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Lenten Journey

Stories From the Heart

by Diane Meredith

Return to Me With All Your Heart

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. This year, with the parish Lenten message “Return to Me With All Your Heart” in mind, we will be reflecting on the many ways we can open our hearts to God more fully.

We open our hearts to God when we help each other and move closer to understanding each other. On the four Sundays of March, the SSPP Outreach Committee is presenting *Stories From the Heart*. Beneficiaries of our weekly collection contributions will be speaking about their programs, how they have been helped, and how they have helped others.

March 5

Give Me Hope – Young women from the Hmong community in our area will bring a slide presentation and speak about their travels to Thailand and Laos with the United Methodist Church. The girls’ project, Give Me Hope, began with a desire to teach poor children in Laos how to read and write. The SSPP donation of \$1,000 helped them in their efforts.

March 12

The Guest House – Andrew DeFranza, Director, will enlighten us on his organization’s work with our city’s homeless men. The SSPP contribution of \$2,000 is being used as seed money to start a trust fund for the academic needs of the Guest House residents.

Project Return – The Director of this local agency, Mary Steppe, will discuss how former prisoners are assisted in rebuilding their lives and finding employment. \$1,000 of SSPP collection funds was contributed towards this endeavor.

March 19

Rosalie Manor – Al Castro is the director of Rosalie Manor, an agency whose mission is to prevent child abuse, child neglect and teen pregnancy in Milwaukee County. Castro will speak about the programs offered through his agency. SS Peter & Paul recently approved a \$1,000 donation to Rosalie Manor.

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March 26

Running Rebels – Victor Barnett, Director, will be back to speak about his organization’s ongoing work with high-risk youth in Milwaukee’s central city. \$7,250 of SSPP insurance settlement funds was contributed to Running Rebels.

Latino Community Center – Ramon Candelaria, Director, will visit us again to give us an update on the progress of his organization in building “a solid foundation for social change on Milwaukee’s near south side.” \$7,250 of SSPP insurance settlement funds was contributed to the Latino Community Center.

The SS Peter & Paul Outreach Committee invites all parishioners to join in welcoming the representatives of these organizations, and to hear the stories they have to tell. These Lenten Offerings take place in the Church Center from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. ☩

Lenten Sunday Morning Mass Schedule 9 am, 11 am

The Sunday morning Mass schedule is not changing for Lent as it has in the past. During March, the **Lenten Series presentations will take place at 10 a.m.** between the 9 am and 11 am Masses
☩

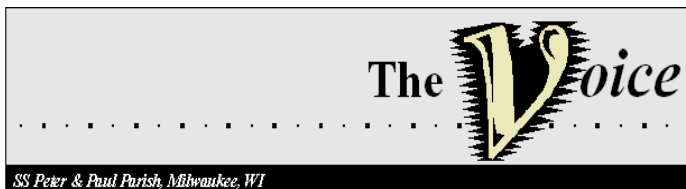


Catholic East
Lenten Fish Fry Fridays
March 3 through April 7
4-7 pm
Cramer Building Cafeteria
2480 N. Cramer Street

Editor’s Corner:

Thanks to all of you who have sent messages with suggestions, and comments about stories you liked. This issue features stories that give us a glimpse into the lives of our neighbors. When we get closer to His people, we get closer to God. We welcome *your* suggestions and comments.

What would *you* like to read about in *The Voice*? Send me an email.



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The Voice is published four times a year. Please send comments or questions to the editor at j9pilar@yahoo.com

Janine Pilarski, Editor
Elizabeth Geldermann, Contributing Writer
Diane Meredith, Contributing Writer

A Spirit-Led Love Affair

To help us all get to know them better, *The Voice* is starting a series of articles about Parish Staff members. This first story features **Monica Meagher, Director of Christian Formation.**

For new parishioners and SSPP veterans, Monica Meagher's is a familiar face. As Director of Christian Formation, her presence is both visible and tangible.

