



St. Victoria
Parish Family
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What's New? What's Changing?

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Did You Know . . .

- In the United States, more than 85 percent of homeless families are headed by single women struggling to make ends meet. When given the opportunities to earn income, mothers will invest 90 percent back into their families. Their children will benefit, the families will grow healthy and their future will be altered.
- In the last 10 years, the average size of a new house in the U.S. has more than doubled.

From the Front Pew



I forget who said it, but it's true. The only constant is change.

As we gear up for another fall season coming to St. Victoria (not to mention what's happening this summer) here's what we're looking at.

Faith Formation

For the first time, our Wednesday night Faith Formation program will be offered for Kindergarten students. Just think, the kids start at four years old coming up for Gospel Time at weekend Masses and from there they'll roll right into Faith Formation. It will be great to have them there.

For our older students, we have the exciting news that **Nick Tofteland** will join us as our new Youth Minister. Nick comes to us with a reputation of being able to reach kids, meet them

where they're at and inspire them to discover the great gift of faith that is theirs. I've seen that work so many times—on fire people helping our young become on fire with Jesus Christ. Welcome aboard Nick. (See pg. 8.)

New Neighbors

Speaking of new people on the block, we have three new priests in our neighborhood. At Guardian Angels in Chaska, our friendly neighbor to the south, we have **Fr. Doug Ebert** who will be their new pastor. Fr. Doug has a fascinating background. You might say he's what we call an "older" vocation. Fr. Doug and I went to high school together and he was a class ahead of me. Fr. Doug was ordained two years ago at the prime age of 62. Before entering the seminary, Fr. Doug was a commercial airline pilot. He also has played in a rock and roll band and has written music. Sounds like an

interesting guy, doesn't he? He is. He will be a great gift to Guardian Angels parish and we wish him well. **Fr. Rolf Tollefson** will be the new pastor at St. Hubert's in Chanhassen, our friendly neighbor to the east. Fr. Rolf just completed seven years on the staff at St. John Vianney College Seminary located on the campus of the University of St. Thomas. Fr. Rolf may well be the only priest with a truly Norwegian name in our diocese. Great name, isn't it? Joining him at St. Hubert's will be **Fr. Paul Kubista** who was ordained just two years ago. Welcome to all of you.

As we greet our new neighbors, we also say goodbye to **Fr. Paul Jarvis** who leaves for St. Joseph in Rosemount and to **Fr. Paul Kammen** who has been the interim priest at St. Hubert's. Many of you may remember him from his days as a
Continued on pg. 2

Think Big . . . Imagine the Possibilities

Changes are Part of Everyday Life!

Continued from Pg. 1

Seminarian at St. Victoria. He will be the pastor at St. Joseph and St. Peter (Delano Catholic Community) in Delano.

Bavarian Dinners

There is another new venue that's happening right under our nose, if you will, on our plate, as in dinner plate. Since I've come to St. Victoria, we've had a tradition of periodically gathering people for an informal dinner at the parish house. For sometime now, the gatherings have been for newcomers — known as our Welcome Dinners. Now the dinners are for all parishioners, new and old alike. Patty Schlader, our Director of Shared Ministries, thinking of the German roots of our parish, came up with a great name for it. We're calling the gatherings our Bavarian Dinner. They will be hosted four to five times a year on Saturday nights after the 5 p.m. Mass. Who will be invited? We will work our way through the parish roster randomly selecting names and send invitations to those folks as our invited guests for the evening. If you would like to increase your chance of having your name drawn, let us know here at the parish office. I know these dinners are going to be fun. The good news is that I am not cooking and as I like to remind people, I get a free meal out of this deal.

Changes to the Mass

One other big change coming up later this year is the revision in the wording of the Roman Missal along with certain Mass parts. This revision comes from the Vatican and it will affect parishes around the world. As we anticipate this most recent revision of the Roman Rite, it is good to remember that over the years, and even over the centuries, the Roman Missal has been revised many times over and

this will no doubt continue. That's the beauty of the Mass, it's the same prayer that has evolved with different expressions throughout the years. Jamie Moore, our Director of Music and Liturgy, will be rolling out a plan that will help us prepare for those changes.

Faith Formation for Adults

Finally, when you think of Faith Formation for young people, Faith Formation for adults in our parish takes shape in several different forms. If we have Vacation Bible School for our little ones, I like to think of our Vacation Bible School for Adults as our Tour to the Holy Land. I will be the chaplain for the tour April 16 through 25 in 2012. I had the privilege of visiting in 1998 and am looking forward to returning and would be excited to have you be a part of that trip. It truly is a life changing experience to walk in the very steps that Christ walked. It certainly brought the Gospels even more alive for me. There are brochures available in the kiosk or on our parish website under Upcoming Events.

