

Cherish the Parish

Beautiful History

Did you know...there are 23 pieces that make up our Nativity scene?

There are many interesting facts that surround the beautiful Nativity set that is displayed each year during the Christmas season. Mark Gilligan, a 19-year parish member, is a walking encyclopedia of Nativity facts. Gilligan not only knows the history of our Nativity scene, he is an aficionado of Nativity scenes in general. So before we do a count down of the 23 pieces, here is some history that Gilligan recounted.

- ◆ The Nativity scene appears to be Italian. There’s no way to be completely sure, but all signs point in that direction. The pieces are made of Italian composition plaster and the figures have Italian characteristics – for example, Mary is holding her hands in prayer, in a style typical of Italian art.
- ◆ Based on their composition, the figures date back to 1901 – 1910. SSPP received the Nativity set about 1910, and it was likely paid for by the parish families. Back then, it was traditional for every family to give one week’s pay to purchase a Nativity set for the church.

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A photo of our beautiful nativity scene, displayed each year from the end of Advent throughout the Christmas season. Photo courtesy of Mark Gilligan

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- ♦ The initials “PK”, etched in the bottom of each piece, are those of the “Pourer.” The Pourer is the artist whose skill produces the beauty and detail of each piece.
- ♦ Today, the set would cost more than \$10,000 to replace since resin is now used instead of plaster because resin is more damage resistant.
- ♦ The original “log cabin-style” stable deteriorated and was replaced in 2000 with the stable we have now. The new stable was built by a parish member.
- ♦ All the statues were restored in the year 2000 by James Colbourne, a well-known restoration expert.
- ♦ The 3 kings represent Europe, Asia and Africa – the 3 known continents at the time of Christ. The standing king is the largest piece of the set, standing 81 inches tall.
- ♦ The figure of Jesus is bigger than an infant, more the size of a toddler. His size indicates his importance. Jesus’ hands are in the “come to me” position. Jesus’ figure is separate from the manger so it is removable. This is also evidence of Italian artistry.

So, what are the 23 pieces that make up the set? The Gloria Angel; 3 Shepherds (kneeling, piper & shepherd with hat); 3 Kings; ox and ass; 10 sheep; Jesus, Mary and Joseph; and the manger. Jesus’ manger is counted because it’s a separate piece. That’s all 23.

In addition to these, Gilligan has countless other nuggets of information about Nativity scenes. His own interest dates back to his childhood. Each year at Christmas time, his father put the Nativity set together, and explained that the Nativity set was not a toy. His parents gave him his own Nativity set when he was still in grade school and his passion grew.

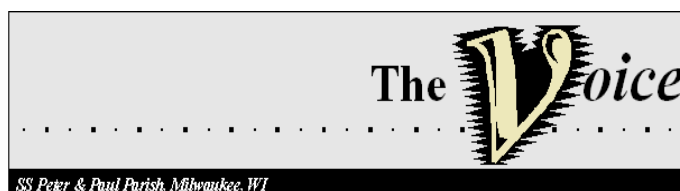
According to Gilligan, the tradition of displaying figures to represent the Nativity dates back to before 343 A.D. evidenced by figures found in the catacombs in Rome. Also known as “the crèche guy”, Gilligan is a member of Friends of the Crèche, a national organization that studies the history of nativity scenes or crèches. The word “crèche” is a French word that means “crib.”

Gilligan provided the photo that accompanies this article. He, himself, requested the spotlight that illuminates the manger scene. He spoke with Tom Koester, SSPP’s Directory of Liturgy & Music, to get that accomplished when he noticed the area seemed too dark for proper appreciation.

We are blessed to have parish members like Mark Gilligan whose gifts bring color, interest and definition to the tapestry of our church history. If anyone is interested in joining Friends of the Crèche, Gilligan asks you to contact him at hummelcreche@netzero.net. ☞

This is our last issue for 2005. We at **The Voice** wish you a blessed holiday season and happy New Year.

What would you like to read about in The Voice? Send an email to j9pilar@yahoo.com with your suggestion.



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

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2005 Stewardship Awards

About this time each year, the Stewardship Commission accepts nominations from the parish for the Stewardship awards. The Steward of the Year award is presented to one member of the parish who has been an exemplary steward during the year, giving time, talent and treasure to SS Peter & Paul, the neighborhood and the community. We are blessed at SS Peter & Paul with a number of individuals who exhibit the principles of stewardship. This year, the Commission is honored to present the Stewardship awards.

The 2005 Steward of the Year award is presented to **Mary Eckert**.

These additional awards are also presented:

Heart of Christ Award
Bobbie Sanders

Dedicated Disciples of Christ
Mike & Barb Spalda and Ruth Prus

By presenting these awards, we as members of SS Peter & Paul, wish to show these remarkable individuals that we respect and appreciate their Christian spirit.

