

Transformed!

Good News at St. Hilary Parish

Dec. 2017/Jan. 2018

Come to the Manger this Advent

This Advent, Sr. Carol Joy, HM, invites parishioners and their families to come to the manger and take pictures with their children. The parish nativity set will appear like a village with new figures including a Renaissance-style angel, another angel looking down upon a new infant Jesus, an elderly woman, and a girl who could be a granddaughter or a teen from the village, according to Sr. Carol Joy. “We did that because we wanted all of the generations included,” she added.

When Fr. Thomas Koegel was pastor, parishioner Paul Heil had the idea of creating an outdoor nativity set in which he would cut out the nearly-life-sized wooden pieces and Sr. Carol Joy would paint them. “That was a happy day when we got together,” Sr. Carol Joy recalled. “It’s always a happy day, Sister,” Paul replied.

Humble beginnings

Originally the set they created included Mary, Joseph, Jesus, a shepherd boy, a cow, and a donkey. Three kings and a camel were added 11 years ago. The set is usually kept in the convent garage, but recently it came out of storage for what Fr. Steve Brunovsky called a “spa day” at the Heil house, where Paul, his wife Judy, and Sr. Carol Joy refurbished them and worked on the new pieces. The set also includes a shelter built at the Heils’ house

several years ago with help from Shepherd Roofing Company. At the time the roofers were actually working on Paul’s house.

“The roofers were watching me do this, and I asked them for their expertise,” Paul recalled. “They came down from doing our roof and helped build the shelter. Gilbert Shepherd is a member of our church. Friends from Akron Tractor actually brought the whole manger without it being disassembled over to St. Hilary.” Paul explained, “I keep the baby Jesus in my car until Christmas Eve; then I put him in the manger—because he’s not born yet.” In some years the Jesus figure

had been stolen; the parish is on its third Jesus. “The new one will be holding a blanket,” Sr. Carol Joy added.

Service runs deep

A strong sense of duty runs in Paul’s family, who he describes as faithful, devoted Catholics from way back. When he was a boy, he used to accompany his father to 7 a.m. Mass on Sundays, where his father served as an usher. Today, Paul also serves as an usher. Father and son often shoveled the church walkways in the early morning before Mass. To this day, Paul

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Paul Heil, Sr. Carol Joy, and Judy Heil spend a Saturday morning painting and refurbishing nativity figures in the Heils’ garage. Behind them is one of the kings on a camel, to which Judy added some jewel-toned embellishments.

carries a snow shovel in his trunk in case the walkways need shoveling.

“I’m pretty humble,” said Paul, “I use what I have to give back.” To Paul, caring for the nativity set and setting it up each year is something he inherited. A crew of fathers and sons help him assemble it each year. They include Sam Parri, Moose Kosco and son Danny, David Ochmann, Mike Fickes, and Matt Fresh.

“Don’t you feel honored to get to do this?” asked Sr. Carol Joy. “When you get to heaven, God is going to say, ‘Thank you so much Paul for spreading my Word.’ It will happen, I’m telling you,” she added.



Sr. Carol Joy displays the new Renaissance-style angel that will be added to the outdoor nativity set in front of church.

Did you know...

St. Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first nativity scene on Christmas Eve in 1223 at Greccio, Italy, in an attempt to place the emphasis of Christmas upon the worship of Christ rather than upon secular materialism and gift giving. It is believed that St. Francis’s inspiration came after visiting the historical place of Christ’s birth on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the humble stable in a Bethlehem cave.



Two kings and a shepherd boy await refurbishment.



Sr. Carol Joy puts finishing touches on the young girl and old woman. Both figures are new to the nativity scene this year.

Friendship rings in bell choir

On a rainy November night, the bell choir put away their gear and gathered in a nearby meeting room for some fun photos by Carol Malick. Reminiscing about their experiences, comments floated through the air in quick succession like the notes they play. It's a choir full of friends—each with their own unique story.

Karin Lesneski and Barb Toth were the first to join 34 years ago after answering a notice in the bulletin. Karin recalled that then pastor Fr. Thomas Koegel, bought a set of used hand bells from Rex Salvage and presented them to Sr. Cheryl Ann, a member of the parish staff, “who knew all of four chords,” Karin recalled.

Like Karin and Barb, many of the members throughout the years knew each other through the parish's renewal program in the 1980s and 1990s—JOY (Jesus, Others, and You). Such was the case with Marilyn McCoy who invited Mary Beth Waickman.

