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- Eagle Scout improves parish grounds

Fr. Bill's Sabbatical — a Journey of Faith

Fr. William Stanfield, co-pastor of St. Matthew Parish, recently returned from a three-month sabbatical in Rome. We all noticed his absence, but what did he do during his time away from us? Earlier this month, "The Buzz" had the chance to talk to him about his memorable trip.



Fr. Bill gained many new experiences while on sabbatical in Rome.

At the end of the summer, Father Bill left Oak Creek and flew to Rome to join more than two dozen priests from across the United States and England. The program in which they were participating mainly consisted of professors from various universities in Rome giving short summary presentations of courses they teach. Father Bill and the other priests also got the opportunity to tour various sites, including ancient churches. The group also prayed together on a daily basis and shared some of their life-experiences in ministry. On weekends and a week-long break, Fr. Bill and the other priests even went to several cities in Italy — Florence, Venice, and Assisi among others — and then a quick trip to Switzerland, Vienna, Prague, Bratislava, and Budapest.

During their time in Rome though, the priests stayed at the North American College. It's the same location where about 175 seminarians from the United States live, including two from the Milwaukee Archdiocese. Fr. Bill says the building is very close to the Vatican. He could even see St. Peter's from his bedroom window.

Two Audiences with Pope Benedict XVI

The ultimate highlight for any Catholic's trip to Rome would have to be seeing the Pope. Father Bill reports he was honored to attend two audiences with Pope Benedict XVI, including one in which the two shook hands. The priests in the program also went to the opening Mass of the Synod that the Pope celebrated.

When asked what were some of the most rewarding experiences, Fr. Bill said, "There were lots of them... like being able to see and experience so much of Church life that goes on in Rome and having time to relax and reflect. Traveling was great too. However, the most rewarding experiences were those little insights or comments made by professors, fellow priests on sabbatical, and the seminarians that helped me see things in a different perspective than I had previously. It is experiences like that that make a sabbatical a renewing time. For example, the Scripture professor, stressed that in the gospel we should look for what seems to be out of place or the unexpected because it is precisely there that we will especially find the heart of what Jesus wanted to teach us."

Father Bill missed the smiling faces that greet him every day here at St. Matthew Parish, but he also will miss those he met in Rome. He says, "It is good to be back, but there was still so much to see and do that I would have enjoyed even more time. Some of the priests are given a half-year and even a whole year for their sabbaticals, but I am grateful for the time and wonderful experience I had. It is a real privilege to have an experience like this."

Trip Offered New Perspectives

Even though Fr. Bill has been to Rome before, he says the extended time he spent there this fall gave him a new perspective, "I saw and appreciated how much good work is really going on there for the sake of the Church and the gospel, but also saw some of what I would call the ugly side of the Church, the bureaucracy and what seems like an attitude of just doing what I want or think should be done and insisting everyone else do it my way. I should also admit that I was much more impressed with Pope Benedict XVI (formerly Cardinal Ratzinger) than I expected to be."

When reflecting on his trip, Father Bill says he hopes the journey will help him become a better person and help him proclaim the message of Jesus even stronger than before.

Article by Robert Tabern

Technology Committee Plans For The Future

Members Maintain Current Equipment and Plan and Implement Upgrades

St. Matthew's Technology Committee has been working hard to keep the computers and other technological devices at the parish working effectively. This year, the Committee's main goal is to update the computers and software.

Among the members of the Technology committee are Gary Hay, Roger Janquart, David Johnson, Brian Kucharski, Mike Nuss, Tom Schneider, and Greg Wheatley. The committee's responsibilities involve updating the St. Matthew's website as well as maintaining and repairing the computers, monitors, network, plotter, printers, projector, and servers. St. Matthew's has approximately seventy computers. A number of computers are located in a computer classroom for students; other computers are found in classrooms and staff members' offices.

Multi-tasking Team

In 2005, the committee members' activities varied. They checked computers for viruses, helped set up a computer and projector to show slides during a Mass, and helped print posters with the plotter for events such as Winterfest. The committee's major project was upgrading the two servers to Windows Server 2003 and repairing some hardware on one of the servers. The parish has a server for staff and a server for teachers and students.

PC Upgrades Goal for 2006

In 2006, the committee has a goal: it would like to upgrade the parish's computers. David Johnson explained that most of the computers were donated in the 1990s by Harley-Davidson, Inc.,

and are running Windows 98. Because Microsoft will discontinue support for Windows 98 this year and because many of the computers do not have sufficient capacity to run Windows XP or Windows Vista, it would be best to replace the computers. A couple committees at St. Matthew's are starting to investigate ways to raise money for the new computers. Still, the committee will make as much use of existing equipment as possible. David Johnson said, "My goal is to strip out things we can use from the old computers."

Replacing the computers will provide a number of benefits. First, students will be able to use the new computers to learn to type, to research, and to write. Upgrading to the new Windows operating system will give students access to new versions of software such as a new version of Microsoft Office and a new version of the JumpStart line of educational software. Fortunately, most software makers provide an educational discount for schools. The upgrade will also provide greater security for the church's computer system since Microsoft would provide updates for the newer operating system.

Committee Seeks New Members

With many plans for maintaining and improving St. Matthew's technology, the committee is expecting to keep busy this year. Its members extend an invitation to people who want to help the parish. Committee members explained that volunteers don't have to be computer experts—simply being willing to learn and sharing time would help St. Matthew's parish.



Maintaining the St. Matthew School computer lab is just one of the many ways the Technology Committee supports the parish.

