

## Fra Letter to Come!

I hope that you and your family are doing well and enjoying good health and God's blessings this March! May what has turned out to be a mild winter find you looking forward to spring. And, may Lent have you looking forward to Easter and the promise of New Life!

Late winter always has a surprise or two in mind for us. A snowstorm here, some sleet there... The Lenten journey is not without surprises, too. Perhaps your prayer, fasting and almsgiving provided a challenging moment along the way. That's not all bad: what's Lenten renewal all about if you can't be stretched or called to grow in a new way? Has Lent given you an insight that has been supporting or affirming? Good! It's a sign that you're celebrating Lent well.

I hope you enjoy reading your newsletter today. If you have any news about people and events and ideas to include in future editions (we're planning on Fall, Christmas and Easter issues), please contact Kathy Rosenbaum at krosenba@nycap.rr.com, or me at revjosephobrien@nycap.rr.com, or please call the Parish Office at 477-7925. So often at Holy Spirit *your* ideas shape our parish. Help us make this newsletter a good means of updating parishioners with Holy Spirit happenings! Many thanks!

**Rejoice: He is Risen!**

Fr. Joe O'Brien

## Upcoming Events

**9/4:** Sisters' Prayer Group, 9:30 a.m., Church—The Good Samaritan  
**9/5:** Bible Study, 10:30 a.m., Chapel  
**9/6:** VIRTUS Training, 6 p.m., Gym  
**9/16:** Catechetical Sunday  
**9/17, 19, 23:** LIFT Gathering 1  
**9/30:** Parish Picnic 11am Mass, EG Town Park  
**10/3:** Adult Enrichment—History of the Church, 7 p.m., School  
**10/10:** Adult Enrichment—Liturgical Year, 7 p.m., School  
**10/11:** Adult/teen enrichment—On the Road with the Good Samaritan, 6:30 p.m., School  
**10/15:** Kateri Tekakwitha, 6:30 p.m., School  
**10/16:** VIRTUS Training, 6 p.m., Gym  
**10/17:** Adult Enrichment—Jesus, 7 p.m., School  
**10/22, 24, 28:** LIFT Gathering 2

## Holy Spirit School Prepares for 2012-13 School Year

The Holy Spirit Community, Parish and School, came together throughout the summer to prepare Holy Spirit School for the upcoming 2012-2013 school year. Least of the work was a summer-long search for the new Holy Spirit School principal by a panel of parents, teachers, staff, parishioners and parish trustees. The panel continues to search for the right principal to lead the school. As the search concludes, more information will be available.

During the summer, the school was lead by Interim Principal Edith Toohey, who brought a wealth of educational experience to the role and an in-depth knowledge of Holy Spirit as Toohey has served as parish secretary for four years. According to Toohey, parents and teachers have pulled

together offering assistance, support and positive comments throughout the summer. "As we begin this new school year, it is my hope that our journey will be one in which our school community grows in our faith and achieves the goals we have set personally and academically..." said Toohey.

New Middle School faculty joined Holy Spirit School: Marc Grace, mathematics; Samantha Eichele, English language arts; and, Liam Treacy, science.

Based on feedback from teachers, parents and ministry leaders, the Technology Committee reformed and is now composed of parents and school and parish leadership focused on augmenting school resources and developing a stronger school-parish partnership. Designed to accelerate technological improvements, the committee implemented upgrades to

ensure students have a robust learning experience and parish staff, namely Faith Formation leaders, have access to the technology in order to enhance their programs. A \$5,000 donation from a Holy Spirit parishioner contributed to the infrastructure upgrade that enabled improved wireless access and connectivity.

"We are so thankful for the generosity and support our school and parish members have shown throughout our principal search and our continued school upgrades and improvements," said Fr. Joseph O'Brien. "It is our community coming together in times of need and to better our offerings that ensure Holy Spirit's continued excellence. We especially thank Edith Toohey for her outstanding work and dedication, and sincerely thank our generous donor who helped us improve our technological capabilities."

## Holy Spirit Master Plan Update

The Holy Spirit Community's Facilities Planning Committee has been meeting throughout the spring and summer with Paul Mays and Steve Rowland, architects with the architectural firm of Butler Rowland Mays (BRM), to consider and review our community programming needs and consider the space suitability in our buildings—the church, school and parish house. The Physical Facilities Assessment and the Programming Requirement Assessment have been prepared and submitted to the Diocesan Architecture and Building Commission for review.

In September, architect Paul Mays and the committee will host a discussion for the community to participate in our Master Plan process. Two sessions are planned for your convenience: Saturday, Sept. 22, 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. (followed by the 4 p.m. Mass), OR Thursday, Sept. 27, 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Both sessions will be held in the school gym with refreshments available. —Kathy Rosenbaum

## LIFT Update: Growing in Faith Is Life Long!

Our Faith Formation program, LIFT (Living In Faith Together), will continue to be intergenerational and family-based with year round opportunities to share faith for your **family, you and community members**. Growing in faith is life-long! To nourish faith, please participate in our offerings throughout the year. Your presence and hospitality helps create a welcoming space for all ages to worship and live in faith together, passing faith from one generation to the next.

