St. Luke
St. Teresa

PARISH NEWSLETTER

JUNE/JULY 2026

Sharing in the Joy of Donuts After Mass

A Great Time for Enjoying Fellowship and Some Sweet Treats

If there are a few things everyone can agree on, it's that donuts are delicious — and enjoying them after Mass is a great way to build community and let kids burn off a little pent-up energy. At St. Teresa's and St. Luke's, dedicated stewards make sure there are fresh, decadent donuts waiting after Mass at least once a month, along with something to drink. It's a simple gesture, but one that has a meaningful and lasting impact.

Kris Hoppenjans, along with her husband Tom, helps coordinate donuts and juice after Mass at St. Luke's, usually on the first Sunday of the month. This was an ongoing ministry for many years, until it was put on hiatus with the pandemic. About three years ago, it amped up again on the Feast of St. Luke. Tom orders the donuts and picks them up. Donna McKelvey coordinates picking up juice and someone to help open the donut boxes at the end of Mass.

"We order five dozen donuts every month, and they're usually gone," Kris says. "It's nice to see people congregate after church a little bit and visit. And I know the kids always like it."

This offers a simple reason for people to stay after Mass, with meaningful rewards for building community.

"I think everyone enjoys it, and I think they look forward to it," Kris says. "I'm glad that they brought it back."

Kevin Bouse, Men's Club member, helps keep the ministry fresh at St. Teresa's. The treats always correspond with the monthly youth Mass. Children perform many of the ministry roles at this monthly Mass as a way to get them involved and build their faith.

"Many of the kids who started in sixth grade are now juniors in high school, and they're still lectoring," Kevin says. "These kids are still serving. It's really cool to see them continue."

The donuts are also a draw for these kids and their

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Stewardship of Time:
The Foundation of Our Faith Lives

A professor stood at the head of the class with a big glass jar. He put six big rocks in the jar with the rocks up to the edge and then asked his students, "Is the jar full?" They replied, "Yes."

The professor told the students, "No, it's not." He then pulled out gravel and put it in the jar. He then asked, "Now is it full?" The students once again replied, "Yes." The professor responded, "No, it's not." He reached down and pulled out sand, which he poured into the jar with the same responses. Then, he reached for a pitcher of water and poured it in, all the way to the brim. Then he asked, "Now is it full?" And the students replied, "Yes."

The professor then asked, "OK, what did you learn from this?" One student responded, "No matter how many things you've got in the jar, there's always room to put a little more in." The professor told the class, "No, that's not the lesson. The lesson is, if I didn't put the big rocks in first, they would have never fit!"

Most Catholics may ask how this can apply to our own prayer lives. Essentially, every person must decide what the "big rocks" are in his or her life. And prayer should be one of those big rocks in the jar.

