



THE CRUX

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY CROSS PARISH,
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEORIA

January-February 2015



The Pillars of St. John Bosco's Spirituality

By Father Dave Sajdak

January 31 is the Feast Day of St. John Bosco. Anyone who knows anything about Don Bosco knows that he had fantastic dreams during his life-time—dreams that were like prophetic visions. Probably the most famous of these dreams was his dream of the Two Pillars.

In his dream, Don Bosco could see a very big ship in the sea which he understood as the Church. There were many smaller ships drawn up to do battle against the big ship; they were the enemies of the Church and different kinds of persecutions. The commander of the ship was the Pope. Out of the depths of the sea were two pillars, a little distant from each other. On top of one pillar was a large host beneath which was written *Salvation of the Faithful*. On the top of the other pillar was a statue of Immaculate Mary with *Help of Christians* written beneath.

All the enemy ships moved to attack. Sometimes the large ship, the Church, got deep holes blown into its sides, but no sooner was the harm done than a gentle breeze blew from the two columns and closed up the gaps immediately.

In one battle the Pope fell gravely wounded. Immediately those who were with him helped him up. A

second time the Pope was struck, this time he fell and died. The new Pope was so promptly chosen that the enemies begin to lose courage. The new Pope overcame all obstacles and enemies and used all his energies to guide the ship right between the two columns. He fastened a chain from the bow of the ship to the column on which stands the host, and fastened a chain from the ship's stern to the column on which stands a statue of Our Lady. When he had done this, all the ships which had fought against the Pope's ship were scattered and broken to pieces and other smaller ships which had fought for the Pope's ship now bound themselves to the same two columns.

The Holy Eucharist and the Immaculate Help of Christians are the pillars of security for the Church, and that means, also for each of us who are members of the Church.

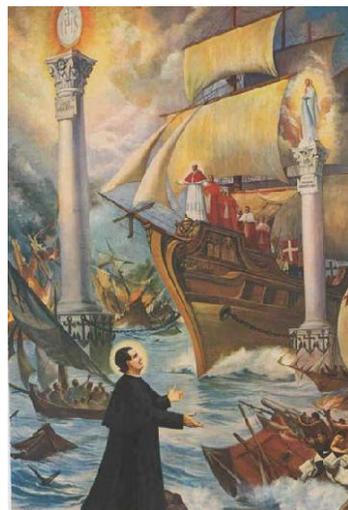
Attachment to the Holy Eucharist and the Blessed Mother is not something new begun by Don Bosco. He was merely stressing what has always been true. Before Christmas, I sent a Pastoral Letter home to all the families of our Holy Cross School children. What I said to the parents of our school children really goes for all our parishioners who do not see the Eucharist and Mary as the pillars of our faith. Here is a portion of that letter.

A major concern of mine is the low percentage of Holy Cross School families who celebrate Mass on the weekends. I am very concerned and saddened that so many of our school families do not celebrate Mass with their youngsters on the weekends.

The students of Holy Cross are taught correctly that the celebration of Mass is the center of our Catholic faith. The documents of the Catholic Church calls the Eucharist "the source and summit" of our faith. It is the teaching of the Church that not celebrating Mass on Sundays and holy days is a grave sin, and if in the state of grave sin, a person is not in good standing with the Church. In fact, before receiving Holy Communion after purposefully miss-

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Two pillars vision picture from: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/blog/vision-john-don-bosco-two-columns-mary-eucharist>



HOLY CROSS
SCHOOL
EST. 1912

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

By

Christina Ellis, Principal



HOLY CROSS
SCHOOL
EST. 1912

This school year has been filled with joyful activity. We welcomed several new staff members into our Holy Cross teaching family. The Feast Week committee expanded their objectives and offered daily activities for our students ending in beautiful weather on Hot Dog Day for our school community. September and November were filled with grand examples of service, focused efforts in academic studies and enriching excursions throughout the community, including a trip to the Cathedral of Saint Mary in Peoria for Mass in honor of Our Lady of Fatima. The highlight of December was of course, the Confirmation of our eighth grade students.

January at Holy Cross School is an exciting time. Our school gears up for welcoming new families to Information Night and Open House, as well as

celebrating Catholic Schools Week. All of these events are centered on the blessing of our faith. At Holy Cross, we have the opportunity to love and share our faith every day. Our faith is what enables us to excel in academics, athletics, and the arts. It is what strengthens our relationships with one another. We can joyfully and confidently live our faith – as a school. It is also the greatest gift that we offer our local community.

