

# VOX POPULI

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Newsletter of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish

## A Festive Thanksgiving

by Rita Bonds

The third, annual, Thanksgiving Day Dinner at our Lady of the Assumption was one filled with good food, great service and companionship. We served between 150-160 people and provided food for another 25-30 at the *Domestic Violence Shelter*.



us for dinner. Their gratitude for having a place to go is overwhelming. They are so appreciative of our festive meal.

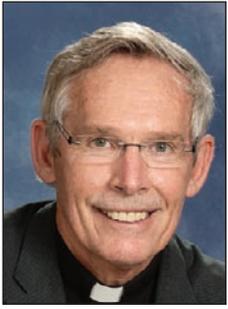
The greatest gift of working on a project like this is seeing, yet again, the generosity of our parish family. Turkeys, pies and bars were bountiful! Our volunteers both on Wednesday and Thursday were plentiful and excellent. We asked for help, and you provided.



The second greatest gift is chatting with people who are joining

The Thanksgiving dinner simply wouldn't exist without **DeeDee Spahos, Les Blumreich, Deb Burns, Lynda Champion, Diane Ryan and Georgia Quinn**. It is a small but mighty group!

We will be looking for additional committee members in the fall. Please give some prayerful consideration to playing a more active role in our Thanksgiving dinner. ■



## Pastor's Message

by Fr. Mike Resop

### Bold Disciples in This Season of Love

Having just experienced a spirit filled parish mission, Committed to Bold Discipleship (the sign that greets you above the doors coming into the church), we now journey in the seasons of Advent and Christmas. It is a season of preparation, prayer, discernment and joy. We are called to be watchful and to prepare for the way of the Lord. As BOLD disciples even in the chaos of contemporary society, we can share our story of faith with those we gather with this season and bring the gifts of hope and joy. As we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child this Christmas may we be transformed into Christ's disciples of light, not darkness, joy, not sadness and peace, not anxiety.

Prayers for a Blessed Season. ■

Fr. Mike



## Missionary Discipleship = Giving Tree

The following is from Lindsey Scianna, Supervisor with the Beloit Community Support Program.

The **Beloit Community Support Program** serves adult individuals in the Beloit area that are living with severe and persistent mental illness. This program is part of **Rock County Human Services** and works to keep individuals in the community and out of hospitals and institutions. One very special tradition of the **Beloit Community Support Program** is the annual Christmas party. This is a decades-long tradition that provides a lot of our consumers with their only holiday celebration. So often, individuals with serious and persistent mental illness have strained or non-existent relationships with family and friends and, as a result, spend the holidays alone and isolated in their residences.

It is difficult to express how much the Christmas party means to the consumers and staff alike at **CSP**. We are able to get together as a group, eat pizza, open gifts, and have the opportunity to enjoy time together. OLA has been instrumental in making the holidays something to celebrate for our consumers. OLA graciously and generously has provided gifts for our consumers as well as any minor dependent children in the home for decades. For those providing the gifts, it may seem insignificant to provide someone with a blanket, socks, or a sweater; however, for our consumers, it is likely the only gift they will receive. Consumers of the **CSP** include individuals who require a lot of assistance to remain in the community. Some of the services provided to these individuals include assistance with grocery

shopping, cleaning, laundry, social skill development, education on living with a mental illness, navigating benefits, maintaining stable housing, and financial assistance with budgeting and developing money management skills. **CSP** also provides vocational rehabilitation to try to get consumers active in either part-time or volunteer work opportunities. We provide group opportunities to our consumers in hopes that having ways to get out of their homes and socialize will increase their overall happiness in life and give them a chance to interact with others that have faced similar challenges. Living with a mental illness is difficult. The stigma that surrounds individuals with serious and persistent mental illnesses like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, and personality disorders can be overwhelming. It is difficult for these individuals to make and keep friends, or maintain relationships with family due to some difficulty with managing symptoms.