I think of other Faith Formational opportunities for the adults of our parish. There are the men's and women's Focus Groups which are faith groups that study the Sunday scriptures and in the process deep connections are made. It is truly an inspiring thing to see. The men tend to meet on Saturday mornings and the women throughout the week.

Outgrowths of our Focus Groups for women are G.I.F.T (Girlfriends in Faith Together) and also Sister Circle which is a gathering of young moms. The men's Focus Group outreach is Friends at Floyds in the fall and Friends at the House in the spring. Our CCD for Adults, Catholic Conversation with Dessert, will be entering its third season. It features a good mix

of speakers and experiences that help us learn together. In addition, for the past several years we have offered a DVD Bible Study series that has a steady stream of followers and has given Catholics, who sometimes tend to shy away from scriptures, a real hungering to dive into God's Word and make it part of their lives.

And finally, for those non-Catholics looking into becoming Catholic, is the R.C.I.A (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) program. Rather than have the feel of a classroom, in these sessions those who participate become their own faith group as they break open the word of the Sunday Gospel and explore together the richness of our Catholic tradition. And by the way, this experience is also open to cradle Catholics who simply would like to have a "refresher course" and come to a deeper walk with the Lord Jesus.

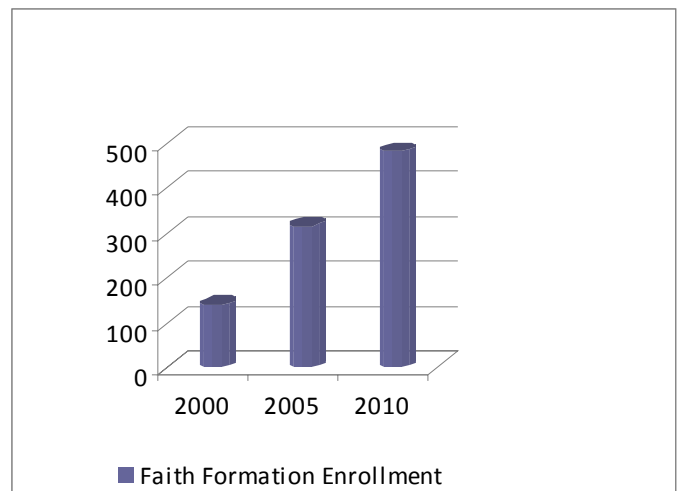
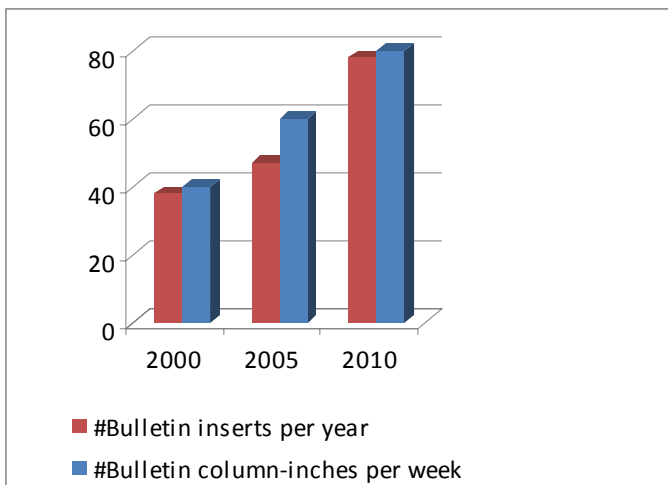
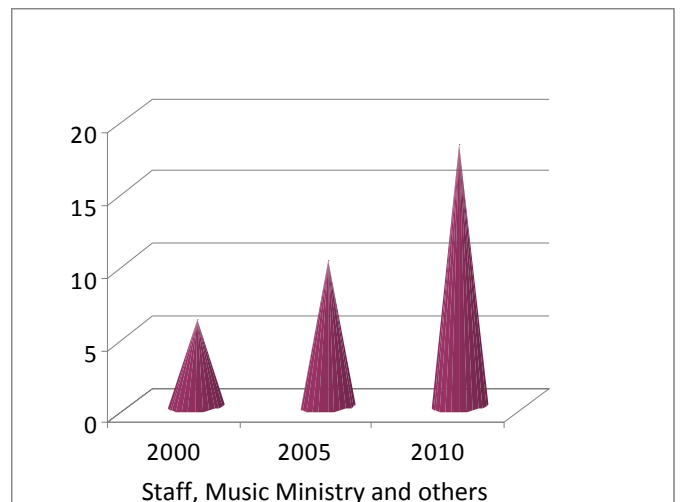
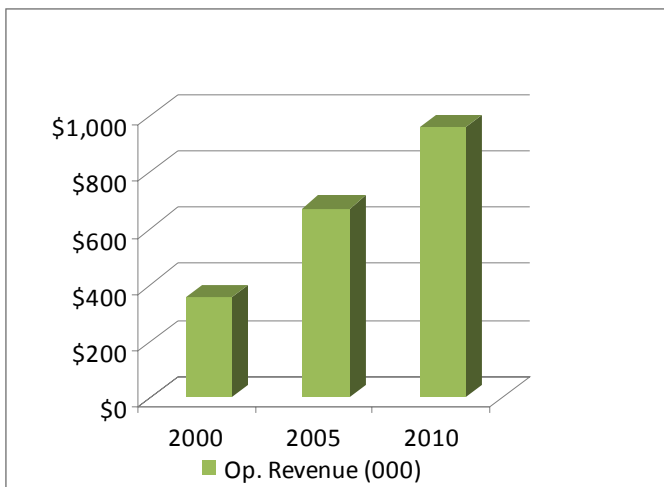
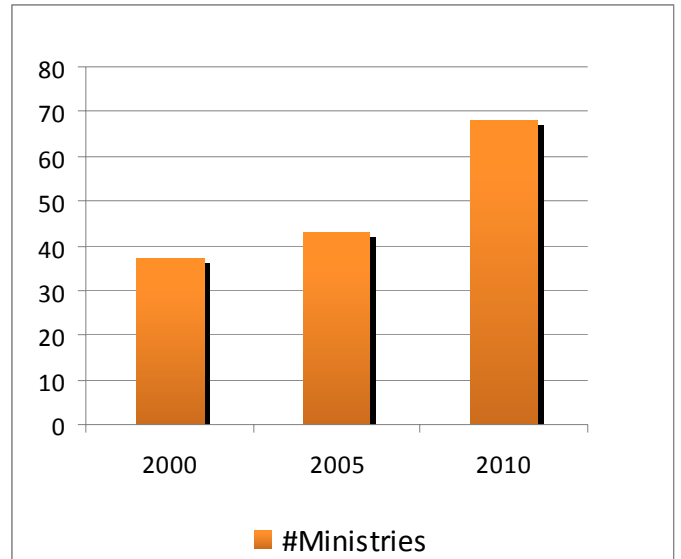
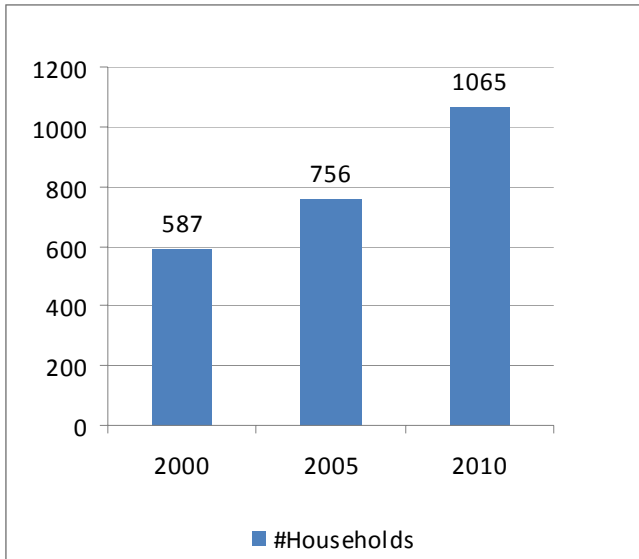
As you can see here at St. Victoria, like in life, the only constant is change. New and exciting changes that keep us alive and growing as a faith community. Thank you for being part of this parish family.

Fr. Bob

Upcoming Events

- **All Saints Swim**, Saturday, August 13. Swimmers compete swimming across Lake Bavaria and they do so honoring a designated loved ones.
- **Sunset Fest**, Saturday, September 10. Parishioners celebrate the end of summer with a 5 p.m. Mass in Lion's Park followed by a picnic supper and family fun.
- **Harvest of Gifts**, Saturday and Sunday, October 8 and 9, after all the Masses learn more about ministry opportunities at St. Victoria.

You've no doubt heard the statement that pictures often tell a story better than words. And, we often talk about the fact that St. Victoria is a growing parish. The charts on this page illustrate that growth in the last ten years — definitely telling the story better than words. The charts also set the tone for some of the articles included in this issue of *The Voice*.



Think Big . . . Imagine the Possibilities

In this issue of *The Voice* we talk about several aspects of our parish — its growth, our volunteers, Faith Formation for our youth and adults, our Bavarian Dinners and we highlight upcoming events.