During the past few years, we had a "blended" program: weekly extension sessions for children in grades K-10 in the fall and winter, and five intergenerational and family-based gatherings. Starting in September, we will no longer have weekly extension sessions. Instead, Faith Formation for all parishioners will be:

- Seven(7) intergenerational and family-based gatherings;
- Monthly, age-specific activities and seminars;
- Liturgy of the Word with Children, all year long;
- Parish hospitality;
- Weekly Mass;
- Service missions;
- Stewardship Day in June; and,
- Sacramental Preparation will remain separate and apart from Faith Formation.

The seven intergenerational family-based LIFT Gatherings will remain on **Monday, Wednesday and Sunday with new times—5:30-7:30 p.m.** This year's topic is "Living as a Disciple of Jesus". Liturgy of the Word with Children will begin at the 11 a.m. Sunday Masses. Adults, teens and families are all invited to help. Monthly age-specific offerings will be announced regularly in Google Calendar on our website ([www.holyspiritchurch.org](http://www.holyspiritchurch.org)) and in the *Bulletin*; you may also call the Parish Office at 477-7925 for updated information. —Maria Collins

### Faith sharing is best experienced in a community; join us!

- ▲ Mass weekly ▲ Seven intergenerational family LIFT Gatherings ▲ Stewardship Day in June
- ▲ Parish hospitality/activities, ▲ Monthly age specific activities & seminars
- ▲ Service Missions ▲ Sacramental Preparation as needed

## Mission Mondays Help Those in Need

During summer 2012, Mission Mondays included 10 different missions—ranging from working in soup kitchens, serving meals to children and seniors, gardening, participating in play groups and renovating a room for a boy living in an Albany residential program (see Youth Ministry Gives Boy Bedroom of His Dreams on this page)—and 56 teens and adults working together to help accommodate only 5-6 people at a time, Holy Spirit mission participants reported positive experiences, and participation continues to grow. —Tracey Penk-Masucci

## Vacation Bible Camp: Olympian Fever

Holy Spirit's Vacation Bible Camp, held Aug. 13-17 at the Holy Spirit School, included 30 children and 15 teens enthused with Olympian fever. The teens planned the entire week's Olympic-themed events and created readings, games, crafts and other activities while exploring qualities important for athletes, such as preparation, trust, confidence, perseverance, friendship and team work. During the week-long camp, children listened to stories of Noah, Daniel, Samson, David and Paul and learned about five saints: Sebastien (patron of athletes), Anthony (patron of the lost), Mary--the Mother of God (the first disciple, on the feast of her assumption), Mother Teresa and soon-to-be canonized Kateri Tekakwitha. —Maria Collins

## Parish Happenings

- **Book Club.** Beginning in November, Kathy Rosenbaum will facilitate "Finding Morality and Virtue in 'To Kill a Mockingbird'". All adults and teens grade 9 and above are invited to join in this unique opportunity. Join us on Nov. 26, at 6:30 p.m. in the School for introductory meeting. Read the book and reconvene Jan. 17 to discuss; Movie Night on Feb. 3. Watch the *Bulletin* for details!
- **Scripture Exploration for Women.** Join us in October for Scripture Exploration for Women. Kathy Rosenbaum will facilitate group driven topics centered in God's Word and how we live the Word today. Watch the *Bulletin* for details.

## Online Giving: Secure and Easy!

Online giving—now available at Holy Spirit Church—is secure and easy! Electronic funds transfer from your checking or savings account allows you to donate and manage your stewardship online. You may access online giving via an online donation Authorization Form at [www.holyspiritchurcheg.org](http://www.holyspiritchurcheg.org) or obtain a form at the Parish Office, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Join now—20 of your fellow parishioners are already giving online!

**Holy Spirit is always  
online at:**  
[www.holyspiritchurcheg.org](http://www.holyspiritchurcheg.org)

## Parish Profile: Meaghan Rossbach Living in Faith

Living her life in a faith-filled manner means Meaghan Rossbach, Church of the Holy Spirit parishioner and volunteer, lives her faith in action every day. After moving to East Greenbush in 2008, Rossbach soon found herself joining in Holy Spirit Parish activities, including summer Bible Camp and as a catechist for children of all ages. Rossbach, a mother of a 16-month-old daughter, remains active by participating and volunteering with: the Amazing God Evangelization Initiative, which works to bring people back into the Church; the Capital Region Frassati Chapter, which brings adults aged 18-39 together to learn from one another how they experience faith and then perhaps share ideas with their individual parishes; Holy Spirit's Facilities Planning Committee; and, the newly formed Catholic Mom's Ministry.