All the awards are presented at the Volunteer Thank You on November 12. This event is held to celebrate the countless number of volunteers from our parish who generously give their time, talent and treasure. Thank you all. ☪

New Parish Members

SS Peter & Paul is always excited to welcome new members. Since August, 2005, the following people have joined our parish family:

- ♦ Ryan and Maria Beckwith
- ♦ Angela Blenski
- ♦ Gregory Borden
- ♦ Caitlin Carlson
- ♦ John Couture
- ♦ Doug and Amy Frede
- ♦ Elizabeth Geldermann
- ♦ Cassandra Hahn and Clarissa
- ♦ Adela Hirang
- ♦ John and Katherine Huegel and Andrew, Benjamin & Alexander
- ♦ Eric Janke
- ♦ Lauren Johnson
- ♦ Laura Koepfel
- ♦ Mary Litzau
- ♦ Martin Michael
- ♦ William Rinehart
- ♦ Karen Rogers
- ♦ Stephanie Spaeth
- ♦ Paul Stillmank
- ♦ John and Angela Townsend
- ♦ Meg Van Bellinger
- ♦ Ava Wilson

Welcome to SS Peter & Paul! Thank you for joining our tradition. ☪

Outreach

Formerly, every fourth Sunday, our collection funds were dedicated to Outreach ministries. The Parish Council has now decided to dedicate 2% of Parish income to Outreach. The Outreach Committee oversees the distribution of those funds to organizations of justice, advocacy, service, and direct assistance. Listed here are the fund distributions since April, 2005:

ILAC –Healthcare Outreach \$300

The Guest House \$2,000

Warmline, Inc. \$500

If Model 7 is the Answer, What is the Question?

By Liza Richlin
Parish Council Secretary

In 2003 the Archdiocesan planning process invited parishes and clusters of parishes to consider new ways to reorganize. This was largely, though not exclusively, in response to the priest shortage. The archdiocese proposed six possible models for how to “be church.” They also created another model, and called it “Model 7.” This model allowed for the possibility of another plan. This plan was left to the parishes to design and propose back a solution of their making in response to how they would like to change to face the future.

Instead of asking, “how can we deal with the priest shortage in the future?” the team with SS Peter & Paul decided instead to ask, “What is it about Catholic Parish life that we want to strengthen and build for our future?” It was seen as an opportunity to strive for the ideal in a parish regardless of the number of priests assigned.

The River Bank Catholic Connection, or RCC, which is formed by the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Old St. Mary’s, Our Lady of Divine Providence, SS Peter & Paul and Three Holy Women, formed a planning team and our Model 7 was born. The way the RCC is currently structured most closely resembles Model 3.

Now that the RCC planning team has a proposal, it is being presented to each individual parish council in the RCC. Our Associate Pastor, Fr. Joe, is leading this effort as the liaison between the parishes. He is striving to collect questions from council members so that (in the future) we can more intelligently discuss the model. This is an informational process focused less on pros/cons and opinions and more on factual questions to understand the proposal better. We will continue to implement the Model 7 recommendations by increasing the collaboration of the parishes.

It is truly an exciting time to “be church” when we are allowed to dream of an ideal instead of accepting and focusing on our shortages. ☪

Note: Taken in large part from “A Model 7 Proposal to the River Bank Catholic Connection.”



Seeking Information:

The Building on our Blessings Task Force is seeking information regarding the water leakage problems that continue to occur in the basements of the Church Center and Parish Office/Rectory building.

We’ve heard that many attempts have been made in years past to repair the problems, but we have little information about the work that was done or the results that were achieved. The Task Force is trying to gain a better understanding of the nature of the problem before we devise a solution.

If you can help us fill in a bit of the history, please contact John Bach at 414-964-8345. Thank you.



SSPP Women's Group

Knitting as Prayer

God works in mysterious ways – even through knitting as the women of the SS Peter & Paul Women's Group have discovered.

Knitting Into the Mystery, a book by Susan Jorgensen and Susan Izard, describes how knitting can become an act of prayer.

With the help of this book, the Women's Group has discovered the spiritual connection between knitting and praying. The women have formed their own ministry, knitting beautiful shawls. The shawls are made to bring physical and spiritual blessings, warmth and comfort.

As they knit, they pray, and their knitting becomes an act of prayer. Often, at the start of a project, the knitter doesn't know for whom she's knitting. As one of the women explained, the Holy Spirit directs your knitting. You knit and "see who comes to your heart."

A shawl can be given to someone who is ill. A shawl can also be created for someone who needs comfort,

friendship, strength or support. Every shawl is given with prayers of love and blessings.

