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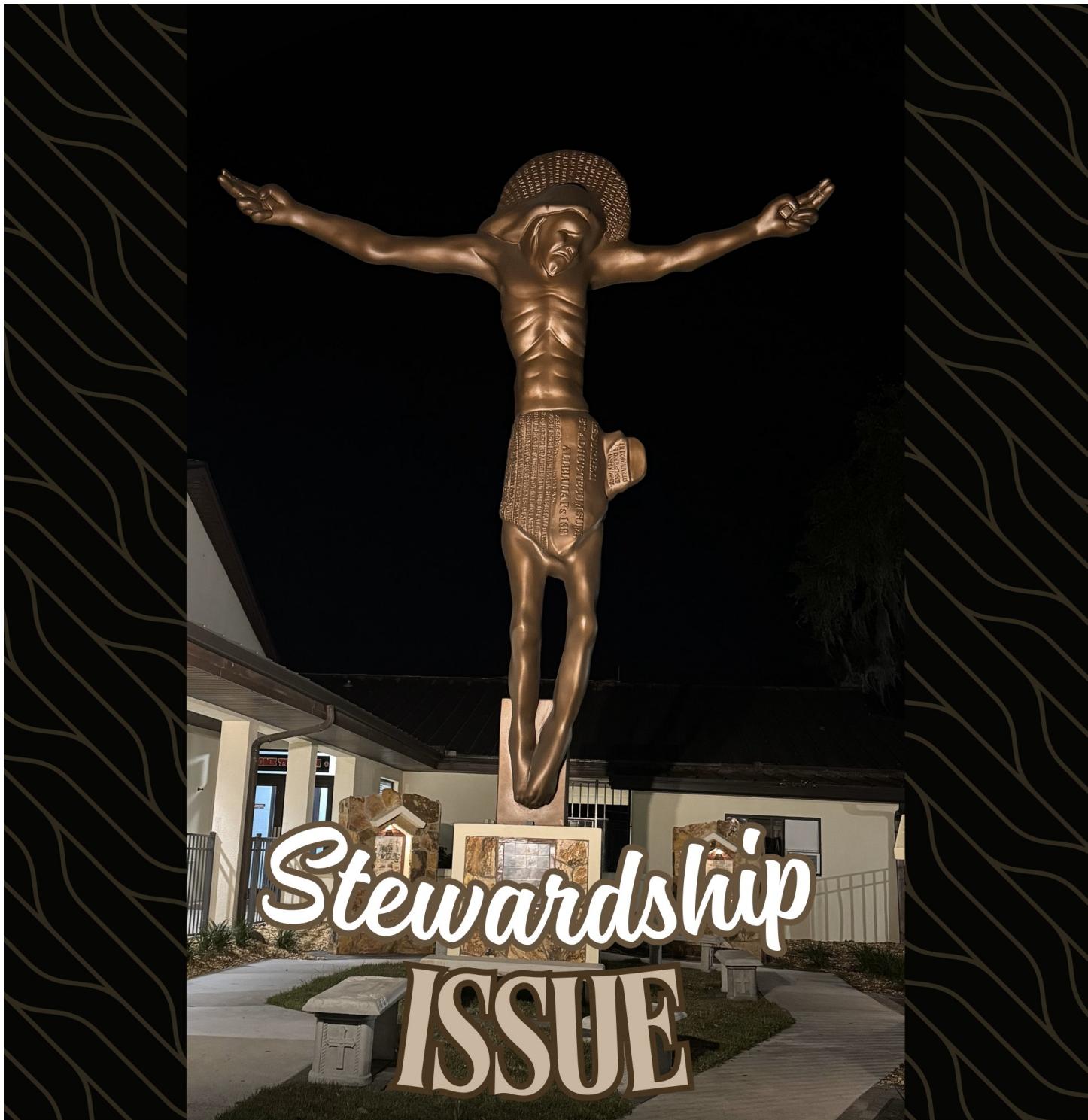
VOL 26 • ISS 1 • Summer 2025