"I enjoy being part of a parish," said Rossbach. "Holy

Spirit is like a second family to me. The parish is always there for me, and the staff and families are just so nice."

According to Rossbach, being around people who care about their faith is important to her. "Everyone in the parish is an inspiration to me," she added. "I look up to them. Holy Spirit is a very warm and welcoming community...I feel like I'm always evolving as a parishioner. Getting involved fulfills you as a person and fulfills your faith life."

Rossbach added that she lives her faith by following her heart. Noting that there is a challenge not to be "stuck in a rut" and that living faith is "a struggle for anyone", she stated that she learns from other parishioners how they follow their faith. By talking and working with others, Rossbach sees how her faith may grow and likes to "spread the word".

On Oct. 15, Rossbach will be

speaking at Holy Spirit Church on Kateri Tekakwitha, who is her Confirmation Saint. Raised in Washingtonville, Orange County, NY, Rossbach said that Kateri has been an important Saint in her family. In addition, Rossbach is working with her husband, Chuck to potentially organize a parish men's basketball league in conjunction with sports scripture study. "Doing something as a group is another way of tying in your faith," she added.

Rossbach cites Paul's Letters to Timothy (Timothy 1 and 2) as a couple of her favorite scripture passages, because, she said, "They are a great source for Catechism and evangelization."

In her limited spare time, Rossbach enjoys taking her daughter, Tara, to the local library's Storytime and planning local trips around the Capital Region for her family and friends, especially during the warm weather.

## Stewardship Day: A Day of Service and Ministry

Holy Spirit's Stewardship Day—held on June 2—was a day of service and ministry that enabled parishioners to join together for one day to put faith into serviceable action.

Coinciding with LIFT's (Living In Faith Together) year of intergenerational faith sharing, Stewardship Day naturally fit with LIFT's teachings of poverty awareness, economic justice and Earth Day. Stewardship Day is also a natural extension of Holy Spirit's work during the past two summers when members of the youth ministry (teens, parents, chaperones and young adults) joined in community service and ministry for five weeks during each summer.

The June 2, 2012, Stewardship Day included a wide variety of service and activity, including: preparing 170 bagged lunches for the Capital City Rescue Mission and delivering four carloads of clothing to the mission; holding a baby shower for Circles of Mercy after collecting supplies and monies; contributing to solidier packages with Operation Adopt A Solidier; collecting funds for Cookies for Pediatric Care; participating with the Grafton State Park Trails for National Trails Day; making rosaries for our Armed Forces; Garden Ministry volunteers refreshed the Holy Spirit campus; participants helped with the Freihofer's

Run for Women, volunteers ran in Miles for Michael, a 5k run to support an East Greenbush student; mailing paper cranes with Holy Spirit Cranes for Cancer; providing Relay for Life bracelets at the Stewardship Day dinner; and, many participants performed their own service missions.

Along with the day's participants, Bishop Howard J. Hubbard celebrated Mass and enjoyed a delicious pot luck dinner. The evening featured an ongoing display of photos taken throughout the day. Next year's Stewardship Day is June 1, 2013—save the date! —Tracey Penk-Masucci

## Youth Ministry Gives Boy Bedroom of His Dreams

A nine-year-old boy residing in Albany's St. Catherine's Center for Children, a family and child human services organization, is dreaming of his newly made over SpongeBob Square Pants-themed bedroom—thanks to the generosity and hard work of Holy Spirit parishioners and Youth Ministry members. The SpongeBob-bedroom renovation is the first in the St. Catherine's Make Over for Kids Program. Holy Spirit's Youth Ministry summer program takes on a community mission to help those in need. To redo his room, eight Youth Ministry teens and their coordinator, Tracey Penk-Masucci, met with the boy and learned his interests, solicited donations from the Holy Spirit community and went to work in late August to remake the room into a SpongeBob Bikini Bottom haven. Work included painting the room blue to simulate an underwater feel, painting murals of SpongeBob characters and accessories, SpongeBob bedding and curtains and other furnishings, SpongeBob slippers, and a new desk and chair.

A late August ceremony was held to reveal for the first time the renovated room to the boy and those who made this possible, and included: a donated Yankee Trails bus ride from St. Catherine's around Albany's Washington Park, as the boy is also interested in buses; a reception; and tours of St. Catherine's. More than 50 people attended the ceremony—including Bishop Howard J. Hubbard, Fr. Joe O'Brien, Holy Spirit Youth Ministry teens and their families, Holy Spirit parishioners who donated more than \$500 to the renovation, Holy Spirit staff and St. Catherine's friends and Board members. Upon seeing his SpongeBob-themed bedroom, the boy said, "This is the best day of my life!"

"Once there, you leave St. Catherine's changed and want to do more," said Penk-Masucci, who added that the Holy Spirit youth were so moved by the children at St. Catherine's that they plan to make over another room this year.—Debbie Sgroi