



Newsletter of St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church

International TV Presentation Showcases St. Greg's

Millions of people in 141 countries around the world got a close-up at look at St. Gregory the Great Church and St. Greg's school students, as Eternal Word Television Network broadcast its annual "World Wide Children's Eucharistic Holy Hour" on October 5.

"This annual event usually takes place at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C." explains Father Tom Mahoney, "This year the organizers were looking for a beautiful church and an enthusiastic, reverent group of children. They found both at St. Greg's."

The Holy Hour included a presentation on Saint Faustina, who helped people understand God's infinite

mercy; the Rosary; the Divine Mercy Chaplet; Eucharistic Adoration; and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. 222 pupils in grades four thru eight took part.

"It was really cool," reported seventh grader Josie Banas, "because I got to be a part of something so big that our school has never done before". Her classmate Seamus Hillery agreed. "You could actually feel the presence of God", he noted. "I felt very close to Him."

You can view this event on YouTube. Go to stgregs.org and follow the link. You will be impressed by the devotion of the children and amazed at the spectacular videography of the artistic treasures of our parish church.



Nativity Pageant to be Staged December 26th-27th

St. Gregory the Great's 11th annual Living Nativity will be held on December 26th and 27th, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Guests and travellers to Bethlehem will arrive in Gathering Rooms, and will be placed in groups during these two hours, for a 20-minute walk on the road to Bethlehem, to witness the birth of the baby Jesus.

There will be crafts and refreshments in the gathering rooms to allow for fellowship and children's creativity while people wait. A shepherd will lead each group through the church and school.

At each different stop along the road, participants will be treated to specific scenes which are performed by acting volunteers from our parish.

St. Gregory the Great's live Nativity performance began as a celebration for our parish's Jubilee back in

2008. The Living Nativity was enthusiastically welcomed by people inside and outside the parish, and has since become a tradition for many families to attend annually.

St. Greg's Living Nativity is produced and directed by Jeff Criden. "Everyone is welcome to attend and participate. I am always looking for new volunteers," Jeff says. "Each year, we love to grow the team. We include anyone who would like to act, dance, or sing.

Watching the Living Nativity grow to be a St. Greg's annual event has been a blessing for my wife Mary and myself, along with our daughter Angelica."

If you're interested in participating in this year's Living Nativity, it's not too late. Please contact Jeff Criden at 207-4878, or at jeffcrd@aol.com.



Are you as Smart as a New Altar Server?



Fr. Paul Cygan with Nathan Reichenberg, Chris Bonghi, Lauren Golden, and Nadia LaBuda.

You are, if you can identify each of these items, tell where to find it, and explain how it's used in Catholic worship: alb, boat, cassock, censer, chasuble, corporal, cope, dalmatic, humeral veil, monstrance, pall pyx, saccharium, and stole.

Father Paul Cygan recently conducted training sessions for young boys and girls wishing to become altar servers. Twenty-six new servers completed the course successfully.

"To serve at the altar is a great privilege," Father Paul explains, "It is an opportunity to not only serve the priest, but also to serve God.

It is about giving back to God, because He has given so much to us. Serving God at the altar, where He becomes truly present in the Eucharist, is an expression of giving love to God. But we receive so much more in return."

Father also noted that the server is a sort of role model for others, especially children. "The altar server is an example to the entire congregation sitting in the pews. of how to have the right disposition during Mass, and how to allow god into your life."

The new servers are Sofia Abell, Zachary Bialkowski, Christopher Bonghi, Carissa Bonvissuto, Baron Brooks, Sadie Doktor, Ellie Duquin, Molly and Colin Fulco, Alexandria Garbarino, Lauren Golden, Luke Knab, Julianne Kurzdorfer, Nadia and Vanessa LaBuda, Lauren Palmer, Sarah and Eva Patti, Kyle Petri, Jamison Quinn, Nathan Reichenberg, Emily Ward, Adam Wargo, James Wild, and Cameron Vergeau.

"We have a bumper crop this year," Father Paul notes. "May God bless all our servers, and the beautiful ministry they provide at St. Greg's."

Youth and Young Adult Ministry Upcoming Events

Teen-agers

Life Teen - December 2, 9, 16

After 4:30 p.m. Mass every Sunday, join in on the fun with high school aged teens for food, friends, and spirituality. Life Teen provides a highly interactive way of learning about the Catholic Faith, while enjoying good food and the company of great friends at the same time. All high-schoolers are welcome.

