

Transformed!

Good News at St. Hilary Parish

June/July 2017

Welcome new Associate, Fr. Matt Jordan

St. Hilary's new Associate is Fr. Matt Jordan of St. Francis De Sales parish and school in Portage Lakes. He is a graduate of Archbishop Hoban High School. "I was very surprised to get my assignment here because I'm really close to home. I thought I would be sent to the other side of the diocese. I know the area very well. My parents live in the Barberton area," he said.

Expressing his excitement to be at St. Hilary he explained, "It's an active parish, very lively, one that cares about those in need. It's a young parish, and that's very exciting for me. I'm looking forward to learning more about it, and I'm really excited to be with Fr. Steve.

"My first experience with St. Hilary was when I was a junior in high school. I went to the Steubenville Youth Conference at Franciscan University with the youth group because my parish did not have a youth group that was going. So I went with Jason Solomon." Fr. Matt still has his St. Hilary Youth Group 2008 T-shirt! "I am definitely very excited to be working with youth ministry," he said.

Early call to the priesthood

From the time he was five years old, Fr. Matt talked about being a priest—or maybe something else. As a small child, "it was always a priest and a sportscaster, or a priest and a weather man, I'd tell my teachers," he recalled.



Fr. Matt Jordan (center) with his family. From left: Chase Pucci, fiancé of his sister, Elizabeth, with parents, Shari and Walter Jordan.

Although being a priest did not seem cool in middle school, he continued being an altar server. "Mass was a non-negotiable in my family," Fr. Matt said.

The turning point came in high school. "The call to the priesthood didn't come back in a firm sort of way until I went on a Search retreat at the end of my junior year. It was the first time I met people my age that liked being Catholic. I thought church was for old people," he said. "So then I was kind of thinking about it—maybe yes, maybe no, but I didn't want to talk about it."

However, other parishioners noticed his potential vocation and began

pointing it out to him. "By this time people would come up to me and sometimes I couldn't leave mass without someone saying, 'You'd make such a good priest.'"

Answering the call

While attending the Steubenville Youth Conference with St. Hilary's youth group, Fr. Matt had the opportunity to attend adoration. "I was praying in front of the Eucharist, and saying, 'Lord, what do you want me to do with my life?' I was feeling kind of sick, so, I had Jason take me out. I was thinking that I was hot, I was kneeling, I didn't have enough food to eat, I was thinking natural causes.

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Bishop Richard Lennon ordains Matt Jordan a deacon at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Cleveland.

“But Jason asked, ‘What were you praying about? Think about that.’ And he walked away. I was praying, ‘Lord what do you want me to do with my life?’ When they asked if anyone had thought about being a priest during this time, I came forward. After the conference I went home and told my family I wanted to be a priest. I went to daily mass every day after that. So that’s how I got to the seminary.”

Journey to the priesthood

Fr. Matt entered Borromeo Seminary after high school, beginning a nine year process by taking classes at John Carroll University, where he earned his bachelor’s degree. He explained that discernment is year-to-year. “They ask you to just give it a year, and at the end of the year to discern about coming back.”

The year of his internship at St. Anselm in Chesterland, Fr. Matt realized he was certain about becoming a priest. “That’s when I knew the Lord had me. This is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I want to serve, be there for people, pray with people in those awesome, tender moments,” he said.

Yearning to be a priest

He spent his diaconate year at St. Ambrose Parish in Brunswick under the guidance of Fr. Bob Stec. “Diaconate year has been really great. My classmates and I were ordained deacons on the feast of Pope St. John Paul II, October 22, 2016. Serving at St. Ambrose was very active, very busy. I see a lot of parallels with St. Hilary: a lot of baptisms, a lot of young families, and a lot of stewardship work.

“I had opportunities to pray with people as their deacon, to pray with people and listen as they told you their life story. How awesome it is and yet how hard it is.

“Part of the diaconate year has been this yearning to be a priest. I would

go out with the priest when he would anoint somebody, and I would pray with them. I yearn to be able to do that—to be able to give that gift.

“One of the great graces has been being able to do baptisms and experience the joy of the parents, the godparents, the joy of the families, where we are bringing in a new saint. We are bringing someone closer to God. That’s an awesome place to be able to be.”

Fr. Matt graduated from St. Mary Seminary with a Master’s Degree in Divinity and a Master of Arts. He was just ordained a priest May 19.

