

# THE GOOD NEWS

## St. Francis Church, Peoria/Dunlap, IL

### JANUARY, 2010

#### Care Craft Ministry

It is a new year and the time to bring out your craft projects from your closet. Bring them to our next Care Craft ministry date January 17. We meet after Mass and craft away. Bring your lunch so you have stamina to sew, paint, cut, knit and etc. We have good conversation, a few laughs and a few more rows on the knitting needles completed. **Come join us!**

If you have any questions please call Candice 264-5949 (cell number).

#### Mission & Outreach Report

Things have been quiet for Mission & Outreach the last few weeks. We have been "brain storming" ideas on how to reach out to the un-churched; we have some exciting things in the works for 2010. The next meeting will be in February, date to be announced.

We delivered Christmas Poinsettias to several parishioners that are unable to attend church regularly (some not at all) our friends were happy that St. Francis remembered them at Christmas.

Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Mission & Outreach Chairs, Deacon Ron +, Julie Neilson

#### St. Francis Young People in Madrigal Dinners



Michael German



Faith Brodkorb

It's the Madrigal season!! Michael German and Faith Brodkorb participated in two weekends of holiday festivities.

Dec 4 – 5 found Maiden Brodkorb serving meals to revelers while entertaining them with her wonderful singing and dancing at the 2009 Dunlap High School Madrigal Dinner. Her dancing partners included the ever dashing Jacob Brodkorb, and Fr. John Spencer.

The revelry continued Dec. 12 – 13 when Lord German entertained one and all at the 2009 IVC High School Madrigal Dinner. He is escorted in the above photo by Lady Allison, who performed a stunning solo during the weekend festivities.

Madrigal Dinners are typically set in England during the era of King Henry VIII, with a King and Queen who host the evening, their lords and ladies (typically an auditioned honors choir of approximately 12 – 20 singers), serving wenches (a ladies choir), and orphans (junior high kids). Most music is renaissance era and Christmas themed. The Courts usually have jesters who provide levity for the evening. There is generally a story that is told throughout the meal interjected with music and levity (and in some cases sword fights!). It is very audience involved and always enjoyable. Please consider supporting Faith and Michael next year as well. Who knows, you might end up in the stocks!

### **Newness of life**

—By Candice Hogden

Every January 1st people say “Happy new Year”! Many will then say “what was your new year’s resolution?” Some will say “I don’t know why I make new year’s resolutions for I don’t keep them and then I feel guilty and bad about myself, but I make the resolutions anyway hoping I will carry through with my plan.” Does this sound familiar to you? Well I have a proposition for you, one where you can make a plan for the new year and not feel guilty and bad about yourself and you truly can have a Happy New year. The proposition is to claim and believe the newness of life that Jesus Christ has given you. This newness of life gives us the joy within our hearts to truly have a Happy new year. This joy comes from Jesus. This joy can be claimed in every circumstance you encounter even the rough or sad times. Yes, even through sad, lonely, despairing feelings, Jesus reminds us he is with us, Emmanuel, and he radiates through us and our feelings letting us know this very fact. Listen to Scripture, as St. Paul writes, “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6.4) This is truly happy news for a brand new year of life ahead of us.

In December we celebrated the birth of Jesus, the Christ child who would grow into his calling as Messiah to give us new life. We are reminded by his divine birth that he is king of our life, and to give our hearts to him. As Paul says, “Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has passed away, behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. So, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.” (2 Corinthians 5:17-18, 20a) So, in our newness of life we too will also grow into our calling in life. Search your heart. Isn’t this truly happy news for a brand new year?

Do you know how we grow in newness of life? Paul also says in 2 Corinthians, “the Spirit gives life.” Jesus’ Spirit gives us what we need. He calls us into this new life, to join him. I call this the “Holy nudge”. We answer the nudge and surrender our life to Christ. We know we are to do this. Jesus has said, “My sheep hear my voice.” (John 10:27) He also says in that verse “and I know them, and they follow me.” Isn’t that beautiful? Jesus knows us. He knows us intimately. He knows who will answer his call, the holy nudge and deep inside us we *just know* we are to follow. Many have heard that call and followed. We are no different then they are. His Spirit lives on today and grows us into his calling, this new way of life. The Spirit will give us Spiritual gifts to go forward in our calling. We will bear his fruit of “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

Jesus’ Spirit will be with us through this life. Again this is happy news for our new year. Don’t you just want to grab all this and hold it dear to your heart?

Jesus will give you everything you need this New year. He said through Ezekiel, “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. (Ezekiel 36:26-27) He also said his love is steadfast and never ceases and that “his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.” (Lamentations 3:23-24) Jesus who sits on the throne says, “Behold, I make all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for

these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to St. John), “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life. He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. (Revelation: 21: 5- 7) Verse 8 talks of the kind of people we *don't* want to be. Please read this on your own, for their lot is the lake that burns with fire, the second death. But instead let us be those who conquers and receive the heritage of newness of life where we drink all that we need from his fountain, the water of life, newness of life. This is truly a guilt free plan that we can embrace for the new year and truly say to one another, “Happy New Year”!

### ***My Utmost for His Highest***

— Deacon Ron Neilson

I have heard it said that guilt is not a feeling but a very bad trip. I open with this phrase in response to Mr. Chambers's thoughts for this month's newsletter. “The Gospel of the Grace of God awakens an intense longing in human souls and an equally intense resentment, because the revelation which it brings is not palatable. There is a certain pride in man that will give and give, but to come and accept is another thing. I will give myself in consecration; I will do anything, but do not humiliate me to the level of the most hell-deserving sinner. Just tell me that all I have to do is to accept the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.”

Yes, I am certainly guilty of wanting the prize without consequence. I will also admit that I am guilty of being willing to do just about anything not to be embarrassed or to feel like I am in somehow inferior in any way. Oswald goes on to say “The greatest blessing spiritually is the knowledge that we are destitute; until we get there our Lord is powerless.” Allow me to illustrate Oswald point with one of the most honest statements I have heard; quote “I thank God for all of my addictions and the problems they give me. Without them I have no need of God.” This man's candor shook me to the core of my faith; he just said I have no hope without God's divine help. I came to earnestly realize that God is not a genie in a bottle furthermore; I was not off the hook for my mistake, forgiven yes, but amends may be needed and in some cases necessary. I have learned that it is essential to grow through recognizing my shortcomings, character defects, mistakes and by being willing to admit I can be wrong. Likewise, it is in our desperation we search for and find God. It is in continually giving up of ourselves that we stay near to Him. For me, my friends, I lean on God some day minute by minute on others second by second just to get through the day. It is when I forget to lean on God that I find myself back in the first paragraph wondering why God will not punish those awful sinners over there.

### **Sock-it-to-me Once Again**

Did Santa bring you some new socks that aren't really your style?? Planning on hitting the after Christmas sales?? Starting in January, we will once again be collecting *new* dress or athletic socks to donate to the Peoria Rescue Mission. The Rescue Mission works primarily with homeless men and these socks are in great need. Dress socks are needed to provide clothing for their clients to have for job interviews. Although their work is mainly with men, women's socks can also be used. So when you are out and about, pick up some socks to donate. We'll be collecting through Super Bowl Sunday, so let's get going and sock-it-to-them!

### **Interesting Read.....**

Looking for a good book? There is a book “Christmas Jars” by Jason F Wright that is a heart-warming story that has sparked some interest in the Outreach Committee for reaching out to others as done in this book. Susan Stranski has a copy, and it is also available in paperback in the stores. Settle in with a cup of hot cocoa and enjoy the book, and let us know what you think!!

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