

Easter  
2014



## Holy Spirit Community Newsletter

### Blessings for Lent

Lent helps us leave the intense winter behind and walk with Jesus as we prepare to enter the memorable and most eventful days of Holy Week and Easter—days that shape our lives as we come to understand more deeply about life, death and new life! Come, pray with the entire Holy Spirit community during this most important time of the year! All are welcome here!

It is an exciting time for Holy Spirit as we develop and implement a Master Plan to address community needs. Now in its final phases, the Master Plan is the result of more than two years of painstaking and persistent efforts by our Facilities Planning Committee and architects. Our Master Plan, which includes new space and improvements, was developed with the Holy Spirit parish and school community. It is a vital and dynamic community plan addressing the needs of today, tomorrow and years to come.

You are essential to our plan's success. Join us as we unveil the Master Plan on April 8<sup>th</sup> at a wine and cheese reception. There will be a slide presentation and time to mingle with friends and neighbors. (See detailed Master Plan information on page 1.) Please RSVP.

We're excited about the direction and progress of this Master Plan, which will enable Holy Spirit to continue to welcome and serve the people of our parish and school, work with nearby parishes, and reach out to the larger community.

Fr. Joe O'Brien

### Master Plan: Participation Essential to Success

An exciting future is in store for our community! The Facilities Planning Committee (FPC) continues to work very hard with architects Paul Mays and Heather Hasselbacher of Butler Rowland Mays Architects, LLP, based in Ballston Spa, to complete the Master Plan for the Holy Spirit community—both the parish and school. The Master Plan is a blueprint for the community's future growth and is almost complete.

Since December, FPC members and the architects worked diligently to complete the Phase IV report—consensus building among community members—to submit to the Diocese in mid-January for review. The Phase IV report describes a plan to address the community's growing spiritual, pastoral and educational needs. With participation from parish staff, ministries, school faculty and community members, the FPC completed a plan that begins to meet these needs.

In late February, the Diocesan Office of Pastoral Planning and the Architecture and Building Commission formally approved Phase IV of the Holy Spirit Community Master Plan—paving the way for Phase 1 implementation. Phase 1 includes construction of **Spirit Hall**, a multipurpose space adjacent to the school library, alongside the sidewalk leading from the school to the church. Spirit Hall will provide much needed space for after-Mass hospitalities, academic sessions, retreats, dining space, programs and meetings. Phase 1 also includes expansion of the technology center used for both school and parish programs. Also included are improvements to the church's plumbing and ventilation; Parish House roof replacement and improvements; and, school technology and library improvements. Future phases may include additional construction and improvements based on community needs and financial resources. Future project features to be considered include: church narthex extension and elevator/stairs to Spirit Hall; Parish House workspace improvements; playground improvements; school classrooms and technology improvements; church lighting and Sanctuary improvements; and, site and parking lot improvements. All projects allow for day- and nighttime facility use and school security.

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**Join Holy Spirit's Facilities Planning Committee on Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, Wine and Cheese Reception to unveil the Community Master Plan, 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m., at The Comfort Inn, East Greenbush. RSVP to 477-7925 or [info@holyspiritchurcheg.org](mailto:info@holyspiritchurcheg.org).**

### LIFT—Cycling through the Liturgical Year

Our journey through the seasons of the Liturgical Year is exciting. We explored Archangels, Guardian Angels and St Francis of Assisi (September); the Communion of Saints and the celebrations of All Saints and All Souls (October); the Advent and Christmas seasons (November); the Feast of the conversion of St. Paul and his missionary journeys (January); the Lenten season (February); and, the Annunciation and Holy Week (March).

**Our journey continues.** Our journey continues with our next LIFT Gathering, "Earth, Wind, and Fire", on April 21, 23 and 27, 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., in the school gym. Celebrate the Easter season and Pentecost together as community—feed your body and soul! The gathering begins with a meal of chicken Caesar salad. Choose the night that best suits your family's schedule. LIFT Gatherings are intergenerational and for anyone and everyone. All are welcome!

