

St. Rita

catholic community

A Letter From Our Pastor

The Importance of Consultation and Collaboration at St. Rita

Dear Parishioners,

The Parish Pastoral Council is looking for new members. The three-year term of four fine members of the Pastoral Council is drawing to a close at the end of the calendar year. You may nominate someone you know or you may submit your own name for consideration as a possible member of the Parish Pastoral Council. Four new members will be chosen by the current Pastoral Council by means of a carefully conducted discernment process that I oversee each year.

The Pastoral Council serves in an advisory capacity, helping the Pastor identify needs of the parish, providing feedback to the Pastor on behalf of the parishioners, and assisting in the development, implementation and evaluation of various parish project initiatives. In the course of my six years as Pastor, the Pastoral Council has been extremely instrumental in spearheading a number of initiatives:

- The parish's 50th Anniversary celebration in 2011
- Guidance in preparation for and during the process of our massive construction efforts
- Encouraging caution at first and three years later supporting the placement of the crucifix over the sanctuary of the church
- Advising on the parish's Music Ministry
- Encouraging establishment of the St. Rita Business Network and Career Ministry
- Strategizing renewed efforts at making St. Rita both a more welcoming, hospitable and safe environment
- Supporting efforts at raising the profile of our St. Rita Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Inside

- 3** "The People Who Get Involved in This Ministry Have Very Big Hearts" *Our St. Rita Catholic Community Stephen Ministry*
- 4** Respect Life: Facing Important Realities Through Faith
- 6** Combined Statements of Financial Position
Combined Statements of Activities
- 7** "This Is Truly Stewardship at Work" *The Sister Relationship Between St. Rita School and St. Mary of Carmel School*

continued on page 2

The Importance of Consultation and Collaboration at St. Rita *continued from front cover*

- Encouraging St. Rita's increased involvement in the second collection programs of the Diocese of Dallas and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
- Encouraging efforts at greater involvement in the parish for youth and young adults
- Supporting the foundation of the parish's Mother's Ministry
- Recent completion of the diocesan Ministry Effectiveness Survey (which was described in last month's newsletter)
- Many, many other areas of consultation and discernment

The Pastoral Council currently has on its agenda the following efforts:

- Bolstering and expanding the Children's Liturgy of the Word at weekend Masses
- Refurbishment of the Changing Room in the narthex of the church
- Establishing a committee to research ways of improving the sound system in the church
- Linking St. Rita Parish with the Financial Literacy Program of Catholic Charities
- Establishment of a new Community Outreach Ministry (discerning the cessation of the parish partnership with the parish in Honduras in favor of involvement with programs of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and diocesan missionary awareness efforts, strengthening the parish partnership with our sister parish of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in West Dallas, eventually assuming from the Tithe Committee the role of

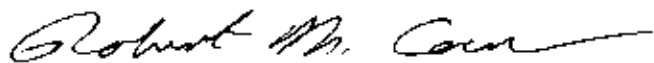
overseeing the parish's 10-percent tithe of its income)

- Establishment in months to come of a Multicultural Awareness Task Force
- Liaison reports from the Finance Council, Stewardship Council, School Advisory Council, and St. Rita Fine Arts Committee

I hope it is evident that consultation and collaboration are extremely important to me in my leadership of the parish. Members of the parish's various councils, past and present, can tell you that I have a high tolerance for meetings and do like to receive input on the life of the parish. I am deeply appreciative of the service rendered in the past and currently by members of the Parish Pastoral Council and all of the other councils of the parish as listed above. Bishop Farrell has been called to a new position in the Vatican to foster collaboration and he has insisted on there being a collaborative atmosphere in the Diocese of Dallas and its parishes. Pope Francis frequently mentions the need for collaboration and genuine consultation on the worldwide level.

Please consider the possibility of recommending persons to serve on the Parish Pastoral Council, or consider throwing your hat in the ring for consideration as a possible council member.