Fun facts about Fr. Matt

Fr. Matt said, “I love all sports. I’m a big Indians fan. Seeing Indians games is one of the things I like to do with Eric Garris, former seminarian intern at St. Hilary. I love spending time with friends and family.” Fr. Matt said he also loves movies, especially those with superheroes.



While still a deacon, Fr. Matt Jordan processes in to Holy Thursday mass at St. Ambrose holding The Book of Gospels. He is flanked by the Knights of Columbus honor guard.

New Communications Coordinator to give the parish a fresh, new look



Angela Dublikar

When Angela Dublikar and her husband joined the parish, they often wondered if there would ever be a job available for her at St. Hilary. "I wanted to be close to home, to be with my family, and with my kids more," she said. The couple no longer has to wonder, since Angela was recently hired as the parish's first Communications Coordinator.

Angela will be unifying the parish's look, brand, and message as she handles the website, bulletin, weekly email, and social media including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

New role in the parish

"It almost doesn't feel like I'm going to work. It's going to feel more like part of my daily life, and that I'm able to be part of the parish even more than we are already," she added.

Originally from St. Joseph Parish in Strongsville, Angela's first experience with Catholic education was attending

John Carroll University, which was transforming for her. "I loved the education I received there. It was exciting to have the different religion classes that were offered because it helped deepen my faith. It was exciting to be around other people who understood me and felt the same way that I felt," she explained.

Transforming experiences

Outside of class, Angela served as a leader in the university's Manresa retreat program, and took an immersion trip to Imokalee, Florida, where she learned about issues related to farming and helped build a home with Habitat for Humanity.

Angela brings with her a wealth of marketing experience. In Cleveland she worked for Brandmuscle with clients such as Bell Canada and Direct TV. She also worked for Hitchcock Fleming Associates, an Akron-based ad agency where her primary clients

were PPG and Goodyear. Just prior to coming to St. Hilary, Angela was Communications Manager at Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, doing much the same work she will be doing for the parish.

Parish involvement

"At St. Hilary, I'm a Eucharistic Minister and part of the Cookie Ministry. Now I think that I'm going to learn a lot more about the ins and outs of the different ministries and I'm excited for that," she added.

Angela and husband Eric are parents to David, born in February and two-year-old Giuliana, both baptized at St. Hilary. They live in Copley where they often run into other families from the parish. "It's so wonderful to get to know people in our area and neighborhood, and that we're able to now connect with the church as well, especially with young people like us," she said.



Eric and Angela Dublikar with newborn son David and daughter Giuliana.

Small Christian Community transforms lives of four couples

Would you like to have meaningful conversations and form lasting friendships? Have you been longing to share your faith with others? Would you like to meet other parishioners who share your stage of life? If you answered yes to any of these, then it's time to join a Small Christian Community (SCC), also known as a small faith sharing group.

"It's a transformative experience for parishioners to become involved in an SCC because it's hard to get to know people in such a large parish as St. Hilary. Being part of an SCC builds community and gives you the opportunity to travel on your spiritual journey with other Catholics," explained Jody Geary, the parish's SCC Coordinator.

"Being in an SCC has allowed me to verbalize my faith as I listened to others share the impact their faith has had on their lives. The groups have acted both as a sounding board for me and as a means for strengthening my faith," Jody added.



Abbey Fistek and son Nolan. Husband Mike is not pictured.

Four young couples experienced many of these benefits plus the strengthening of their marriages as an added bonus. All joined an SCC because they wanted to get involved in the parish, while yearning to meet others their age. Enter TJ Wolski, who invited Mike Fistek, a fellow resident at Akron General Medical Center, and his wife Abbey to join him and his wife Michelle to be part of an SCC.

Around the same time, two more young couples new to the parish were searching for others who shared their values and interests. With nudging from Pat Schnee, former SCC Coordinator, and Randy Malick, Director of Faith Formation for Adults, the new group came together: TJ and Michelle, Mike and Abbey, along with Brett and Jillian Laubacher, and Cory and Kelly Treharn.

For the past three years, the four couples have met one Tuesday each month to share their faith, their lives, and dessert. Their format is simple: They start and end with prayer, discuss the week's topic, have dessert, and socialize. Using a book with discussion questions helps guide their conversations. As a result, their faith has grown stronger and their marriages as well.

At Pat's suggestion, they started with *Living in the Lord; Building Blocks of Spirituality* by Daniel Pilarczyk. Brett said, the book featured "bite sized chapters on a range of topics" the group found helpful, especially since



TJ and Michelle Wolski with sons Grant and newborn Holden.

they did not know each other well at that time.