SWAT Team - December 5, 19

Any youngsters seeking to deepen their faith, and to learn more about prayer and Scripture will find exactly what they're looking for in this group. The meetings are at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, and you can always expect a time of prayer, worthwhile discussion, and even a few snacks.

High School Hangout - December 21

Once each month, high-schoolers have the opportunity to take over the Ministry Center for a night of food and fun for everyone. Come yourself and make sure to invite a friend along.



Young Adults



St. Luke's Service - December 8

A trip to St. Luke's has been scheduled for December 8th, where young adults will be working in the donation center, sorting out goods for later distribution. After our work session, we'll have lunch together and enjoy some fellowship time.

Young Adults Women's Bible Study - December 6

We'll be meeting on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. and examining 'The Fruits of the Spirit', for this particular series of discussions and review. We welcome all young adults to enjoy coffee and great discussion at these sessions. If you can't make all the sessions, just come when you can - you'll always be welcome.

Mass and Lunch

Take a break from your normal routine and join us for Mass and Lunch on Wednesdays at 12:00 noon. After celebrating Mass together, we will break bread at the Café to extend the hour of fellowship among attendees. We invite everyone to join us at Mass!

College Life

College students who need a boost to get them through their daily routines will find just what they need with this group which meets from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. every other Monday in the Café. Enjoy a snack with us, and explore some of the biggest questions about College Life at these sessions.

SEEK 2019 - January 3-7 Indianapolis

This conference is open to all college students, and is something that just may change your whole life, if you're open to the experience. Join thousands of other college students who are seeking to enrich their faith lives through live music, powerful speakers, and worthwhile group discussion.

Organize and Prioritize Your Life with the Monk Manual

By Steven Lawson



Steven Lawson, creator of the Monk Manual

Catholics have the seemingly paradoxical calling to be “in the world, but not of the world” - but how exactly are you supposed to do that?

For many of us it is a real struggle simply balancing the demands of busy jobs and busy family lives. Diapers have to be changed, assignments have to be complete, and bills have to be paid. If the modern experience is marked by any singular attribute, it’s the continual sense of pressure we feel to do more and be more. It can be exhausting.

Where exactly is our spiritual life supposed to fit amongst the hustle and bustle of all this everyday “stuff” that just has to get done? Searching for the answer to this question on my own personal pursuit towards a fuller life, I came upon a startling discovery.

Studying best practices in productivity, psychology, and spiritual growth, I came to the realization that despite how different these fields may seem, they all point to the same fundamental principles around what leads to human thriving. More surprisingly, when I looked around to see who was best in the world at living these principles I found, to my surprise...that it was monks.

Monks have the solution. If you peel back the curtain on the life of a monk, you will find a highly practical way of life that applies just as much to those outside the monastery walls as those within. A life marked with peaceful being and purposeful doing.

We in the world can learn quite a bit from the timeless wisdom of monks. Monks know that our spiritual lives and our regular lives aren’t two separate things. It’s

easy to fall into the trap of thinking our spiritual life is confined to our Sunday Mass experience and dedicated times of prayer.

But our spiritual life isn’t something set apart from our regular life, our spiritual life is just our life. Monks have an integrated spirituality, knowing that every activity, action, and relationship is as much a part of their spiritual journey as any other. Wherever you go, there you are, and wherever you go there God is.

Monks also have a daily system that drives clarity of purpose and engagement in the present moment. A monk wakes up and knows exactly what they are meant to do that day. From 7 a.m. to 8 a.m., they are meant to have breakfast and from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. they are in manual labor.

This creates a real freedom to truly engage the task or individual right in front of them, having the peace that comes from knowing they are doing exactly what they are supposed to be doing.

Most of us will never be able to base our lives off a strict daily rule, but we can get close by intentionally planning and reflecting on our days. Monks also know that the secret to a full life is to focus on what’s truly most important.

The secret to happiness and productivity isn’t doing more, it’s actually doing the most important things well. By saying ‘no’ to countless distractions, they are able to give their full ‘yes’ to the things that matter most. They know from experience that the spiritual life isn’t easy, but it is simple.

I’m convinced that the wisdom of the monks offers us a great hope for a fuller experience of our day-to-day life. That’s why I recently left my full-time job to provide tools designed to help busy everyday people live out the wisdom of monastic life.

If you’d like to learn more I invite you to visit monkmanual.com, where you can get more information on how to apply these principles to your life, as well as a free download of the Monk Manual daily system.

