



Blessed Sacrament News

Vol 3 December 2020

1029 Delaware Avenue | Buffalo, NY | 716.884-0053

2020-2021

Parish

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Christmas Greetings & New Year Wishes



Fr. Joe Porpiglia
Pastor

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Blessed Sacrament Church:

It is hard to believe that one year has already passed since I said my first Mass here at Blessed Sacrament as your new pastor. And what a year that has been, indeed! The challenges we all face, constantly adapting and always being asked to be flexible just in case the plans we made might be changed, again.

In March when our church was closed, I remember thinking how we would be able to sustain our faith community? I must say that I am very grateful to you, our parishioners, and I'm also very proud of your commitment to our parish and to your faith. The creativity that emerged because of the restrictions was wonderful to see.

This issue of *Blessed Sacrament News* will highlight some 2020 moments of our community's celebration of Easter and the sacraments, welcoming new parishioners and a new bishop, as well as looking forward to what 2021 might bring in terms of our faith community.

Amidst all of the flurry of preparations for Christmas, let us all take a moment to sit in silence with the Lord. In this silence, let us listen to Him, and to thank Him for all the gifts He has bestowed upon us. Let us pray for peace on earth and goodwill to all peoples, and that we learn to love one another as the Lord God has loved us. My wishes to you for the Merriest of Christmases and may the New Year be filled with abundance, kindness, and joy for you and your loved ones!

Pax et bonum,

Fr. Joe Porpiglia,
Pastor



Pope Francis Names New Bishop for Buffalo Diocese

On December 1, 2020 at Noon (Rome time), Pope Francis named the fifteenth bishop of the Diocese of Buffalo: Bishop Michael William Fisher.

Bishop Fisher was born on March 3, 1958 in Baltimore, Maryland, and is the oldest of five children. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1990. Named an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Washington, he was ordained to the episcopate on June 29, 2018 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

"At my core I am a parish priest and pastor," said Bishop Fisher. "All I ever wanted to be when finally discerning and accepting the call to ministry was to serve a parish family, to walk with its members and accompany them on their own journey toward holiness; to share in their joys, their heartaches and to have some part to play in revealing the incomparable love and grace of God as they experience life's defining moments." Our new Bishop announced at his first press conference that he hopes that the faithful of our diocese will call him "Bishop Mike."



Bishop Michael W. Fisher
"Bishop Mike"

Bishop Fisher's installation will take place on Friday, January 15, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. in St. Joseph Cathedral. His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Metropolitan Archbishop of New York, will preside and Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, will be in attendance.



Blessed Sacrament News

Welcome to our New Parishioners!

Since March 2020, we haven't been able to hold our regular liturgies, and once we did reopen, the wearing of masks and the elimination of gatherings after Mass have made it difficult to get to know new members of our parish family. In this volume of *Blessed Sacrament News*, we'd like to introduce some of the 26 people who officially joined the parish since December 2019. These new parishioners represent 12 new households, with 17 adults and 9 children.

During our Coffee Talks in 2019, parishioners were asked what they hoped for in the future. A common response was wishing that young people and families with children would join our parish. Well, it appears that those wishes are becoming reality! **Here's a big, warm Blessed Sacrament "WELCOME" to our Faith Community!** We all look forward to getting to know you and working with you in the years to come.



Tiffany Bentley

1) When did you join the parish? Why did you join?

Summer of 2020: previously attended various churches including St. Joseph University Parish, Buffalo. I have moved a lot since belonging to my childhood and family parish and had never joined on my own since then. I started attending Blessed Sacrament on my own when I moved to the Elmwood Village. I had been attending for about a year before Father Joe came to the parish. One day he asked me to do the candles and I was very nervous. Father Joe was so welcoming and presented a sense of community I hadn't thought about or experienced before. I would bring friends to mass who also felt very welcome. Deacon Bill was also a part of this feeling of supporting our community. That's when I realized it was time to join a parish.

2) After joining, what aspects of Blessed Sacrament's parish life do you especially like?

The Mass itself is always very enlightening to me. I have really appreciated during quarantine and COVID the extra measures that have been taken to make people feel safe. I've heard people from other parishes compliment how safe they feel attending mass at Blessed Sacrament. The virtual options have been very important too. I also can't stress enough how much Father Joe expressing care for parishioners and his importance on people feeling like they belong to a faith community has been such an important part of being a part of the parish.