Our appreciation to OLA for your thoughtfulness and generosity is unmeasurable. Please know that your gifts are cherished by our consumers. The radio you purchased for someone may provide them with enjoyment as well as a distraction from their chronic mental health symptoms. The gift card to the grocery store allows them to buy some of their favorite foods they may not otherwise be able to afford. The children's toy allows one of our consumers the opportunity to have a gift under the tree for their child that believes that Santa is coming. Please remember how much of a blessing these gifts and your congregation are to our consumers and staff.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! ■

## School News: Self Study Accreditation,

by Trevor Seivert, Principal

As you may recall, OLA was responsible for hosting a Visiting Team for our Self-Study Accreditation Process.

Accreditation takes place in a seven year cycle. From October 23-25, 2018 the Visiting Team came to OLA to review the findings.

By and large, the visit went extremely well! It's been an honor



and a pleasure to host a Visiting Team

this year, and while the Self-Study process has been long and tedious, it was worth it.

When the Visiting Team left OLA, they held a **Wrap Up Meeting** with the teachers, staff, and councils/committees of OLA. The **Wrap Up Meeting** was a general summary of the Visiting Team's findings and experience.

The Visiting Team's findings were very affirming. There were many compliments for those who work with and for the school. Some of the highlights were:

■ 1. OLA has a great sense of Catholic Identity with the school and parish and all of the councils, committees, teachers and staff work together to promote Catholic Identity.

■ 2. Fantastic leadership from top to bottom: **Fr. Mike** and the Administration, down to the teachers and staff.

■ 3. Great sense of collaboration and work atmosphere within the school. The school and parish also work extremely close.

o Everyone understands and works for the Mission.

o All groups work together and in conjunction with one another for the benefit of the students.



o Not many parishes & schools work this well together.

■ 4. Excellent culture that is warm, welcoming and affirming.

o Teachers & staff truly care about the students

■ 5. Great academics in which our students succeed beyond OLA after they graduate.

Moreover, during the visit, the Visiting Team made some **unofficial** comments that weren't listed at the **Wrap Up Meeting**. These were very affirming:

■ 1. *We wish our schools were like OLA.*

■ 2. *Your culture is amazing here.*

■ 3. *People love the school.*

■ 4. *Can I stay here and teach?*

■ 5. (And my personal favorite): *I've been on several self study teams and this has been the best one.*

Now that the Visiting Team has finished their reports, they are required to submit their findings to **WRISA**, our state accreditation agency, for official approval. Official approval will come in April/May 2019. Between now and then, OLA will begin to draft goals that we will work on for the next seven years. The goal is to continually improve the school and community as a whole.

Just before Thanksgiving, Madison Diocese new Assistant Superintendent of Accreditation,



Mr. Charlie McGrath, came to OLA with a copy of the report that will be sent to WRISA. The report is

unofficial until **WRISA** can approve it, but the Visiting Team's recommendation was to fully accredit OLA!

Special thanks to **Fr. Mike**, the Visiting Team, the teachers, faculty and staff at OLA who work tirelessly to help kids grow closer to God and learn to their maximum ability. OLA would not be the same place without them. ■

## News from Child Care

by Rachel Shepherd,  
Child Care Director

We are so THANKFUL for our new shed!!!

A heartfelt thank you from the staff and families of OLA Child Care Center to all of the people that helped make our new storage shed and extended playground space possible, we couldn't have done this without your support! Our old shed is being

repurposed for use on campus by the maintenance team and OLA School.

Thanks especially: The **OLA School and Child Care Annual Fund** and team of volunteers

**Father Mike**

**Mike Fallon**

**Zachery and Marisa Franks**

**Les Blumreich**

**Laura Warzcheka**

**Laurie Seehafer**



Thank you to all of you for sharing your time and talents with OLA! ■

## Sister Parish Update

by Rita Bonds

Merry Christmas greetings to all from St. Joan of Arc Parish. They embarked on a new, untried fundraiser this fall, bringing many local people to their



first car show with 10 antique cars. They hope to increase the number of cars next year. They were happy to raise \$1400 for the church through this project.