One of the planned interview questions was "Describe a typical day on the job." Getting ready for this interview proved there are *no* typical days. After a few failed attempts, we were able to connect on a Saturday afternoon after Meagher had half the day with the outgoing Adult Formation committee members. The planned "Q&A" format got scrapped for a more informative story that Meagher shared. Here is her story:

Monica Meagher grew up on the East side of Milwaukee. When we talked about how she got started in her present career, Meagher laughed and said her direction truly had to be the "Spirit-led." She did not seek out a spiritual path. Her career goals took her down the road toward Interior Design and Art at UW-Milwaukee and MATC. Still looking for more, Meagher changed to Marquette University. When she learned that Theology classes were required, she said "yuck!" So, what happened then really came as a shock to her.

"It was just like falling in love. I was in love."

Meagher says that what she found in her Theology class was amazing and unexpected. It was a place where people talked about "all the questions I had." The excitement in her voice was unmistakable as she declared, "It was just like falling in love. I was in love."

When she graduated in 1977, Meagher was one of only 20 Theology majors at the University. With her degrees in Theology and Education, Meagher began what has become a life-long love affair.

For 10 years at Pius High School, Meagher taught Theology and was Head of the Religion program at Pius. She loved the students and those years teaching. Now, as the current Director of Christian Formation, Meagher is responsible for the faith-centered programs at SS Peter & Paul: sacramental preparation, the RCIA program (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults), and Adult Formation, which focuses on educating Catholics in their faith.

Prior to 1990, the Adult Formation program didn't exist at SSPP. Meagher traces the roots of her current role back to when Steve DeLeers was the Associate Pastor at SSPP. Father DeLeers was "big" on Formation, she says, and in 1990 the parish began an Evaluation Project – a planning year – to see what was needed. Out of that Project came two especially noteworthy changes: a national search for a liturgical director that resulted in hiring Tom Koester, our full-time Director of Liturgy and Music, and the Adult Formation program.

With the inception of the Adult Formation program came the need for a new position: Pastoral Associate for Adult Formation. Meagher said that she and 26 others applied for the position, and she was chosen. Having a lay person in such a role was very new to the parish and to the church. Over the years, the love that grew out of Theology 101 has not waned. In 1997, Meagher went on to get a Masters in Divinity at St. Francis Seminary where lay persons study right along with future priests. Meagher says those studies at the Seminary deepened her love.

Her role today involves lots of meetings. The Parish Staff meets every week. And she is the ecumenical liaison for SS Peter & Paul, meeting with Staff members of other churches, the Riverbank parishes, and with businesses on the East Side to discuss neighborhood renewal.

Another aspect of Meagher's role involves event planning for all the spiritual education programs at SSPP. That means arranging for speakers, rooms, publicity, hospitality, volunteers, etc. for all the programs.

Along with Fr. Tom and Fr. Joe, Meagher also provides spiritual guidance. For a few hours each week, she meets one-on-one with parish members who may feel alienated, be in crisis, or those looking for spiritual direction in their lives.



A Spirit-Led Love Affair, continued from page 4

We finished the interview with two questions:

What one thing would people be surprised to learn about you?

Meagher laughs and says that, considering how people typically see her in her role at SSPP, they're always surprised to hear "that I'm a huge Packer fan. I never miss a game."

What do you like most about your role at SS Peter & Paul?

"I feel blessed to be doing what I'm doing. I'm personally blown away I feel so lucky. I get to see the action of God in everything I do. I can't think of anything better."