3) Who are the other members of your household? What are the occupations/employers of the adults?

Tiffany Bentley: Media
Robert Rabb: Hospitality Industry

4) What do you look forward to in 2021 at Blessed Sacrament?

I look forward to getting involved in more volunteer opportunities in the community.



**Daniel & Lindsay
Brazil**

1) When did you join the parish? Why did you join?

December 2019: previously attended St. May's in Simsbury, CT. Blessed Sacrament was close to our home, and when we went to Mass the first time, we really felt already like we were part of the parish. It was very welcoming.

2) After joining, what aspects of Blessed Sacrament's parish life do you especially like?

We love the community feel of the church, and how it is very involved with community outreach and helping those less fortunate than us.

3) Who are the other members of your household? What are occupations/employers of the adults?

Lindsay Brazil: Email Marketing Manager
Daniel Brazil: Embedded Systems Engineer

4) What do you look forward to in 2021 at Blessed Sacrament?

We're looking forward to getting more involved with the community outreach!



Welcome to our New Parishioners!



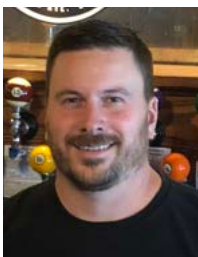
**Elizabeth
Buckley**

- 1) **When did you join the parish? Why did you join?**
June 2020 (started attending in April 2019): previously attended St. Joseph's, Gowanda, NY. My hometown priest made me aware of Blessed Sacrament and it is close to my home here. Following the first service I attended, I sat next to and met a parishioner who was warm and friendly. By way of her I became involved in Blessed Sacrament Church.
- 2) **After joining, what aspects of Blessed Sacrament's parish life do you especially like?**
I have enjoyed getting to know multiple parishioners and am enjoying the Bible Study Class.
- 3) **Who are the other members of your household? What are occupations/employers of the adults?**
Retired: Telecommunications and Speech Pathology and audiology
- 4) **What do you look forward to in 2021 at Blessed Sacrament?**
Seeing more parishioners attend Mass and having a variety of activities to attend.



**Matthew
Lunghino**

- 1) **When did you join the parish? Why did you join?**
May 2020: previously attended St. Josaphat's. I joined mainly because Fr. Joe makes everyone feel so welcome. I had attended Mass off and on for a year before deciding to become an official parishioner. I had experienced some unexpected health issues in April of this year, and Fr. Joe wasted no time offering his spiritual support, which ultimately led to me joining the parish.
- 2) **After joining, what aspects of Blessed Sacrament's parish life do you especially like?**
I especially like how quickly the parish came up with alternative options to "attend" Mass because of Covid-19's restrictions. The conference call-in number was a nice way to feel some sense of community and allowed me to "attend" Mass without putting myself and others at risk. The addition of the YouTube livestream made that even better!
- 3) **Who are the other members of your household? What are occupations/employers of the adults?**
I currently live at home with my parents who are both retired. I currently work as an Account Manager at a local advertising agency, FIFTEEN.
- 4) **What do you look forward to in 2021 at Blessed Sacrament?**
I look forward to strengthening my faith and connecting with new people. The Covid-9 pandemic has made me realize even more the importance of human connection, and how essential that is to living a fulfilling life.



Robert P. Rabb

- 1) **When did you join the parish? Why did you join?**
Summer of 2020: previously attended St. Louis. My girlfriend Tiffany and friend Matty had been going for a couple of years even though they never joined as parishioners. They asked me to join them one Sunday and I immediately felt comfortable and really loved Father Joe and Deacon Bill. I've been going ever since whether it is in person, the call-in Masses, or now virtually.
- 2) **After joining, what aspects of Blessed Sacrament's parish life do you especially like?**
I love the community aspect. Tiffany, Matty and I have helped mulch and plant flowers this past spring. I have gone through a few rough patches with my business and other personal times. Father Joe has been amazing to talk with. He's open and available always. And loves to listen and give guidance when needed.
- 3) **Who are the other members of your household? What are the occupations/employers of the adults?**
Tiffany Bentley: Media
Robert Rabb: Hospitality Industry
- 4) **What do you look forward to in 2021 at Blessed Sacrament?**
I look forward to continuing the growth of my faith, and building off of the community feeling that I've received this past year.



