

MORE
GOOD NEWS



**The business
of running
the parish**

Page 3

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Why the parish needs your time, talent, treasure

Hushed laughs spread quickly through the pews that Sunday.

A young couple who had fallen away from the church were visiting relatives and brought their 5-year-old to Mass. The child never had seen the inside of a church. When the collection basket arrived, the child's face lit up with a mile-wide grin. Before his embarrassed parents could stop him, he was pulling out money by the fistful!

That situation was comical because we're supposed to be putting in, not taking out. Yet parishes everywhere are short on funds.

If the parents of the child who took money from the basket had looked closely, they would have seen a surprising amount of \$1 bills. That's because Catholic financial giving has been declining over the last several decades.

The hard truth is that Catholics seem hesitant to contribute adequately to their church. At the same time, however, they still look to the church, especially its leaders and ministers, to "be there" for Sunday Mass, service to the sick and hurting, weddings, funerals and the rest.



FATHER JIM CESTA

We are in a period, though, when Catholics from all walks of life, must each consider if we are giving enough to our church in time, treasure and talent. The survival of our parishes may depend upon our willingness (parishioners and clergy alike) to take on stewardship as a way of life, to rise to the challenge of our times, to "grasp the vision" and allow our faith to guide every corner of our lives.

Read the article on Page 3. It gives you an idea of what it takes to keep our parish alive.

CELEBRATING THE SAINTS

St. Patrick

Feast day: March 17

Legends about Patrick abound, but truth is best served by our seeing two solid qualities in him: He was humble and he was courageous.

The determination to accept suffering and success with equal indifference guided the life of God's instrument for winning most of Ireland for Christ.

Details of his life are uncertain. Current research places his dates of birth and death a little later than earlier accounts. Patrick may have been born in Dunbarton, Scotland; Cumberland, England; or in northern Wales. He called himself a Roman and a Briton. At 16, he and a large number of his father's slaves and vassals were captured by Irish raiders and sold as slaves in Ireland. Forced to work as a shepherd, he suffered greatly from hunger and cold.



After six years Patrick escaped, probably to France, and later returned to Britain at the age of 22. His captivity had meant spiritual conversion. He may have studied at Lerins, off the French coast; he spent years at Auxerre, France, and was consecrated bishop at the age of 43. His great desire was to proclaim the good news to the Irish.

In a dream vision it seemed "all the children of Ireland from their mothers' wombs were

stretching out their hands" to him. He understood the vision to be a call to do mission work in pagan Ireland. Despite opposition from those who felt his education had been defective, he was sent to carry out the task. He went to the west and north — where the faith had never been preached — obtained the protection of local kings and made numerous converts.

Because of the island's pagan background, Patrick was emphatic in encouraging widows to remain chaste and young women to consecrate their virginity to Christ. He ordained many priests, divided the country into dioceses, held church councils, founded several monasteries and continually urged his people to greater holiness in Christ.

He suffered much opposition from pagan druids and was criticized in England and Ireland for the way he conducted his mission. In a relatively short time, the island had experienced deeply the Christian spirit, and was prepared to send out missionaries whose efforts were greatly responsible for Christianizing Europe.

Patrick was a man of action, with little inclination toward learning. He had a rock-like belief in his vocation, in the cause he had espoused. One of the few certainly authentic writings is his "Confessio," above all an act of homage to God for having called Patrick, unworthy sinner, to the apostolate.

There is hope rather than irony in the fact that his burial place is said to be in County Down in Northern Ireland, long the scene of strife and violence.

— Source www.franciscanmedia.org

PARISH WEBSITE

Visit www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com for the latest parish news and announcements. There's even a mobile version for your smart phone. You can donate online and check out our social media sites and more.