As the best advocates of our school, we encourage our Holy Cross community to spread the word of all the benefits our school offers our students and families. Invite those you know to our Preschool & Kindergarten Information Night/Open House on Thursday, January 22nd at 6:00 PM. Our preschool is expanding to offer an extended day option in the fall. An open house for all age levels will also be offered on Wednesday, January 28th from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. This is a wonderful

(Continued on page 7)

Holy Cross School is a faith-centered community fostering lives of service, integrity, and life-long learning. We are committed to Catholic education founded on Gospel-centered values and the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.



FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL OF ST. THOMAS MORE

By Katie Schroeder (kschroeder@hs-stm.org)



What a year! When you reflect on 2014, what will you remember? At the High School of Saint Thomas More, we will remember that with your support:

- STM organized the first day devoted to community service by our senior class
- STM took over forty students to the annual March for Life
- STM's class of 2014 averaged 26 on the ACT, versus a state average of 20.9 and national average of 21.1
- STM's new a capella team, Note Nerdy, earned an invitation to sing at Carnegie Hall

- STM garnered a state title in girls' basketball
- STM received a 2014 National Blue Ribbon Award for academic excellence

The High School of Saint Thomas More was honored to host Bishop Jenky for Mass and Blue Ribbon celebration on December 2, 2014. Bishop Jenky held a question and answer session with our Theology students. After Mass, Mayor Gerard joined us for a Blue Ribbon celebration where the 2014 Blue Ribbon plaque was presented to the school.

Far more important than any

achievement or event is the fact that we have a place where we can grow in faith, learn, and teach. Support from Holy Cross parishioners ensures that The High School of St. Thomas More can continue to assist parents in forming students spiritually, morally, intellectually and physically in a Christ-centered atmosphere of love, respect, and reverence consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, sending them forth to fulfill their baptismal call as His disciples in the world. Thank you for all of your support in 2014. We can't wait to see what our students accomplish in 2015!

Veteran's Day At Holy Cross Photos by Dave Devall

Holy Cross School Events



Veterans Day Mass, Pancake Breakfast Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus



Don Bosco's Two Pillars Vision (continued from page 1)

ing Sunday Mass, one is supposed to confess this sin in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. So, I hope you now see my concern as pastor.

Our Catholic Catechism tells us this about Mass attendance: The first precept of the Church ("You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor") requires the faithful to sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord as well as the principal liturgical feasts honoring the Mysteries of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints; in the first place, by participating in the Eucharistic celebration, in which the Christian community is gathered, and by resting from those works and activities which could impede such a sanctification of these days.

The precept of the Church specifies the law of the Lord more precisely: "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass."

The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin. (CCC. 2180 and 2181)

When asked why Catholics go to Mass on Sunday, the third commandment is quite often given as an answer. ("Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.") This commandment definitely includes celebrating Mass on Sunday, but it is not where the reason why we are obligated to participate in Mass ends. The first commandment is just as crucial. ("I am the LORD your God... You shall have no other gods before me... 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'")

From the earliest days of the Church, Christians have understood that being a Christian isn't a private matter. We are called to be Christians together. While we can and should engage in the private worship of God throughout the week, our primary form of worship is public and communal, which is why Sunday Mass is so important.

Those who willfully miss Sunday Mass obviously feel they have something better or more important to do. Many are busy driving children to sports events.

Others use Sundays to catch up on shopping. Still, others just want to relax, read a book, go the movies, or even get a head start on work related tasks for the week. The focus is put on these other things, and not on God.

The first commandment tells us to keep God first. And, while you are not worshiping a golden statue, as ancient people had done, the result is the same if you put other things before God. When these things take precedence over Christ, the false gods of the material world are being put before our Lord. It is not to say that ambition in career, shopping, entertainment, and keeping up the house are evil in themselves. The problem is when one allows them to become more important than God, and when one willfully chooses these in place of God, including in place of participation in the Mass, which the core of our faith.

We should not view the word 'obligation' as a bad thing. Going to Mass is not a punishment. It's not meant to be a chore to get out of the way so you can go to the movies or out to brunch. The Mass is celebrated at Christ's instruction, "Do this in memory of Me."