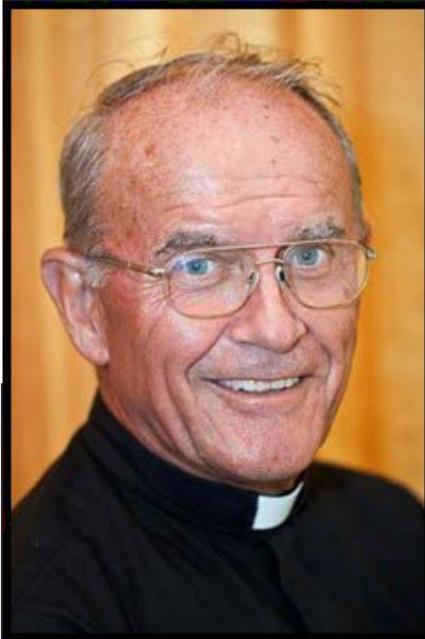
TRINITY TRYANGLE

Stewardship - A Way of Life

TIME • TALENT • TREASURE

Catholic Community of  Blessed Trinity





In my 36 years at Blessed Trinity, I have been very blessed to work with a devoted unified parish staff and countless leaders who continue to step forward to provide leadership in our 100 plus variety of parish ministries. For the most part there are no “insiders” or “outsiders”, all are needed, and all play a very necessary role in our parish mission.

Coming to Blessed Trinity in October 1988, I had no vision or preconceived plan. My only plan was to be available as much as possible and let God lead the way. It sounds like a cop out, but it actually does work.

There have been over 24 major and not so major expansions and additions to our church properties since 1988. Only because buildings and expansions are dictated by ministries and not the other way around. Ministries require physical places to meet. Our three schools; Angels, Blessed Trinity, and Trinity Catholic are great examples of that. Besides the community center and parish hall, the continued explosion of ministries in the English and Spanish communities demanded the building of the King of Kings building.

Blessed Trinity parish certainly can never be accused of being a private club for its “members.” While we are vitally interested in the salvation of each member, we know from the life and ministry of Christ’s life and from the official teaching of His church that one’s salvation is not a private matter. From a brief look at all our parish ministries, one will see we are fully involved inside and outside the parish in the greater Ocala area, within the diocese (OCA), CMT missions to D.R., Haiti, Belize, annual trips to our Uganda sister parish, and disaster relief anywhere in the world.

As a parish we respect and revere tradition as seen in our many days of renewal when we gather before relics such as: St. Jude’s arm, St. Faustina, Eucharistic Miracles, Maria Goretti, or the sacred shroud. Simultaneously, we are open to the new ongoing developments such as Life Teen, Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP), Women in Leadership, and others.

We have had some men explore the call to priesthood and the diaconate. Two have been ordained priests and a few more as deacons. The vocation cup we give out at each Mass is a big effort to inspire others to answer God’s call. A few are presently considering that possible call.

At no time did I consider publishing anything. The Covid epidemic changed that and produced the book “God is Able” and that has now led to “God is Needed.” Will there be a 3rd book – if there will be, only God knows.

I owe God a whole lot of thanks. That is a theme in itself. We all owe God. I owe sincere thanks and praise to countless of you who have made my life so meaningful over the years. God bless all of you, your extended families, and God bless Blessed Trinity parish.

Fr. Pat





“One of the most beautiful things the Lord did for us was give us the gift of uniqueness.”

Gabriella Martinez

Good evening, for those of you that don't know me, my name is Gabriella Martinez. I have been a member at Blessed Trinity all my life, and I am actively involved in my faith both here and at my school. My parents made it a priority to come to mass every Sunday no matter the circumstances, so I've always had a great foundation in the faith. They

sent me to Angels in Arms for preschool, Blessed Trinity School for kindergarten through eighth grade, and now I am a senior at Trinity Catholic High School where I've been for the past four years.