Steven Lawson currently lives in Cincinnati, OH with his wife and three children. He attended nearby St. Amelia school and parish, then went on to St. Joe’s Collegiate Institute, and graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Boy Scouts at St. Greg's

By Michael Wesolowski



You've seen the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts at St. Greg's - especially in September when they hold their annual popcorn drive at the church, or at the Scout Sunday Mass in February.

As a leader in the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), I'm often asked what else happens throughout the year. Meetings? Yes. Camping? Absolutely. Service? You can see the results of Eagle Scout projects everywhere around the St. Greg's campus.

Instead of listing every single activity, I'd like to tell people that the BSA "opens doors" to the world for our young boys and men to explore the world.

As Cub Scouts, the boys are engaged in fun, hands-on activities that revolve around the tenets of the Scout Law: A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

Besides the monthly den and pack meetings, the boys are learning to design and build Pinewood Derby

cars. They also give to their community by Christmas caroling at local nursing homes, or by uniquely exploring local cultural centers with overnight indoor camping at the Buffalo Zoo, Science Museum, Niagara Aquarium, or Fort Niagara.

The doors to the world open further when Cub Scout "Go See It's" are added in. My son's den "trained" with the Army Reserve at the Connecticut Street Armory and learned about radio broadcasting at WYRK.

Cubs Scouts also get to explore the great outdoors during summer camp at Scouthaven in Freedom, NY. The opportunity to experience boating, fishing, archery, geocaching, astronomy, ecology, and much more is mixed in with fun and games.

When a Cub Scout crosses over to Boy Scouts in the 5th grade, not only are the doors to the world expanded further, but so too are the doors to personal growth.



Boy Scouts are led by the young men of the troop - not the adult leaders! We are there to assist and to guide, but the Boy Scouts themselves set the yearly agenda, lead the meetings, and ultimately decide the path the troop will take.

It is quite a joy to watch the scouts as they adapt from being led as Cubs to leading as Boy Scouts. With each rank advancement (Scout, Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star, Life, Eagle), the scout is expected to learn additional responsibilities to help not only themselves, but the troop and ultimately, the community at large.

Look around the St. Greg's campus - the new Nativity scene, grotto landscaping, and Stations of the Cross are all Eagle projects that helped our church community. Other recent projects have added benches to Amherst trails, signs at the Buffalo Naval Park, and kid carts for Rochester's Children's Hospital.

Religious emblem awards and merit badges are other areas Boy Scouts will be exposed to. Christ the King Seminary held a retreat in October for the Pope Pius XII award and at last count, there are over 135 merit badges that Boy Scouts can earn.

While only 21 are needed to earn the Eagle Scout

rank, the others are there for the young men to take a deep dive into areas as diverse as aviation, chemistry, golf, journalism, medicine, nuclear science, robotics, or theater.

No parent knows what path their child will take, but by opening as many doors as we can, by exposing our scouts to as many areas of study as possible, it will allow them a much wider expanse of options when the time comes for them to step out into the world on their own.

Opening doors to the world while being committed to the Scout Law - that is our goal for Scouting at St. Gregory the Great. So the next time you see a Cub Scout or Boy Scout, ask them about their latest adventure, merit badge, or Eagle project. It may just be the beginning of a lifelong journey for that scout - all with the help of you at St Greg's.

Thank you for your continued support of the BSA at St. Gregory the Great.

Michael Wesolowski is the current chartered organizational leader and past Scout Leader of Troop 440 at St. Greg's.

St. Greg's Health Ministry Provides Flu Shots

St. Gregory's Health Ministry has been busy, as the winter flu season approaches, helping parishioners be prepared by offering them flu shots. The Senior Citizens had opportunities for immunization at their September meeting. A general parish Flu Shot Clinic took place after the weekend Masses October 20 and 21, and school children were treated on November 16.

Assisting in this effort have been pharmacy students from the University of Buffalo, under the direction of their supervisor, Karl D. Fiebelcorn, MBA, and pharmacist Mike Rossi, from Family Medical Pharmacy. "Mike is always willing to lend a hand to Health Ministry", says Lee Zack, a registered nurse who heads the Health Ministry. "He is a valuable resource to our parish community, and an active parishioner."

Lee, who is our Parish Nurse, outlined some of the other ways Health Ministry serves parishioners. "We offer a respite on the first Saturday of each month for people taking care of Alzheimer's disease victims, so that caregivers can have a few hours off. Some thirty volunteers help in caring for these patients in the Gathering Room at church."