After a shawl is finished, it is blessed by the Group. They pray over the shawl, asking God's blessings on the person who will receive it, and on the person who made it. Afterward, it is given to the recipient with an enclosed written prayer. The shawl is a reminder of the prayers of comfort and support.

Prayer shawls can be any size, any color, any type of yarn, but the key element is that they are created prayerfully. At the beginning of the book, Knitting Into the Mystery, there is a dedication. This part of the dedication helps to explain how knitting shawls becomes an act of prayer:

...And for knitters everywhere. May their knitting be their praying. May their praying draw them more deeply into the Mystery we call God.



Knitting prayer shawls is only one of the many faith activities of the SSPP Women's Group. The Group meets once a month and is open to parish women of all ages. For information, contact Monica Meagher.



Joanne Kolodzik, a member of the Women's Group, displays the prayer shawl she just finished.



The women gather around the prayer shawl to ask blessings for the person who made the shawl and for the person who will receive it.



Justice Education

Health Care for All!

By John Couture

On September 28, the parish's Justice Education Committee held the first in a series of discussion panels on justice-related issues and Catholic social teaching on these issues. The series, entitled "Justice Matters," is intended for all of us, as Catholics and members of SS Peter and Paul, to learn about Catholic social teaching on these issues, to educate ourselves and others in our parish and community, and hopefully, to advocate improvements by enacting our Catholic beliefs while respecting and preserving pluralism.

Our first panel, "Perspectives on National Health Care," featured three speakers. State Representative Jon Richards, Assembly District 19, shared an overview of the bipartisan plan he is attempting to help craft for health care in Wisconsin (plan details at <http://www.wisconsinhealthplan.org>). Paul Westrick, Director of External and Government Relations for Columbia/St. Mary's Hospital, noted that while our health care system works for what it was designed to do, it is no longer sustainable and changes need to be made. And Fr. Andrew Nelson, a moral theologian, wanted to remind us that we are morally complicit in the failures of our health care system to cover those of us who are the most vulnerable; revolutionary changes need to be made, and these changes need to be enacted by all of us.

It was Fr. Andy Nelson's contribution to the panel that struck me the most, and it is what I would like to take a few moments to reflect upon and share with you. While doing further research after the panel, I came across the website of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. They are "launching an effort to unite Catholics around a common message: In this, the wealthiest of nations, it is unacceptable that so many people do not have access to affordable health care." Over forty-five million of us—about one-sixth of the population—are uninsured, and the vast majority of the uninsured are members of working families, people of color, and children. As Pope John Paul II writes, "Social thinking and social practice inspired by the Gospel must always be marked by a special sensitivity towards those most in distress."

The figure of forty-five million is staggering, and we are all complicit. We cannot allow this to continue.

The revolutionary changes that Fr. Andy talked about are many; they will not be easy, and they require us to change our hearts and minds, and the hearts and minds of others. We need to change our thinking about health care: we need to look upon it as a basic human right, not as a privilege, as Pope John XXIII writes in his encyclical *Peace on Earth*. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has also issued helpful guidelines for us as Catholics to think about; in their *Framework for Comprehensive Health Care Reform*, they have created criteria by which they will evaluate health care policy proposals. These include:

- ♦ "Respect for Life—Whether it preserves and enhances human life from conception to natural death."
- ♦ "Priority Concern for the Poor—Whether it gives special priority to health care needs of the poor, ensuring that their health care is quality health care."
- ♦ "Universal Access to Comprehensive Benefits—Whether it provides universal access to comprehensive benefits sufficient to maintain and promote good health."
- ♦ "Pursuing the Common Good and Preserving Pluralism—Whether it allows and encourages the involvement of all sectors, including the religious and voluntary sectors, in all aspects of health care, ensuring respect for the ethical and religious values of consumers and providers."

For further reading, including the bishops' statements *Health and Health Care* and *A Framework for Comprehensive Health Care Reform*, go to <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/index.htm>.

I am unable to propose a plan here in this limited space, and I am neither a politician nor an economist. But I know something has to be done, and it will begin with you and me—with us. We can make change happen, and we need to pressure those who can make these changes to make them.

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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.

NOVEMBER

November 12:
Market Day Pick-up, 8:15-9:15am, Cafeteria/
SSPP Women's Group, 9:30 – Noon, Church Ctr/
Volunteer Thank You, 6:30pm, Cafeteria/

November 14:
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/

November 15:
Centering Prayer, 7:15pm, Church Ctr /

November 16:
Stewardship/Finance Commission, 6:45pm, TBA /
Worship Commission, 6:45pm, TBA/
Christian Formation, 6:45pm, TBA/
Service Commission, 6:45pm, TBA/

November 20:
SPRED Mass, 9 am/
SPRED Reception, 10 am, Church Ctr/

November 21:
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
Peacemakers, 7pm, Cafeteria/

November 22:
Centering Prayer, 7:15pm, Church Ctr/

November 24:
THANKSGIVING

November 27:
First Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER

December 2:
JustFaith Retreat, 7-10pm, Church Ctr/

December 3:
JustFaith Retreat, 8am-4pm, Church Ctr/

December 4:
Holiday Bake Sale, after masses, Church Ctr/

December 5:
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
SPRED Preparation, 6:30-9pm, SPRED Rm.