Inspired by JOY

Michelle Bisconti also met Mary Beth through JOY and began playing bells in 2011. “We talked about it for a number of years,” said Mary Beth. “I found out that Michelle played organ and piano and so she was interested in it.” While Mary Beth insists the group's members are not musicians, many like Michelle, have a lot of musical experience.

Diane Husk has been playing the bells for 30 years. Responding to her sister, Patty Buschko, Diane said, “I joined all by myself!” not because of their mother's influence. Patty has been part of the group for 23 years.

LuAnne Toth has been a bell ringer for several years, having joined when Mary Lou Grossmann led the group. “This is my favorite ensemble, because I'm not in charge!” LuAnne teaches music at St. Hilary School and leads the Contemporary Ensemble at the 9 a.m. Mass on Sundays.

The more, the merrier

Recognizing the need for new members, LuAnne asked Amy Hoffmeister to join. “When I heard about the girls in the convent, I asked Amy if she knew how to play hand bells or knew something about music. She said, ‘Actually, I do know how to play hand bells.’” Amy had played bells at her former parish, St. Mary in Hudson.

Amy in turn invited Alex Spalding, who was fairly new to the parish, but had minored in music while a student at Case Western Reserve University. He also plays clarinet.

To his fellow choir members, Dan Henry is a natural. “The day Dan walked into the hand bell choir, it was like he'd been here forever,” said Mary Beth. “No learning curve!” she added. Dan, who became a member in 2009, also plays guitar.

So what keeps them coming back year after year? “Bell choir is a ministry,” said Mary Beth. “To be able to do something I like and share it with my parish,” Michelle added. “We're a team,” continued Mary Beth. “We're only as important as the other 11 people.” Karin chimed in, “We each have four notes.” “Because we each play four bells,” added Michelle. But perhaps LuAnne summed it up best, “It's just plain fun!”

Pictured from top to bottom:
Karin and Barb, Alex and Amy, Patty and Diane, Michelle and Dan



The future begins here

By Debbie Sinopoli,
Director of Marketing &
Admissions, St. Hilary School

Today's world demands strong moral character, global mindedness, and a broad, forward-thinking skillset. Preparing children to have these attributes is a challenging task, but one that takes place every day at St. Hilary School. Already recognized as a leader among elementary schools in our area, St. Hilary School continues to raise the bar by masterfully blending traditional core values with innovative teaching



A student practices drawing blood while working in the Nursing lab.



The Digital Manufacturing lab allows students to design and manufacture items using a 3D printer.



Eighth graders learn to use an AED as part of the Emergency Medical Services career exploration lab.

methods and cutting-edge programs.

The school's science lab has always been a hub of learning, but with the addition of Paxton-Patterson labs both there and in a newly carved-out learning space within the school faculty room, students in grades 7 and 8 have the opportunity to explore a host of STEM related careers. Topics such as biomedical engineering, emergency medicine, veterinary medicine, nursing, dentistry, sports medicine, therapeutic

services, forensics, digital manufacturing, virtual architecture, electricity, alternative energy, environment and ecology, and audio communications, come to life in these labs where students learn hands-on concepts and skills. Rounding out the career exploration electives available to seventh and eighth graders are additional courses in digital media, entrepreneurship and financial literacy, entrepreneurship and marketing, writing and debate, graphic design, and robotics and coding.



Digital Media students monitor devices that control the morning announcements, while students across from them read the script.



Exploring robotics using Ozobots is just one of many activities available to students in the Maker Space.

For all students from kindergarten through eighth grade, a brand new Maker Space in the media center provides a wealth of age-appropriate experiences that foster thinking outside the box, creating and learning. A collaboration table in the center of the space enables groups of students to work jointly to solve problems, create new things, and learn together. These areas serve to expand on the STEM learning that has been taking place in classrooms throughout the school for several years. Teachers receive ongoing training on the latest in STEM education in order to provide innovative lessons for students in all grades.

Open to All

Also new at the school is a diversity initiative that seeks to embrace and promote the unique gifts each of us contributes to the school community. Teachers have been instructed on ways to incorporate appreciation for human diversity into lessons throughout the school year. Artwork in the school is being updated to more purposefully showcase diversity. Expanding on the school's openness to educating students of diverse learning abilities, students who need alternative workspaces to help with focus may now sit on ball seats or work at stand-up desks.