Their ministry to the crab workers will be coming to an end in December as the plants close and the workers return to their homes. They will be presenting a retreat for them on December 8 prior to their leaving. Some will return in May, but the majority will return in June for an approximate six-month stint in the fish processing facility.



They currently have 41 children in faith formation and 2 children in their RCIA program.

Like OLA, they have a giving tree program although their's is called an angel tree. It is strictly for the kids and their greatest need is clothing for the children.

They will start their novena to Our Lady of Guadeloupe

December 4 and it runs until her feast day on December 12. On December 16, they start their Christmas tradition called *Posadas*. (*Posadas* means inns or hotel/hostel).



It is a reenactment of the pilgrimage to Bethlehem by Mary and Joseph and ends with a fiesta to celebrate their finding a place for the birth of the baby Jesus. ■

They will start their novena to Our Lady of Guadeloupe December 4 and it runs until her



## How Do You Celebrate the Seasons of Advent and Christmas?

by Rob Olsen, Director of Faith Formation

What are Advent and Christmas preparations, traditions, and celebrations like in your family? Are you part of the group that is putting up the décor as soon as *Farm & Fleet* sends their toyland catalog in early October and Christmas is competing alongside Halloween? Or, are you part of the group that has considered painting frozen pumpkins red and green because you haven't had time to move them off the porch and, if you wait until the last few days before Christmas, the few trees left will be half price?

Depending how you answer those questions will tell me whether your tree is on the curb and you will scream if you hear *White Christmas* one more time after December 26. (Just ask my sister-in-law who worked in a shopping mall department store.) Or you could be like me, the year my wife reminded me to take the big wreath off the barn because it was almost Ash Wednesday. (My excuse was it was just too cold.) The honest truth is I hate to see the Christmas season end. Most folks are somewhere in between.

However your own preferences and traditions unfold, it is worth

pondering what the Church offers each of us and the entire world in these seasons. The real question is this: Can the story of God, coming to earth, as a vulnerable little child, compete with lights, Santa, toys, nutcrackers, and tinsel?

Many years ago, while working at another parish, a Mom signed up her daughter (grade 4 or 5) to attend our *ADVENT-ure SUNDAY* event. (A whole afternoon of free baby-sitting on a December weekend, what busy Mom would not like that?) *ADVENT-ure SUNDAY* is always a lot of fun, kids making crafts and gifts for others, singing, snacks, and we ALWAYS tell the nativity story. We turn the lights low, pretend we are shepherds of old, sitting around our make-believe campfire, and tell of the angel breaking through the darkness and proclaiming the *Good News*. For this little 9-10 year old girl I knew something more was going on. Her eyes were as big as saucers, she had heard of Rudolph and Frosty, but had never been told the story of the first Christmas.

Later that evening I got a call from her Mom. *Rob, what did you teach the kids this afternoon?*

I replied *Uhhh..., we simply told the story of the first Christmas.* (I wasn't sure where this conversation was going.)

The Mom continued: *Well, she came home tonight with her bag of goodies, but so excited that God came to earth, and more than a*

*little mad that we (her parents) had never told her that. Why would we not want her to know about God and Jesus? I guess we had always felt that kids would make up their own mind about religion when they were old enough to decide for themselves. Maybe we were wrong? How are they supposed to decide if they don't know the story?*

We talked and listened to each other some more. To make a long story short, the little girl was enrolled in FF, the Sacraments followed in time, the Dad came into RCIA about a year later, and the Mom became a catechist after that. The lessons of Advent and Christmas, the story of waiting for a savior, of a vulnerable child, refugee parents, angels, shepherds, stars, and wise men, are all we really have to compete against all the rest. But it is enough! Whether we start in October (hmmm) or last beyond the twelve days until Epiphany, we need to tell the real story. We do not need to be Scrooge, the Grinch, or Puritans. But we need to give the story of the first Christmas, of *light in the darkness, of grace following upon grace*, the same energy, and joy, as the effort we give jingle bells and cyber-Monday, tinsel and stockings. And, sometimes it might take a 9 or 10 year old child *missionary disciple* to remind us of that. ■



