The Christmas season seemed to have come and gone so quickly this year, that I had little time to pause for reflection on the birth of our Savior. So I thought I might do that for this year’s winter newsletter. Of course the first thought that comes to mind is the tremendous amount of love that is manifested at Christmas. I suppose this is because there is no deeper longing in the human heart than this: to love and to be loved by God. Nothing in this whole universe can satisfy this longing and no one can long ignore it. There is a thirst in our soul for God, and many people have gone terribly astray trying to quench that thirst with a drink that simply leaves them as parched as before. Yet we have a dire problem: the very fulfillment of our deepest longing is beyond our reach because of sin, as though the last source of water on Earth was on the other side of an impassible desert.

Yet for love of us God crossed that desert, taking on flesh and coming as a conqueror to destroy the chains of sin that bind us. John cries out, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” At long last the single barrier between us and God is breeched and it is possible, by His grace, to enter into loving relationship with the God from whom we have been estranged, in one degree or another, since the Fall.

This is the true joy of Christmas; this is the gift that we have received. Through the Incarnation we are able to restore what once was thought forever lost: loving communion with God. Let us not hesitate to let Christ fulfill our heart’s deepest longing: go to Him and love Him, and let not your past sins paralyze you with shame. He has come precisely to remove your sins so they are no longer a barrier to loving Him. Recall that in your Baptism you are now loved with the same love which binds Father and Son eternally, and with which both of them love you. Could we have asked for a greater gift than this? Have a wonderful year!

Fr. Randy
Parish News

From The Office of Faith Formation

I have been in my new position for a few months now and I have so much to learn. What I have learned, or actually confirmed, is that St. Louis Parish is a great place to be. The people are amazing. I have received so much encouragement and support. I am truly blessed to be here. I enjoy working with and being surrounded by kids. I also enjoy working with the many different groups of people, both in our parish and in the deanery. Some days are more challenging than others, but every day is blessing.

Here are a few things going on in Faith Formation:

Brother Bob Baxter visited our parish on December 12, 2013 for a presentation on the Nativity. We had a small reception afterward in the parish office. It was an inspiring and entertaining evening. The Faith Formation Committee would like to thank all those who ventured out for the presentation. If you were not able to attend, we hope to see you next time!

Thanks to some very generous donations by members of our parish, all parishioners received the book “Ordinary Lives Extraordinary Mission,” by John R. Wood. Mr. Wood will be the guest speaker at our Lenten Mission on Sunday, March 30, 2014 and Monday, March 31, 2014. Please mark your calendars. Book clubs are also being formed.

Currently, there is a Great Adventure Bible Study on the “Acts: The Spread of the Kingdom,” by Jeff Cavins held on Friday mornings at 9:00am in the Prickel building. All are welcome. Stop by and check it out.

We have 136 students enrolled in Religious Education on Wednesday evenings. There are 17 dedicated catechists who volunteer their time each Wednesday evening to share our Faith with these students. I would like to thank all the volunteers, the parents and the students for making this program a success.

On Wednesday evenings, while Religious Ed is going on, many of our Hispanic Families get together at the parish office to pray the Rosary in Spanish. There are usually about 17 families attending. All are welcome.

We have 56 students preparing for Confirmation, which will be at 2:00pm on April 12, 2014. The students have been preparing for this sacrament by attending Mass every Sunday, performing service hours and preparing for a Faith test, which was administered in December. They will also be attending a retreat on Sunday, February 16, 2014. Please pray for our students as they continue their journey toward the sacrament.

We also have 49 students preparing to receive First Communion on Sunday, April 27, 2014. They are preparing by attending mass every Sunday and by making their First Reconciliation on December 11, 2013. Please pray for these students, as well.

We are very excited to have 10 candidates in our RCIA program. Nine of these candidates are from St. Louis Parish and one is from St. Nicholas Parish. The success of this program is due to the Holy Spirit and our dedicated RCIA team, a group of seven enthusiastic, devoted members. Please pray for our team, candidates and sponsors as they grow in faith on their journey.

Plans for Vacation Bible Camp are underway. Our leadership group has been meeting and planning for quite some time. They are gearing up for a fun-filled week. Please mark your calendars for June 16-20, 2014. You won’t want to miss it!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our parish! May we all have a Blessed New Year!

Amy Tonges

Parish Pictorial Directory

St. Louis is once again publishing a parish directory including pictures of parishioners, staff, teachers, and committees. Life Touch, a family photography company, was on premises several weeks to capture the images of approximately 300 families. The last directory was published in 2008.
Parish News

St. Louis Choirs Make Beautiful Music

St. Louis parish is blessed with a great deal of musical talent. And not just from our adult choirs. We also enjoy beautiful music from our younger parishioners.