God bless you,



Bishop-Elect Bob Coerver

“The People Who Get Involved in This Ministry Have Very Big Hearts”

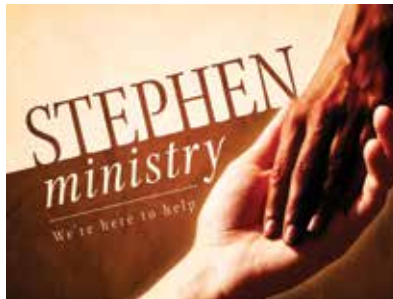
The Stephen Ministry

Most of us are aware that Pope Francis announced a Jubilee Year of Mercy for the Church, for all of us, more than a year ago. The Year of Mercy began on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception last Dec. 8, and it officially culminates on this Nov. 20, the Feast of Christ the King. This Jubilee truly follows what has been the central message of Pope Francis' time as our Holy Father, that message being one of compassion and pardon. In announcing the year, the Holy Father said that he had “thought often about how the Church can make more evident its mission of being a witness of mercy.”

Even prior to this Year of Mercy, our St. Rita Catholic Community had a proud heritage of reaching out to those in need. The pope has constantly cited the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy as examples of what we should be doing as individuals and as parish communities. And one of the excellent parish examples of living out these works of mercy is our Stephen Ministry.

Stephen Ministries is a not-for-profit Christian education organization founded in 1975 that produces training and resources known for their excellence, practicality, psychological integrity, and theological depth. Christian congregations and other organizations use these resources to strengthen and expand ministry. Individuals use them to improve their ability to relate to and care for others, grow in faith, and journey through life crises. We are blessed to have an active Stephen Ministry here at St. Rita.

Jeannette Lynch and Lawson Taitte head up our Stephen Ministry, and they have received extensive training through the program and are now able to train others.



“The people who get involved in this ministry have very big hearts,” Lawson says. “And they all report that they are getting much more out of the program than they are giving. Serving other people is the surest path to spiritual growth, and we have really seen that spiritual growth already in those who have been involved over the last year.

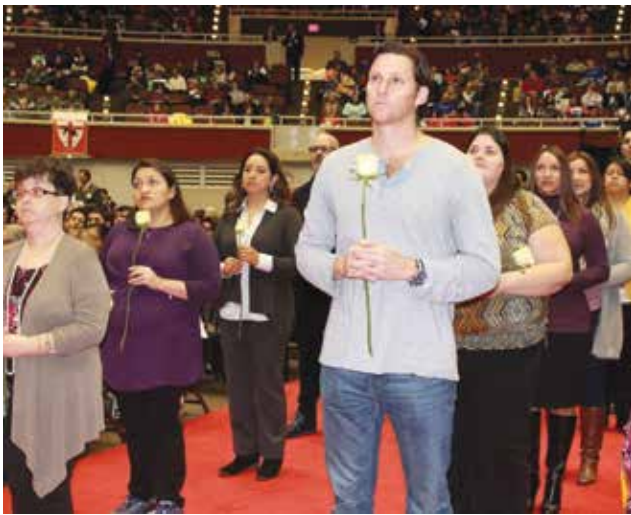
“We are one of six Catholic parishes in the Diocese of Dallas who have enrolled in the Stephen Ministries program,” he continues. “Five people from our parish – Jeannette Lynch, Jim and Mary Doyle, Jenny Priddy, and I – were sent to a week-long training conference in July 2015. Last October, we trained an additional 22 St. Rita volunteers who completed 50 hours of classes and were commissioned as Stephen Ministers by Fr. Bob Coerver this past April. Another class of more than 20 begins training on Oct. 4. It is too late to enroll in that class, but people need to be aware of what we do and what we offer in the event they or someone they know is in need of the caring offered by our trained ministers.”

When someone expresses a need and desire for help – people in the midst of the loss of a loved one, a serious illness, a divorce, a loss of a job or mobility, they are matched with a minister for a one-on-one experience. They are screened carefully to assure that they are not in need of professional care, which Stephen Ministers cannot provide. The caregivers and receivers meet for about an hour each week. Stephen Ministers do not judge or give advice, but they listen, provide support, and pray for or with the care receiver.

“Our St. Rita Parish Prayer speaks of God's ‘mercy, compassion, and forgiveness,’” Lawson says. “That is our true mission – to walk alongside the care receiver and suffer with them in their time of need.”

If you are interested in learning more about being involved with the Stephen Ministry, you can contact the ministry confidentially by calling 214-451-6503, or emailing stephenministry@stritaparish.net.

Respect Life: Facing Impor



If you or a loved one has had an abortion and would like to speak to someone, completely confidentially, to begin the journey of healing and hope, please contact: Project Rachel (for women) at 214-544-2273 (English), 972-679-4760 (Español) or Project Joseph (for men) at 469-416-2101.

