

Church of the Holy Spirit

You're reading something new! Holy Spirit's first newsletter!

The Parish Pastoral Council wishes to provide the Holy Spirit community with an additional source of information on our parish and the people, groups and events that bring life to our vibrant parish community. You'll read about upcoming events and our many diverse programs and services offered to folks throughout the Holy Spirit community, as well as our larger extended community throughout East Greenbush, Rensselaer County and the Capitol Region.

I hope you'll enjoy reading this first edition, as well as future newsletter issues. If you have any ideas about people, events and things to include in future editions (we're thinking about Christmas, Easter and September issues), please contact Kathy Rosenbaum at krosenba@nycap.rr.com or me, Rev. Joseph O'Brien at revjosephobrien@nycap.rr.com or at the Parish Office, (518) 477-7925. Your input is appreciated and valued—and will help us make this newsletter a truly useful vehicle in which to reach all members of our parish and community.

Many thanks!

Fr. Joe O'Brien

Upcoming Advent Events

- Dec. 13, 7 p.m.:
Reconciliation Service
- Dec. 14, 7 p.m.:
Cookie Exchange and Caroling
- Dec. 22, 6 p.m.:
Church Decorating

Holy Spirit School Celebrates 50 Years

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of Holy Spirit School. It has been 50 years of learning and growing, not only for our students but also for all of the parents, teachers and parishioners involved with Holy Spirit School over the years.

Holy Spirit School succeeded in providing a well-rounded, spiritual and educational springboard for its students during the last half century. This, in many ways, is due to the unselfish efforts of those

such as you. Therefore, it is only appropriate that you and your family share with us the special events scheduled in honor of our golden anniversary.

Celebration Events

Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012:
Holy Spirit's Alumni Basketball Game. (We are looking for alumni players.) Contact us at holyspiritschool50@gmail.com.

Saturday, April 21, 2012:
Mass at 5:30 p.m. in Holy Spirit Church. Anniversary

Dinner at 7 p.m. in the Holy Spirit School Gym. Bishop Howard Hubbard and Sr. Carmel Spratt (Sr. Monica) will attend, along with former principals and teachers. Several of the founding sisters and pastors are also invited.

In addition, it is our hope that parishioners instrumental in establishing Holy Spirit School will also join the current school family for this celebration.—*Dr. Marilyn Caramore & Theresa Girvin*

Holy Spirit School is celebrating 50 years of Catholic identity and academic excellence. Are you an alumnus? We want to hear from you. Please contact Anne Cowling, school principal, at (518) 477-5739. Would you like to be involved in supporting and participating in the 50th anniversary celebrations? If so, please contact Theresa Girvin at (518) 477-6004 or holyspiritschool50@gmail.com.

Holy Spirit Community Considers Space Needs

Have you noticed that:

- nearly every Holy Spirit School classroom is used when Faith Formation meets on Sunday mornings and Monday nights;
- LIFT may limit presentations because traditional classrooms cannot accommodate the program needs for people of all ages;
- Holy Spirit School turned pre-K students away this fall for lack of space; or,
- storage space is at a premium in the church, parish house and school?

The Holy Spirit Community (church and school) needs additional or reconfigured space in the school building to support the growth and success of programs that benefit the parish, school and the broader community.

In collaboration with the Diocese's Architecture and Building Commission and the Office of Pastoral Planning, the Holy Spirit Community has received approval and permission to conduct a facilities

feasibility study, which will review programming and consider the availability and suitability of our current space.

A request for proposal was sent to several architectural firms recommended by the commission. Initially, the request for proposal centers on information gathering and a review of space needs in support of community programming. Recommendations will consider how to serve the needs of Holy Spirit and the wider community.

K-5 Program: Exploring Faith

Holy Spirit's K-5 program seeks to help children become more familiar with Bible stories of our "ancestors in faith" to simultaneously help children become more familiar with parts of the Mass and the importance of regular worship. At our LIFT Gatherings, K-5 parents and children talk and explore together, and Vacation Bible Camp in August invites children to have fun exploring faith.

learning "by heart" prayers, like the Our Father and Hail Mary, as well as through spontaneous prayer and by watching and listening to you and others pray! By bringing your family to church, your child learns the importance of community and communal prayer, as well as the significance of our interdependence on one another and how we seek to help others and remain mindful of their needs.