**Stewardship Day, May 31.** Our final LIFT Gathering for the 2013-14 year is Stewardship Day on May 31. (See page 2 for more on Stewardship Day.) Watch the *Bulletin*, web site and emails for information on ways you can put your faith into action as part of a unified community. Our day of stewardship opens with a Prayer of Sending and closes with a 4 p.m. Mass, immediately followed by a community potluck dinner in the school cafeteria.—*Kathy Rosenbaum*

## Hope for Tomorrow: Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Every day, Holy Spirit Church and its ministries offer help and hope for tomorrow to our community members and neighbors. We are living the baptismal call to serve.

**Stewardship Day, May 31.** A day of service that puts faith into action, Stewardship Day is a faith community event that helps those in need and betters the community. It is a natural extension of the Youth Ministry's volunteer work. With the May 31, 2014, Stewardship Day, Holy Spirit looks to build on the last two years' success and welcomes ideas and suggestions for work sites and stewardship opportunities, as well as people to serve as contacts. Activities include: lunch preparation for the Capital City Rescue Mission; meal preparation for Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless; and, a clothing drive for the Capital City Rescue Mission—and much more!

Stewardship Day begins with a Prayer of Sending Forth for participants who will serve throughout the community. We will gather for the 4 p.m. Mass and a community potluck dinner in the school cafeteria. Contact Tracey Penk-Masucci at 477-7925 for more information.

**Copson House.** The Holy Spirit community was honored by St. Catherine's Center for Children early this year with the Hope For Tomorrow Award for its long-time volunteer work with St. Catherine's Copson House Group Home. Albany's St. Catherine's Center for Children is a family and child human services not-for-profit organization that houses up to 25 children aged 5-13 who need a safe home.

According to Brian Bell, St. Catherine's director of community relations, the award recognizes those whose vision, energy and support makes a lasting contribution to the well-being of children and families served by St. Catherine's.

### **Stewardship Day is May 31, 2014:**

#### **Join with Holy Spirit to Help Our Neighbors.**

"Volunteers from the Church of the Holy Spirit have been incredible supporters," said Bell. "In ways large and small, their work has contributed to the quality of lives our children enjoy."

### **Parish Profile: Gus & Joyce Lapham Believe Helping Others Is a Privilege**

**Caring for others—a family legacy.** Gus and Joyce Lapham, both long term Holy Spirit Church members and East Greenbush residents—exemplify our Catholic belief in loving our neighbors. According to the Laphams, they were raised to care for others and help those in need, and, they said, fostered this value while raising their two daughters, who in turn have imparted the family philosophy to their nine children.

Gus Lapham is busy every week: bringing the Eucharist to people in hospitals and long-term care facilities and who are homebound; transporting people to various appointments and on various errands—even driving them to Mass; serving as an usher during Mass and delivering weekly church donations to CoNSERNS-U; and, helping, along his wife Joyce Lapham, at all LIFT gatherings—setting up tables, distributing materials, assisting in the kitchen and then cleaning up afterward. "I have the time, so I give back," he said.

Joyce Lapham is a four-year member of the Altar Rosary Society, which prays for others as well as helps those in need, and helps Holy Spirit staff prepare, serve and clean up meals for every LIFT gathering. "It is important to help those who need," Joyce said. "I enjoy helping in any way I can. You feel great when you realize how helpful you are."

**A privilege to serve.** Both Laphams were recently named by Holy Spirit Church as the first recipients of the Holy Spirit LIFT Stewardship Recognition, which will be an annual event presented on Stewardship Day. The LIFT Stewardship Recognition honors those who live the Gospel of Matthew 25: 31-40, which, said Kathy Rosenbaum, parish associate, "teaches us to be kind to one another—the poor, the marginalized, the hungry, the prisoners, etc."

"The Laphams have a long standing history with the parish and school community," Rosenbaum noted. "They are the hands and feet of Christ on Earth."

"I find it a profound privilege to serve as a Eucharist minister... to bring the blessed sacrament into homes, senior apartments and the hospitals as well," said Gus.