If we all take a moment to understand why participating in Mass is so important, and why skipping Mass is a mortal sin, maybe 'obligation' will no longer seem like such an imposing word. Understanding why the Mass is so important is the first step to loving the Mass. And, when you come to love the Mass, then going to church on Sunday will no longer feel like an "I have to," but instead becomes an "I need, I want to."

My concern is that many of our good families just do not realize how important Mass is, and what a serious matter it is to miss Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. People are truly busy. Young families are exceptionally busy, and, I believe, have all good intentions of giving their children the best. Our Catholic faith tells us that leading our children to the Eucharist is the best. The Mass is the greatest prayer.

The two pillars of the Holy Eucharist and the Blessed Mother have always been, and will always remain, the stronghold of our Catholic faith. For those who do not make Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and Mary, His holy mother, pillars of their spiritual life, it will difficult, if not impossible to live a good and holy Catholic life.

From Your Parish Council

By David Devall, Chairman

Your Parish Council achieved quite a bit at our last meeting on December 1st. Most important was the training Father Dave provided on discernment: how we allow the Holy Spirit to work within us as we conduct Council business. Our choice to use discernment instead of straight-up voting is based on how our early church conducted its matters and made its decisions. We will continue to use discernment as our guiding principle on everything but the simplest, routine matters.

One proposal that's currently being discerned concerns hiring an Information Technology (IT) staff member to bundle up and standardize the Parish's various IT modes: website, email, Twitter, Facebook, etc. Social media can be an invaluable tool in getting Holy Cross's Catholic message out to the connected world. Holy Cross School has an impressive IT set-up already in place thanks to parent volunteers. The goal of this proposal is to have one parish-wide IT system that recognizes and keeps the best parts of what the school's done and incorporates what's needed for the church side. We'll discuss the outcome of the discernment process at our January meeting. Also under discernment is choosing a new member to replace one of our Council members who, unfortunately, had too many other obligations to allow him to fulfill his Parish Council commitment.

Our December meeting also saw us juggle the committee system that we developed based on guidance from the Diocese. After five months, it had become clear that what was a "super committee" that covered the functions of Catholic schools, catechesis, and evangelization was too diverse in its areas of responsibilities. There simply wasn't any self-support among the three functions. We also learned that the needs of the Catholic schools function were different enough and important enough to merit its own stand-alone committee. The catechesis and evangelization functions will also stand alone as a committee. The result is that we now have five committees rather than the four we started with.

Here's how they break out and how they are staffed:

Sacramental Life: Gloria Fellers and John Cunningham

Catechesis and Evangelization: Bethany Kisting, Dennis Menke, new Council member

Catholic Schools: Jessica McMahon and Liz Kelley

Stewardship and Justice: Joy Pace and Dawn Longfellow

Administration and Planning: John Goyette and Catherine Barbercheck

We also created, and had approved by the Diocese, Holy Cross's Mission Statement, the sole focus of what Holy Cross Parish is in existence to do.

Holy Cross' Mission Statement

The mission of the Catholic Community of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is to provide a home for all who wish to join our spiritual family and share our Catholic beliefs and values. We are here to continue to live our lives according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, under the leadership of the Bishop of the Peoria Diocese.

One might wonder why a Mission Statement is so important, and the answer is straight forward. There is a tendency among governing bodies to eventually stray from the non-specific task they were formed to perform. It's just the nature of the beast. With no limits, it

wanders and loses focus of its primary purpose. The mission statement, then, is the simplest explanation of why a body exists and serves as a boundary to keep the body on task.

From ground zero with no Parish Council in August of this year, we have come together and grown from 15 individuals into a Parish Council that is spiritually equipped to go forward in doing God's work.

I need to hand a thank you to the ushers who have kept a head count of all of our weekend Masses. Having this information is a simple way to spot trends in Mass attendance and in a round-about way, lets Father Dave and the Parish Council know how well God's message is getting out to those people we serve.

As we move into 2015, I ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers.

A Word from Joy...

By Joy Pace

Thinking Outside the Box

I'm thankful that we are part of an "And and Both Church."

I am so grateful that we have the fullness of the faith in the Catholic Church. It's not an Either-Or Church – but an "And and Both" Church. For example – we don't have the bible alone – we have the Bible and Church Tradition.

And in Social Teaching we have BOTH Peace and Justice AND Pro-Life married together as one. Unfortunately many do not live this teaching as one.