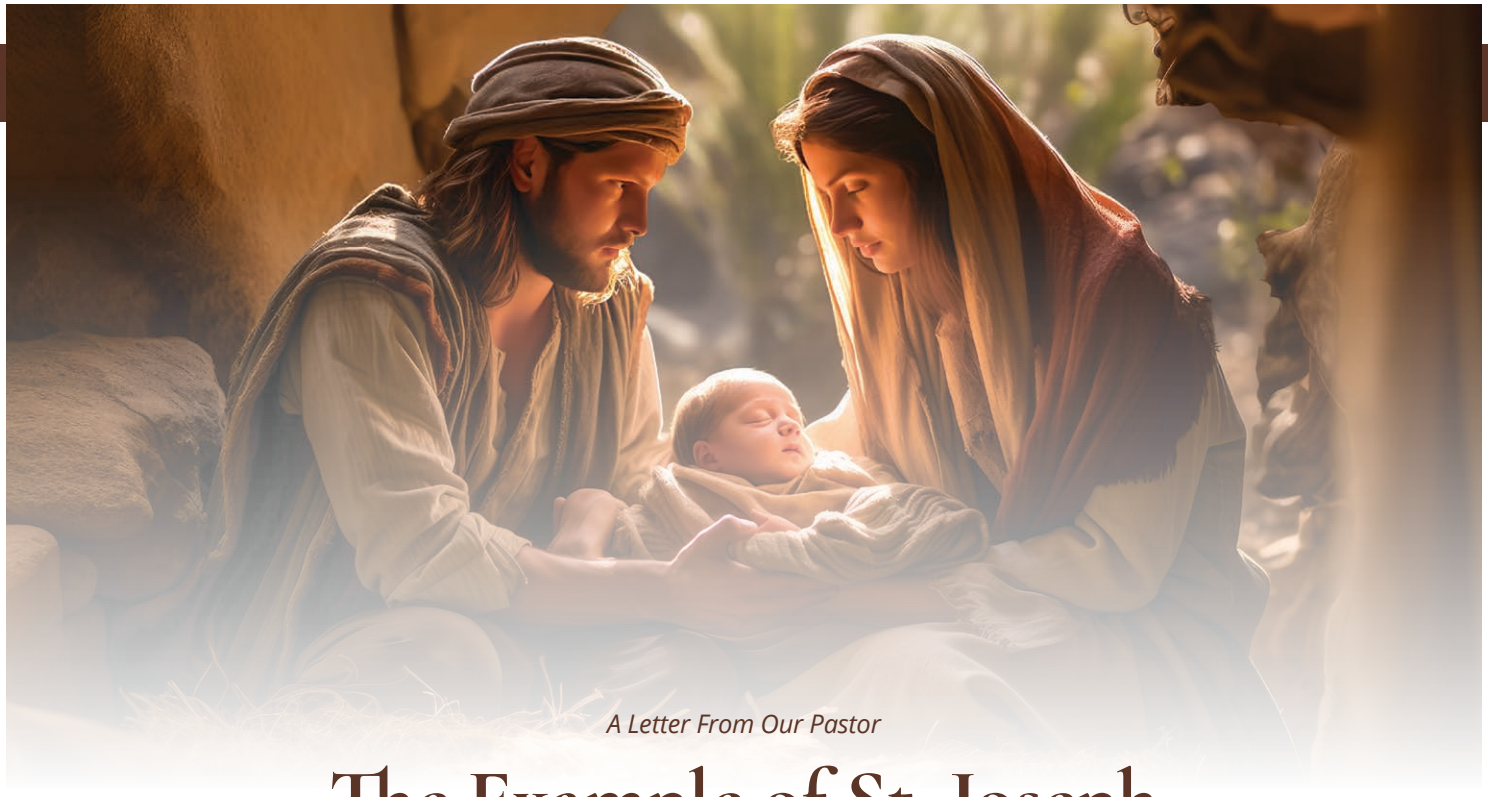
The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has told us stewardship is part of discipleship and is a way of responding to God's call in every aspect of our lives. We refer to the three facets of stewardship as "Time, Talent and Treasure," and when we consider the importance of these three Ts of stewardship, the "time" component comes first by design.

Stewardship spirituality is about trying to become more generous with our Time, Talent, and Treasure. And there's a reason why "Time" is first. We need to take time to talk to God and take time to be quiet and seek to listen as He expresses His love for us and wants us to know His inspiration in our lives.

There are many different forms of prayer. From weekly prayer, such as the Mass, to daily personal prayer, such as a daily Rosary. Morning and night prayer are also important disciplines to maintain. Set aside a comfortable place in your home where you can find silence. Focus on a spiritual image and take time to center yourself with Scripture or other spiritual reading.

For many, spending large portions of the day in silent prayer is not possible. But make it a priority to find moments of quiet throughout the day, and find ways to incorporate prayer amid your busy schedule. When you get into a vehicle, pray — before a meal, after a meal, if you're faced with a tough decision. Just pray!

Just as in any human relationship, communication is a central aspect of a vibrant relationship with God. Prayer is fostering this communion of love with God. He loved us into existence, and He wants us to enter into a loving conversation with Him. We've got to talk to Him. And we must listen to Him. He will take care of everything if you just trust Him. He's knocking at the door and waiting for us to open it in prayer.



A Letter From Our Pastor

The Example of St. Joseph and the Gift of Fatherhood

My Dear Sisters and Brothers,

As we enter the month of June, our attention naturally turns to Father's Day — a time to honor and give thanks for the fathers who have shaped our lives. In the life of the Church, this celebration also invites us to reflect on the example of St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, whose quiet strength and faithful obedience continue to offer a powerful model of discipleship for us all.

St. Joseph is a remarkable figure not because of what he said, but because of how he lived. The Gospels record none of his words, yet his actions speak clearly. He listened to God, trusted in His plan, and responded with humility and courage. When faced with uncertainty, Joseph did not turn away. Instead, he stepped forward in faith, accepting the responsibility entrusted to him and placing his life at the service of God's will.

This example is especially meaningful as we consider the role of fathers today. Fathers are called to be more than providers or protectors. They are called to be witnesses of faith — men who lead by example, who pray, who serve, and who guide their families with patience and love. In a world that often pulls families in many directions, the steady presence of a faithful father can be a source of strength, stability, and spiritual direction.