Our parish is what it is today because parishioners have generously shared their time, talent and treasure. All three are vital to the health and growth of St. Victoria!

In the fall we focus on time and talent and in the spring our emphasis is treasure. While not always the most fun to talk about, it is vital if we are to reach out as the face and hands of Jesus Christ and to continue seeing our ministries blossom.

This year we have challenged you to **think big and imagine the possibilities**. We have asked each of you to pledge to our annual stewardship drive. These funds are required to meet our regular operating expenses which are about \$80,000 per month.

In addition to our regular operating expense, our debt burden for the new church stands at \$3 million with mortgage payments of \$21,000 per month for the next 20 years. Our current capital campaign winds down at the end of June, and although we have made progress in transitioning away from dependence on these gifts, we need your help to complete this effort.

For those of you who have been unable to complete your capital campaign pledge, we invite you to keep going for another year. And for those of you who have fulfilled your capital campaign pledge, or who did not join us in that effort, we urge you to give generously in your stewardship offerings and/or to pledge to help pay down our debt on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual schedule.

(On the pledge cards this year you perhaps noticed that there were two sections — for your annual pledge and a second spot to pledge toward paying down the debt.)

While we are fully aware that the economy has taken its toll on many of us, your support is vitally important to the continued growth of our beautiful church.

Think big and imagine the possibilities . . . with your generous response to our annual stewardship drive and to our request to help pay down our \$3 million mortgage . . . we can meet the challenges of a rapidly growing Faith Formation program, including creating two additional classrooms and expanding our commitment to Youth Ministry, returning to weekly tithes and adding new ministries.

Pledges to Date
(June 15, 2011)

290 registered households have pledged \$625,606.

46 households have pledged \$86,410 to help pay down our \$3 million mortgage.

Preparing for the New Roman Missal

In 2000, John Paul II issued the text for a new Roman Missal that was subsequently released in 2002. (The Roman Missal is the red book the priest or bishop uses at his chair and at the altar that contains the prayers for that particular Liturgy. Most often we hear it called the Sacramentary.)

The official language of the 2002 Missal was Latin and so an English translation was need for the celebration of the Mass in the vernacular. The process took eight years and received final approval in April 2010. We will begin using this new text on the first Sunday of Advent (November 27) this year.

The structure of the Mass as we

know it is not changing, but the words will change in significant ways giving a richer and deeper meaning to our Liturgy.

The new translation will provide a more exact rendering of the original Latin currently in use, one that was translated in 1974. The new text is necessary, correcting and clarifying those points in the 1974 translation that were perhaps not as clear as they need to be, or that did not do adequate justice to the beauty or power of the original Latin text.

Over the next several months, you will learn more about these changes and receive detailed information in the weekly bulletin.

New Hymnals

As part of the revised translations for the Mass, new hymnals will be published. Jamie Moore, Director of Music and Liturgy, has announced that an opportunity for parishioners to donate hymnals in honor of, or memory of, loved ones will occur later this year. Watch for details, also in the weekly bulletin.

Amen: The only part of a prayer that everyone knows.

Bulletin: Your receipt for attending Mass.

Choir: A group of people whose singing allows the rest of us to lip-sync.

Incense: Holy Smoke!

Make Sure Your Contribution is Counted!

You may have noticed something different about this year's stewardship pledge card (the blue card you received in the mail, that were available in the pews and are now in the kiosk in the Franciscan Commons). On this card, you have two opportunities to share your treasure with St. Victoria.

In the first section, you can make your **annual stewardship pledge**, the contributions used for our annual expenses. You have the option of adding \$5 a week to your existing pledge, renewing your existing pledge or pledging a new amount (per week, month, quarter or year).

In the second section you have the opportunity to help **pay down our \$3 million mortgage**. If you have already paid your Building on Our Heritage Capital Campaign Pledge, or if you have not pledged in the past, this is an opportunity to help with this debt reduction. (If you pledged during the campaign five years ago and have not yet paid off that pledge, you will have an additional year in which to hopefully pay off your pledge.)

In the **envelope packets** you receive six times each year (for two-month periods), you will find a weekly envelope for your stewardship contribution. Each month you will also find a pink envelope designated debt reduction for those contributions (or for continuing Capital Campaign donations). In addition, you will find a yellow envelope designated church improvement with contributions intended for the care and upkeep of the Historic Church. There is also a green envelope for our endowment to fund a perpetual revenue stream for St. Victoria. There are also envelopes for holy days such as Christmas and Easter. Please use the appropriate envelopes for each contribution.

You may also use **Electronic**



Joni Jeurissen, Administrative Support

Funds Transfer (EFT) to make your contributions. On the EFT form you may select the amount for your Stewardship Pledge, debt reduction or other designations.