Growing up as a Catholic, I've heard this term “Stewardship” being used my entire life and thought it to be just another thing the church teaches. Almost everything in the Catholic faith is universal. No matter where you are in the world, the mass will remain the same. However, stewardship is not a universal thing. One of the most beautiful things the Lord did for us was give us the gift of uniqueness. We all have different gifts to bring to the table and stewardship is how we show God we are glorifying Him. Catholic school has taught me that stewardship is based on three principles: time, talent, and treasure. It was not until high school that I started to understand the gravity of my faith after attending a retreat with Life Teen for a week in Georgia. That was the beginning of my faith journey.

I had been living a comfortable life, not a catholic one. As a high school student though, it can be difficult to live a life of stewardship. I remind myself of the sacrifice Jesus made for us and do my best to live the way God designed me to live. I give my time to Jesus all throughout my week now. My friend and I have made it a priority to have weekly bible study and attend chapel mass at Trinity Catholic. We remind each other to pray before all our meals, pray daily, and overall lead each other closer to Christ. I am always a part of the Mass and available to help, but I am still trying to navigate giving financially. I give my treasure in donations, and through the form of compassion and empathy. As a Catholic, stewardship is more than just giving our time, talent, and treasure. To be a steward of Christ is to give our lives to Him. I invite you to not be comfortable—but be Catholic.

My name is Tony Papouschek and my wife and my two children have called Blessed Trinity our parish home since 2005. It was around that time that we began to truly embrace stewardship as a family.

For us, stewardship is a way of responding to God's incredible generosity. It's recognizing that everything we have is a gift, and we are called to share those gifts with love and gratitude. This concept seemed a bit daunting at first, especially with the busyness of family life, but gradually we discovered that stewardship isn't about giving because we have to – it's about giving because we want to.

Stewardship – volunteering at Mass, helping with school activities, or simply offering a kind word to a neighbor – it's become a way of living out our faith every day. We've seen how small acts of giving can have a ripple effect on the lives of others.

Stewardship isn't about numbers or expectations – it's about the heart. It's about realizing that when we share what we've been given, we're not losing something – we're gaining something far greater. For us, stewardship has built lasting friendships, deepened our connection to the parish, and strengthened our faith. It's shown us that even when life gets busy, there's always room to give, and when we do, the rewards are immeasurable.

“Stewardship isn't about numbers or expectations – it's about the heart.”

