life Injections.” He is known as a priest who connects Scripture to human experience, and who injects hope and peace into lives wearied by pain, suffering and heartache.



“Father Duke is a man of deep spirituality, who has a profound grasp of the human condition,” notes Father Joseph Gatto, former pastor and rector of Christ the King Seminary. “He has a remarkable ability to help people apply the Gospel to their daily lives. People are always able to profit from his messages.”

Father Duke says that his homilies “will leave you with something to chew on, something that strikes home and something that is of relevance to both the young and the old, the sick and the well, the rich and the poor”

At the conclusion of each Healing Mission Mass, members of the congregation are invited to come forward to be prayed over. Priests and deacons offer a prayer for each person. At the same time, the entire congregation is encouraged to pray for the intentions of one another. Some people present themselves to be prayed over as a proxy or stand-in for a loved one who is not able to be present at the Mission.

“The Mission is concerned with all types of healing,” according to Father Thomas Maloney, St. Gregory’s part-time parochial vicar. “We pray for physical healing for those who are ill, or injured, or recovering from surgery. Others will be seeking healing for some mental or emotional disorder; still others will be asking God for healing of a relationship, or for some sort of financial betterment. And, of course, God is ever eager to respond to our requests for better spiritual and moral health.”

Lenten Healing Mission

Monday, March 12, - Wednesday, March 17
12:00 noon and 7:00pm with Father Richard Zajac



Coffee Break with God

by: Megan Looney

Coffee Break with God is a new ministry that Family Faith Formation started in September, 2016. With all the busyness in our lives, we often feel like hamsters on a wheel. We wanted to provide an opportunity for our parents to slow down, come have a cup of coffee, unwind from their week and fill their spiritual tank. It began with a talk by parishioner, Dawn Iacono, and has blossomed into a wonderful ministry. We meet once per month on Saturday mornings for coffee and donuts and have had some wonderful speakers over the last two years. It is open to anyone and we would love for you to join us. Since its inception, we have included talks by Trustee Christine Thein, Deacon Peter Donnelly and his wife Cathy, Gina Cutrona, the head of the St. Gregory's Art and Environment ministry, and many more wonderful parishioners. Some of the topics have included "Faith at Home", "The Rosary," "Holiday Traditions," "Faith: What's in it For Me," "Keeping Christ in Christmas," and "Your Kids are Watching Your Marriage." Our next talk will be on February 10 and our speaker, Amy Blair will be talking about "Forgiveness and the Family" and in March, Gina Cutrona will be back to talk about "Prayer Spaces in the Home." In addition, we will be making a craft that day to bring home to enhance your prayer spaces. If you have any questions about this ministry, please call the Family Faith Formation office at 688-5760. Please come join us and take a Coffee Break With God!



Next Coffee Break with God dates:

- Janaury 27
- February 10
- March 3
- 9:15am in the School



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www.stgregs.org

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Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church

Parish Handbook

Pick up your copy of the Parish Handbook which lists over 80 pages for you to make a difference!

Mark Your Calendar For These Upcoming Events:

February

- 4 - Scout Sunday
- 9 - MOMS Mothers of Mercy
- 10/11 - Heart-to-Heart Food Drive
- 11 - Pancake Breakfast
- 11 - Parishioner Social
- 12 - Senior Citizens Meeting
- 14 - Ash Wednesday
- 16 & 23 - Fish-Fry Fridays & Stations of the Cross
- 16 - Youth Ministry ULTIMATE Night

March

- 1 - Parish Penance Service
- 6 - First Penance
- 2, 9, 16, 23 - Fish Fry Fridays, Stations of the Cross

- 3 - Coffee Break with God
- 7 - Grief & Loss Meeting
- 9 - XLT Eucharistic Adoration with Live Music
- 11 - Parishioner Social
- 12 - 14 - Parish Lenten Healing Mission
- 17/18 - 8th Grade Lock-In
- 29 - Holy Thursday Shared Supper
- 30 - Good Friday - Seven Last Words of Christ
- 30 - Good Friday - Living Stations of the Cross
- 31 - Holy Saturday - Blessing of Easter Baskets

April

- 1 - Easter Sunday
- 15 - Parishioner Social
- 20 - MOMS Mothers of Mercy

Spirit & Life Staff: Greg Smith and Fr. Leon Biernat. Published bi-monthly 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.