Whether you use envelopes or EFT, please designate where your money is intended to go to facilitate our bookkeeping process.

One other suggestion — because the offertory is part of our Mass, your offerings are an important part of our celebrating Mass together. Even if you use EFT, please use your envelopes; just mark “I give electronically” and drop them in the collection basket. Or, use one of the laminated cards you will find in the back of the church.

And, finally, if you are a visitor, have not yet registered as a member or if you just forgot your envelope, there are **“welcome” envelopes** in the kiosk for your convenience.

Thank you for your generosity!

G.I.F.T. Events



G.I.F.T. (Girlfriends in Faith Together) is a woman's ministry which serves to connect all the women of St. Victoria

together in faith and friendship. In the fall and spring, G.I.F.T. hosts a women's speaker event as well as quarterly social events such as Ladies Bunko Night and Morning Coffee Talk.

In January, women of all ages met at School of the Wise for fun, fellowship and good coffee. It was a great way for women of St. Victoria to get to know one another. The next Coffee Talk is planned for Saturday, October 15, 9 to 10:30 a.m., again at School of the Wise.

Vicki Klima was the guest speaker for G.I.F.T.'s Spring Speaker Event in March. With her theme, “Marching into Lent,” Vicki educated, entertained and inspired the audience as she revealed the reasons behind some of the mysterious church traditions

involving women. Patty Schlader, Director of Shared Ministries closed with prayer.

The Summer Friday Outdoor Mass on July 29 will be hosted by Robyn Dumcum and a special invitation has been extended to all women and their children. (Note: Parents and their children are always welcome at Summer Friday Outdoor Masses.) All the mothers and their children are invited to stay for a play date after the Mass and social time.

The fall speaker event, “Mothers, Daughters, Sisters & Friends” will be held Saturday, September 17, from 9 to 11 a.m. The speaker is Pati Kachel.

The Woman of Faith Conference will again be coming to St. Paul on October 21 and 22. The G.I.F.T. steering committee is hoping to have a group of women from St. Victoria attend what is sure to be an inspiring and uplifting event. For more information, visit the website at www.womenoffaith.com.

Volunteers are the Bedrock of our Parish

(Editor’s Note: In some issues we highlight a volunteer. In this issue we salute all of you!)

When you consider all the parishioners who are part of our Ministry Schedule, provide music, help Fr. Bob with rides and meals, teach at Faith Formation, to name only a few activities, St. Victoria can claim hundreds of volunteers. Patty Schlader, Director of shared Ministries, and Jamie Moore, Director of Music and Liturgy, both look to volunteers for the success of their programs. “Volunteers truly are the bedrock of our parish,” says Patty. “Without our volunteers we simply could not do the things we do here.”

Jamie added that “we now have so many people involved in some of our activities that we need volunteers to help coordinate the volunteers. That’s what makes St. Victoria so special.”

While we can’t share information on every volunteer opportunity, the following are some examples. There are activities for everyone — some commitments requiring a substantial time commitment, while others, like serving lemonade once a summer, are quick and easy and equally rewarding. For more information, the 2010 Harvest of Gifts brochure is in the kiosk and available on the website at www.stvictoria.net under stewardship (or watch for the 2011 edition due out this fall.)

Simpson Housing

In the Twin Cities alone, roughly 1,000 people sleep outside each night. For over 20 years, Simpson Housing Services in Minneapolis has provided shelter and affordable housing to men, women and children experiencing homelessness. Since January 2004, approximately every six weeks volunteers from St. Victoria have prepared and served dinner to 46 to 90 men at Simpson House.

Parishioner are encouraged to join in this endeavor — serving a meal, providing a food item (salad fixings, dessert), or donating items needed by men at the shelter. Simpson House provides 46 men with a bed each evening, but relies on donations for personal needs. You’re always welcome to join in this unique opportunity to be the face and hands of Jesus Christ. For more information, contact Kathy Hamilton at 270-1545.

Sharing and Caring Hands

Each day hundreds families and individuals turn to Mary Jo Copeland and Sharing and Caring Hands for a hot, nutritious meal. The third Monday of each month, a group of St. Victoria parishioners help prepare and serve dinner at Sharing and Caring Hands. For more information, contact Jane Wenning at 474-8798.

Wedding Mentors and Coordinators

Every couple preparing for marriage at St. Victoria is assigned a mentor couple, a married couple from our parish that helps to prepare an engaged couple by sharing their own experiences and providing practical guidance and discernment tools as the couple prepares for marriage. Each couple also is assigned a coordinator who helps them plan their wedding ceremony and who is there to help right up to the minute the bride walks down the aisle. For information, contact Mary Harvey in the parish office at 443-2661 x16.

