

St. Matthew Parish buzz

News About St. Matthew Parish
& School in Oak Creek, Wisconsin

March 2005

- Easter Greetings to Parishioners and Guests
- The Special Meaning of the Easter Vigil
- The Story of the Restored Altar
- School Auction Was Pure Magic



St. Matthew Parish Welcomes You!

An "Alleluia" welcome to everyone celebrating Easter, especially those visiting relatives in the parish, or those returning to our parish. Easter is the high point of the Church year. On Easter, as on every Sunday of the year, we celebrate the Life, Death and Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. In fact, the Church calls Easter the "mother of ALL Sundays!"



The faith community of St. Matthew's parish gladly welcomes you back to pray with us whenever you are in our area. If you have moved to this vicinity and have been searching for a parish community to which you can belong, this is a warm, welcoming, prayerful community of fellow believers who, like you, are on a journey of faith. We invite you to journey with us.

We have several community-building events throughout the year, and have a vibrant school and religious education program for children, youth, adults and families. We have a dedicated staff and parishioners who join together in a myriad of ways to build up God's Kingdom in this southeast corner of Milwaukee County in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

As it states on our Welcome Banner hanging on the exterior of our Little Brick Church: Welcome! Come grow with us!"

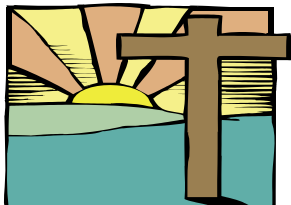
Easter Blessings!



Rev. William Stanfield
Pastor



Judy Wargin
Director of Liturgy and Music



Easter Vigil Has Special Meaning for This Year's Candidates and the Elect

The forty days of Lent are officially over and Easter is finally upon us. What does that mean for you? Attending this weekend's Easter Vigil and listening to the readings and teachings of Jesus?... spending time with family you haven't seen in a long time?... or the look upon the face of the children when they wake up Easter morning searching for treats?

While Easter is a magical and spiritual time for many of us for so many different reasons, it is taking on special meaning this year for the candidates and the Elect of Saint Matthew Parish. After beginning the process last summer, this weekend's Easter Vigil on Saturday evening marks the third and consummating rite of the Adult Initiation process, the Sacraments of Initiation. On Holy Saturday, the Elect culminate their long journey to initiation in the waters of Baptism — then, with the candidates, the newly baptized are sealed with the oil of Confirmation and share the bread and wine of the Eucharist as full members of the Roman Catholic community.

In last month's edition of "The Buzz" you got to know more about Scott Butzer, who will be baptized during the Easter Vigil, as well as making his First Communion and Confirmation. The other candidates who will be welcomed into the Church include: Melissa Martin, Nancy Milkie, Lisa Schlotz and Jane Weyenberg.

After the Easter Vigil rites on Saturday evening, the new members of our St. Matthew's family are not completely done with their initiation journey. Initiation marks the beginning of the mystagogia period, which means "lead-

ing into the mysteries". The newly initiated will still meet several times between Easter and Pentecost to explore and confirm the Easter experience with their sponsors and RCIA team members after the 9:30 a.m. Mass.



Lisa Schlotz will make her first Eucharist and be Confirmed at the Easter Vigil. She poses with her sponsor, and author of this article, Robert Tabern.

Mystagogia is the final stage of the RCIA process, but it is in turn the beginning of a pilgrimage of lifelong, continuous conversion in full communion with the Roman Catholic community of Christians.

I can also say without a doubt this year has been a memorable one for the sponsors of those going through the Adult Initiation process. Last year, at the age of 24, I was a candidate for Adult Confirmation and went through the year-long process of learning more about my faith. This year, I decided to give back some of the knowledge I learned... by becoming the sponsor of Lisa Schlotz, who will make her First Eucharist and Confirmation tonight. It has been such a remarkable experience to watch her and all of the other can-

didates grow. On Saturday, February 19th we gathered together for a day of reflection... and it was one of the most powerful experiences of my life, not talking, but just listening to the stories all the other candidates and sponsors had to share about their life and the journeys they have come through until this point.

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming Catholic, you are encouraged to contact Pastoral Associate Alice Hatzenbeller between now and the end of summer. You can call Alice at 414-762-4200, ext 24. She can also be reached via email at ahatzenbeller@stmattoc.org.

Starting in July or August, inquiry sessions will begin for the 2005-2006 Adult Initiation process. The informal discussions during the inquiry period help the seekers link their personal life stories to the Good News as witnessed and lived by the Roman Catholic community.