*You can also visit
www.racheldallas.org
and www.projectjosephdallas.org.*

Sometimes, it's all too easy to tune out information that is difficult or unpleasant to face. It's easier to stay in our comfortable world, giving little or no attention to things that don't appear to directly affect us. But sometimes, we're forced out of our rosy lives and made to face the reality around us.

"One of the most poignant moments in my pro-life journey was when I was very pregnant with my third child," Leanne Knight says. "I was praying the Rosary outside of an abortion center. And as I was standing there, I realized that the child that was moving around, who I could feel kick – knowing that somebody in my exact same month could be in there."

Leanne, who serves as the parish coordinator of our Respect Life Ministry, is passionate about encouraging parishioners to face the difficult issues, and works to promote the dignity of every human life.

"The cornerstone of our entire faith is the dignity of the human person," says Leanne.

Leanne, along with those who serve in the Respect Life Ministry in the parish and the diocese, hopes to make a difference, offering women in crisis pregnancies the resources and support they need to honor their child's life.

Our Respect Life Ministry works on several different projects, including Gabriel Angels, which empowers mothers in difficult situations and gives them the help they need to successfully parent, if that is their choice. St. Rita's and other parishes within the diocese also work to support a number of local women's health centers.

St. Rita's also participates in a number of yearly events, such as the March for Life each January and 40 Days for Life in the fall. Parishioners are encouraged to sign up for 40 Days for Life, "the largest internationally coordinated pro-life mobilization in history, helping people in local communities end the injustice of abortion through prayer, fasting, community outreach and peaceful vigil." Our parish will be sponsoring the prayer vigil on Friday, Nov. 4, at Planned Parenthood in Dallas.

tant Realities Through Faith

"We have women going in to have an abortion and when they see someone praying for *them*, in a peaceful way, it really does make an impact," Leanne says. "We're praying for the mothers, also for the people who are the workers, praying for those people to have a conversion of heart, for them to realize that they're doing."

"Women who are having abortions don't have a choice, they feel like they are choice-less," she adds. "We pray that they know that they do have that right to have that child."

Particularly in this election year, Leanne encourages others to take a serious look at the issues that threaten human life and the dignity of the human person.

"[Voting] is part of our civic duty," she says. "God gives us the right to choose right from wrong. When we're voting, we're choosing right from wrong and we have to be able to follow the guidelines that are set before us, and to

truly live them and grasp them so we can say, 'This is why I choose what I choose.'"

Leanne is hopeful that, with faithful Catholics taking a stand and finding ways to aid those in difficult circumstances, abortion will not continue forever.

"It may have been 40 years, but it doesn't mean that it's going to continue the rest of my life," she says. "It can't. I will not have a lifetime of abortion allowed in this country. I want to see the end of it, and that's where faithful citizenship comes in."

Leanne encourages others to get involved in Respect Life Ministry, however they feel called.

"I will go with you so you can see the benefits of the work," she says. "If you want to come with me, I'll pray with you on a corner, I will introduce you to a sidewalk counselor, I can take you to White Rose Women's center. Find what you're interested in. We can always start small. Take baby steps if you need to. It's better to start small than never start at all."



If you would like more information on Respect Life Ministry or any of our events and services, please contact Leanne Knight at imaknight@gmail.com. To sign up to participate in 40 Days for Life, please visit: <http://goo.gl/DVPV0K>. For more information on faithful citizenship, please visit: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/>.



Combined Statements of Financial Position *Year Ended June 30, 2016*

	2016
Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$1,668,479
Investments	\$6,460,895
Accounts receivable	\$15,276
Physical properties, net	\$22,342,091
Cash restricted for building	\$43,396
Other assets	<u>\$121,944</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$30,652,081</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable	\$306,898
Retainage payable	\$1,023,785
Accrued expenses	\$120,142
Funds held for others	\$71,028
Deferred revenues	\$1,180,062
Capital leases payable	\$25,190
Note payable	<u>\$4,700,000</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>\$7,427,105</u>
Net Assets	
Unrestricted	
Available for operations	\$1,133,900
Board designated	\$2,988,837
Invested in physical properties	<u>\$16,593,116</u>
Total unrestricted	<u>\$20,715,853</u>
Temporarily restricted	\$1,509,123
Permanently restricted	<u>\$1,000,000</u>
Total net assets	<u>\$23,224,976</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$30,652,081</u>