Prison Outreach

On the first and fifth Sundays of each month, Deacon Ray and others lead an interactive Liturgy of the Word Service for men incarcerated at the Carver County Jail in Chaska. This is a ministry of love and evangelism that seeks to serve and encounter Christ in all our brothers. For more information, contact Deacon Ray Ortman in the parish office at 443-2661 x13.

10 Reasons to Volunteer

- No. 10 Volunteering can be good for reducing stress and making you healthier.
- No. 9 Volunteers save resources.
- No. 8 Volunteers gain professional experience.
- No. 7 Volunteering brings people together.
- No. 6 Volunteering promotes growth and self-esteem and fosters empathy.
- No. 5 Volunteering strengthens the parish and the community.
- No. 4 Volunteers learn a lot.
- No. 3 Volunteering is a chance to give back.
- No. 2 Volunteering encourages responsibility.
- No. 1 You make a difference!

Staying Connected

In our fast-paced culture these days, things are always on the move and changing — including the ways we connect with each other. And, your parish family wants to stay connected with you! If you have moved, switched phone numbers or have a new email address, drop us a line so we can update our records and keep you in the loop with all of the happenings here at St. Victoria. We would especially like to have email addresses for each household so we can “go greener” as a parish and quickly and effectively communicate with you. If you have not been receiving emails from us, send us your email address and we’ll add you to the list. To send any new contact information, email Julie Schmiege at jschmiege@stvictoria.org or call her at 443-2661 x11.

Our Volunteers are My Eyes

By Fr. Bob White

(Editor's Note: This article was recently included in "The Good News" edition of "The Catholic Spirit." The article highlights the number and diversity of our volunteers at St. Victoria.)

Talk about great volunteers! We have the best at St. Victoria and I am one of the beneficiaries! In 1996 I was diagnosed with "Angioid Streaks" a disease affecting my vision. By 2000, I had only a small amount of central vision in one eye remaining. No longer could I jump in the car, read a book or look to the rear of our church and recognize my parishioners.

The call went out for help. To date, I have had nearly 300 drivers who have driven me everywhere from a quick hop to the grocery store to destinations hours away from Victoria. What a wonderful way to get to know people, and I think I offer wives of newly retired husbands a great respite!

There are 60 people on the "drop-off dinner" list and I can't count the number of invitations to parishioners' homes. Since my culinary skills were always in question, this is nothing short of fabulous.

Countless people read for me, tape record books and materials, and a faithful volunteer puts everything in large type that I need for my Liturgies. Along with a great staff and adaptive equipment, I'm able to do all that is expected of a priest with a growing parish — one that has nearly tripled in size since 1996 and during that time we built a new church.

And, lest I forget, there's my faithful dog, Miss Betsy White. No, she's not a seeing eye dog, but she is a dog that sees a need to be a loving and faithful companion.

And when I think back on all that has happened, it really has brought us closer together as a parish. Our

parish mission is to be the face and hands of Jesus Christ. These volunteers and my staff have been that for me.

Sure, there are days I would like to jump in the car or pick up a book, but then I stop and think of all my blessings and thank God.

(Note: Staff member Julie Schmiege coordinates all the volunteer activities and that's no small feat.)

Reminder . . .

Placing flowers at gravesites is a sign of love for those departed and it serves to make our cemetery a beautiful, peaceful place. However, we do have some requirements that we ask all to follow.

- There may be one plant stand or shepherd's hook on each grave.
- All plants and flowers — fresh and artificial — must be in pots in the plant stand or hanging from the hook. Please remember that watering plants and flowers is your responsibility.
- Plants and flowers may not be planted in the ground and pots of flowers may not be set on the ground.
- No other types of decorations are allowed on or around gravesites with the exception of small flags the weeks before and after Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

Plants, flowers and other decorations that are placed in or on the ground will be removed and discarded. Plants and flowers, fresh or artificial, that become unsightly will also be removed and discarded. Thank you.



No matter how you spell it, the meaning is the same — thank you! The staff saluted all our volunteers earlier this spring. Pictured, left to right in the back row, are: Jamie Moore, Amy Kusber, Michelle Williams, Fr. Bob White, Joni Wohl and Mary Catino. In the front: Mary Harvey, Patty Schlader, John Wall, Julie Schmiege, Joni Jeurissen and Deacon Ray Ortman.

Photo Directories

We still have a number of unclaimed photo directories that were produced last summer. If you had pictures taken and do not yet have your complimentary directory, please stop by the parish office for your copy.