Cory was looking for something as a follow-up to his RCIA experience. "Faith-wise, it was nice to hear the perspectives of lifelong Catholics because I had been together with people who were really developing their Catholic faith through RCIA. It's nice to hear, 'Well, here's my perspective on this; what's your perspective on this?'" It has helped my faith grow and I've learned a lot in that regard," he said.

Kelly added, "When we first started this group Cory was new to the Catholic faith and he was asking me all his questions. It was good to have a group of people that he could ask his questions to and not count on me to know all the answers."

Jillian and Brett, who had moved to Akron from St. Louis, were eager to meet other couples. “We just really bonded with each other right away,” said Jillian, “and had so much in common with being relatively the same age at the same life stage.”

Being part of the SCC “has reinforced my faith to know that there are others who share a similar foundation,” said Michelle. “We can now have conversations that lead to us applying our faith. I see my faith more often in our daily life.”

TJ added, “I approach my faith in a different way now compared to before the group. In addition to my own personal faith, I see my faith through the eyes of my wife. I see her perspective and how my daily practice affects her.”

For Abbey and Mike, the group has impacted their prayer life. Addressing the group she said, “One difference is that we pray for each other and include all of you in our nightly prayers. You are like our faith family. We can share our concerns with each other that I don’t always share with my friends. It’s a nice support system, too. I think that we support each other in different ways because we share prayer concerns,” she said.

“I really like how it strengthens our marriage. Doing the discussion



Jillian and Brett Laubacher with their son Garrett.

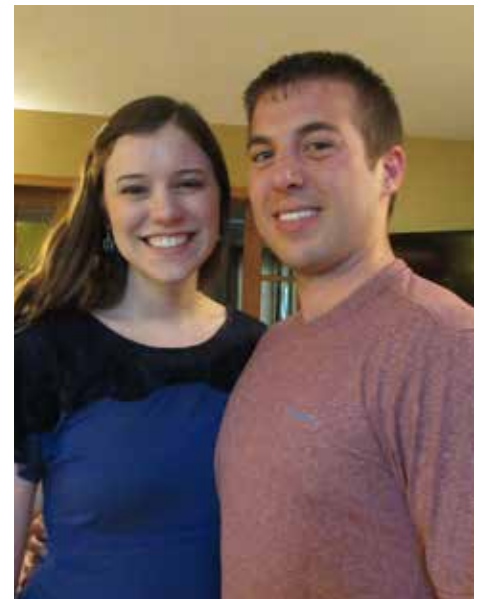
topics forces you to think harder and deeper—topics you wouldn’t talk about in everyday conversations,” said Jillian. The group’s latest book, *For Better . . . Forever* by Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak, focuses on marriage.

Having met regularly for three years has given the couples a chance to get to know, trust, and support one another. “Just sharing our struggles shows me this isn’t that unique. Everyone goes through this. We can work through it,” said Brett.

Michelle observed, “It has helped strengthen our marriage by engaging

us in conversation that allows us to be open with each other, even if the topic is uncomfortable. We see the importance of practicing our faith everyday with our growing family.”

In addition to impacting their marriage, Kelly has benefitted from the witness of the other couples as they became parents. “We are the only couple without kids. It’s nice to see the transformation of how people become parents. And it’s inspiring to see how they have stayed with the group to work on themselves, even with the kids around. It’s what we want to do and it’s been a good example for us moving forward,” she said.



Kelly and Cory Treharn



GET CONNECTED!

Are you ready to join a Small Christian Community?

If so, contact Jody Geary, the new Coordinator of Small Christian Communities at (330) 665-2363 or email her at jgeary@neo.rr.com.

Newcomers will be grouped according to interest or life stage, such as young married couples, families, or older singles, to name a few. There are no restrictions on who can join.

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***The 13th Day* (movie, unrated)**

In a world torn apart by persecution, war, and oppression, three children in Fatima, Portugal, were chosen by God to offer an urgent message of hope to the world. Based on the memoirs of the oldest seer, Lucia Santos, and eyewitness accounts, *The 13th Day* dramatizes the true story of three young shepherds who experienced six apparitions of Our Lady between May and October 1917, which culminated in the final prophesied Miracle of the Sun on October 13.