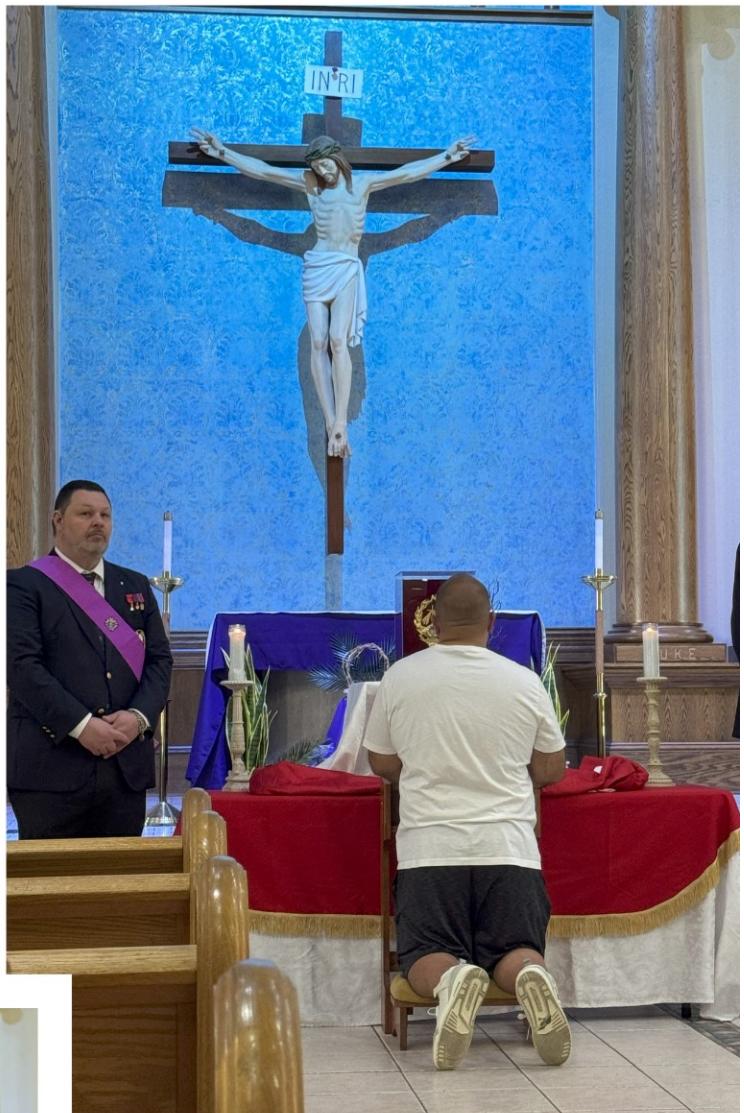
TONY PAPOUSCHEK



Flanked by the Knights of Columbus, and set in a place of honor below the altar, the relic of St. Faustina Kowalska visited Blessed Trinity Church on March 19th. After a short commencement ceremony to open the veneration period, parishioners filed past the image of Divine Mercy to reverence and pray before the relic of the Divine Mercy Saint.

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Bartow, Florida, received the relic directly from the Sanctuary of Divine Mercy Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland. Father Eugene Grytnar SDS from St. Aquinas applied for the relic in a process outlined by the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints. The Sisters in Poland review these applications thoroughly. The applicant parish must demonstrate a great devotion to Divine Mercy as evidenced through parish events and educational outreach to the wider community. If a parish is chosen to be gifted with a relic, representatives must travel to Poland to receive it.

The relic brought to Blessed Trinity is a piece of St. Faustina's habit. Maureen Leckie, a



DIVINE
Mercy

parishioner of St. Thomas Aquinas said, "It is a very precious relic, because St. Faustina rested in this habit for 28 years in the cemetery, until the exhumation, and it also contains particles of her body."

Since the relic's visit in March, Father Pat has begun his own application on behalf of our sister sub-parish that bears the name of this great saint.

The Sisters in Poland have already responded to the inquiry requesting more information!





From the **New Age to the Eucharist**

My Journal to the Table of the Lord

My name is Judith. I was born and baptized in Bogota, Colombia. I am the third in a family of seven: three brothers and two sisters. I am the only one living in the USA.

When I was growing up, I thought I had a normal childhood. I remember having a great time with my siblings, but as I got older, I realized what I missed as a child. My father was a funny person and very outgoing. He loved to read and listen to classical music. He was a great cook, but he abused alcohol. Therefore, my mom was absent most of the time from home because she had to take care of their family business.

Growing up, I felt a void that was not only physical but spiritual, too. We called ourselves Catholic, maybe because we had our sacraments and went to mass occasionally. There was no confession, communion, or praying time as a family. I remember seeing my mom doing the rosary and going to church alone during the week because we were unwilling to go with her.

Unsurprisingly, with this background, my life was far from God. As soon as I finished high school, I started to practice Yoga with a group that used to meet at the park near my house. At this point, I listened to anybody who claimed to know how to find peace, joy, and wisdom. I met some people who introduced me to tarot, kabbala, astrology, meditation, incense, candles, and gurus—in other words, to the dangerous world of the New Age. Listening to these New Age teachers reminded me of the parable of the Good Shepherd, where Jesus warns us about the dangers of following false shepherds.

“So Jesus said again, “Amen, amen, I say to you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came [before me] are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.” John 10: 7-10

Now, you must ask yourself how I did not get lost in this New Age world. And I must answer: the love of God, the company of the Virgin Mary, and my mom's prayers.

During college, I met my sister-in-law, and we became friends. Years later, she moved to the USA. In 1985, I landed at John F. Kennedy Airport to join her, with a mix of emotions: excitement and heartbreak. I left all that I loved and knew for 25 years.

While living in New York, I took a Cooking and Restaurant Management course; simultaneously, I tried reconnecting with my Catholic roots by attending church and joining a prayer group. It was in New York that I met my husband. Three years later, for immigration reasons, I left the country. During this time, I got engaged and married, but not by the Catholic Church. My thought was that if I ever wanted a divorce, I wanted to be able to make that decision. This lack of understanding of the sacrament of Marriage and Holy Communion and its significance in the Catholic faith hindered my complete acceptance of the Church's teachings.