One of the youthful groups that offers their musical talents at Masses is the Teen Choir, composed of high school students from the parish. The volunteer-extraordinaire who rehearses and polishes their productions is Rita (Strong) Wilder. She adeptly accompanies them on the piano, and other students sometimes play flute, guitar or violin along with the group.

Their regular practice time is Tuesdays at 8:15 pm in the Church, but they often have individual rehearsals to accommodate the teens’ busy schedules. Open to all high school students from the parish, the Teen Choir is a great way to keep young adults connected to their Faith. Current members of this talented group are: Erica Geers, Shannon Deal, Molly Weigel, Ivy Glaser, Tyler Wachsmann, Caleb Moster, George Junker, Mikaela Fangman, Claire Dickey, Mia Hillenbrand, Marie Hoog, Josie Wesseler, Kira Krause, and Angela Freyer.

St. Louis also enjoys the voices of a Youth Choir for students in the 3rd through 8th grades. Rehearsals are held on Tuesdays at 7 PM in the Church. They sing, on average, one Mass per month, plus Christmas Vigil. Come join a spirited, joyful group who loves to sing! The group is directed by Mel Calvert.

Members of the Youth Choir include: Ava Geers, Ana White, Marissa Fullenkamp, Stella Hillenbrand, Martha Hillenbrand, Alyssa Wanstrath, Anna Wanstrath, Olivia Raab, Megan Raab, Mimi Wilder, Evelyn Storms, Allie Savage, and Hope Kroen.

Please contact Sunny Calvert at the Parish Office for more information on any of the different groups of singers.

St. Louis Celebrates Feast Day

On Sunday, August 24, our parish celebrated the feast day of our patron saint, St. Louis. After all Sunday Masses, the Parish Life Committee served donuts, coffee, orange juice, and milk. The Youth Ministry provided games and prizes for the kids, and a bouncy house was set up on the lawn for additional fun. A good crowd took part in the celebration.
On July 13th, the St Louis Youth Mission Team returned from a one-week mission trip to Muskegon, MI where we teamed with 16 other youth groups from around the country to spend a week of our summer helping refurbish homes for the needy of Muskegon. The 374 teen and adult participants were divided into 64 crews and worked on 62 homes. The work projects included painting, building wheelchair ramps, repairing decks and porches, and a variety of other home repairs. Together, we completed over 11,000 hours of community service and donated over 2,000 food items to the local food pantry. In addition, 4 girls from our Mission Team raised $1,250 for the local food pantry in 4 days by singing outside the cafeteria each morning during breakfast.

The theme for this year’s work camp was “What Do You Stand For?” Through a series of questions, we examined a different aspect of our relationship with God each day. On Monday, the question “What do you want me to do for you?” helped us realize that God wants us to turn to Him for our every need and request.

On Tuesday, we asked ourselves “Why are you afraid?” to remind ourselves that Jesus will always stand with us through our fears and on Wednesday “Why do you doubt” reassured us that despite our doubts, God is real. On Thursday, our discussions about “Do you want to get well?” focused on how we can only be made well through Jesus and on Friday the question “Do you see anything?” challenged us to pause for a moment, open our eyes, and try to identify things that are stopping or slowing us down from God’s plan for us.

The entire Mission Team would like to take this opportunity to thank our parish family for its support of this ministry. This experience would never be possible without your spiritual and financial support. Because of your generosity, 21 teens and adults from our parish were able to touch the lives of many needy families in Muskegon and bring home memories that will last a lifetime. Words can’t begin to express our gratitude.

We’ve already selected Milford Center, OH as the destination for the 2014 mission trip. We’ll leave on July 6th and return on July 12th. Once again, we’ll finance the trip thru a variety of fund-raisers. We sold poinsettias, wreaths, and Yankee Candles and hosted a Reds Family Night in November, we’ll be putting on a Murder Mystery Dinner in January, and a Princess and her Friends night in February. We’ll also be building & selling bird houses and sponsoring a car wash in the spring. We look forward to the continued support of the parish.
Parish News

Parishioners Support Life!

St. Louis has been participating in “40 Days for Life” for the past 10 seasons; praying in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion facility on Auburn Avenue in Cincinnati. This past year, during the Spring and Fall season we had over 50 participants, with many participating in both campaigns.