Love changes everything! ☪

Outreach Committee News

by Diane Meredith

The Outreach Committee of SSPP is pleased to start off the new year by telling parishioners where their generous contributions from Sunday collection funds are going as of December 2005 and continuing into 2006. With a great deal of thought, discussion and hope -- and following the established guidelines -- the Committee has decided to use funds available in January 2006 to assist the following organizations:

Central American Awareness Committee of Milwaukee -

This committee and the School Sisters of St. Francis sponsored Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez from El Salvador to come and speak about the work of Archbishop Romero and the four North American churchwomen who were murdered in El Salvador in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of their deaths. Unfortunately, Bishop Gomez was unexpectedly admitted to the hospital on the day he was to come to the U.S. The \$200 we donated will be used in his work to help the people of El Salvador.

The Guest House - Originally a drop-in center for homeless men, this organization now offers a growing set of programs that include education, treatment, health care and employment preparation. Our contribution is being used as seed money to start a trust fund administered by the director for the academic needs of those it serves. Volunteer opportunities for parishioners exist. Call 345-3240. Donation: \$2,000

Rosalie Manor - an agency whose mission is to prevent child abuse, child neglect and teen pregnancy in Milwaukee County. Volunteers are needed for office support work. Call 449-2868. Donation: \$1,000

S.E.T. Ministries - a Milwaukee community-based health and human services agency whose work involves Service, Empowerment and Transformation in the inner city. Three of its major focuses are in school social services, family empowerment (in-home service which relies entirely on donations), and on-site case management. Volunteer opportunities for parishioners exist. Call 449-2680. Donation: \$1,000

Warmline, Inc. - a local grass-roots, peer-run, non-crisis support line for people with mental illness. Donation: \$500

Cathedral Center, Inc. - a unique shelter serving over 1600 women and children in our area each year by providing temporary shelter and performing assessments for each woman, which qualifies them for assistance in becoming more independent. Donation: \$1,000

Project Return - a local agency which assists former prisoners to rebuild their lives and find employment. Volunteer opportunities for parishioners exist. Call 344-5013. Donation: \$1,000

Dismas Ministry - a Milwaukee organization that reaches out to inmates at correctional institutions in Wisconsin and other states by offering Catholic bibles and prayer books. Learning opportunities and possible correspondence with inmates exist. Call 977-5064. Donation: \$500

School Sisters of Notre Dame Mission for Hurricane Katrina Relief - Sr. Miriam Ross, SSND, requested assistance for a group of School Sisters of Notre Dame based in New Orleans who, because of Hurricane Katrina, have lost their income, homes, personal belongings and the schools they teach in. The schools they work in have been closed and many of their students lost. Notwithstanding their limited funds, they are working to merge three grade schools and three high schools in their area, as well as giving assistance to the people of Guatemala who were hit by the mudslides. Donation: \$1,000

All SSPP parishioners are welcome to submit requests to the Outreach Committee for donations to causes they believe are in need. Forms may be obtained at the rectory. Presentations from some of these will be given during the Lenten season between the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. masses. ☪

Affordable Housing is *not* so Affordable

By Elizabeth Geldermann

In December 2005, Milwaukee was one of nine cities around the globe to receive a World Leadership Award from the World Leadership Forum for its model of affordable housing. The award recognized Milwaukee for transforming public housing developments into communities of inclusion and economic independence.

In the same month, the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) released results from *Out of Reach 2005*. The annual report compares the hourly wage that someone must earn working 40 hours a week, 52 weeks per year to be able to afford rent and utilities in the private local housing market. The report covers every state, metropolitan area and county in the country.

The report showed that the national housing wage, what individuals and families would have to earn to afford rent is \$15.78 per hour. This wage is more than three times the federal minimum wage, which is \$5.15 per hour.

...a full-time worker making minimum wage would not be able to afford a one bedroom apartment anywhere in the country.

The NLIHC report concluded that a full-time worker making minimum wage would not be able to afford a one bedroom apartment anywhere in the country.

Organizations have formed over the years representing states and cities in an attempt to combat the dire affordable housing situation. In Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) and the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) have made strong efforts to offer affordable housing to individuals and families whose income is below average.

WHEDA created the Low Income Housing Tax Credit in 1993 as an incentive to developers and an attempt to provide affordable housing in healthy neighborhoods to those who may not otherwise be able to afford it.