Combined Statements of Activities *Year Ended June 30, 2016*

	Total
Revenues	
Contributions	\$3,317,216
Capital Campaign contributions	\$2,019,067
Tuition and fees, net of financial aid	\$4,943,845
Gifts and grants	\$13,358
Interest and dividends	\$99,862
Net realized and unrealized losses on	-\$207,130
Fundraising	\$536,722
Other revenue	\$300,553
Net assets released from restrictions	-
Total revenues	<u>\$11,023,493</u>
Expenses	
Program Services	
Parish administration and program:	\$956,131
School administration and program	\$886,823
Instructional and student activities	\$3,917,645
Ministries	\$598,428
Worship and liturgical	\$711,827
Faith formation	\$219,317
Athletics	\$79,395
Student organizations	<u>\$277,345</u>
Total program services	<u>\$7,646,911</u>
Supporting Services	
Endowment	\$17,891
Fundraising	\$70,074
Facilities	<u>\$2,099,476</u>
Total supporting services	<u>\$2,187,441</u>
Total expenses	<u>\$9,834,352</u>
Change in net assets	<u>\$1,189,141</u>
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>\$22,035,835</u>
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$23,224,976</u>

“This Is Truly Stewardship at Work”

The Sister Relationship Between St. Rita School and St. Mary of Carmel School

Some 500 years ago, St. Teresa of Ávila captured the essence of stewardship with her prayer, “Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ’s compassion is to look out to the earth. Yours are the feet by which He is to go about doing good. And yours are the hands by which He is to bless us now.” Living out stewardship as a way of life is a means by which we can fulfill St. Teresa of **Ávila’s** prayer.

We in the St. Rita Catholic Community have tried for several years to pursue and live out stewardship – our parish and our school are filled with examples of that effort. One of the best such examples is the sister relationship between our St. Rita School community and the St. Mary of Carmel School. This effort is carried out by way of our school Parents’ Club and our students – currently, Parents’ Club members and school parents Tessa Hambleton and Melissa Pridmore head up the effort.

“We are proud of our ‘sister’ relationship with St. Mary of Carmel School in West Dallas,” Melissa says. “This is truly stewardship at work. The support and love for our sister school from our students and our parish community is stewardship in action, as we do all we can to provide our brothers and sisters across town with resources we have available. This relationship has existed for more years than I am aware. I can remember going with my mom to St. Mary on many occasions when I was a student at St. Rita in the ‘90s.

“St. Rita is a support center and resource that the SMC students and parents can rely on to come into action in any capacity as needed,” she continues. “We facilitate food drives, a coat drive, a shoe drive, and have all the resources collected, sorted and delivered.”

The largest annual effort is the Adopt-A-Family program, where families are connected and much needed resources are provided to help another family have a Christmas to remember. In addition, another program the St. Rita Advisory Council helps with is being available to perform the Mock Interviews with SMC students as they prepare for high school or even the work force.

“We also help provide funds so SMC can treat their faculty to an end-of-year luncheon for a year well done and a huge thank you for their support and commitment to SMC,” Melissa says. “Finally,

continued on back cover





Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 290
Dallas, Texas

12521 Inwood Road
Dallas, TX 75244

Weekday Masses

Monday-Friday, 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday-Saturday, 8:00 a.m.

Weekend Masses

Saturday, 5:30 p.m.

Sunday, 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m.,

12:30 p.m. (Bilingual), 5:30 p.m.

The Sister Relationship Between St. Rita School and St. Mary of Carmel School *continued from page 7*

although this is not part of what our group does, our school Student Council conducts fundraisers to provide an annual scholarship to an SMC eighth-grader – selected by the SMC principal and faculty – each year.”

We are called to discipleship and stewardship by our parish mission statement, “to witness to Christ’s presence in the world and to respond to the challenges of the Gospel message,” and that we are “called to be a worshipping, listening, and serving people.” Part of our goal is to instill these beliefs and goals in our people, and especially in our children. The “sister” relationship with St. Mary of Carmel not only fulfills our mission, but it builds a real and present understanding of stewardship in our people, and especially our young people.

“We are proud of our ‘sister’ relationship with St. Mary of Carmel School in West Dallas. This is truly stewardship at work. The support and love for our sister school from our students and our parish community is stewardship in action, as we do all we can to provide our brothers and sisters across town with resources we have available.”

– Melissa Pridmore

If you would like more information on this program, or would like to become involved in some way, please contact the school office at 972-239-3203.