

- Parish Children celebrate Reconciliation
- New Teachers at St. Matthews
- 7th Grade Students tour St. Francis Seminary, the Humane Society, and decorate a Christmas Tree

## Learning Their Faith



## How St. Matthew children prepare for the sacrament of Reconciliation

On December 12th, over sixty children from our parish celebrated the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. The children spent several months preparing for this special day.

A very important part of their preparation is done at home with their parents. The children and their parents are asked to spend time each week going through a chapter in their Reconciliation Book together. This gives the families an opportunity to have conversations about their faith that otherwise may not take place due to the busyness of our lives.

The concepts introduced in the book are reinforced in their religion classes. During the celebration of the sacrament, the children are also asked to think about someone that they need to forgive. They write the name of that person on the back of a candle picture and all of the candles are hung on a large poster board. After celebrating individual confession, the families light a candle and say a short prayer together. The light of their candle represents the light of Christ that we pass on to others as we ask for God's forgiveness and plan to make better choices in the future.

Now the children continue their faith journey as they look forward to celebrating First Eucharist the first weekend in May.

— Carol Daun, Director of Adult and Family Ministry



# New Teachers Welcomed in 2009 - 10 School Year

As Interviewed and Written by Students in St. Matt's 7th Grade Class

## **MS. KOZLOWSKI SAYS...** – by Kelly Kotowski and Nathan Harvey

I went to St. Matthew School. While I was here, I played volleyball. My favorite grade was 4th grade. My favorite things about St. Matthew School are intramurals, field day, and the hot lunches. My favorite subject to learn was social studies. I graduated in 1999 from St. Matthew School. Then I went to Oak Creek High and I played volleyball. After I graduated, I went to Alverno College and I played volleyball there too. I got my degree in education. I can teach grades 1-8, but I have a minor in social studies. I started off going to college for nursing, but then I decided my heart was for teaching. My hobbies are playing volleyball and spending time with family.

## **MRS. LUTHER** – by Elizabeth Shelton and Shannon Dugan

Mrs. Luther is St. Matthew's newest 4th Grade teacher. She has been a member of St. Matthew's for 9 years. She went to UWM and Alverno College. This is her first year of teaching. Her favorite grade is 4th and her favorite subject is science. Her hobbies are spending time with her family on vacations. Her family consists of 3 daughters, her husband, and the dog. The best thing about St. Matthew's is how hard the students work and how cooperative the teachers are.



Ms. Kozlowski (left) and Mrs. Luther

## **BENJAMIN PARISH** – Interviewed by Rachel Anderson and Written by Frank Margraff

Benjamin Parish was born in Malvern, Arkansas and attended college at Arkansas State University. He was the last Indian to compete at Arkansas State University before they changed their mascot to the Red Wolves. He likes to golf, coach running and track, and he likes to run in decathlons. Parish likes St. Matthew's Parish School because of the closeness and the small school feeling. His favorite sport is track and field. His favorite color is blue. His favorite singer is Jamey Johnson. His role model is Bryan Clay. He is not perfect though he is not bad at soccer. His favorite movie is Brave Heart. He now works at a Sears store and at St. Matthew's Parish School.



## **MS. STASZAK** – by Sarah Ciombor and Matt Zemla

Amber Staszak began playing the violin at age 5. She is now the St. Matthew music teacher. She has been involved in music for quite some time. She has taught at schools for 1½ years and has taught private lessons for 10 years. Her family includes her mom, dad, sister Crystal and her dog. She was born in Cudahy and then moved to South Milwaukee when she was about to start middle school and she now lives in Oak Creek. She attended UW-Whitewater for college. Her hobbies include bowling, video games, going to Brewer games, arts and crafts, wrapping presents, and playing with kids/babysitting. Her favorite subject is art. When she was little, she wanted to be a news anchor and teacher. Her role model is her mom. If she didn't learn to play the violin, she would be playing the cello or piano. Her favorite part of St. Matthew is the fact that it is very family orientated.



# Seminary, Animals, and a Christmas Tree!

On Tuesday, November 17, 2009, students from St. Matthew's 7th grade class got in the Christmas spirit by taking a tour of the Saint Francis Seminary, spending time with animals at the Wisconsin Humane Society, and decorating a tree in Cathedral Square in downtown Milwaukee.