Developers receive a dollar-for-dollar reduction in tax liability to a developer's owner or investor from WHEDA when a minimum of 20 percent of units are rented to households with incomes less than 50 percent of the county median income or when a minimum of 40 percent

of units are rented to households with incomes less than 60 percent of the county median income. Incomes are adjusted for family size.

The median household income in Milwaukee County in 1999, not adjusted for family size, was \$38,100, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

In 2005, a household with a family of four who falls below 50 percent of the county median income would make a maximum of \$33,600, based on figures from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Under the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, a family of four making \$33,600 could pay a maximum of \$756 for a two bedroom apartment and \$873 for a three bedroom apartment.

That is a lot to pay when a household that is supporting two adults and two children has at a maximum \$33,600 in income flowing in, not including taxes and health insurance.

It is true that \$756 for rent does not exceed 30 percent of the family's monthly income, which would amount to \$2800 before taxes. And yes, in more affluent neighborhoods, \$756 is a steal for a modest two bedroom apartment.

But the individuals without any dependents that I know who make around \$33,000 a year would not even pay that much for rent.

The four-person family whose income is \$33,600 is limited in many ways, regardless of whether the family decides to stay in a less affluent neighborhood or move to a nicer one and getting a break on rent.

If the family chooses to stay in a poorly kept neighborhood or in a public housing development, it would have more spending money because of a cheaper rent. However the children would most likely be exposed to crime and a lower quality of public education.

The other option is to move to a more affluent neighborhood, with the likelihood of the children attending a better quality public school. The parents could have the possibly of finding a better paying job. The family as a whole may be able to rise out of living below the average income.

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∞ Parish Calendar ∞

These dates - subject to change – are events at SS Peter & Paul in the coming months. Please check the Bulletin for specific information. Regular Masses are 5 pm Saturday, 9 am, 11 am and 7 pm Sunday, and 8 am weekdays (M-F). Confessions are 4-4:30 pm Saturday. Centering Prayer is each Tuesday at 7:15 pm in the Church Center. For more information, call the rectory at 962-2443.





FEBRUARY

- 2/18
Market Day Pick-up, 8:15-9:15am, Café /
- 2/19
RCIA, 10-Noon, Church Ctr/
- 2/20
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
Peacemakers, 7pm, Café/
SPRED Preparation, 6:30-9pm, SPRED Rm/
- 2/21
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
ESCYM MS & HS, 6:30-8pm, SC/
- 2/22
Adult Confirmation, 7pm, Church Ctr/
ESCYM K-Gr 5, 6:15-7:30pm, SC/
- 2/25
SPRED Total Comm, 9am-Noon, SPRED Rm/
SSPP Lent Morning of Reflection, 9-1pm at Urban Ecology Center/
- 2/26
RCIA, 10am-Noon, Chiapas/
SPRED Mass at 11am/
SPRED Reception, Ch. Ctr.
- 2/27
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/
- 2/28
4th Tuesday Group, 7pm, Chiapas/
ESCYM MS & HS, 6:30-8pm, SC


MARCH

- 3/1
Ash Wednesday – Masses at 8:15am & 7:00pm✠
- 3/3
CEE Fish Fry, 4-7pm, Café/ 
- 3/4
Single Vision, 6:30pm, Church. Ctr/
- 3/5
RCIA, 10-Noon, Church Ctr/
Apostle's Café, 8pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/6
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
- 3/7
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/8
Adult Confirmation, 7-9pm, Church Ctr/
Parish Council, 6:30pm, Upper Rm/
- 3/9
Lenten Prayer with Sr Ann Kelley, 7-8pm, Church Ctr/

MARCH (cont'd)