Blessed Sacrament News

Welcome to our New Parishioners!



**Kimberly, Ford, Pierce, Lincoln,
and Andrew Rodgers**

- 1) **When did you join the parish? Why did you join?**
November 2020: previously attended Blessed Mother Teresa Parish Depew, NY. We joined Blessed Sacrament because we live nearby and wanted to start our kids in Faith Formation.
- 2) **After joining, what aspects of Blessed Sacrament's parish life do you especially like?**
Faith Formation
- 3) **Who are the other members of your household? What are the occupations/employers of the adults?**
Kim is a pharmacist at CVS Pharmacy; Andrew is in the United States Air Force. We have three sons: Lincoln is 5 years old and attends Olmsted 64. Pierce is 2 ½ years old, Ford is 7 months old, and we also have Geri the cat.
- 4) **What do you look forward to in 2021 at Blessed Sacrament?**
In 2021, we are looking forward to attending Mass when Covid-19 infection rates are better and meeting other parishioners.

Buildings & Grounds



When Fr. Joe arrived at Blessed Sacrament in November 2019, he was shocked to discover the extent of rotted wood holding up the heavy slate roof of the rectory back porch. Facing the possibility of heavy snow and ice, he knew that the columns might not last the winter and that the consequences could be disastrous for this important parish asset. Within weeks, Fr. Joe enlisted the help of parishioner and local contractor Jim Knab to temporarily shore up the porch with stud walls to prevent collapse while a permanent solution was developed.

This undertaking led the Parish Pastoral Council in February 2020 to establish a new entity—the Buildings & Grounds Committee—devoted entirely to the stewardship of Blessed Sacrament's beautiful historic properties. This committee provides expert technical direction and oversight of our Church, Sacristy, Rectory, and Carriage House buildings, as well as the landscape and parking areas owned by Blessed Sacrament. It further serves to maintain and enhance our historic properties in ways that maximize long-term value and celebrate the legacy of our Parish. Experts in the field of architecture, engineering, planning, historic preservation, and construction serve on the Buildings & Grounds Committee, including Daniel Farrell, Rosanne Frandina, Jim Knab, Peter Rizzo (chair), Dick Stievater, Tim Van Oss, and Tim Weigel.

Originally known as the Chapel of the Most Blessed Sacrament, what we know today as our Church represents the oldest building on our campus, erected in 1887. Our Rectory and Carriage House were built in 1904 as the residence of the Seymour H. Knox I family, and our yellow brick Sacristy building was constructed in 1914 as part of the new St. Joseph Cathedral complex. For decades these buildings have deteriorated for lack of prioritization among our many other Parish initiatives. Today, however, we can no longer turn a blind eye to the needs of our historic facilities, as in the case of the Rectory porch. Many serious and significant repairs are necessary at this time. Ignoring them is not an option.

This past spring and summer, members of the Buildings & Grounds Committee unearthed the original Rectory blueprints and created a historically-accurate design for the porch columns and balustrade, which was installed in the fall by Knab Brothers Remodeling. The result was a spectacular repair and stunning restoration that cost the Parish far less than originally anticipated.

In September 2020, the Buildings & Grounds Committee conducted a detailed inspection of our facilities and properties, documenting 80 repair and maintenance items that need to be addressed across our campus in the next five years, the most costly of which need to be accomplished in the immediate future (e.g., reshingle Church roof; repair masonry on the Sacristy and Carriage House; cap and stabilize the old Cathedral boiler smoke stack). To validate their findings and create a framework for action, the Committee enlisted the help of Flynn Battaglia Architects of Buffalo; a final report is expected in January 2020.



Buildings & Grounds

In the meantime, the Committee has continued to tackle some of the smaller-scale projects on their list, including exterior painting and replacement of broken windows on the Carriage House; tree trimming in front of the Church; restoration of the gratto behind the school, and replacement of the carpet in St. Joseph's Hall. Two new Parish Life Ministries have also been created: the Green Thumb Ministry, chaired by Tim Weigel; and the White Glove Ministry, chaired by Rosanne Frandina. For more information on these ministries, see page 7.