— story by Robert Tabern



John Kreuzer (L) sponsored candidate John Lauder. They were photographed at the Rite of Election, which took place at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in downtown Milwaukee.

Restored Altar Gives New Worship Place a Link to the Past

When St. Matthew's parish started celebrating weekday Masses in the lower level of the new building, parishioners soon realized that this new tradition was already linked to the parish's long history thanks to the altar that Mark Kozlowski refurbished.



Parishioner Mark Kozlowski "put some life" back into an altar rescued from the basement of the Little Brick Church.

In fall 2004, St. Matthew's was looking for ways to save money. One of the ways to save money was to save on energy, so it was decided that weekday Masses during winter could be celebrated in a room in the lower level of the new building. It would cost less to heat this area than the whole church.

Then, things seemed to fall in place. During a Building and Grounds work day last fall, a group of parishioners discovered an old altar in storage in

the Little Brick Church. A 1930's photo suggested that the altar was used for Masses during that time. Unfortunately, when they pulled the altar out, they had to pull it out in pieces. Having been in storage for a long time, the altar was showing its age — part of the front had fallen off and some of the columns were loose because the glue had weakened with age.

Mark Kozlowski volunteered to refurbish the altar. He remembered the October day that Dan Wachs and Tom Schneider dropped the altar off at his home: "When I got the altar, I had the basic frame and a box of wood."

He began to work on the altar a few hours each day. First, he stripped off the paint. This was a tedious task because of the dentil cross head, little carvings, and other intricate details on the altar. As he stripped off multiple layers of paint, he realized that this was not the first time the altar had been worked on.

When the altar was bare wood, Mark sanded the wood and made repairs. He used wood filler to fill the small nicks and holes. He also repaired an eighteen by twelve inch hole on top of the altar and reattached the wood that had fallen off. Finally, he primed and repainted the altar. "The altar really is an antique. I realized I didn't need to make it new." Mark explained, "I just needed to put some life back in it."

After working for approximately sixty hours stripping, sanding, repairing, and repainting the altar, Mark, with the help of his daughter, brought it back to St. Matthew's in December. Alan Bronikowski met them and helped carry the altar to its new place.

With the altar now in place, Mark reflected, "If the altar had no significance to the church, it probably wouldn't have been worth rebuilding. Yet, it was significant, and it seemed important to bring it back to life." Parishioners indeed feel God's blessing to have the refurbished altar for celebrating weekday masses, and perhaps they feel more blessed to see St. Matthew's past, present, and future interweaved again.

— story by Rick Barribeau



BEFORE: The altar during restoration. Note the missing column on the right.



AFTER: Beautifully restored by parishioner Mark Kozlowski, the altar is now used to celebrate daily Mass in the St. Luke Room, which is located in the lower level of our new Gathering Space.

Making Magic Happen...St Matt's School Auction

St. Matthew's first ever school auction was held Saturday, February 19th at the Oak Creek Community Center. The auction was titled "Making Magic Happen" and for more than 250 people who attended, the evening was purely magical. Attendees could browse and bid on fantastic items on the silent auction tables before enjoying a fabulous buffet dinner.

Following the silent auction, Sal Purpora and Ted Flisner were the quick-talking auctioneers for the live auction items. The live auction gave folks the opportunity to bid on such unusual items as

a ride to school on an Oak Creek Fire Truck and a round of golf and a meal with St. Matt's teacher, Mr. Keane.

Raffle winners were Adam & Jeanette Gruszewski (\$1000), Barb Kozleuchar (\$500), Dan & Jill Duchniak (\$250) and Betty Beckman (\$100). Beth Collins won the first Heads & Tails game worth \$450; Don & Debbie Sievert won the second game worth \$380.

Proceeds from the event are earmarked for the purchase of new textbooks and curriculum materials for our school.

The wizards who orchestrated the event were Patty Butzer, Eileen Rehn & Stacy Sims, plus numerous volunteers and committee members. St. Matt's own Joel Breen was the Master of Ceremonies.

Thanks go out to all the organizers, volunteers, individual and corporate sponsors/donors and to those who attended.

Look for another magical evening in 2006!

— story by Amy Cicigoi



Master of Ceremonies, Joel Breen, counts down the last few seconds of a silent auction.



If you needed a gift basket raffle ticket, Dave Dretzka (L) and Paul Maurer were ready to serve you.



Katy Esselman (center) gets ready to break the bank with her next bid.



Parishioner Sal Purpora (L), together with friend Ted Flisner, served as auctioneers for the live auction.

St. Matthew Parish Buzz
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