"We offer information nights, so people can be bet-

ter informed about issues that impact their health and the health of their loved ones. For instance, we recently hosted speakers on opium addiction, a session on stress management for parents and children, and another on coping skills. We also do blood pressure clinics from time to time, for people attending weekend Masses, and assist families who need to find facilities for older members who can no longer take care of themselves at home."

Not everyone was content with the flu shot clinics. On October 21, one gentleman was heard to remark, as he was leaving, "I heard about the flu shots, and I was hoping for scotch, or maybe some bourbon, but all I got was a needle in my arm."

Pharmacist Karl Fiebelcorn prepares an injection for a St. Greg's parishioner.



MOMS Ministry Reaches out to Mothers



MOMS is a ministry for Catholic mothers, founded in 2001 at St. Gregory the Great, and is open to all Catholic mothers, because when you've helped a mother, you've helped a family!

Mothers meet together to share the joys and struggles of their vocation of motherhood through prayer, fellowship, discussion and conversation over

coffee.

We offer free baby-sitting by request during our meetings to give mothers a well-needed respite, and a play group is offered during the month.

Speakers are often invited to help encourage those who are struggling, and to inspire those who need a spiritual boost!

MOMS exists to support Catholic women, to connect them to other women of faith, and to help create a sense of belonging in the church.

Each year a theme helps us serve others in ministry. This year's theme is "Spiritual Motherhood", and it includes spiritually adopting priests. We've pledged to pray for them, encourage them, and to fast on Fridays for their vocation and for our children.

MOMS helps serve the community of St Greg's and reaches out to support charitable organizations within the diocese for women, children and families. This year, we've selected St Gerard Place and will be collecting items on Dec 7.

MOMS ministry focuses on Mary as our model of charity, purity and a role model for motherhood. We share resources and have been blessed by all the moms that have participated in this ministry during their seasons of motherhood.

Contact us at stgregsmoms@gmail.com, and consider being a part of an intimate and holy sisterhood in Christ.

Men of God Ministry Seeks New Members

By Jeff Criden

I am here to tell you about our Ministry, Men of God. Our ministry began 17 years ago, with 12 Men reading the Bible over the course of a year. Since that time, we have grown as a group so that men of our parish could create and engage in real-life discussions around issues that Catholic men face in today's world.

The Men of God (MOG) focus on becoming the man God created us to be. We gather together once a month to pray the Rosary, socialize, and discuss issues that are related to the challenges we face as husbands, fathers, brothers, sons, employers, workers, and men of God. We attempt to discover what it means to be a man in the modern world.

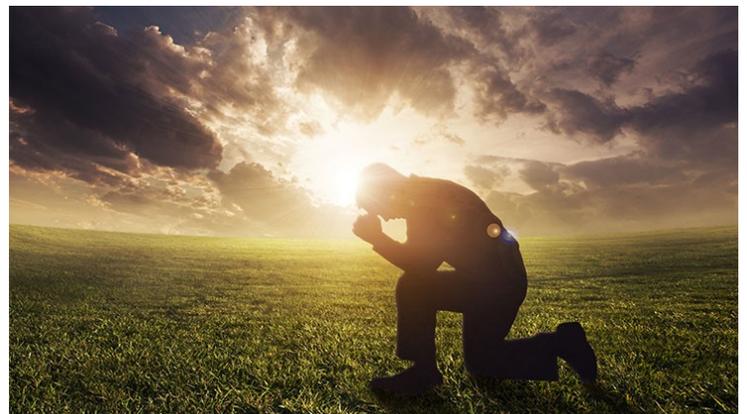
As a parish faith community, the Men of God are here to help each other grow in our faith through the example of our model, Jesus Christ, through Scripture readings and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Our group discussions are insightful and thoughtful. If you are a Catholic man who desires God's will in his life; if you are seeking brotherly support through life's twists and turns; if you are looking to grow in your spiritual life and to be all that God created you to be; we invite you to join us.

We pray, we eat, and we share fellowship and discuss what is in front of us each month. We meet the third Wednesday of each month in Gathering Room 2.

Please consider joining us. Our next gathering will be November 14. Please call me at 716-207-4878 or email at jeffcrd@aol.com.

Jeff Criden is co-leader of the Men of God Ministry.