Rectory Porch: Before



Rectory Porch: Work in Progress



Rectory Porch: After



Entrance to St. Joseph Hall: Before



Entrance to St. Joseph Hall: After



Rectory Porch Upper Level: After



The Celebration of The Sacraments during 2020

Jesus touches our lives through the sacraments. Our celebrations of the sacraments are signs of Jesus' presence in our lives and a means for receiving His grace. The Church celebrates seven sacraments, which are divided into three categories.

Sacraments of Initiation:

Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are the sacraments that lay the foundation of every Christian Life.

Sacraments of Healing:

The Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick celebrate the healing power of Jesus.

Sacraments at the Service of Communion:

The Sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders help members serve the community.

Despite the pandemic, we have great cause to celebrate and recognize the twelve people who have received the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation. Special thanks to all the recipients, parents, family members, sponsors, Maureen Myers, Director of Faith Formation, Fr. Joe, and Deacon Bill.



Blessed Sacrament News

The Celebration of the Sacraments...cont'd

First Reconciliation: Sunday, October 4, 2020



Henry Horrigan: son of Scott and Hadley Horrigan
Vincent Lopez: son of Vincent Lopez and Gia Gandolfo
Niamh McNally: daughter of John and Sinead McNally
Gabrielle Weigel: daughter of Tim and Kathleen Weigel



Hadley and **Henry** Horrigan



Vincent Lopez and Gia Gandolfo



Sinead and **Niamh** McNally



Tim, **Gabrielle** and Kathleen Weigel

First Eucharist: Sunday, August 15, 2020



Ryan Antonius: son of Daniel and Beth Antonius
Claire Donlon: daughter of Michael and Lisa Donlon
Marta Macur: daughter of Ken and Franziska Macur
Taylor Malecki: daughter of Luke and Jennifer Malecki



Ryan, Michael, Daniel, and Beth Antonius



Claire, Elijah, Zacharia, Michael, Elise, and Lisa Donlon



Franziska, **Marta**, Ken, and Marlena Macur



Lincoln, Luke, **Taylor**, Leah, and Jennifer Malecki

Confirmation: Monday, August 31, 2020



Anna Margaret ANN Cerroni
 Daughter of David and Jennifer Cerroni
 Sponsor: Bridget MaGowan



Fr. Joe, Anna, Chloe, and Daniella

Chloe MARIA McCarthy
 Daughter of Dan and Lisa McCarthy
 Sponsor: Edward Warren

Daniella Rae ROSA DA LIMA Vaquero
 Daughter of Francisco and Renee Vaquero
 Sponsor: Rosa Day

An adult parishioner, **Javier MIGUEL Bustillos**, received Confirmation on September 26, 2020; Sponsor: Lloyd Alfonso.

If you have children who have not registered for any Faith Formation program, please go to our website: www.BlessedSacramentBuffalo.org. Look for the Faith Formation tab in the navigation bar. You will find the registration form there. If you have any questions, please contact Maureen Myers, Director of Faith Formation: moey17@aol.com or call 716-512-8176. Adults who wish to receive any of the sacraments should contact the RCIA office (Deacon Bill) in the rectory: 716-884-053.



Parish Life Ministries

Five new Parish Life Ministries were established in 2020. These ministries were highlighted during the 2020 Stewardship Appeal as ways parishioners could give of their Talents to help serve the needs of the Parish community.



Volunteers call members of Blessed Sacrament Parish throughout the year to check in, see how they are doing, and to ask what support and prayers they might need. Deacon Bill Hynes, our permanent deacon, is chair of this ministry.



Parishioners work to beautify and maintain the ground of Blessed Sacrament Church. The majority of the work occurs in the spring to clean up the various gardens, plant annuals and mulch. During the summer, the work involves watering, weeding, and pruning. In late fall the work focuses on winterizing the gardens. Tim Weigel, a member of the Buildings & Grounds Committee, is chair of this ministry.



Parishioners volunteer to direct traffic into the parking areas on the grounds of Blessed Sacrament Church. The need for this ministry becomes especially critical whenever there are large scale liturgical celebrations or events. Volunteers are also asked to set up parking signs at various points along our property. The chair of this ministry is Mike Donlon, a member of the Parish Council.



The Parish contracts for snow removal from our parking lots, sidewalks, and steps. However, many times the winter conditions worsen after everything has been plowed. The volunteers in this ministry will pick up the shovels and salt to keep walks and egress areas clear of ice and snow. Mike Donlon is also chairing this ministry.