In seeing the face of Jesus in the poor – the poor in material, emotional or spiritual goods – we need to open our hearts to the humanity of everyone – especially those different than ourselves.

I spent nearly 8 years as a kitchen volunteer at the Catholic Worker House – 4 as part of a Friday kitchen crew and another 4 as the Friday kitchen crew head. It was very good, and demanding physical work. One thing I loved to do was eat my lunch at the tail end of the shift, sitting with our guests that came to the Worker House to have lunch. We would have good conversations and have genuine sharing. It was a precious time -- breaking bread with everyone. Little did I know that these experiences would prepare me for my next ministry – Pro-Life work.

Many people find it easy to help the poor from a distance – to give money through the Church or other organizations. It's a little harder to actually serve the poor – up close and personally. But honestly – it's easy when you view the poor as just like us: we all have challenges, we all have defects, we all need to improve somewhere. We are made in the image and likeness of Our Lord. After all, God is the Father of all – including the poor. And that makes the poor our brothers and sisters – our neighbors. We are one.

Jesus came to us – born into a poor family. We know this from the Scriptures, since at the presentation of Jesus, Mary's and Joseph's offering at the Temple was two doves. So if Jesus came to us in a poor family – then we have the King of Kings pro-

nouncing dignity on the poor in a unique way. As the saying goes: "if it's good enough for Jesus, then it's good enough for me."

Look with the eyes of our Father and see the poor among us. Notice who needs some cheering up. Notice who may be struggling materially, financially or emotionally. Notice who may need a smile, a donation, your time. A tiny gesture – from a cup of coffee, to a gift of new gloves, to a smile, can go a long way in bridging the gap between the haves and have-nots. Can you imagine everyone noticing, giving, getting involved? When that gap is closed, we come together as a community – we come together as one.

So what does this have to do with the Pro-Life part of the equation? Not only did Jesus come into a poor family, he came at the moment of conception to Mary after she gave her Fiat. That means that Jesus sanctified human life from conception. That means...

Life in the womb is our neighbor too. And with every human life, we need to recognize their dignity – no matter if they fit our definition of neighbor in the poor, or in the womb. We are all recipients of God's love, and we are all worthy of right-treatment from others. I've had comments made to me: "Why bother being at the clinic? We have mouths to feed; families to help!" I reply: "Yes we do, AND we have lives to save."

I've had people say to me: "but people treat children so terribly and we have over-population besides!" I reply "no one should mistreat children. We need to help people treat children well AND we need to save lives and make a difference to the families." We must do BOTH. Besides – did you know if ALL the people in the world were put into the state of Texas, EVERY person would get 300-400 square feet of land? We have the land for food, housing, etc. We need to work so that we all recognize each other as humans worthy of respect to be sure food and resources get to the most people possible.

We can be here all day with these examples. The point is: **even in difficult times and circumstances, we can't kill the poor to serve the poor.** If we can't kill the homeless or the poor, then for sure we can't kill the unborn either! We must be creative to help the circumstances of all – food for those who are hungry, shelter for those who are homeless, cheer for

(Continued on page 7)



Baby Bottles are back! For the month of January – save your spare change, dollar bills or write a check and help out women in crisis! All donations support Living Alternatives, a Crisis Pregnancy Center, right here in Champaign! Holy Cross School and Holy Cross Parish are participating. Your change makes a change in our community! See the bulletin for more details!

Thinking Outside the Box (continued from page 6)

those who are overburdened, education and job training for those who need it – practical help. In short: hope for the hopeless.

Those in the Pro-Life camp can be more pro-active in helping the poor in practical ways. And those in the Peace and Justice camp can recognize the poor and needy in the unborn, in the bewildered mother who is seeking abortion to end her troubles (and in those who suffer human indignity – like the sick, elderly and victims of sexual misuse, etc.).

In the end – we need to help the needy AND the unborn. We are all Brothers and Sisters -- part of a human family. We actually are one.

And that is one great reason I'm grateful to being part of an "AND and Both" Church.

Holy Cross Happenings (Continued from page 2)

opportunity to see actual classes, while also getting a full tour of the building and all your questions answered.

We want all parents to know that at Holy Cross, students develop the values and morals that will forever be a part of their lives. Centered on Catholic values and principles in all that we do, Holy Cross students learn to grow in faith, to serve others with compassion, and to become the person who God intends them to be.