Thru the Lens



A few of the 300 happy faces at the Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast on November 4. “Over 300 meals were served, and the Knights cleared about \$1,500”, reports Robert Moses, one of the organizers of the annual event.



Father Chris Alar, MIC, celebrates Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament with students from St. Greg’s.

Fourth Grader Sadie Doktor leads the congregation in prayer

Fr. Alar delivers a message about the power of the Holy Eucharist to listeners in the audience, and to 140 countries around the world.



Fourth Grader Marco DellaMea leads his fellow pupils in prayer.

Family Faith Formation Activities

Confirmation Mass of Enrollment and Pot Luck Supper

Our Confirmation public and Catholic high school students were enrolled for the Sacrament of Confirmation at the 4:30 pm Mass on Sunday, October 27th. The candidates, their sponsors and families shared a Pot Luck Supper to celebrate the occasion. We were blessed to have Fr. Paul lead them in prayer and song.



Coast-to-Coast Rosary

Our Generations of Faith Program registered and participated in the national “Coast to Coast Rosary” that was held on Sunday, October 7th. There were 560 parents, students and catechists who prayed a “Living Rosary” for our nation.

“In 2017, the Church in Poland gathered around the borders of their country to light a spiritual flame, a flame that quickly engulfed the nation in prayer and reparation.

Shortly after, the sparks from this conflagration of the Holy Spirit spread to Ireland, the British Isles and the United States. This is a world-wide effort to combat the Powers of Darkness - the Powers that seek to stifle the Light.” (rosarycoasttocoast.com website)

Our Family Faith Formation program embraced the efforts to share prayers asking our Blessed Mother to intercede for our nation to overcome the evils of our modern society, and to return our nation to the moral and cultural values that our country was founded upon. We all need to put God first in our lives.



What do Disciple Camp students do at First Friday Club?

- We do service projects, ministry, and have fun!
- Christmas Wheat Packets for Advent
- Rosary Making
- St. Vincent de Paul food drives
- Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast
- Make placemats and crafts for area nursing homes



The FFF Program celebrates Halloween with All Saints Day!

“Saint for a Day” Our little cherubs become a ‘Saint for a Day’ by dressing up as their favorite saint. They also learn how to become a saint with a special interactive “Saint Lesson.”

“Saints Fair” Our fourth graders each choose their favorite saint to dress as, or they can make a saint poster. They do a presentation on their saint for their parents and the other students.

“Pumpkin Lesson” Our third graders participate in a “Pumpkin Lesson” by removing the sticky stuff and the seeds, and carving the pumpkin. They learn that in order for others to see Jesus in each of us, we need to get rid of our sins (the seeds and sticky stuff inside the pumpkin) through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. When we choose to follow the Commandments, the light of Jesus shines brightly in our lives, and the love of Jesus will spread to those around us.

“Saint Name for Confirmation” - Each Confirmation student chooses and researches a saint for their Confirmation name.

“Saints Trivia Challenge” during First Friday Club, our Disciple Camp students are challenged to name the saint from the facts presented.

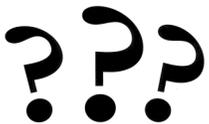


Blankets for Child Advocacy Center

Our Junior High students made 45 blankets to be used for children who receive services at the Child Advocacy Center in Buffalo.

Each child is given a blanket when they receive their medical exam before being placed into a foster home.

This blanket will help comfort them during this very difficult transition. The students and parents donated the fabric that was used to make the blankets.



THE QUESTION BOX



In the Apostles Creed, we profess that Jesus “descended into hell”. How can this be? We learned that someone who goes to hell does not come back.

In the original Latin version the relevant words are “descendit ad inferos”. “Inferos” can be translated “hell”, but probably in this case a better word would be “the netherworld”. In the minds of the ancient peoples, someone who died went into a kind of shadow world, which was not necessarily a place of punishment, known as the netherworld.

— Msgr. Thomas Maloney

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Spirit & Life

Winter 2019

Christmas 2018 at St. Greg's



Tuesday, December 11	Advent Penant Service at 7:00 p.m. with parish priests and visiting confessors
Saturday, December 22	Confessions from 2:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.
Monday, December 24	Christmas Eve masses at 4:00 p.m. (Church), 4:05 p.m. (Ministry Center) and 4:10 p.m. (School Gym) 12:00 p.m. Midnight Mass
Tuesday, December 25	Christmas Masses at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 12:30 p.m.
Monday, December 31	Vigil Masses at 4:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday, January 1	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God Masses at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.