Greater emphasis is being placed on including adult role models from a variety of races, backgrounds, and abilities when planning for programs that teach and impact students. This year's school theme, "Calling All Angels," celebrates the gifts that a host of professions bring to our community and encourages students to appreciate and aspire to be like these individuals, ranging from maintenance workers to health care workers, from religious personnel to military personnel, and many vocations in between.

Looking Ahead

While much is new at St. Hilary School, much remains constant, including the school's focus on traditional values and building character. This perfect blend of innovation and tradition has made the school a top choice for thousands of families over the years.

If you would like your child and your family to experience the benefits of a St. Hilary School education, now is the ideal time to begin exploring all that the school has to offer.

The school will host its popular Kindergarten Kaleidoscope program for prospective 2018-2019 kindergarteners and their parents on January 11 from 9-11 a.m. RSVP by December 28 to attend.

An Open House on January 28 from 12-2 p.m. is open to all. Stop by to tour the school, visit classrooms and meet teachers.

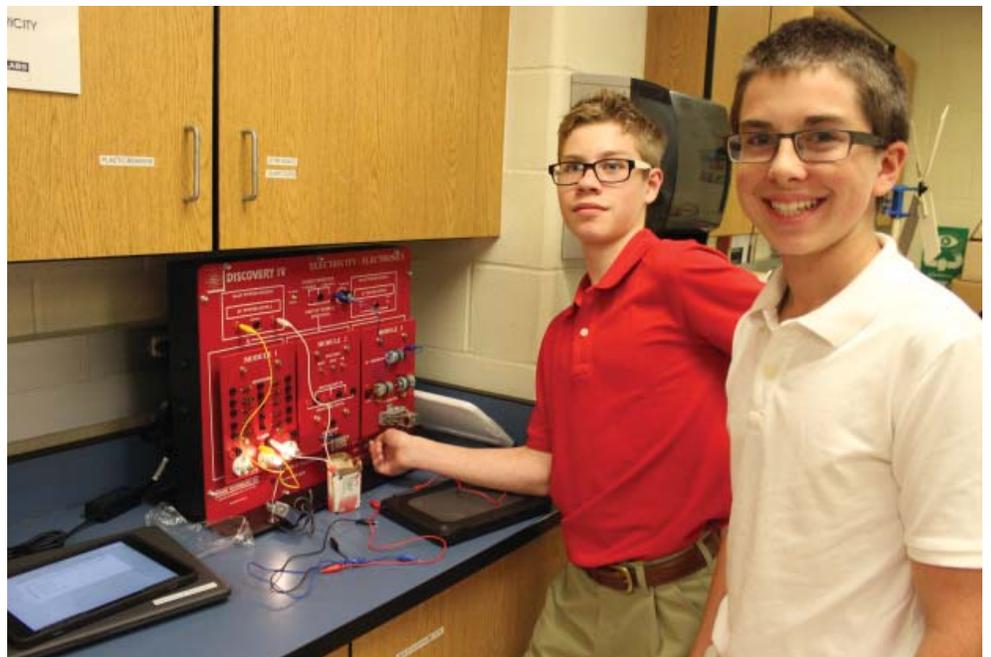
New Student Registration for 2018-2019 will begin February 5, 6 and 7 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at the school office.

For more information, to RSVP for Kindergarten Kaleidoscope, or to schedule a personal tour or shadow day, contact:

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330-867-8720, ext. 343
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The Electricity lab provides students with hands-on lessons in a variety of concepts.

Celebrating the joy of our teens

With the help and guidance of the adult core team, Life Teen Youth Ministry hosted a Senior Prom for older parishioners and participated in their fall retreat at Loyola of the Lakes Retreat Center in Green. Core team members Joan Heegan, Aggie Maas, Lori Thomas, Stephen Garchar, and Fr. Matt Jordan offered their thoughts and insights about their experiences.

According to Fr. Matt, “In my time here at St. Hilary, God has been working in and through my work in youth ministry. I find myself grateful and humble for the teens, for the great support of the parish, and for the beautiful way that God has chosen to work in this ministry.

“We have had some great events this year that have shown the joy of our teens, from our crazy, messy kick-off, to Senior Prom, to our great retreat with IHM Life Teen. I look forward to seeing what God has in store for this great ministry.