December 6:
Centering Prayer, 7:15pm, Church Ctr /

December 7:
Parish Council Meeting, 6:30pm, Church Ctr /

December 10:
Market Day Pick-up, 8:15-9:15am, Cafeteria/
SSPP Women's Group, 9:30 – Noon, Church Ctr/
SPRED Total Comm, 9:30am, SPRED Rm./
SPRED Training, 12-5pm, SPRED Rm./
Single Vision, 7pm, Church Ctr/

DECEMBER, cont'd

December 12:
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/
St. Vincent de Paul, 6:30pm, Church Ctr/

December 13:
Centering Prayer, 7:15pm, Church Ctr /

December 17:
Single Vision Christmas Party, Church Ctr./

December 19:
Bible Study, 6-7pm, Chiapas/

December 20:
Centering Prayer, 6-7pm, Church Ctr /

December 21:
Stewardship/Finance Commission, 6:30pm, TBA /
Worship Commission, 6:30pm, TBA/
Christian Formation, 6:30pm, Church Ctr /
Service Commission, 6:30pm, Chiapas /

December 24:
Vigil of Christmas, 5:00pm and 10:00pm

December 25:
Christmas Day, 9 and 11:00am

December 27:
Centering Prayer, 7:15pm, Church Ctr/

40 Years+ Members

These individuals who have been members of SSPP for 40 years or more were honored on October 23 at the Pancake Breakfast.

Mary Aiello Donna Bessy Dorothy Bode Elaine Burns Larry Burns Nancy Burns Domenic Carini Margaret Carini Mario Carini
Barbara Chmielewski Lillian Conway Joseph D'Amato Santa D'Amato Anthony Damiano Carmella Damiano Carol Dati
Donald Dati Frances Dittrich Karl Dittrich Arthur Dubinski Grace Ellen Ehr Anne Eichbaum Lucia Eichbaum
Charles and Mary Fricano Joe Fricano Katherine Fowler Rose Garfield Frances Gartzke Rita Goetz Kathleen Hallett
Janice Hallett Dolores Heron George Janicki Marcella Jankowski Suzanne Jaszewski Nancy Jeanpierre Thomas Jeanpierre
Charles Johnson Ann Johnstone Brian & Linda Kliesmet Robert Kleppin Carolita Knott Mary Ellen Kolanko Danial Konzal
Bruno Kowalewski Maryanne Kowalewski Jerome Kuptz Joyce Kuptz Cecelia Kwiecien Kathleen Kwiecien Jim and Judy Lewis
Eugenia Lukowitz Bob Mathia Marcella Matyasz Mary McDermott Jean McGovern Al McGrath Louis Migliaccio Alice Murray
Gertrude Nelson Wanda Newland Beverly Phillips Frank Purtell Jean Purtell Louis Raffaele Tina Raffaele Vivian Tetzer
Julie Revane Bernice Rice Evelyn Rice Jerry Richie Leonor Rosas Rosalie SanFelippo Jane Schieffer Rita Kuhnen Schiro
JoAnn Schmidt Jerry Schulz Peggy Schulz Mary Margaret Scully Mildred Setright Barbara & Mike Spalda Prudence Spera
Joan Squire Nadine Stoltz Elaine Stone Sr. Margaret Underwood Ruth Underwood Anna Maria Vicini Isabella Vitucci
Rose Vitucci Frances Wingers Anna Wonser Ken Wonser Joseph Ziino Lucy Ziino



Health Care for All continued from page 6

As long as health care is looked upon as a privilege and not as a right, the profit motive will reign. Any changes that move towards universal coverage will be resisted mightily by those who are concerned with profit, and we will have to pressure some powerful economic and political interests. We need to think not only about ourselves, but also, especially, about others.

Over the past couple of decades, an unfortunate, and intentional, change has occurred in mainstream political discourse. We no longer hear much talk about ourselves as citizens, but as taxpayers. As Jesus says in the Gospel, the two most important commandments are to love God, and to love one another as we love ourselves. These commandments are intimately related. Loving God and loving one another are very difficult as taxpayers. It seems to me that it is easier to realize and enact these commandments if, in a political sense, we think of ourselves as citizens. Our health, and the health of others, depends on our responsibilities as Catholics, and as American citizens. ☞

John Couture 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 about the Justice Education Committee, contact Fr. Joe Juknialis at sfs@wi.rr.com.



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