## Lessons and Carols with the Madison Diocesan Choir

Sunday, January 6 ■ The Feast of the Epiphany ■ 3:00PM  
Our Lady of the Assumption Church

A freewill offering will be taken to support the Diocesan Choir Youth Scholarship.

with musical guests:  
Mary Ann Harr, harp  
Mary Wilcosz, flute  
The OLA Choir

## ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

*Just hear the word 'Advent' and many of us also hear in our memories the voices of children saying, 'How long until Christmas?' This season is one of anticipation, preparation, waiting, longing for the coming of Christ at the end of time and celebration of the Incarnation in the season of Christmas. In our homes and families, the way we mark Advent can help balance what is often an especially hectic time of social gatherings, children's activities and shopping. Advent gives us reason to pause, reflect and hear the story of God's love anew. – Paraphrased from 2018 Sourcebook for Sundays, Seasons and Weekdays*

- Sunday Dec. 3 **First Sunday of Advent** – Masses at 8:00AM & 10:30AM  
Liturgy of the Word for Children  
Blood Pressure Screening after all Masses
- Wednesday Dec. 5 Cluster Communal Penance 5:30PM at St. Thomas
- Friday Dec. 7 Adoration 9:00-11:00AM in the chapel  
Fish Fry 5:00-7:00PM in Assumption Hall
- Saturday Dec. 8 **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception** – Holy Day of Obligation Mass 8:15AM  
Children's Christmas Choir Rehearsal 3:15-4:00PM in the music room  
5:00PM Mass (**Second Sunday of Advent**) Hospitality after Mass
- Sunday Dec. 9 **Second Sunday of Advent** – Masses at 8:00AM & 10:30AM  
Hospitality Sunday  
ADVENT-ure Sunday 1:00-5:00PM in Assumption Hall
- Tuesday Dec. 11 OLA School Music and Band Christmas Program 1:00PM and 6:00PM in the Gym
- Wednesday Dec. 12 Cluster **Our Lady of Guadalupe** Mass with our Hispanic Community OLA church  
5:30PM Songs with Mariachis to Our Lady of Guadalupe  
6:00PM Mass Reception following in Assumption Hall
- Saturday Dec. 15 First Reconciliation retreat 9:00AM  
First Reconciliation and Parish Communal Reconciliation 11:00AM  
Children's Christmas Choir Rehearsal 3:15-4:00PM in the music room  
5:00PM Mass with Liturgy of the Word for Children
- Sunday Dec. 17 **Third Sunday of Advent** – Masses at 8:00AM & 10:30AM  
Liturgy of the Word for Children  
Giving Tree gifts due!
- Tuesday Dec. 18 Child Care/Early Childhood Baby Jesus Birthday Party 11:45AM Assumption Hall  
Private Reconciliation 4:00-4:45PM  
Adoration 5:30-7:00PM in the chapel
- Wednesday Dec. 19 Cluster Communal Penance Service 6:30PM at St. Stephen's
- Saturday Dec. 22 Private Reconciliation 9:00AM  
Christmas Pageant rehearsal with Children's Choir 3:00-4:00PM in the church  
5:00PM Mass
- Sunday Dec. 23 **Fourth Sunday of Advent** - Masses at 8:00AM & 10:30AM  
Decorate for Christmas following 10:30AM Mass
- Monday Dec. 24 **Christmas Eve** Children's Mass with pageant at 5:00PM (Carols at 4:30PM)  
**Christmas** Mass at 10:30PM (Carols at 10:00PM)
- Tuesday Dec. 25 **Christmas** Masses at 8:00AM & 10:30AM
- Sunday Dec. 30 **Feast of the Holy Family** – Regular weekend Mass schedule
- Tuesday Jan. 1 **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God** – Holy Day of Obligation – Mass at 9:00AM
- Friday Jan. 4 NO FISH FRY!
- Sunday Jan. 7 **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord** – Regular weekend Mass schedule  
Liturgy of the Word for Children – Blood Pressure Screening  
Lessons and Carols with the Diocesan Choir & OLA Choir at 3:00PM in the church
- Sunday Jan. 14 **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord** – Regular weekend Mass schedule  
Take down Christmas decorations following 10:30AM Mass

## Cluster Mission in November

What did you miss at the Cluster Mission November 11-14?