At the same time, the example of St. Joseph speaks to all of us, not only to fathers. Each of us is called to live with the same spirit of trust and obedience. Discipleship requires that we listen for God's voice, respond generously, and remain faithful even when the path is not entirely clear. These are not extraordinary expectations reserved for a few, but the daily call of every Christian.

Stewardship is one of the ways we live out this call. Like St. Joseph, we are entrusted with gifts that are not meant for ourselves alone. Our time, our talents, and our resources are given to us so that we might serve God and one another. When we offer these gifts with humility and consistency, we participate in the work God is accomplishing in our parish and in the lives of others.

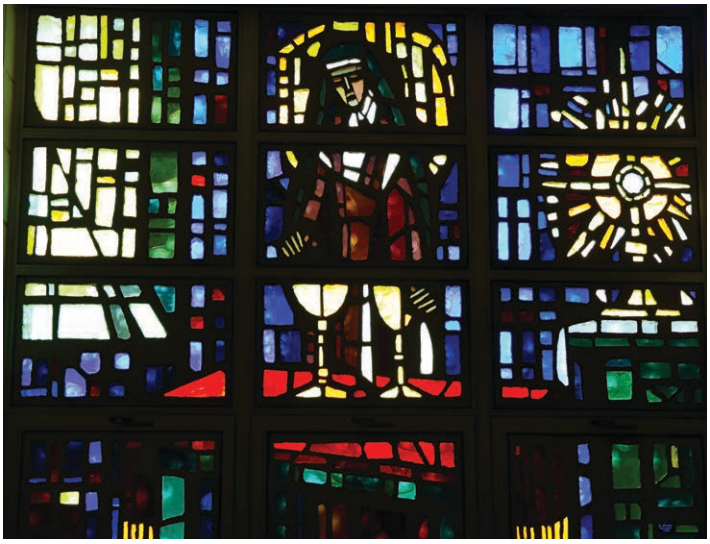
As we celebrate Father's Day this month, let us give thanks for the fathers in our lives and pray for them. Let us also ask for the grace to follow the example of St. Joseph — to live with quiet faith, to serve with generosity, and to trust in God's plan each day.

In Christ,

Fr. Joseph Oganda, *Pastor*

JOIN US FOR A

Looking Forward to Our Parish'



The stained-glass windows at St. Teresa, which tell the story of the saint's life

The organ at St. Teresa

This year, parishioners can look forward to both a celebration of St. Teresa's 100 years and our country's 250 years. On Sunday, July 5, we'll gather in St. Teresa's Church for a little history and great music. At 2:30 p.m., Deacon Doug Boyer will give a short talk about the stained-glass windows.

"The windows have been there since 1966-67," Deacon Doug says. "Once in a while, I'll mention one of them in a homily. Everybody's like, 'I've never looked at that window.' This is a good opportunity. It should help us to pray better in our church if we had a clue what we were looking at."

There are around 20 stained-glass windows throughout the church. Each tells part of a story, though sometimes deciphering stained glass images is tricky.

"Except for the one over the altar, they were designed around the life of St. Teresa," Deacon Doug says. "Across the choir loft, there are five moments from her baptism to her death and her life in the Carmel. Some others need more interpretation. Having read her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, you might know about the roses or the convent where she lived. Sometimes you have to dig deeper, like her connection to St. Paul, because of their writings. The last one on the far side of the church shows her with a Chinese child. Even though she never left France, she is a patroness of the missions."

Learning the story behind the windows helps parishioners to understand both the life of our saint and offers a deeper reflection on our identity as parishioners.

"What are these windows telling us about who we are as sons and daughters of St. Teresa?" Deacon Doug asks. "In this part of the country, people associate themselves with their parish. We've got eight parishes in Belleville, so it's more of a thing here than most places where you only have one. I belong to St. Teresa, but many people don't know the story of St. Teresa. Normally, all we know is this pastor, then that pastor, but we lose track of who we are. We're from St. Teresa, but we have no idea what that means."

It's a great opportunity to be reminded of the rich history. The stained-glass windows aren't the only historic pieces, though.

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A Grand Celebration

...'s Centennial and Our Country's 250th Birthday

"Likewise with our organ, we have one of the finest pipe organs in all of Southern Illinois," Deacon Doug says.

Rich Thompson has been at St. Teresa a total of 28 years on and off. While he's primarily at the Cathedral now, he came back to celebrate the anniversary Mass this past February and will be performing on July 5 as well. The organ concert begins at 3 p.m.