The students' tour at the Seminary was led by Fr. Don J. Hying, the current Rector. Former St. Matthew pastor, Fr. Bill Stanfield, also stopped by to greet the students.

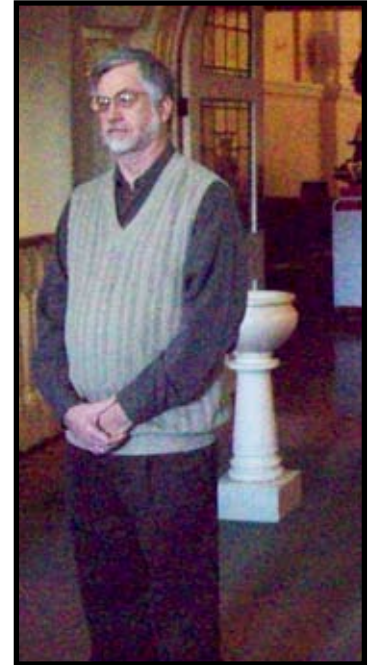
The Seminary was founded in 1845 in the home of Archbishop John Henni, two years after the Archdiocese was established in Milwaukee. It is one of the original Roman Catholic seminaries in the United States, and the oldest in continuous existence.

Henni Hall was dedicated on January 29, 1856, after a new location was chosen for the seminary along the south shore of Lake Township. This building was expanded in 1868 and later renovated in 1989. Christ King Chapel within Henni Hall was consecrated in June 1861 by Archbishop Henni. Archbishop Michael Heiss, who served as rector, is buried beneath the chapel.

Students also got a tour of the recently restored The Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto. It was built by German born Paul Dobberstein while training at the seminary in 1894. During his studies, he contracted double pneumonia and promised the Blessed Virgin Mary he would build a grotto in her honor, once he recovered. This monument can be found in the St. Francis Seminary wooded area. It is free for anyone to view.

Standing a mere ten feet tall, this grotto was Dobberstein's first attempt at grotto building. He used the knowledge and skills gained during its construction to build other grottos in Wisconsin and

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Former St. Matthew pastor Fr. Bill Stanfield now works at St. Francis Seminary.



The students toured the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, which is located on the grounds of the St. Francis Seminary.

*Field Trip, continued from previous page.*

Iowa, including the massive Grotto of the Redemption found in West Bend, Iowa. It is believed to have inspired Mathias Wernerus (who also attended St. Francis Seminary) to build the Dickeyville Grotto in Dickeyville, Wisconsin in 1930 and started the grotto building movement in America.

Forty-nine tall maple trees line the long road that leads up to St. Francis Seminary. Planted by Austrian immigrant Siegfried Wegerbauer in the 1930s, their canopy now forms cathedral arches shading the path.

After that, the 7th grade students were off to the Wisconsin Humane Society's building at 45th & Wisconsin in Milwaukee's Merrill Park neighborhood. Students got a "behind the scenes" tour of WHS's wildlife center, the intake area for stray animals, and where dogs and cats are spayed and neutered. The highlight was when students got to play with a dog who escaped death. WHS workers explained that volunteers saved the animal, who was about to be set on fire as "a joke". Students also got to tour the adoption area for the dogs, cats, and even birds and rabbits.



**Henni Hall of St. Francis Seminary, 3257 S. Lake Drive, St. Francis, WI in 1868.**

After a brief stop at the Grand Avenue Mall for lunch, it was off to Cathedral Square Park in Milwaukee. It has become an annual tradition for the 7th grade class to decorate a tree. The tree was located at North Jefferson and East Wells Streets in Downtown Milwaukee and was on display until January 3rd. St. Matthew wasn't the only school to participate in this year's tree decorating. In fact, handmade ornaments by students from over 30 area schools currently adorn a forest of

Christmas trees in Cathedral Square Park to create "Community Spirit Park." Also located in the park is a 50-foot Christmas tree of ever-changing, energy-efficient LED lights. With themes of love, peace and joy, these trees capture the essence of the holiday season.

*— Article and photos by Robert Tabern*

## **St. Matthew Parish Buzz**

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## **This Month in St. Matthew History...**

"January 8, 1952 - The issue is brought up at the Biennial Parish Meeting about expanding St. Matthew Cemetery. Extension of the cemetery eastward to add three rows of graves was discussed with favorable reaction"