Upon my return to the USA, I settled in Coral Springs, South Florida, with my one-year-old daughter, and my

husband. Four years later, my middle girl, was born, and my last child was a boy. My mom's frequent visits prompted me to attend Sunday mass with my family. I felt content with my life during this time.

In 2005, we had to relocate our family to Ocala. The following year, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, and our lives changed drastically; my existence would never be the same. When I remember that part of my life, I must say that God works in mysterious ways; I will tell you why.

Months before my diagnosis, I had bought insurance related to cancer because of my family history. I also decided to make a Living Will. I went to my first Healing retreat, where I felt the Holy Spirit. Still, because I was unaware of His power, I thought it was just my imagination and emotion—but later, it made me realize the power and presence of God in my life. I recognized Him in the generosity of the surgeon nurse who ran to the gift shop and bought an angel that said Hope. From the day of my diagnosis, we prayed as a family for my healing and to accept God's will in our lives. My family, especially my children, played a significant role in my return home to the Church.

God has shown me His way little by little: Sunday Mass, confession, family prayer groups, getting involved in church ministries with my kids, retreats, and talks. And then I attended Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP). Although I was already on God's path, it was not until this retreat, after confession on Saturday night, that I felt the imperative urgency for my husband and I to receive the Sacrament of Marriage and a great desire to receive Holy Communion. When I got home on Sunday night, my first words to my husband were, "We must get married in the church!" We spoke with Father Pat, giving him all the required documents except for one that had to be sent from Colombia. Weeks passed, and I was getting anxious for Holy Communion. We came to the church and asked Father Pat if it would be possible to get the sacrament sooner, and he married us that afternoon in jeans and sneakers. Our official ceremony was a month later when Father Pat received the pertinent document. We celebrated the ceremony with my sisters from CRHP and the families of my prayer group.

Since I began to receive Holy Communion, it has enriched my spirit in ways I could never have imagined. My prayer has become more constant, the reading of sacred scripture more profound, and my visits to the Holy Sacrament more frequent. I feel a periodic need for confession, and a reverence for the Holy Mass that I could not feel before. The word 'holiness' was once a distant concept, but now, I can see the possibility of being with Jesus at the end of my life. This is only possible by receiving the Body and the Blood of Jesus Christ. I commit to receiving Communion at least once weekly and seek any opportunity to be close to Him. However, the most significant change is that for the first time, I have not only chosen to believe what Jesus said but to believe in Jesus. I invite you to discover this profound connection in John Chapter 6.

"I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me." John 6: 48-56

Now, I can give my life to Jesus. I can especially consider pain as an offering to Him in the Eucharist. I have more capacity to forgive, and I would love to say more capacity for loving, too—although loving sincerely is the most challenging thing to do! However, through the loving power of the Bread of Life, we can attain SALVATION and ETERNAL LIFE.



At my mother's behest, I volunteered for the Adoration Chapel.

KIARA FELICIANO

My name is Kiara Feliciano. When I was a student at Blessed Trinity, I learned about stewardship in its simplest form: time, talent, and treasure. The Lord gave me the talent and passion for acting. I wanted to be a famous actress, walk the Red Carpet, and win Academy Awards, so I moved to Los Angeles. In my pursuit of fame, I came to

learn that living a life that was solely centered on me was a lonely and empty life.

I decided to move back to Ocala, but still, I felt empty. At my mother's behest, I volunteered for the Adoration Chapel. She knew I loved to write and told me to go sit with Jesus once a week with my journal. So I did, every Tuesday at 6AM.

It was there that He spoke to me. He asked me to audition for a faith-based theatre in PA, to write him a musical to be performed at BT, to create a Stewardship video, and to take a job as a fight director for the play Dracula at Ocala Civic Theatre. He was working with what I had to offer.

And what came out of it all? When I gave of my time, my talents, and treasure without holding back a second, a skill, or a dime, the Lord took every bit of it and multiplied it!