"If you don't have an outstanding recitalist like Rich, it sounds like everybody else," Deacon Doug says. "I'm hoping that will give people a new appreciation of what a spectacular instrument it is. It helps us lift our voices to God in song."

"We'll have some patriotic favorites, the National Anthem, 'America the Beautiful,' and 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic,'" Rich adds. "They'll be sing-alongs. God of Our Fathers would be another. Then we'll close with a setting of 'Stars and Stripes Forever,' which is a lot of fun."

The organ has its own history.

"It's built by Wicks Organ Company from Highland, Illinois," Rich says. "It's a combination of physical pipes and digital sounds — a hybrid. It's a successful marriage of the two. It sounds great. There were major renovations in 1995 — a lot of digital additions, new pipe work, and revoicing. Physical contacts were repaired. It was expanded. It used to have two keyboards and a pedal board. We now have three keyboards. That was an addition of different sounds, quieter sounds, a couple of louder sounds, and more versatility. It's a warmer sound now, less piercing."

On July 5, come hear the history of our beautiful windows, then enjoy our magnificent organ as we sing and celebrate both our 100 years of St. Teresa Parish and 250 years of our country.

"I'm going back to a place I loved for many years," Rich says. "It's a homecoming for me. It strengthens that sense of community."

Sharing in the Joy of Donuts After Mass

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families. It's fun for everyone to have a treat after Mass. Some months at St. Teresa's, there is a corresponding activity, like a backpack blessing, a pet blessing, or the start of Catholic Schools Week.

"This is what gets our young families involved and talking," Kevin says. "A lot of them don't want to take a jelly-filled donut into their car, so they stay for 5 or 10 minutes, and then you have a captured audience."

Kevin, like Kris, wants people to understand that while this ministry may seem simple or small, it plays an essential role in building community.

"It gets people talking after Mass," Kevin says. "It gets them sticking around and meeting one another."

Next time donuts are offered after Mass, stick around and meet someone new!

St. Anthony of Padua:
A Beacon of Faith and Compassion

On June 13, we celebrate the feast day of St. Anthony of Padua, a beloved and revered saint whose life and teachings continue to inspire and guide Catholics around the world. St. Anthony's significance in the Church goes beyond his remarkable abilities as a preacher and theologian; he stands as an embodiment of faith, compassion, and devotion.

Originally named Fernando Martins de Bulhões, St. Anthony of Padua was born in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1195. He entered the Augustinian order at a young age and later joined the Franciscan order, inspired by the martyrdom of five Franciscan friars. It was during his time with the Franciscans that he took the name Anthony.

St. Anthony became known for his profound knowledge of theology and Scripture. His preaching was marked by eloquence and clarity, making complex theological concepts accessible to ordinary people. His ability to communicate the Gospel effectively earned him the title "Hammer of Heretics."

St. Anthony of Padua's importance in the Catholic Church is multifaceted:

Patron Saint of Lost Things

St. Anthony is widely recognized as the patron saint of lost things. This devotion originates from a story of a lost book of Psalms that St. Anthony fervently prayed to recover. His prayer was answered, leading to his association with helping people

find lost items. Catholics around the world turn to St. Anthony when seeking lost possessions and, more symbolically, when seeking spiritual direction and a sense of purpose.

A Model of Compassion

St. Anthony's life was characterized by an unwavering commitment to the poor and the marginalized. He was known for his compassion and his ability to meet the needs of the needy. His example serves as a model of how Catholics can embody Christ's call to serve others, particularly those who are less fortunate.

Devotion to the Eucharist

St. Anthony had a deep devotion to the Eucharist, recognizing it as the true presence of Christ. He often celebrated Mass and spent hours in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. His devotion to the Eucharist continues to inspire Catholics to deepen their understanding of this central sacrament of the Church.

Powerful Intercessor

St. Anthony is sought after by many for his intercessory prayers. Whether it's seeking guidance, healing, or spiritual assistance, Catholics turn to him with their petitions, believing in his ability to intercede on their behalf.

Holiness in Simplicity

St. Anthony's life reflects the idea that holiness can be attained in simplicity and humility. He was known for his humility and desire to serve others, and his example encourages Catholics to embrace a life of virtue and simplicity in their own journeys of faith.