These are some of our parishioners who participated:

Nan & Nelson French  Jim Dickey Family
Mary Jean & Maria Wessel  Jade Ritter Family
Julie & Carolyn Billman  Pete Mack Family
Arlene Flodder  Gene & Joanie Ritter
Ruth Seifert  Peggy Neth
Jeff Wilson Family  Bill Dwenger
Janice Werner  Susan Glaser
Rosie Gauck  Dee Dee Kaiser
Ann Graves  Renate Wolferst
Mark Masavage  Mike Garvey
Kathy Mattucci  The Freese Family
Isabella, Chris & Anna Crume  The Geers Family
Mary Harrah  Denean Williams Family

What started with a few people sitting around a table in College Station, Texas, in 2007 is now, 40 Days for Life, a National/International effort. The following is a summary of the stunning results of 40 Days for Life over the last 6 years:

- 600,000 participants
- 16,500 churches
- 2,786 local campaigns
- 522 cities
- 21 countries
- 88 abortion workers quit
- 42 abortion centers shut down
- And 8,245 lives saved

Hopefully we will have even more participation from St. Louis this year, with the next campaign, March 5 through April 13, 2014.

St. Louis Parish Festival

St. Louis Parish enjoyed another successful festival on Sunday, September 15. All of the popular booths of chance were available, and of course the famous turtle soup and fried chicken. Batesville’s popular Eureka band was also on hand to entertain the crowd.

On Saturday, September 14, the pre-festival attracted a good crowd. They enjoyed food and music of the Hispanic culture. The food was prepared by some of our own Hispanic parishioners.

SLS Alum Swims to Help Others

Caroline Storms, 15, a sophomore at Oldenburg Academy competed in the 11th annual Swim With The Centurions in San Francisco, California on Saturday, September 28, 2013. The 1.25 open water swim from Alcatraz Island to Aquatic Park took place the morning of September 28, 2013. Caroline was one of the first in the water and arrived at Aquatic Park 36 minutes and 40 seconds later. Caroline swam freestyle most of the 1.25 miles and finished 11th amongst female and 38 overall amongst all swimmers. Swimmers came from all over the United States as well as from China, United Kingdom and several other countries. The trip was one she will never forget as she accomplished something very few have and she helped the Margaret Mary Community Health Foundation secure approximately $10,000 of donations as a result of her efforts. Caroline is already planning her trip for next year and would love for others to join her.

We Could Use Your Help!

The parish newsletter is printed twice a year, in Winter and Summer. Our goal is for the newsletter to be interesting and informative for all our readers—parishioners, parents and alumni.

If you have suggestions, or would like to assist with this newsletter, please contact Margie Walke at 812-934-3418 or e-mail marwalke@etczone.com. We welcome your input, and would love to have additional staff members!
Announcements

Parish News

BAPTISMS

Blaise Patrick, son of Jason & Brenda (Schneider) Frey

Andres Jesus Alvarez, son of Rosendo Alvarez & Angelica Camarena

Evan Patrick, son of T.J. & Barbara (Gehl) Greene

Lexie Lynn, daughter of Jeffrey & Julie (Schantz) Puente

Reese Elizabeth, daughter of Ryan & Elizabeth (Hesselbrook) Holtkamp

Rebecca Jo, daughter of Andrew & Amy Jo (Werner) Siebert

Emmalynn Grace, daughter of Brian & Stacy (McKell) Allgeier

Joshua Aaron, Jr., son of Joshua Hountz & Molly White

Louis George, son of Romain & Trisha (Kurtz) Candelot

Thomas Joseph, son of Paul & Mary (Markham) Feagins

Westen Lee, son of Frank & Deann (Webdering) Schneider

Siena Cate, daughter of Leron & Hannah (Einterz) Giesting

Zoë Virginia, daughter of Evan Bolser and Ashley Butt

Kaelyn Skye, daughter of Michael & Sarah (Werner) Miller

Nicholas Ray and Ross Mitchell, sons of Jeremy & Jane (Baurley) Lieand

Leo Christopher, son of Jason & Holly (Maple) Lipps

Elloise Mae, daughter of Jonathan & Erin (Sendelwick) Temple

In Memoriam

Catherine Frey 7/9/13
Charles Suding 7/14/13
Sandra Combs 8/10/13
Robert Seevers 8/11/13
Marjorie Yorn 8/25/13
Ronald Hooten 8/31/13
Daniel Federle 9/8/13
Florence Schulte 9/25/13
Patricia Randle 10/30/13
Richard Stirn 11/11/13
Eugene Billman 12/2/13
Regina Holtel 12/25/13
John Pohlman 12/27/13
Elmer Dierckman 12/27/13
Marvin Graves 1/3/14

St. Louis Parish & School Calendar

Mar. 5—Ash Wednesday—7th Grade Fish Fry
Mar. 9—Super Sunday Bingo
Mar. 12—Kindergarten Registration
Mar. 24-28—Spring Break
Apr. 12—Confirmation
Apr. 12—Spring Tea
Apr. 18—Good Friday
Apr. 20—Easter Sunday
Apr. 27—First Communion
May 28—8th Grade Graduation
May 29—Last Day of School
Jun. 16-20—Vacation Bible Camp