I made a Stewardship video that my parish loved. I was cast as a lead in that faith-based theatre in Pennsylvania. The musical cabaret I wrote and directed received sold out performances and raised thousands of dollars for Parish Hall renovations! And I ended up falling in love with and marrying the man playing Van Helsing in Dracula!

My name is Emily Vey. When we originally joined BT, I had no idea what being a stewardship family meant except that I was supposed to give my time, talent, and treasure. When my daughter Anastasia transitioned from Angels in Arms to BTS, we had no idea how to pay for her schooling, we just knew she had to be here!

"We are putting God first and now attend Mass every weekend."

Emily Vey



We knew we couldn't afford the 10% or even the 8% that the church asked for! When we sat down with Fr Pat, he told us that stewardship is not just treasure, it is also time and talent. We committed to a treasure that was well below 8% and began looking for ways to give in the other areas.

In 1st – 3rd grade we spent a lot of time with the music ministry. We attended Mass most weekends. On the weekends that we didn't make it to Mass, Anastasia would remind me that we needed to put God first. Each February when the renewal meeting came up, I stressed out, because I couldn't give what the church was asking.

In 4th – 8th grade my outlook changed. After Covid, I felt the invitation to come back to church very strongly. I felt God calling me to give more time and talent, so we did. Anastasia became an altar server. She continued in the choir, she played sports, she became a school greeter and usher, and she attended the adoration chapel during school. I saw her stewardship journey growing and I wanted to be a part of it!

We've arranged our family life around being part of the church community. We are putting God first and now attend Mass every weekend. I still haven't made it to the suggested tithe, but I have been able to increase it each year. I don't worry or stress as much as I did at the beginning now that I see how God provides for us.

A FRESH * NEW LOOK

* Completed Bathrooms for Church and Hall



At Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, we are committed to creating a welcoming environment for our congregation and visitors alike. We know that every aspect of our church building, from the sanctuary to the fellowship areas, plays a role in making everyone feel at home. Recently, we completed two important remodels, the renovation of our church bathrooms and the update of our parish hall restroom facilities, that will have a lasting impact on the comfort and functionality of our space. Here's a look at the highlights of these exciting projects.

Church Bathrooms

Our church bathrooms were in need of an update. The old bathrooms were functional but lacked style. The new design brings a modern touch to these spaces with fresh, calming colors, updated fixtures, and sleek, durable materials. The lighting was improved to create a brighter, more welcoming atmosphere. The new tile work is easy to maintain and adds a clean, modern look that ties the bathroom to the rest of our church's aesthetic. As part of our ongoing commitment to sustainability, we incorporated eco-friendly features, such as low-flow toilets and water-saving faucets, to help reduce water consumption. These upgrades not only benefit the environment but also reduce our operating costs.

Parish Hall Bathrooms

The parish hall is a central hub for fellowship, events, and community activities at Blessed Trinity Catholic Church. Whether it's a stewardship dinner, Bible study group, or a community outreach event, the space is used frequently by our congregation. We recognized that the restrooms serving this area needed an update to match the growing needs of the church. Much like the church bathrooms, the parish hall bathrooms were given a fresh, modern look. New finishes, stylish lighting, and updated color schemes have turned what was once a utilitarian space into a welcoming area that reflects the warmth and hospitality of our church. Subtle, modern touches like updated mirrors, sleek countertops, and contemporary fixtures create an inviting space for all who use them.

A Heartfelt Thank You

We are deeply grateful to Drake Construction and Elizabeth from Minami Granite Designs and all who contributed to making these projects possible. The updated spaces are not only more functional but also contribute to a more pleasant and comfortable experience for everyone, whether they're attending a service, meeting, or social event. Whether you donated your time, funds, or prayers, your support has been instrumental in improving these vital spaces. We are truly blessed to have such a supportive church family, and these remodels are a testament to the strength and unity of our congregation.





IT IS ALL IN HOW YOU CHOOSE TO RESPOND.