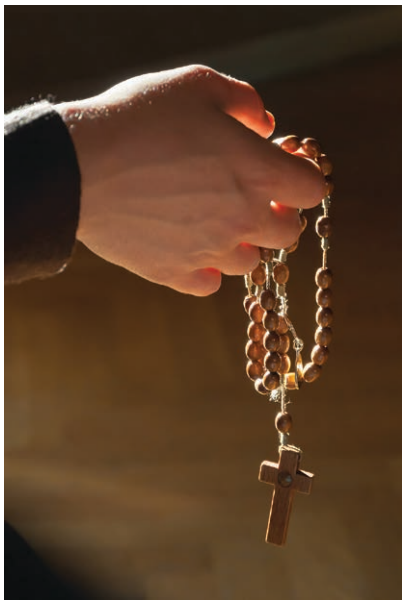
St. Anthony of Padua's feast day is a time to reflect on his life, teachings, and the enduring relevance of his message. He serves as a source of inspiration and a reminder of the importance of faith, compassion, devotion, and intercessory prayer in the Catholic tradition. St. Anthony's legacy continues to be a guiding light for the faithful, illuminating the path of holiness, compassion, and service to others.

The Legion of Mary:

Prayer Warriors for Christ Asking for the Blessed Mother's Intercession

"I didn't use to say the Rosary as I do now. It always impacts you and gives you more strength to continue doing what you are doing in your life. I would encourage others to join us in the Legion of Mary. It is a great way to grow in your faith!" — *Jo Ann Rider*

As Catholics, we believe in the powerful intercession of Mary, the Mother of God. Our devotion to her and her intercession for us is an important aspect of our faith. The members of the Legion of Mary, an international lay apostolic association of Catholics, commit to offering daily prayers to Mary and serving the Church on a daily basis. This association was founded in 1921 by a man named Frank Duff in Dublin, Ireland. In the century since its founding, the reach of the Legion of Mary has spread through over 170 countries. It is the largest society of lay apostles in the world.



Jo Ann Rider has been a part of the Legion of Mary group since 2004.

"Someone asked me to join the group many years ago, and I have enjoyed being a part of it ever since," Jo Ann says.

The Legion of Mary group meets every Thursday at 12:30 p.m. in the St. Luke's Community House. With about 10 members, they pray the Rosary as a group and read passages out of their prayer book.

"We are all dedicated to praying the Rosary regularly," Jo Ann says. "Mary is our Mother and our Queen, and she watches over us."

In addition to their dedication to praying for Mary's intercession in the world, the group participates in service activities as well. The component of service is very important to the Legion of Mary. Currently, they are putting together rosaries and pamphlets on how to pray the Rosary. These are to be used to spread devotion to Mary through the Rosary.

"We are also available to the priests should they need help with anything," Jo Ann says. "We also have members who are dedicated to helping homeless people and getting them off the streets. They do wonderful work and help them get to doctor's appointments or help them with shopping that needs to be done."

The Legion attends meetings once a year in St. Louis with other regional Legions.

The fellowship, friendship, and camaraderie that come from this close-knit group are a very important part of the Legion of Mary.

"We check in with each other," Jo Ann says. "We know the different struggles that each of us has going on, and we make sure to support each other through that. Life isn't easy, and we make sure that we take care of one another."

This group has helped Jo Ann to grow in her faith over the years.

"I didn't use to say the Rosary as I do now," Jo Ann says. "It always impacts you and gives you more strength to continue doing what you are doing in your life. I would encourage others to join us in the Legion of Mary. It is a great way to grow in your faith!"

All are welcome to attend a weekly meeting and learn more about the Legion of Mary. Meetings take place in the St. Luke's Community House on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

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St. Luke Catholic Church:
https://www.stlukebelleville.org/

St. Teresa Catholic Church:
https://www.stteresabelleville.org/

The Feast of Corpus Christi:
Celebrating the Eucharistic Miracle

The Feast of Corpus Christi, celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, is a day set aside to honor the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. It draws our attention to the heart of our faith — the belief that, at Mass, bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ. This mystery, known as transubstantiation, is not symbolic but real, and it invites us into a deeper relationship with Him.

Corpus Christi is more than a feast day; it is an opportunity to renew our understanding of the Eucharist and its place in our lives. The Church calls us to reflect on what it means to receive Christ — not only as a ritual act, but as a personal encounter that strengthens, nourishes, and transforms us.

In a special way, this feast is connected to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' National Eucharistic Revival, a nationwide effort to renew devotion to the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Christian life. The timing is fitting. Corpus Christi places our focus squarely on the gift of Christ's presence and invites us to respond with renewed faith and reverence.

As we celebrate this feast, we are reminded that the Eucharist is central to everything we are as Catholics. It unites us, strengthens us for mission, and calls us to live lives of charity and witness — rooted always in Him.