Kindergarten Added to Faith Formation

New this year: Kindergarten Classes will be offered at both Wednesday night sessions (Session No. 1, 5 to 6 p.m. and Session No. 2, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.). We will now offer a Faith Formation Program to **all students** in Grades K through 10!

The program for the 2011-2012 year will begin with an opening Mass on Wednesday, September 28, at 6:30 p.m. Please join us!

St. Victoria Faith Formation programs are designed to help children experience what it means to be "Catholic," not only within a classroom setting, but in life. We do this through activities which introduce children to liturgy, prayer, principles of Catholic Social Justice, and acts of charity and service to others. We are building community through our Catholic Faith!

During the 2010-2011 Faith Formation Year, we filled 466 boxes for Operation Christmas Child, we volunteered at Feed My Starving Children, we created 376 cranes for the children of Japan (Osh Kosh donated items of clothing for every crane a child made) and we collected cans of soup for area food shelves with our "Souper Bowl of Caring." Our 7th and 8th graders spent an evening playing Bingo with residents of Community Living and presented the Living Stations to all during Holy Week.

Also as a faith community, we enjoyed fun events at Grand Slam, Comedy Sportz and tubing at Buck Hill.

We invite your family to be a part of Faith Formation this coming year!

Starting July 1, 2011, registrations will be accepted for the upcoming

Faith Formation year. Information and registration forms will be mailed to all families who had children enrolled in our program last year. You will also find information about the program and registration forms on our website at www.stvictoria.net.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of us. We hope you join us for a faith-filled year of learning, service and building community through our Catholic Faith!

Your Faith Formation Team

Amy Kusber
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Joni Wohl
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Nick Tofteland
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Joni Jeurissen
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New Youth Minister to Join Parish Team

In May, after considerable prayer and discernment, Fr. Bob invited Nick Tofteland to be our new Youth Minister.

In his announcement, Fr. Bob said, "I am convinced that he will bring passion and spirit to his work and inspire our youth to learn and live our faith."

In his introduction, Fr. Bob shared words from Nick's mission statement, "Each of us thirsts for God to fill our lives with purpose and joy. I want to develop in young people a deep relationship with Christ and an understanding of the Gospel, their value in the Body of Christ and their role in honoring and glorifying God."

Nick grew up in Chanhassen and he comes to us with experience from having served as Youth

Minister for two previous congregations.

Fr. Bob shared that a particular challenge for his discernment was that Nick, though he is a faith-filled Christian, is not Catholic. "I am convinced, however, that he will bring his unique gifts to bear in such a way that will both uplift our youth in our faith and set their hearts on fire for Jesus."

At the same time, to maintain a strong Catholic identity in the catechetical programs, Deacon Ray will assume overall leadership of Confirmation and Amy Kusber and Joni Wohl will continue to oversee 7th and 8th Grade catechesis.

When Nick joins the staff in July, please join Fr. Bob in extending him a warm welcome.

St. Victoria's Got Talent!

You're familiar with the TV show "America's Got Talent." Well, St. Victoria's got talent too! And, we're going to give anyone from St. Victoria, and their friends, the chance to show off that talent. On Sunday, August 14, at 7 p.m. we will put on a talent show as a fundraiser for St. Victoria's Youth Ministry. Young and old, singers, dancers, magicians, **whatever!** If you've got talent, we want you to share it and help raise funds for the youth of our parish. Contact Jamie in the parish office at 443-2661 x17 or email him at jmoore@stvictoria.org for details or to sign up.

Parishioners Witness Pope John Paul II Beatification

By Karl and Patty Tauscher

Last month we were fortunate to travel to Italy. We booked our lodging last November and after we had confirmed our reservations in Rome, our first stop, the Vatican announced that on Sunday, May 1, they were holding a Beatification Ceremony for Pope John Paul II (the day after we arrived in Rome).

We had the privilege to be two of the 1.5 million people to attend the ceremony in St. Peter's square. The ceremony was a spectacle like we have never seen before. The reverence shown by people was awe inspiring.

After the ceremony, we traveled to a little known Cathedral of San Clemente. We descended down 60 feet to the bottom level of the Cathedral which dates back to 1st Century A.D. Built on the top of this Cathedral is another Cathedral dating to the 14th Century A.D. The relics and frescos on the walls were very vivid and very well preserved. On top of the 14th Century Cathedral, the current Cathedral rests. Here in one church is history dating back to the 1st Century A.D. This is a must see for anyone traveling to Rome.

We then walked a few blocks to St. John Lateran Church, the Pope's Church. This was the most spectacular church we had ever seen. The ornate statues and altars were beyond description.

We spent an entire day at St. Peter's from the top of the cupola and walking in the Sistine Chapel to viewing the bones of St. Peter under the altar.