On the first night **Fr. Bart Timmerman** spoke about the courage and simplicity of being an evangelist, that is living the Gospel. We sometimes think we need a lot of theology classes, or to leave that to **Church professionals**. We need to remember we are all called.



Jesus didn't call scribes or Rabbis, he called ordinary fishermen and tax collectors. He called each of us! On Monday night **Mary Kate Van Wagner** knocked it out of the park with her story of compassion and relationship with Christ. Our students are blessed to have her as a mentor! **Kristin Bird** spoke about the power of each of our own stories of faith

in connecting to others. Finally **Fr. Gary Krahenbuhl** linked it together reminding us of how often God *delights in his creation*. The theme of God's delight begins at the moment of creation and continues in us!

A special word of thanks to the Confirmation students who assisted playing with the *little kids* in the gym and making some crafts while parents attended the mission. That was a big hit with kids and parents!

Following are recommended resources from the Cluster Mission: *Discover Your Story* by Burning Hearts Disciples; *Forming Intentional Disciples* by Sherry Waddell; *Jesus: The Story You Thought You Knew*

by Deacon Keith Strohm; *The Garden, the Curtain and the Cross* by Carl Laferton; *Dragon Slayers: The Essential Training Guide for Young Dragon Slayers* by Joyce Dunham; *The Ultimate Relationship Booklet* by Catholic Christian Outreach; and, *You Are Loved* by Kristin Bird.

– [BurningHeartsDisciples.org/ola](http://BurningHeartsDisciples.org/ola) ■



From the Diocese of Madison,  
Office of the Diocesan Administrator

**Visus Non Mentietur – The Vision Will Not Disappoint**  
– Episcopal Motto

The Most Reverend Robert Charles Morlino, age 71, Bishop of the Diocese of Madison, passed away on Saturday, November 24, 2018 at 9:15PM in SSM St. Mary's Hospital Madison, Wisconsin.

He was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, on December 31, 1946 to Charles and Albertina Morlino. He was raised in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, where he graduated from the Jesuit-run Scranton Preparatory High School. He entered the seminary for the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus and was ordained to the priesthood for that Province on June 1, 1974.

Father Morlino was scheduled to begin a full-time faculty appointment as Professor of Theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Michigan, when Saint Pope John Paul II appointed him the ninth Bishop of Helena on July 6, 1999. Four years later, Bishop Morlino was named the fourth Bishop of Madison on May 23, 2003. He was installed on August 1, 2003.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.

**M**ary, Virgin and Mother...  
Filled with Christ's presence,  
you brought joy to John the Baptist,  
making him exult in the womb of his mother.

*Brimming over with joy,  
you sang of the great things done by God.  
Standing at the foot of the cross with unyielding faith,  
you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection,  
and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit  
so that evangelizing the Church might be born...*

*Star of the New Evangelization,  
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,  
service, ardent and generous faith,  
justice and love of the poor,  
That the joy of the Gospel  
May reach to the ends of the earth,  
Illuminating even the fringes of our world.*

*Mother of the living Gospel,  
Wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,  
Pray for us.  
Amen. Alleluia!*

– From *Evangelii Gaudium*  
Prayer for the Joy of Gospel



**NO FISH FRY!**

Friday, January 4

Returning in February

## How to Help a Grieving Friend During Holidays

by Laura Warzecha,  
Director of Pastoral Ministries

From the *National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization* and *Beloit Regional Hospice*:

- 1. Be supportive of the way your friend chooses to celebrate the holidays. Some may wish to follow traditions; others may choose to change their rituals.
- 2. Offer to help with tangible tasks such as baking, cleaning or decorating. Seemingly simple tasks can be overwhelming while dealing with grief.
- 3. Invite the person to attend a religious service with you and your

family.