Most small businesses the size of our parish either pay someone or contracts for support services. Whether it's "help desk" functions, or normal technical support, planning, or implementation, our parish/school staff does not have the technical skills or enough time for these functions. These parishioner-stewards save the parish a great deal of expense and make it possible for us to remain technically sound.

We are very fortunate to have parishioners who share their gifts with our community. Yet at the same time we need additional helpers. If you have the willingness to help, and would like more information about the Technology Committee or our parish's technology needs, please contact Tom Schneider at tschneider@stmattoc.org or by phone at 762-4200, ext. 21.

Article by Rick Barribeau

You Can Make Magic Happen!

Join Us At the School Auction on Saturday, February 18

On February 18, please plan on attending Making Magic Happen dinner and auction to support St. Matthew School. The event will be held at the Oak Creek Community Center starting at 6 p.m.

Your ticket price includes a delicious buffet dinner, beer and soda, plus a chance to participate in the live and silent auctions and raffles. Silent auction items include: Lasik eye

surgery, resort stays, tools & electronics and much, much more. Tickets are \$35 per person. Ticket order forms are available at the St. Matthew School office and at the Oak Creek Community Center.

For more information or if you are interested in providing donations contact (414) 571-0565.



Parishioner Joel Breen will once again serve as master of ceremonies.



So many great items to choose from...and the proceeds benefit our parish school.



Plan to enjoy a fun evening at the Oak Creek Community Center and help support our school.

Eagle Scout's Project Helps Parish Put Best Face Forward

One of the most visible portions of the parish grounds is the north side (back) of the Little Brick Church, especially to south bound traffic on HWY 32. Now, thanks to the efforts of Matt Dretzka, it is also a beautiful portion of the parish grounds. Matt is the reason there is a retaining wall and landscaping at that portion of the parish grounds. He took on this challenge as his Eagle Scout service project.

Matt, the son of parishioners Dave and Kim Dretzka, says that "I have always been part of St. Matthew Parish and the parish scouting troop #251. I knew that when I started my project that I wanted it to benefit St. Matthew Parish. So when I figured out where I

wanted to do my project, I talked to Tom Schneider and asked him if he had something that I could do. He gave me 3 options. I chose the retaining wall project because I wanted to do something that down the road I could look back and say 'I did that'."

Learned Many New Skills

If you've seen how well the wall was installed and landscaped, you might assume that Matt must have had a lot of experience building retaining walls. Actually the opposite is true. "I have never built a retaining wall before. Along the way, I learned tons of new skills. The most important lesson I learned is time management. I don't remem-

ber how many things (Packer games, hanging with friends, etc.) that I missed because I had to get the project done before the ground froze," he recalls. All told, Matt spent over 300 hours from the beginning to the end of his project.



Matt Dretzka invested over 300 hours on his Eagle Scout project.

Matt got the funding for the project off the ground asking for donations before and after the Masses. "That was where I got most of the money," he says. "I also had a sign up sheet for the

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Eagle Scout, continued from previous page.

different flowers and plants that could be donated. Also a lot of the materials like the pea gravel, grass seed, soil, and landscaping equipment was donated. That was a HUGE help.”

Matt managed many tasks from the project’s inception to completion. “First I had some meetings with Mr. Schneider to draw up our ideas,” he says. “Then I started looking into places where I could get the plants and bricks. Then we had to get all the equipment, materials, and most importantly someone who knew how to make a retaining wall,” he recalls.

“We had pamphlets and a general idea of what to do, but we needed professional help,” he says. “After looking around, I found Mr. Marin. Wow, was he a help! He not only helped me construct the wall, but he showed me how to do it and why we had to do all the steps that went into forming the wall. After the wall was complete I started the landscaping and planting.”

Not only did Matt have to manage the materials, construction, and learn how to build a retaining wall, he also had to stay focused on raising funds to complete the project. He recalls that “all throughout this period I was also try-

ing to raise money. A total of \$2,000 to be exact.”

Management Skills Necessary, Too

The project offered Matt an opportunity to perform many tasks himself, but also to organize and manage the help of others. “All of the volunteers were either friends or family,” he says. “And due to the fact that to properly erect the wall you need to do things in a certain order, there was never a need for a lot of people at any one time.”

Ask Matt what the best thing about the project was, and he will jokingly tell you the best part was when it was finished. But on a serious note, he says that the best part was all of the skills that he learned along the way.

Matt has been involved in Scouting since first grade — he is now in his junior year of high school, so that is about 11 years of scouting. “I like all the outings that we go on,” he says. “Our troop really enjoys the outdoors (like fishing), so most of our outings revolve around the outdoors,” he adds.

And for those scouts who are looking to attain the rank of Eagle as Matt has, he has this advice for them. “If I was to say something to an Eagle Scout hopeful, I would tell him that the experiences that

I learned along the way were immeasurable. It is something that will stick with you forever and will make a better person out of you.”

Matt appreciates the help, encouragement, and guidance he got along the way in completing this project. “I really want to thank Mr. Schneider, Mr. Marin, and my Dad, for all of the time and energy that they spent to help make this project a reality,” he says.

As a result of his efforts, Matt was awarded the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest award in Boy Scouting, in a ceremony at the Oak Creek Community Center.

Other Scouts At Work on Projects

Three other members of troop 251 are currently working toward the rank of Eagle Scout. Adam Maurer is overseeing the creation of the parish Youth Room, John Szydel is installing flags, a well pump, and picnic tables on the parish grounds, and Kevin Thomas is working on a dumpster enclosure and picnic tables for the parish grounds.

Congratulations and thank you to Matt, and to all the scouts who work to make St. Matthew Parish a better place for all of us.

St. Matthew Parish Buzz

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