One of trip's highlights was the attendance on May 4th of a Papal audience. Being part of the crowd allowed in St. Peter's square (there were about 15,000 people not allowed in the square until after



A close encounter with Pope Benedict

the ceremony) and to see and hear the Holy Father preach in numerous languages was extremely moving. We got as close to Pope Benedict as anyone could. The people we were traveling with, who are not Catholic, were so moved by the Vatican that they are considering joining the Church.

After visiting only a small percentage of the 600-plus churches in Rome, we traveled to

Siena, Florence, the Cinque Terre and Milan. We visited the Duomos (Italian term for cathedral church) in each of these cities.

In Siena, they were celebrating St. Catherine of Siena's feast by displaying her skull on the Duomo's altar. We attended Mass at the Church of St. Catherine of Siena that evening. Although the Mass was in Italian, we were able to follow along. During the homily, the celebrant was preaching and had the congregation's full attention. Perhaps it was all the arm and hand movements he made while doing his homily.

Another highlight of our trip that we need to mention is that we enjoyed the food!

Both being cooks, we were amazed at the quality of food that we ate. We did bring back with us several cook books that we plan on using when we are asked to cook for the Bavarian Dinners.

Everyone, if at all possible, should visit Rome and Italy to see what religion is all about.

Catholic Aid has a Name Change

Earlier this year, Catholic Aid Association changed its name to Catholic United Financial Council.

What has not changed is the services and programs provided by the organization.

CUF has been in existence since 1878 bringing together community and parish, providing every generation in the Catholic community the opportunity to thrive and grow.

They promote financial strength by offering life insurance, annuities, retirement savings plans and more to members at every step of their lives.

In addition, in just the last few years they have provided over a million dollars in matching funds and

grants for Catholic schools and students and offered grants to members who suffered losses after natural disasters to help them get back on their feet along with other grants and programs.

St. Victoria benefits directly when our hard working CUF members hold their annual Spring Rummage Sale. CUF matches the first \$1,000 realized through the sale. (Next year's sale is set for May 10 and 11.)

If you have questions or would like more information, contact CUF field representative Carol Lindner at 657-2210 or our St. Victoria Council President Darlene Williams at 403-6959. You will also find information in the kiosk in the Franciscan Commons.

From the Back Burner

Geography Lesson

At least once a year, Fr. Bob announces it is “Hit the Road Sunday.” It’s an opportunity to move to another section of the church, see everything from a different perspective and to perhaps meet new people.

He also has named each section of the church because, as he says, the distinct features of our state help him remember the names. In case you missed the geography lessons shared last summer, here’s a review.

On the parking lot side, the first section (and typically the most populated) is the **Twin Cities**, next it is the **Winona Bluffs** and finally the **Southwest Prairie** section. On the cemetery side, across from the Twin Cities it’s “**Da Range**,” the center is **Lake Wobegon** and the far northwest is the **Boundary Waters**.

And, now a bit of trivia on each:

Twin Cities: Mickey’s Diner (St. Paul), Mall of America (Bloomington), First Minnesota sky scraper, the Foshay Tower (Minneapolis), the Cathedral of St. Paul and the Coffee Pot Water Tower (Lindstrom).

Winona Bluffs: Lake Pepin, Birthplace of Water Skiing (Lake City), SPAM Museum (Austin), Home of the Mayo Clinic (Rochester), Shoot-out with the Jesse James Gang (Northfield) and home of the “Grumpy Old Men” movie (Wabasha).

Southwest Prairie: Traverse des Sioux, the site where the Dakota and Ojibwe Indians ceded all the land between the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers, the prairie home of Laura Ingalls Wilder (Walnut Grove), the world’s largest ball of twine (Darwin), the world’s oldest rock (Granite Falls) and the Pipestone National Monument (Pipestone).

Da Range: World’s largest pit mine (Hibbing), site where iron ore

was discovered in Minnesota (Soudan), site of the “Great American Think-off” (New York Mills), Greyhound Bus Depot (Hibbing), birthplace of Judy Garland (Grand Rapids).

Lake Wobegon: Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox (Bemidji), Paul’s girlfriend Lucette (Hackensack), last one-room school house (Northwest Angle), Lake Wobegon (Imagination of Garrison Keillor) and the Headwaters of the Mississippi River (Itasca State Park).

Boundary Waters: Shipping channel wide enough for ocean-going vessels (Duluth), often the coldest spot in the U.S. (Embarrass), Hockey Hall of Fame and alleged site of the First Polka Mass in 1973 (Eveleth) and entry Point for the Gunflint Trail and Boundary Waters Canoe Area (Grand Marais).



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