- 4. Offer to help with holiday shopping or share your favorite catalogs or on-line shopping sites.
- 5. Invite your friend to your home for the holidays.
- 6. Inquire if your friend is interested in volunteering during the holiday season. Doing something for someone else may help him or her feel better about the holidays.
- 7. Make a donation in memory of your friend's loved one as a reminder that his or her special person is not forgotten.
- 8. Remember not to tell your friend that he or she should be over it; grief is an individual

process and there are no right or wrong ways to grieve.

- 9. If your friend wants to talk about the deceased loved one or feelings associated with the loss, LISTEN. Don't worry about being conversational...just listen.
- 10. Remind the person you are thinking of him or her and the loved one who died. Cards, phone calls and visits are great ways to stay in touch.

For more help, anyone may contact **Beloit Regional Hospice**: toll free 877-363-7421 M-F 8:00AM – 4:30PM OR website: [BeloitRegionalHospice.com](http://BeloitRegionalHospice.com) OR email: [griefsupport@beloitregionalhospice](mailto:griefsupport@beloitregionalhospice) ■

## A Piece of History

by Pat Hemenway

Prior to the renovation of the old church in the mid-70's, the main worship space consisted of what is currently the gathering space, chapel, music room & sacristy. Because of no gym and limited school space at that time, the church was used for parish & school meetings and activities, scouts and even a salad luncheon! There were heavy

stage-type curtains pulled across the church area to seal off the sanctuary. The movable pews and folding chairs were pushed toward the front of the area to allow the space to be used as needed.

An attached kitchen (on the Bootmaker side of the building) was used for preparing and serving refreshments for parish activities and even frying donuts on a regular basis as a parish fundraiser.

In late summer of 1975, renovation began and the original

church was plastered and freshly painted. Carpeting, flooring and new pews were installed. The east side of the church (along Bootmaker Drive) became the sanctuary area. On August 15, 1976, the Feast of Our Lady of the Assumption and parish feast-day, the renovated new church was re-dedicated. Following the renovation, the church no longer was an activity center and was used entirely as a place of worship. ■

## Baptisms "You Are God's Work of Art"

Oceana Sarahy Jimenez Curley (**Alfonso & Damaris**)  
Joaquin Spartacus Natividad (**Jesus & Griselda**)  
Everett Joseph Bennington (**David & Stephanie**)  
Emma Leigh Hauck (**Andrew & Samantha**)  
Dominic Costie Lupo (**Stefanie**)  
Jaxson David-Andrew Nordeng (**Monica**)  
Santiago Ismael Avila (**Jairo & Blanca**)  
Everett Duffy Arnold (**Brian & Pamela**)  
Greyson Miller Brueggen (**Benjamin & Rachel**)  
Marcos Henri Reyes III (**Marcos & Jennifer**)

### Go Paperless!

We would like to send Vox Populi electronically to as many parishioners as possible to save on printing and postage costs. Email Randy at [randyg@olabeloit.com](mailto:randyg@olabeloit.com) to receive future issues electronically.

## Deaths "I Have Called You Each by Name"

Richard W. Wallace (9-14-2018)  
John H. Franz (9-15-2018)  
Maureen T. Chekouras (9-15-2018)  
Sam V. Licata (10-2-2018)  
Joan T. Bocian (10-4-2018)  
Thomas J. Herkis (10-6-2018)  
Michael W. Brown (10-6-2018)  
Verdelma M. Broderick (11-2-2018)  
Ann T. Maltese (11-9-2018)  
Mary Josephine Canik (11-11-2018)  
Madeline Shultz (11-15-2018)  
Joyce J. Sciacca (11-21-2018)  
June M. Hanson (11-26-2018)