

Taste the

# NEW WINE



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HOLY FAMILY PARISH

A CARING COMMUNITY

WINTER 2016

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## What's next for Holy Family?

by Mel Beckman

The short answer is, I don't know, and I suspect we won't know for a while. I do know that the parish has been very good for me and Mary Ann and has had an impact not yet fully come to bloom for our children.

We would be sad if our parish would end, and we would need to find a new faith community. It's been 45 good years for me and longer for Mary Ann.

We would be happy for more good years at Holy Family, but the likelihood of that happening appears to be diminishing. It's hard to miss the signs: our parishioners are elderly; the church is old; membership is low; some Sundays we are hard-pressed to

assemble enough folks to have a good entrance procession.

There is much discussion about what we will have to do to survive in some fashion and what the Archbishop is likely to decide about Holy Family.

How do we continue to function in the short-term, with some peace of mind, given the uncertainty and our smallness? What do we do when the future is uncertain? How do we stay optimistic?

Holy Family parishioners must have asked some of the same questions in the early 1960s when the school was closed and homes in the neighborhood were disappearing. We know what came next for Holy Family

at that time—some fifty good years of liturgical renewal and service to the poor!

With that in mind, and with some trust in the Spirit at work in both the parish and the Archdiocese, we can just "keep-on-keeping on." The boiler in the basement still works, the roof doesn't leak, and there are parish savings in the bank. For the time being, we have enough people to make lunches, provide help through the door ministry, do outreach with the vans, and work for a better criminal justice system.

Even though we don't know our future, we can be confident that we are doing good work right now, while we wait for "what's next" to unfold.

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## Follow Your Star

*As Christmas approaches keep the star in view. This star led the magi to the greatest gift that was ever given to us. This star can lead each of us to peace and love!*

*A star appeared in the sky. Different, unusual, so much so that it prompted action. Action that led the three to strange and unknown lands. Action that brought hardship and suffering on a long and danger filled journey. Fatigue and fear must have made them question the advisability of such a journey.*

*But the reward was far and above what they anticipated. For how could they have anticipated the joy of their discovery?*

*So follow your star where ever it may lead. Watch that star as it leads you to the joy of family. Follow that star as it reveals the wonder of God and the beauty of God's creation.*

*Follow that star as you draw neighbors and friends together.*

*Follow that star to the babe in the manger in Bethlehem as we celebrate the birth of the one who makes our journey easy and well worth the rewards.*

by Lucille Saunders

# Holy Family during an earlier time of change

This from an interview with Lela Everhart, a former Holy Family parishioner done by Tancy Jahn and Margaret Anderson, during the church restoration effort around 1988. Provided by Mel Beckman

In the 1930s, Holy Family parish was a neighborhood of small apartment buildings. First generation Irish lived south of Nicholas Street while north of it were the Italian families. Holy Family served as an Italian national parish during this time. Intermarriage was common in these amicable groups.

Neighborhood restaurants and bars were owned by ex-criminals from prohibition days. Without them many families would not have had enough food. These neighborhood merchants regularly checked with Holy Family to find needy families to help. The J.F. Bloom Monument Company, a Jewish, family-owned business, frequently provided fresh fruit to Holy Family school children.

To add to the already colorful

neighborhood, a "red-light district" at 17th and Nicholas Streets and 15th and Webster Streets had prostitutes who often attending Mass at Holy Family on Sundays.

Father J. J. Faso was pastor to the community from 1937-1954. He grew up with the mafia and even praised his friend Al Capone for the amount of good that he did for his community.

Rituals and statues were important to this group. During his era, Italian prisoners of war were housed in barracks at the Ford Motor Company building (now TipTop apartments) at 16th and Cuming. These same prisoners attended Mass at Holy Family and honored the parish by painting the interior of the church.

The school opened in 1876 with 135 children. It's doors were closed during the pastorship of Father Francis Moreci in the 1960s. It was a difficult time for parishioners to give up their neighborhood school. With dwindling residences in a changing neighborhood, Holy Family parish appeared to be on the brink of dissolution.

It was during the 1960s that Father Burbach and Father Stewart attended to the needs of the parish. Statues were removed and the altar railing was removed, because of the changing mood of the times following Vatican II. Some members of the parish kept pieces of it as symbols of an era gone by. Pictures of the pre-Vatican II altar are hung outside the southeast doors at the back of church.

## Holy Family's Back to School Giveaway

by Lucille Saunders

Once again this year, the Holy Family Community Needs Committee arranged and produced the Socks and Underwear Program with the very welcome donation from Good Fellows and the help of many hardworking volunteers. We were able to give vouchers for socks and underwear to many, many children ready to return to classrooms throughout our city.