Christmas Caroling

By
Cheri Rakers

Several Holy Cross parishioners (and my out-of-state relatives) joined in the Christmas caroling this year. The group sang at Helia Nursing home and Swann Center, both in Champaign. The residents really enjoyed it but we know we get even more out of it. We also provided background Christmas carols for the Live Nativity at the parish center and anyone visiting the Nativity was invited to join in. Thanks to those who came and we'll plan to do it again next year.



Holy Cross Christmas Carolers

Mass of Remembrance

Photos by Dave Devall

The Mass of Remembrance was held on November 2nd, 2014. Please remember all those who passed away in 2014 and their families in your prayers. A special thanks goes to the following ministries for helping out:

- Knights of Columbus
- Bereavement Committee
- Nicodemus Society
- Funeral Luncheon Cooks and Servers



FOCUS

a closer look at the people,
organizations, and
activities of Holy Cross

2015 New Year Spiritual Resolutions

At Coffee Shop one weekend in December, we asked parishioners about their 2015 New Year Spiritual Resolutions. Below are their responses—we hope they inspire you!

Happy New Year!!

Sharon and Dave Kristovich, Crux Editors

“To pray more often for the suffering of others”

“I like to pray” -age 6

“To thank God for every day”

“I promise to be nice to my brothers and sisters”

“I will send letters to J and for Dad, sincere eternal conversion of heart.”



“To pray the rosary more often” (3 people said this, one was a 7 year old)

“Sincere spiritual conversion of heart”

“All children to grow in love, faith and soar like an eagle”

“To make it through 2014”

“Spend more time in God’s presence”

Editors’ note: We would like to feature your parish ministry in a future issue! If you are involved with a ministry, please contact us at: cruxathc@gmail.com

Christmas Midnight Mass Photos by Dave Devall



E I M N T S T

L O P W

A A J N R U Y

A C F R S

Answer:

Answers: Mittens, Plover, January, Scarf - Secret Word: Snowman

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**Happy Birthday
St. John Bosco!**

Help Celebrate St. John Bosco's Feast Day and the Anniversary Year of his 200th Birthday with a special youth-led Mass on Saturday, January 31st at 5:30 PM

A reception will follow in the Parish Center Great Hall.

Everyone is welcome!

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BLIZZARD
COLD
DECEMBER
DRIFTS
FEBRUARY

FREEZING
FROST
HOCKEY
ICE
ICICLES

JANUARY
MARCH
SHOVEL
SKATE
SKIING

SLUSH
SNOWMAN
SNOWSTORM
TOBBOGAN
WIND CHILL

Winter Word Search

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**Your Contribution to the Crux could
be here -**

**Articles, Pictures, Poems, Ideas,
Anything!!**

**Please send any suggestions or
articles to:
cruxathc@gmail.com**

40 Days for Life starts February 18th!

Get ready to witness for the unborn and help women and families in crisis! See the bulletin for more information!



ANNUAL COMMUNITY ECUMENICAL MEMORIAL PRAYER VIGIL

Thursday, January 22nd, 2015, at 7:30 p.m.
First Wesleyan Church, 408 East Illinois, Urbana

The theme for this year's Vigil is "Blessed are They..." with Pastor Shannon Caughey of Twin City Bible Church in Urbana, and Jessica McMahon, who will give a testimony.

The annual Vigil is to memorialize all lives lost to abortion and to pray for those whose lives have been affected by it.

Please join us in this prayer service. Reception to follow.

Sponsoring area churches include First Wesleyan Church, Holy Cross, St. Matthew, and St. Patrick Catholic Churches, InsideOut Church, Monticello Church of the Nazarene, Three Hierarchs Greek Orthodox Church, Twin City Bible Church, and Windsor Road Christian Church.

Everyone welcome! We hope you can join us January 22nd!

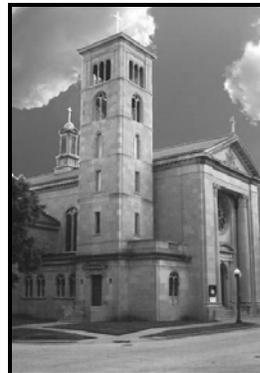
**The deadline for the
March-April issue of *The Crux* is
February 15th.**

**Please send your submissions or sug-
gestions to:**

cruxathc@gmail.com

Have a Blessed New Year!!

-The Editors



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