Bill Kennedy

One day at Mass, a man got up and spoke about a Christ Renews His Parish (CRHP) weekend. I wasn't moved, and he stepped away from the podium. Then he stopped, stepped back up to the microphone and proceeded to make a sincere, heartfelt plea to take the opportunity to attend before he stepped away again.

I was hooked. I went from attending the retreat to leading the team over the next few years. I embraced the Stewardship Way of Life. Before CRHP I had not heard of, let alone understood the meaning of Stewardship. It is not about giving of yourself without being compensated for your value or time. It is about sharing your God-given blessings as best you can. Every one of us is unique, born with or trained with tangible and intangible skills. You have knowledge and blessings that are yours and yours alone.

Perhaps you feel an emptiness inside that you don't know how to fill. Perhaps you feel short-changed or cheated in life as your talents and skills have never been deployed or appreciated. Or perhaps your talents were overshadowed by others, so you retreated into your shell and gave up on your dreams.

Stewardship gives you the opportunity to shine in giving back to God, by sharing your innate gifts with your fellow parishioners and even your community at-large. It is all in how you choose to respond. Today, I am active in the choir and the Parish Council, and I devote one hour a week in the Adoration Chapel, and I strive to volunteer to help any of the other 100 ministries we have when they put out a call for help.

I promised I would give Him my time and my talent because that's all I had. When I went up to the altar and kissed it, I sealed this promise to Him. And believe me, He's taken full advantage of that. Since then, God has called me to serve in CRHP, the Legion of Mary, and as a volunteer swim coach at TC, among other things.

“THIS ISN’T ABOUT EXPECTING BLESSINGS IN RETURN...”

Cale Russell

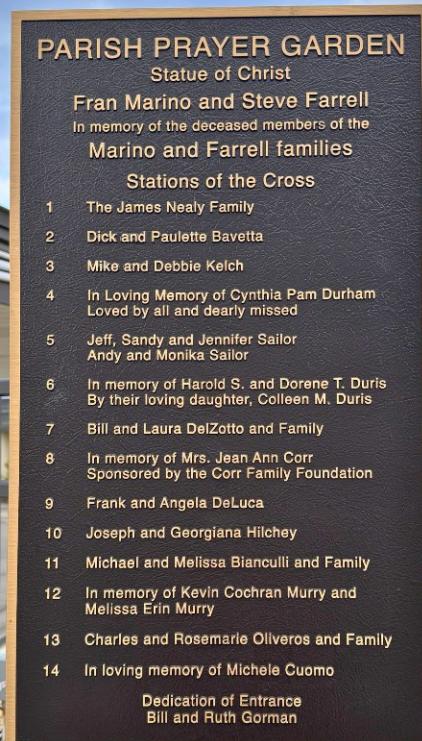


In Luke 6:38, Jesus says, “Give, and gifts will be given to you.” This isn't about expecting blessings in return; rather, it's about aligning our hearts with Christ's self-giving love. True giving is about offering ourselves freely, trusting that God will use our gifts according to His good will, and doing so out of gratitude for His love and the countless ways He provides for us.

Pope Francis echoes this sentiment, describing the heart as the center of our response to God's love: “The heart, moved by the love of God, is called to give without measure, to offer itself wholly in gratitude and trust.” This call to give from the heart invites us to participate in God's work, not out of obligation or for personal gain, but as a response to His love. For me, giving from the heart, my time and talent, is my way of expressing gratitude for the journey that led me home to the Catholic church, and it is a reminder to trust fully in His care and providence.

Whether it's a little or a lot, each of us can offer something precious to God. We are called to look into our hearts, to discern what we have been blessed with, and to ask ourselves what we can give back to Him. Giving isn't just about the amount; it's about each of us sharing according to the blessings we've received. Those with less can still give all that they can, while those with more have the chance to give even more, as a true act of gratitude. Together, we're all called to give freely from the heart, supporting one another and our parish, joining in the stewardship that keeps our parish thriving.

The PRAYER Garden IS OPEN



Thanks be to God, our prayer garden is complete! We want to thank our Donors for their generosity in helping to create this sacred space. Our parish is deeply grateful to all who devoted time, energy, and resources to this project. Please come and pray in this beautiful, peaceful place.

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