For the two days of the give-away, parents and guardians formed lines to receive a voucher worth \$20.00 for each child. These vouchers could be redeemed at the Richman Gordman Store indicated on the voucher within a certain time limit also indicated on the voucher.

This year we did have some vouchers left over at the end of the second day. These were distributed by our Door Minister, Patti Fidone, to counselors in our school buildings. They were to cash them in before the expiration date and distribute the product as needed by the children in their schools.

As always the families were very grateful for the opportunity to get help with clothing their children as they returned to school.

## On a personal note, from Pattie Fidone

A couple of months ago we heard about a woman who needed help with her utilities because she was in danger of having the gas and water turned off. Holy Family helped prevent her shut off by paying the bill.

As time passed this woman kept popping up in our thoughts, and as Thanksgiving approached we thought it would be nice to give the family a food basket with a turkey.

One of our lunch program volunteers delivered the food basket on her way home the Monday before Thanksgiving. No one was home at the house so the volunteer put the food on the family's front porch along with a note to call her to make sure they got the food.

The woman called the volunteer that evening and was in tears as she thanked the volunteer for the food and said their family really needed it this year. You see, she lost her husband to a drunk driver this spring.

# From the Deacon's Desk

by Al Aulner

Here we are at the beginning of a new Church year and at the same time we are at the end of this calendar year. The new emerges as the old gives way. The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy has come to an end. We pray that the seeds of mercy planted during this time will grow and flourish and continue to bear fruit for many years to come.

Holy Family Parish is wrapping up its 140th year, for those who are counting. Once again this parish was blessed by many gifts from throughout the Omaha area. We received help to do many needed tasks from the kind helping hands of our volunteers.

The volunteers who help always seem to remember that they are not simply doing various jobs but they are engaged in ministry. They minister to each other and to the people who come to our door. There always seems to be smiles and plenty of laughter when volunteers come together to do a morning's work.

We also received generous donations of food, clothing, money, and even a new floor in the social hall; enough to keep the ministries on stable ground and ready to meet the coming year. These donations came from individuals, companies, charitable groups, schools, and foundations.

The metro area community continues to be very generous with this parish, and I would like to think that our donors know that their donations are in good hands and quickly distributed to those in need.

As we move into the New Year we know it will come with opportunities and challenges but most of all

it will come with many more blessings from God.

This great season of Advent anticipates blessings and points to a time of eternal blessing. We also know this next year will seem to pass by faster than the one before; they

always seem to go by a little faster each time.

Advent reminds us that we are pilgrims on a journey in time, never staying too long in one place, and always moving toward a final destination that is with Jesus our Lord and Savior.

## *DOOR MINISTRY REPORT*

### *November 2016*

by Pattie Fidone

Families = 294

Adults = 388

Children = 291

Adding the number of adults served 388 + the number of children 291 served = 679 total number of individuals that received food from our food pantry. This number includes 82 Thanksgiving Baskets that went out to families from our Food Pantry, delivered, and shared with Beautiful Gate Ministries.

We want to thank Mary Our Queen Parish for all of the food. A great big thank you to Patrick Hoarty for bringing all the food to Holy Family and to Gail Vilotta for collecting the food all month in her garage. Thanks to everyone who volunteers to sort and box up the food once we get it to Holy Family. Thank you Knights of Columbus, Kappa Kappa Iota, Immanuel Hospital, and Siena/Francis House for helping make the food baskets possible.

We also sent the makings of 40 survival kits to BlackBurn High School. (shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes, toothpastes, deodorant, chapstick, and dental floss) The students will get the kits for the holidays.

We continue to give out coats, gloves, and stocking caps as the weather gets colder. In October and November we have given out over 100 coats to men and women who access the Door Ministry.

#### NOTE

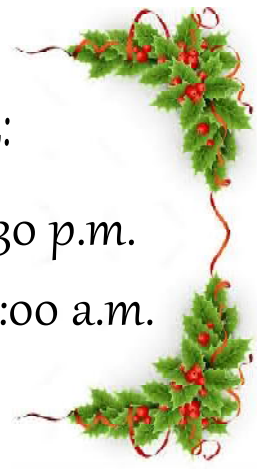
Deacon Al Aulner has installed 'donate' buttons on Holy Family's website, [www.holyfamilyomaha.org](http://www.holyfamilyomaha.org). We also have an account with PayPal. If you want to donate, for Christmas or at any time, please consider Holy Family's Ministries to the Poor: the Door Ministry, the Lunch Program, Food Redistribution, and the *Nebraska Criminal Justice Review*. To donate online, please visit our website. Please let your family and friends know. All such donations, 98.5%, will go to Holy Family's undesignated charities fund to help the Ministries to the Poor where most needed, and PayPal will take the remainder, 1.5%.



# CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE:

Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day

5:30 p.m.  
10:00 a.m.



## TASTE THE NEW WINE

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