According to Gus, he is motivated by scripture: "When you do this for the least of my people, you do this for me." These words, he said, are "always present in the back of my mind, and the effort always brings me joy. I am always moved by the faith, zeal, gratitude I find, especially in the hospitals... Sometimes a visit with a patient, conversation, communion or a prayer may produce a tear or two. When that happens, it is tough—but very moving," he said.

From hosting Christmas parties to donating Easter Baskets, from coordinating book drives to monthly visits to prepare homemade meals, our friends at Holy Spirit have enriched the lives of our children beyond measure. Their crowning achievement was a complete renovation of the community room at Copson House. During a long weekend, Holy Spirit volunteers turned an old playroom into a bright and inviting space. The new playroom—with a Washington Park theme—sports bright murals, new play areas and even a small stage patterned after the Washington Park Playhouse. Volunteers provided the vision, labor and materials to create this one-of-a-kind playroom. We cannot thank them enough."

Another project included renovating a boy's room into a Sponge Bob Square Pants-themed bedroom. The Youth Ministry and volunteers continue to bring, prepare and share dinner and dessert with the children residing in Copson House, followed by a game of Bingo. Volunteers are always welcome to join the ministry every third Sunday of the month, 3:30 p.m.-6 p.m., for dinner. Contact Tracey Penk-Masucci at 477-7925 for more information.

**Easter Baskets.** Providing Easter Baskets to more than 200 Rensselaer County children and families in need for more than 20 years, Holy Spirit's Youth Ministry and parishioners assemble baskets for each child containing a small toy, such as sidewalk chalk, coloring book and crayons, small sports ball, card deck, jump rope, bubbles or crafts kit; a small stuffed animal; plastic eggs filled with wrapped candy pieces; a story book; and, a chocolate bunny nestled in Easter grass—all donated by Holy Spirit parishioners. Basket assembly occurs in the Holy Spirit School gym following the Palm Sunday 8:30 a.m. Mass. Contact Tracey Penk-Masucci at 477-7925 for more information.

## Sacraments of Initiation May Begin at Any Age

**All are welcome—any time!** While parents bring their children throughout the year to Holy Spirit Church to encounter God in the sacrament of Baptism, said Fr. Joe O'Brien, Holy Spirit's spiritual leader, adults are sacramentally welcomed and received into the Catholic church on the Easter Vigil.

"At Holy Spirit, all are welcome—the door is open," said O'Brien. "No one is turned away. We will walk with individuals as they journey to a relationship with God and continue their initiation into God's love and grace by receiving Sacraments of Initiation. Perhaps someone was not ready to receive Confirmation at age 14. We will find a way for him or her to come back. We walk together as a community to help them find greater closeness with God."

The Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation—help Catholics form their commitment to the church and their faith.

**Sacraments of Initiation offer grace.** Sacraments of Initiation are important, said Beth Carlin, Holy Spirit sacramental preparation minister, because "they lead to full participation in the church...It is about spiritual gain and a growing relationship with God and community...The sacraments themselves give us the grace to continue on our journey. Every sacrament in its own way strengthens us with God's love."

**Baptism.** Baptism is our first entrance into the church and faith, and begins full initiation into the church.

"Whether you are the parents of an infant son or daughter, or you are a young person, or an adult filled with life's experience, Baptism is the sacrament that speaks to your first encounter with Jesus Christ," said O'Brien. "People seek Jesus Christ. We all journey as church to be one with Jesus in word, way and sacrament. Awash in the waters of Baptism, you are filled with all a life-giving God has to offer. Anointed with oil, we are gifted to follow Jesus in his life of prophetic service."

**Eucharist.** Eucharist is the sharing of Jesus' body and blood as we memorialize the ritual he shared with his disciples the night before he died. We pray to the Holy Spirit to bless our gifts of bread and wine to become Christ's body and blood.

"As Catholics, our celebration of the Eucharist is the center of life in our community," said O'Brien. "Sacraments can be celebrated at any time. With children, immediate preparation and reception of the Eucharist is at the age of reason, or about age seven or eight, and is about capability. With adults, receiving Eucharist is about call and community. So, when adults experience a call and longing to share in the Eucharist, the community journeys with them in a deeper encounter with Christ, helping them come to the Lord's table."