- 3/10
CEE Fish Fry, 4-7pm, Café/ 
- 3/11
SSPP Women's Group, 9:30-Noon, Church Ctr/
- 3/12
RCIA, 10-Noon, Church Ctr/
- 3/13
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/
SPRED Preparation, 6:30-9pm, SPRED Rm/
- 3/14
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
Lent Evening of Reflection, 7pm, Church/
- 3/15
Evening Prayer, 6:30pm, Church/
Commission Meetings, 6:45pm/
- 3/16
Lenten Prayer with Sr Ann Kelley, 7-8pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/17
CEE Fish Fry, 4-7pm, Café/ 
- 3/18
Market Day Pick-up, 8:15-9:15am, Café/
SPRED Total Comm, 9-Noon, SPRED Rm/
- 3/19
RCIA, 10-Noon, Church. Ctr/
- 3/20
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
- 3/21
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/22
Adult Confirmation, 7-9pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/23
Lenten Prayer with Sr Ann Kelley, 7-8pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/24
CEE Fish Fry, 4-7pm, Café/ 
- 3/26
RCIA, 10-Noon, Church Ctr/
- 3/27
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/
Peacemakers, 7pm, Café/
SPRED Preparation, 6:30-9pm, SPRED Rm/
- 3/28
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
4th Tuesday Group, 7pm, Chiapas/
- 3/29
Lenten Penitential Prayer Service, 7pm, Church/
- 3/30
Lenten Prayer with Sr Ann Kelley, 7-8pm, Church Ctr/
- 3/31
CEE Fish Fry, 4-7pm, Café/ 

APRIL

- 4/1
SPRED Total Comm, 9-12, SPRED Rm/
- 4/2
RCIA, 10-Noon, Church Ctr/
Apostle's Café, 8pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/3
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
- 4/4
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/5
Parish Council, 6:30pm, Upper Rm/
Adult Confirmation, 1355 W. Vliet St/
- 4/6
CEE Reconciliation, 10:30-Noon, Church/
- 4/7
CEE Fish Fry, 4-7pm, Café/ 
- 4/8
ESCYM First Reconciliation, 10am, Holy Rosary/
SSPP Women's Group, 9:30-Noon, Church Ctr/
- 4/10
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/11
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/15
Market Day Pick Up, 8:15-9:15am, Café/
- 4/16
EASTER SUNDAY
- 4/17
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
- 4/18
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/19
Evening Prayer, 6:30pm, Church/
Commission Meetings, 6:45pm, TBD/
- 4/24
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/
Peacemakers, 7pm, Café/
SPRED Preparation, 6:30-9pm, SPRED Rm/
- 4/25
Centering Prayer, 7pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/26
Newly Married Dinner, 6pm, Church Ctr/
- 4/29
SPRED Total Comm, 9-Noon, SPRED Rm/
- 4/30
Spring Tea, 9am, Café/

Affordable Housing, continued from page 6

However, the family would be choosing to uproot itself from what it is used to. And with the higher cost of rent, it may not have the money for quality food, books for the children or sufficient clothing. The family will most likely have little, if any money left to save and in the case of an emergency will probably not be able to afford the bills.

There is no incentive for the family to stay or go. Both options have their pros and cons. And unfortunately, most of us would probably pick the option where we would have more cash in our pockets at the end of the day.

Milwaukee has made great strides in creating affordable housing. This is proven beyond the recognition from the World Leadership Organization. In the neighborhoods that Milwaukee County has developed private housing to replace public housing, including Hillside Terrace, Lapham Park, Parklawn and Highland Park, employment increased by 32 percent.

But there needs to be something else available. Families and individuals that want to live in a more affluent neighborhood should be able to without making such a monetary sacrifice. And families that work hard and care to stay in their current neighborhood should not have to move out to have better opportunities for their futures.☪

Elizabeth Geldermann is a member the Justice Education Committee at SS Peter & Paul that studies social concerns from our faith perspective and helps educate and sensitize our parish about justice. For more information, you can contact Fr. Joe Juknialis at sfs@wi.rr.com.



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