Parishioners volunteering for this ministry will help clean, declutter, and organize our Parish buildings including spaces in the Church, Sacristy, Marian Hall, Rectory, and Carriage House. We all want to remember that "cleanliness is next to godliness!" Rosanne Frandina, a member of the Buildings & Grounds Committee, is chairing this ministry.

If any of these Parish Life Ministries interest you, please contact the Rectory either by phone or email: [716-884-0053](tel:716-884-0053) or Office@BlessedSacramentChurch.org. We will pass your name along to the respective chairperson. We are always looking for more people to help with the many tasks that need to be done in the Parish.

Remember, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." *Matthew 18:20*



Blessed Sacrament News

Time for a New Strategic Five-Year Plan!

SOME BACKGROUND:

At the conclusion of Blessed Sacrament's year-long 125th Anniversary Celebration in June 2013, parishioners, excited about the positive impact of the 125th Anniversary on all aspects of parish life, kept asking "what's next?" Soon, Fr. Paul Bossi committed to embark upon creating the parish's first five-year strategic plan. Michael Pitek facilitated 65 parishioners who participated in a multi-month strategic planning process. Out of this process came a vision and mission for the parish, as well as our guiding principles, a tag-line, and seven key pillars on which the five-year plan was based. Icons were designed to represent the pillars and strategies, and they are presented below:



Blessed Sacrament's 7 Strategies



Parish Viability



Parish Life



Religious & Faith Formation



Liturgical Engagement



Outreach



Marketing, Communications, & Membership



The School

Blessed Sacrament's Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2014-2019, was revealed to parishioners at all Masses in June 2014 as a multi media presentation. Some of the things that were accomplished from 2014-2019 included the formation of a Parish Council which did not previously exist. Membership on the Council consisted of the chairs of all standing committees (related to the seven strategies) and election of at-large representatives from the parish. Taizé Prayer became a new addition to our spiritual life during Advent and Lent. A robust Adult faith Formation Program featured lectures, retreats, and parish missions. The interactions between the children and their families enrolled in Lifelong Faith Formation and parishioners became highlights of each year. Parish Life sponsored numerous dinners and BBQs which helped all of us come together as a faith community.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE:

Now it is time to begin the strategic planning process again and to create Blessed Sacrament's second five-year strategic plan. During the November 2020 meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council, Fr. Joe committed to convene a strategic planning process. Michael Pitek will again facilitate this second round of strategic planning. The planning process is **OPEN to ALL PARISHIONERS** who are interested. The work will begin in early 2021, and sessions will be facilitated on Zoom.

Creating a robust second five-year plan is critical for our parish. We now have the opportunity to build upon all that has been positive and successful for the past six years. And, we can further define our Mission: **"Love God, Love Our Neighbors, Make Disciples"** by developing our Peace and Justice and Outreach programs to continually reach not only the people in our parish but expanding out to our surrounding neighbors and communities of Latinos, African-Americans, the LGBTQ community, immigrants, and refugees)

We also have the opportunity to become good stewards as we create a strategic plan for all of our physical properties that house our programs of discipleship. We can no longer ignore these significant, historic structures. We need to develop a meaningful plan that addresses repairing, preserving and sustaining these properties well into the future. The Buildings & Grounds Committee is already working with Preservation Buffalo Niagara to add our Church, Sacristy, Rectory, and Carriage House to the National Register of Historic Places, which is expected to open the door to grant opportunities to support the funding of needed repairs and upkeep.

Simply put: In developing the first five-year strategic plan, we focused on the people of our faith community...reaching out and addressing their needs. In doing so we neglected our campus.....those buildings where we gather and praise the Lord. Now, we have to adjust and share our focus so that we are good stewards for our people's needs **and** our buildings' needs!

WE NEED YOU! If we can gather many brains with different talents and expertise, tap into great energy and a passionate commitment to Blessed Sacrament, then we can **"... become the joyful, vibrant, and welcoming Catholic Church of Choice for the Elmwood Village and the Delaware District!"** (That's our parish's Vision, what we're striving for!)

Contact Michael Pitek if you're interested: Michael@ThePitekGroup.com; or call 716-480-8313 (cell).