Check Websites for more information.
St. Louis Church:
www.stlouis-batesville.org
St. Louis School:
www.st.louisschool.org

Welcome New Parishioners

Amy Kroen and her children Phoebe & Hope
Joshua & Lindsay Tunny
Darlene Origer
JB & Shannon Showalter and their children Madden & Beckham
Eric & Ashley Kranz and their children Natalie & Benjamin
Keith Konradi
Krista Palfi
School News

From the Desk of the Principal

iPads

St. Louis School has gone 1:1. Every student at SLS now has an iPad to use. As you know, with any new endeavor there seems to be a learning curve. This was not the case with the implementation as students and staff hit the ground running. Anyone walking through the building would see how much these devices are used to educate students. Please know that the iPads do not replace the traditional education that our students have been so successful with. The iPads are merely another tool for the teachers to prepare students for their future.

Amazing Results!

The State of Indiana requirements for high school no longer include taking ISTEP in 10th grade. Instead students must pass an End of Course Assessment (ECA) in Algebra 1 and English 10. Since we offer algebra at St. Louis School, we gave our students the ECA in May. Nineteen students took the algebra EOC. Not only did all 19 pass, they all received a pass+! That means we have a 100% passing rate for the 5th year in a row. Scores could range from 0-900. It took a score of 564 to pass and a 665 for pass+. Four of our students scored a perfect 900. The average score for SLS students was 815.

Speech Champions

St. Louis School Speech Team recently competed at a deanery speech competition. In a close competition, SLS brought home the team trophy! In addition to the team achievement, fifth grader Caroline Kellerman won an individual trophy for having the highest score in the humorous speech category.

Teacher Honored

St. Louis School teacher Missy Bowman was recently named Batesville VFW Teacher of the Year. Ms. Bowman will be honored at a dinner in April. Congratulations Ms. Bowman!

Art Program Recognized

According to Artsonia.com, SLS is ranked in the top ten art programs in the State for the fourth straight year. SLS came in 8th place. Congratulations to art teacher Hilary Cavitti and the SLS students!

PTO Update

The St. Louis PTO, along with all of its volunteers has been a busy organization this school year. Below are a few highlights and accomplishments from the Fall and early Winter.

- Provided over 400 pencil bags filled with supplies to SLS students to kick off the 2013-14 school year
- Introduced the new Parent Ambassador Program to enhance communications from the school to our SLS families
- Recruited volunteers to cover 80 different time slots for help in the Cardinal Café
- Hosted a PTO General Session meeting on September 25th to inform parents and teachers who attended, about the current status of all PTO Committees
- Provided dinners to faculty members during Parent/Teacher conference nights.

- A great time was had by children and adults alike at the PTO booth at the St. Louis Festival thanks to the tireless efforts of our chairperson and volunteers
- Held a Kroger Rewards Campaign to increase and encourage participation in this program that is an important component of fundraising for SLS
- The Cardinal Café Decorating Committee has overseen the decoration of nine bulletin boards in the cafeteria and two school information boards at the Parish.
- Participated in both the Box Tops and Campbell’s Soup Label contests to raise funds for the PTO
- Gave out custom designed and carved (by Tim Weberding) St. Louis Christmas ornaments to our students and cafeteria workers to celebrate Christmas
- Will host the second PTO General Session meeting for SLS teachers and families on February 26th
St. Louis Catholic Church
13 St. Louis Place
Batesville, IN  47006
812-934-3204
Address Service Requested

Mass Schedule
Weekend: Saturday 5:00 pm;
Sunday 8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 am
Weekday: Tuesday 6:00pm; Wednesday-Friday 8:10 am

Prayer & Devotion
Rosary & Benediction: First Sunday at 7:00 pm.

St. Louis Church and School Websites
Check the St. Louis Church website at www.stlouis-batesville.org for weekly bulletins, mass schedules, parish calendar and school links. At the School website, www.stlouisschool.org, there is information on the PTO, school calendar, staff and staff web pages for homework and other school related information.

Rave reviews from the recent North Central Accreditation visit:
- “Better community school than about any I have ever seen.”
- “It is not unusual for a Catholic school to have a family atmosphere, but this is the best I've ever been in.”
- “We struggled to find something to tell you to work on. This is the first time it ever happened.”

ISTEP Scores:
“Overall, the best performing school in Ripley and Franklin counties is Batesville’s private St. Louis School.” —The Herald Tribune

- 95.8% of all SLS students passed the Math section.
- 92% passed the English/Language Arts section.

Congratulations St. Louis Catholic School!