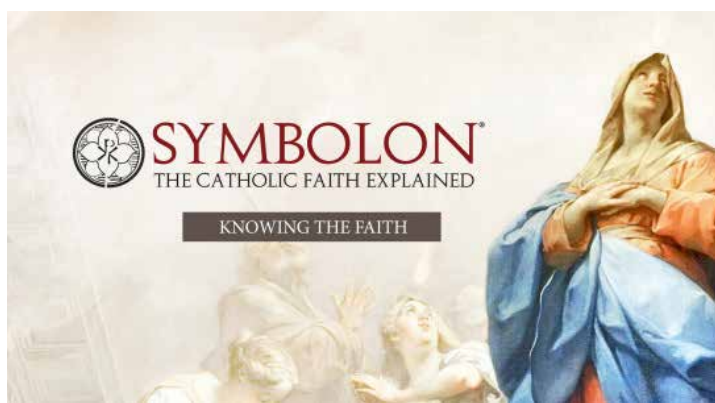
***Convinced: Why Would Anyone Want to Become Catholic?* (documentary)**

Why would intelligent, successful people give up careers, alienate friends, and cause havoc in their families . . . to become Catholic? As he was considering his own move into the Church, Donald Johnson traveled around the country to get the story for himself, from some of today's most interesting and articulate Catholic voices.



***Beloved* (video series)**

Beloved, from the producers of the renowned *Symbolon* series, explores the spiritual and eternal reality behind "I Do." *Beloved* speaks to the very heart of every husband and wife, bringing sacramental truth and God-infused love into everyday challenges of married life. *Beloved: Meaning and Mystery of Marriage* includes six inspiring and informative sessions.



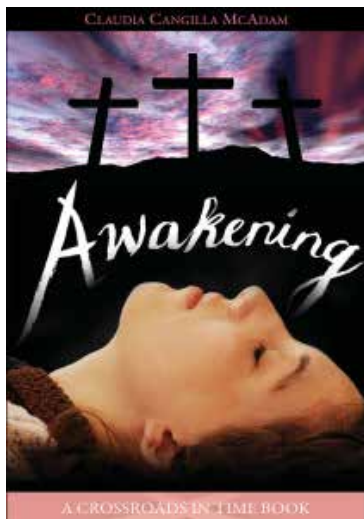
***Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained* (video series)**

Too often we try to live a faith we don't know or understand. *Symbolon: Knowing the Faith* explains the essentials of the Catholic Faith in a way that will inform our minds and inspire our hearts. Presented in ten sessions that are ideal for parish catechism, family instruction, and personal devotion.



Is God on Your iPod (audio talk)

Is mainstream music bad for you? Can hit songs remind you of the things of God? Matt Smith discusses how we as Christians can judge all different types of music to determine whether or not it is going to lead us closer to The Good, The True, and The Beautiful . . . which is ultimately closer to God.

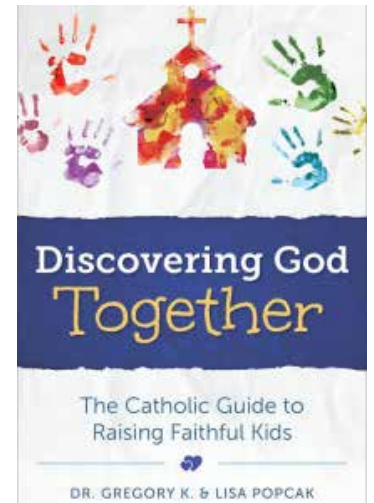


Awakening (eBook, middle school/young adult)

Ronni is a 21st-century American teen-aged girl who wakes up 5,000 miles away from home . . . 2,000 years in the past in Jerusalem, the week of the crucifixion of Jesus. She has three days to try to stop his death. The question is, can she do it? Should she?

Discovering God Together: The Catholic Guide to Raising Faithful Kids (eBook)

Research shows again and again that when families openly live and share their faith together, their marriages are stronger, children and parents get along better, and children are less likely to succumb to drugs, alcohol, promiscuity, or negative peer pressure. Psychotherapists Greg and Lisa Popcak show how you can transform your family into a joyful place where each member experiences life as a gift from God.



The Day the Sun Danced (movie, children)

The Day the Sun Danced is the inspiring true story of Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, three shepherd children whose great faith and courage brought the message of Our Lady of Fatima to the entire world.

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RCIA Inquiry

Thinking about Becoming Catholic? Got questions? "Inquiry" is for you!

5 Wednesday evenings this summer.

The Curious may contact Randy Malick in the Parish Office
rmalick@sthilarychurch.org or (330) 867-1055, ext. 209

Don't Miss the FEST!



12:00 noon-10:00 pm

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The newsletter of St. Hilary Parish

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We welcome your feedback!
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