Parent volunteers assist the program in many ways and are always welcome to offer new ideas and help implement them! Outside the program, parents of all ages may help children grow in awareness of God's love by praying daily at meal times, in the morning, at bedtime, in the car, anytime! Resources and suggestions are available in the parish house to assist you—just call! —*Maria Collins*

Children benefit from

Parish People

- Thank you, Al White, for decades of service in scheduling our Eucharistic ministers. Welcome, Patricia Rickert, our new eucharistic minister scheduler. If you would like to learn more about Eucharistic ministry, please contact Fr. Joseph O'Brien at (518) 477-7925.
- Thank you, Diane Kellogg, for years of service as president of our Altar Rosary Society. Welcome, Roxanne Murray, our new president. If you would like to become a society member, please contact Roxanne Murray at (518) 477-7679.
- Happy 98th Birthday, Eleanor Rossner. May you enjoy God's blessings in the coming year.
- Congratulations to our teens who attended the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis—Jared Danaher, Emily Farley, Adam Graham, Julie LeBlanc and James Merrill—and to their chaperone, Stefanie Graham. May you now spread the good news of Jesus!
- Congratulations to Cylon George, who is the campus minister at Hudson Valley Community College and the Sage Colleges. Welcome, Beth Carlin, our new Sacramental Preparation Coordinator.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve:
4 p.m., 6 p.m., 8 p.m.
and 10 p.m.

Christmas Day:
10 a.m.
(There is no evening
7 p.m. Mass in our
area.)

**Holy Spirit is
always online at
www.holyspirit.org.**

Youth Ministry: In A Word, Service

One word to describe Holy Spirit's Youth Ministry this year is "service" because Youth Ministry members want to serve their neighbors. Throughout 2011, teens, supported by their parents, served in a variety of areas.

• Fifty teens and adults participated in the Mission Mondays Service Project this summer. Now in its second year, this service enables parish teens to serve on each Monday in August. The group participated at: Capital City Rescue Mission, Ronald McDonald House,

St. Paul's Center and the Regional Food Bank Farm.

• The Youth Ministry held a diaper drive collecting 40 packages of diapers for families served by Circles of Mercy and raised \$478 for the Joseph's House Winter Walk for the Homeless.

• Teens participated in service opportunities at St. Paul's Center where they ran a play group for the shelter's children.

• Easter baskets were assembled on Palm Sunday. Many hands were available to assist

with the assembly of the baskets for both Joseph's House and Circles of Mercy.

• In November, the Youth Ministry coordinated the collection of nearly 600 cans of yams for CoNCERNS-U's Thanksgiving Basket Drive.

Youth Ministry members, with the support and guidance of adults, continue to show a desire to live out their baptismal call and serve others.

—Tracey Penk-Masucci

Parish Profile: A Deacon's Work

As deacon at Holy Spirit Church, I am an ordained minister of the church. I assist at all Masses on Sundays (except during the Army football season). I am able to, and have, administered the sacrament of baptism and witnessed marriages. I participate in our parish Pastoral Council, am a member of our Local Catholic Community

Leadership Team and LIFT (Living In Faith Together) and RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) coordinator. As LIFT coordinator, I work with the Faith Formation Team to set the theme for the year's faith formation program. LIFT Gatherings involve people from the entire parish sharing their faith and learning about the teachings of the

church. As RCIA coordinator, I assist those learning about the Catholic faith. They may be unbaptized, baptized in another Christian tradition, or baptized Catholic but never received instruction as children. I assist them on their faith journey and share my living out of the Catholic faith in everyday life.—Bill Dringus

Renaissance Ministry: Rebirth

Holy Spirit's Renaissance Ministry is a rebirth of the Senior Ministry. Many of our retired parishioners have been involved in parish life—and we thank all for their gifts and commitment. We call out to recently retired parishioners—now may be the time to share your gifts and energy, and our reorganized Renaissance Ministry offers you more and varied opportunities to become involved. Mother Theresa once said "good works are links that form a chain of love." Some continuing good works are:

- Eucharist to the Homebound;
- Prayer Circle; Sisters Prayer Group;
- Bereavement Support Group with Sacred Heart, St. Johns/St Joseph's and St. Mary's;
- visiting the sick, sending cards of encouragement, thinking of you, birthdays, anniversaries and holidays;
- Caregivers Group;
- Bi-monthly Seniors Newsletter; and,
- participating in LIFT and Adult Formation.—Rosemary Horan

The Social Action Committee

The Holy Spirit Church's Social Action Committee of volunteers, begun 18 years ago, performs acts of charity and advocates for social justice. The committee tries to address the root causes of problems of the poor. Since Called to be Church, we have been joined by Sacred Heart, St. Mary's and St. John the Evangelist/St. Joseph parishes to address social issues facing these communities. The committee's most

significant recent accomplishment was establishing a household for a refugee family from Burma, brought to the United States by Catholic Charities. The family is thriving and adjusting to life in its new country.

Yearly, the committee collects needed items and food through drives on behalf of CoNCERNS-U, Circles of Mercy and Joseph House; which all meet the needs of the poor. This past May, the

committee helped establish a connection with the Rensselaer County Habitat for Humanity and the City of Rensselaer. Committee members also plan to attend the New York State Catholic Conference in March 2012 to foster a voice for the working poor and child care.

Volunteers are needed. If interested, please call Marilyn Fortin at (518) 477-4181.