Joan relates, “I have been involved with St. Hilary Life Teen as a core member for four years. It is a wonderful program for high schoolers with quite a few schools represented. It is refreshing to see teens who want to grow in their faith, and be able to share and proclaim it in an atmosphere where they are not judged.

“We do quite a few things during the year, including Life Nights, a fall and spring retreat, XLT! (evenings of Adoration, praise, and worship), service projects, hosting Senior Prom, and social events as well. High school years are tough, no matter what school you attend. This is a place where teens can come, learn, pray, sing, relax, socialize, make friends, and have fun.”

“I have been through some incredibly difficult and devastating challenges. To see me today, you wouldn't know it. To be able to share my journey, shows that everyone struggles, but if you have faith and perseverance you can accomplish anything. I'd like to think I am giving them a head start on how to overcome hardships! It is such a blessing to have the teens in my life—even once they graduate!”

For Lori, “Having a positive and guiding connection with teenagers is rewarding. Witnessing a teen grow, mature, gain confidence, and live a positive Catholic life style with God's love and blessings is amazing!”

Aggie had this to say about her experience, “I love the joy and

the eagerness to learn of the students in youth ministry. They want to learn more about their faith and be strengthened in their faith. They want to know the Church's position on many things they have seen or heard about.

“In this environment, it is truly joyful to be there as a positive role model to help them on their faith journey. Those in core have had many more life experiences than the teens have had and generally more training as well, so the core members have a wealth of knowledge from which to draw. The important thing though, is that all of us are on this faith journey together. We pray together, build each other up, and all end up learning from our time in youth ministry.”

‘Witnessing a teen grow, mature, gain confidence, and live a positive Catholic life style with God's love and blessings is amazing!’



Core team and St. Hilary participants join together at the fall retreat.



Teens from St. Hilary and Immaculate Heart of Mary, along with Core Team members at the Fall Life Teen retreat.



Senior Prom attendees and youth enjoy a line dance.



Members of the Life Teen group served at the Senior Prom.

Steven Garchar related, “This is my seventh year at St. Hilary Parish serving as director of music for the Life Teen Mass. I’m also serving as part of the core team this year as we welcome Fr. Matt to lead and direct the program. And while there have been changes over the past seven years, the one constant that is always present is Jesus Christ! He’s the same today, as he was yesterday, as he will be forever.

Youth ministry gives our young people the opportunity to make new friends and find fellowship with other teens who want to deepen and grow in their relationship with God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It gives them a place to talk about their faith and encounter the Risen Christ, that their hearts may become the good and fertile soil that Jesus speaks of in the parable of the sower and give witness by their lives to the Good News of the Gospel and bear a harvest, leading others to follow Christ,” he continued.

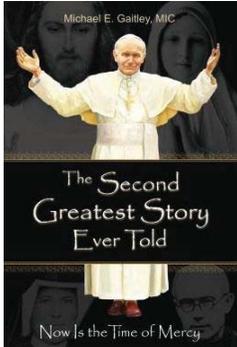
“Our Life Teen music ministry is a great opportunity for our young people to grow in the gifts and talents God has bestowed upon them and bless the parish community by sharing their gifts by playing and singing at the 5:30 p.m. Life Teen Mass. I have to rely on the Lord to guide me because He knows the abilities each person has. He has equipped them for their life’s journey. We see ourselves as we are but God sees us as He created us to be. Youth ministry is a great opportunity to help people become the person God has created them to be!” Stephen added.

“We have a strong core team and Fr. Matt has some great plans for Youth Ministry. We just had an awesome Fall Retreat at Loyola and are looking forward to activities planned through Advent and into the new year. Before we know it, the Spring Retreat will be upon us! I’m so blessed to be a part of this vital ministry,” he concluded.

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Call the Parish Office to Register or
email elaine.sisler@resolvema.com



Advent and Christmas Liturgical Schedule 2017

Advent Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, December 6, 13, & 20 at 7 p.m.

Communal Penance Service

Monday, December 11, 7 p.m. at Guardian Angels

Private Confession

Thursdays, December 7, 14, & 21, 8:45-9:15 a.m.

Gaudete Sunday Concert

Sunday, December 17 at 7 p.m.

Christmas Vigil Masses

4 p.m. at St. Hilary and Faith Lutheran

6 p.m. at St. Hilary

10 p.m. at St. Hilary (music begins at 9:30 p.m.)

Christmas Day Masses

9 & 11 a.m. at St. Hilary