**Confirmation.** At Confirmation, people are anointed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Catholics prepare for Confirmation by meeting with mentors, members of the parish community who discuss their faith journey with those preparing for Confirmation.

"It is a combination of catechist and prayer partner," Carlin said. "We receive Confirmation with an open spirit and hopeful heart."

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## School Update

Spring always follows winter with a rebirth of nature, our spirit and our faith. During this past long, cold winter, we were busy at Holy Spirit School (HSS). Lessons taught, projects assigned, homework completed (and forgotten at home), bulletin boards created, tests passed, faith grown, friendships made and strengthened, community service performed, birthdays celebrated, games won and lost, smiles and tears shared, school applications sent and accepted, and the copier jammed and unjammed. And that's just a typical week!

This winter we take particular pride in our:

- mother/son bowling night;
- Catholic Schools Week celebration;
- Ronald McDonald House fundraising;
- Reading Buddies across grade levels;
- 100<sup>th</sup> Day Celebration and Hat Contest;
- accepting 43 books for Project Cameron's Story;
- successful March Open House;
- father/daughter dance;
- Dr. Seuss and the Crazy Sox Day;
- Lucky the Leprechaun visit;
- Pre-K & Kindergarten Pajama Night; and,
- revamped web site ([www.hsseg.com](http://www.hsseg.com)).

The end of the school year quickly approaches, but plenty of activities are planned. So, please mark your calendars.

- Silent Auction, April 26
- Open House, May 3
- Spring Concert, May 15
- Comedy Show, May 16
- Grade 8 Graduation, June 23
- Last Day of School, June 25
- Summer Camp, June 30-Aug. 8
- Vacation Bible Camp, Aug. 11-15

We are currently enrolling students in all grades for the 2014-15 school year. Anyone interested in attending HSS, please call the school at 477-5739 for information. We are a great school continuing to improve. We thank you for your help and your support is greatly appreciated. *Servire cum Laetitia* (to serve with joy)—*Michael Piatek*

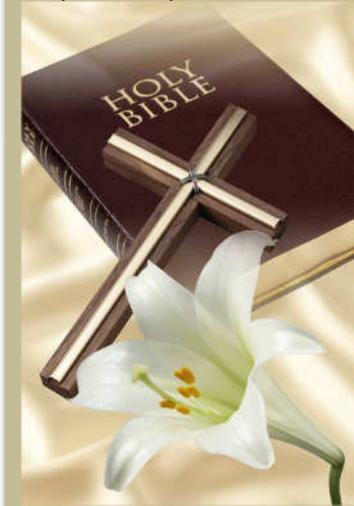
## Scharfenberger to Lead Albany Diocese

Pope Francis named Monsignor Edward B. Scharfenberger as the next bishop to lead Albany's diocese. Scharfenberger succeeds Bishop Howard J. Hubbard, who held the position for 37 years and announced his retirement in late October. Scharfenberger's ordination and installation as bishop is scheduled for April 10, 2 p.m., at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Albany. A live web stream of the ordination will be available via a link from [www.rcda.org](http://www.rcda.org).



## Upcoming Events

**3/27:** Stations of the Cross with the Women of the Gospels, Holy Spirit Church, 11 a.m.  
**3/28 & 4/4:** Stations of the Cross, Holy Spirit Church, 6:30 p.m.  
**4/8:** Unveiling the Community Master Plan Wine and Cheese Reception, The Comfort Inn, East Greenbush, 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m.,  
**4/11:** Stations of the Cross with the Women of the Gospels, Holy Spirit Church, 6:30 p.m.  
**4/13:** Easter Basket Assembly, Holy Spirit School gym, 9:30 a.m.-11 a.m.  
**4/21, 4/23 & 4/27:** LIFT Gathering, Earth, Wind and Fire, Holy Spirit School gym 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.



### Lenten Reconciliation Services

**4/1:** St. Henry's, 7 p.m. (Averill Park)  
**4/2:** Sacred Heart, 7 p.m. (Castleton)  
**4/7:** Holy Spirit, 7 p.m. (East Greenbush)  
**4/9:** St. John/St. Joseph's, 12:10 p.m. (Rensselaer)

Please see the enclosed post card for a full listing of Holy Week Easter Mass schedules.

**Mark the Date!**  
**Vacation Bible Camp,**  
**Aug. 11-15, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.,**  
**Holy Spirit Church**

### Master Plan, continued from page 1

**Together, we can do great things.** Participation in the formation of the Holy Spirit Community Master Plan continues to be essential to its success. The FPC met with all stakeholders in the parish and school communities to gather input and insight. Once needs and desires were identified, the FPC and architects worked hard to respect community needs and be responsible with your stewardship. The plan outlined above is more than two years' work to develop a comprehensive Master Plan that meets our present and future growing needs.

FPC is grateful for your interest and support in developing the Master Plan. Continued interest, support and participation helps our community meet the spiritual, educational and pastoral needs you identified.

**Help shape our future.** Please join us on Tuesday, April 8, 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. at The Comfort Inn, 99 Miller Road, East Greenbush, for a FREE wine and cheese reception and slide presentation to learn more about the planned expansion and improvements. Also, come meet three new FPC members—Tom Reamer, Ken Rizzo and Amy Utter.

Visit our web site ([info@holyspiritchurcheg.org](mailto:info@holyspiritchurcheg.org)) and read the weekly *Bulletin* for periodic updates. Help ready Holy Spirit Parish and School for the next 90 years!—*Kathy Rosenbaum*

### Sacraments, continued from page 3

**RCIA.** The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is available for people seeking the Sacraments of Initiation. RCIA is the process that enables people of all ages to begin or continue their faith journey and deepen their commitment, said O'Brien.

In late November, Holy Spirit celebrated the Rite of Acceptance, during which the community welcomed and prayed for current RCIA participants, who received sacraments and formally joined the Catholic church. On the first Sunday of Lent, the church celebrated the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion at the Cathedral. Holy Spirit's RCIA candidates participate in rituals during the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent to prepare to receive sacraments at the Easter Vigil.

"RCIA is for the person who never had the opportunity to share in the sacraments or lived in another faith tradition," O'Brien said. "RCIA is there for you when you need it."

According to Deacon Bill Dringus, who guides Holy Spirit's RCIA process, 60 people have completed the RCIA process at Holy Spirit during the past 20 years. "I am extremely proud of the RCIA process and the people who have gone through it," Dringus added. "They have studied and prepared and then joined the community as those who will continue to carry out Jesus' wish that we help one another."

**Sacraments of Initiation begin the faith journey.** "The Sacraments of Initiation enable us to fully embrace and celebrate our complete acceptance of Jesus and his teachings to help and love one another," said O'Brien. "All are not expected to go through the sacramental preparation process the same way or even at the same time. So, of course, Holy Spirit's doors are open—wide open—when people are ready to prepare and receive the Sacraments of Initiation. We really are here whenever we are needed."

"Sacraments are not a reward or graduation after completing a checklist of stuff," noted Carlin. "Sacraments are grace, and we prepare ourselves to receive that grace through prayer, discussion of faith, exploring our doubts, exploring our relationship with God and living our faith through community celebrations (Mass) and service to others...We spend our lives *continuing* our journey...Learning about our faith is a *life-long* process."

**Sacramental preparation is available for all. Contact Beth Carlin or Fr. Joe O'Brien at 477-7925 or [info@holyspiritchurcheg.org](mailto:info@holyspiritchurcheg.org) to learn more.**

### Rossner Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

The Holy Spirit parish hosted a potluck dinner in the school cafeteria in early November to celebrate parishioner Eleanor Rossner's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Rossner continues to be an active church member who often participates in parish activities and helps with LIFT programs. At the celebration, about 120 people gathered to commemorate Rossner's life, including her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. One of Rossner's granddaughters created a pictorial storybook of Rossner's life and hung photos of Rossner over the past century throughout the cafeteria.