PHOTO GALLERIES



BULLETIN



St. Mary of Mount Carmel Blessed Sacrament Parish

www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com and www.facebook.com/mountcarmelblessedsacrament

ABOUT THE PARISH
 Address: 648 Jay St., Utica, NY 13501
 Telephone: 315-730-3482; Fax: 315-735-8806
 Office hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday
 Closed on Friday and national holidays
 Faith Formation and Sacraments Center: 315-724-3950
 Email: stmaryuta@syrdio.org
 Hearing impaired: Listening devices available in the sacristy.

MASS SCHEDULES
 Weekend
 Saturday: 4:30 p.m. (livestream on parish YouTube channel)
 Sunday: 8 and 10:30 a.m.
 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:30 a.m.
 Rosary for the unborn and Divine Mercy Chaplet: Thursday after Mass.

Holy Days
 Consult the bulletin and website.

RECONCILIATION
 Saturday: 3:45 p.m.

MARRIAGE
 Couples must make arrangements six months in advance.

BAPTISM
 Call the parish office to arrange. Parents must attend a preparation class prior to the baptism of their child.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS
 Adults or children, 7 or older who have never been baptized or confirmed or received the Eucharist, are invited to call the parish office for information about this process.

NEW PARISHIONERS
 Welcome to our parish family. We invite you to become an active participant of our parish community. Please be sure to register by calling the parish office.

PARISH STAFF
 Pastor: Rev. Jim Cesta
 In Residence: Rev. Luis Ojeda
 Trustees: Riccardo Arici Sr. and Bill Tibbault
 Parish Office Manager: Terri Piazza-Panuccio
 Faith Formation I-IV: Terri Piazza-Panuccio
 Faith Formation 7-10: Anne Carbone-Elacqua
 Music Director: Peter Ilacqua
 Website Manager: Auburn Editor: Fran Perritano



... and more

Scan the QR code below to get the mobile version of the website and save it to your home screen Here's some of what you'll find:

- Wedding Planning Guide.
- Funeral Service Planning Guide.
- Weekly prayers, reflections, photos, videos and more to enrich your faith.
- Photo galleries
- Mass schedules



COVER STORY

Having faith in the business side

It takes a lot of work, finances to keep parish vibrant

By FRAN PERRITANO

St. Mary of Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament Parish is renowned throughout the diocese and beyond for its meaningful liturgies, profound Holy Week services, beautiful celebrations at Christmas and Easter, a glorious music ministry, and a very welcoming and compassionate community of worshippers.

And yet, none of that would be possible, or even exist, without another important part of the parish — the business side.

While throughout the last several decades many parishes have closed, Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament has remained vibrant, not only religiously, but through careful management of resources.

Father Jim Cesta has been pastor since July 2009. He acknowledges the importance of keeping a parish fiscally viable.

“If you as a pastor — with a core team and provide helpful worship services — money and support will happen,” he said. “Every pastor is part beggar. If the parish is providing the best possible (faith experiences), people are generous.”

Father Jim said stewardship is critical in the life of a parish.

“It goes with discipleship — following the Lord,” he said. “It’s two sides of the same coin.”

Here’s an idea of how our parish remains anchored in the turbulent religious sea.

In fiscal year 2021-22, the parish had a total regular gross income of \$482,685.80. That was offset by expenditures of \$480,323.70 — leaving a net income of \$2,362.10.

But thanks to the generosity of bequests from people and wise investments, the parish saw a total net income of \$85,531.24. (A detailed report is found on the parish website.)

We’re in the black. Other parishes are seeing red.

Running the parish office

Father Jim said it’s important “to have a competent secretary / business manager and a few business advisers.”

When he first arrived at Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament after 12 years as pastor of St. Joseph’s parish in Oswego, MaryBeth LaNeve was parish administrator. When she died in June 2020, Terri Panuccio took over as office manager after helping MaryBeth as a volunteer for several years.

Running the parish office is very complex.



Bev Franz is one of the volunteers who help Office Manager Terri Panuccio in the parish office.

“I’m responsible for facilitating the day-to-day operations of the parish,” said Terri, who also is the K-6 Faith Formation coordinator.

Those duties include:

- Maintaining accurate financial records and files.
- Ensuring that bills are paid on time.
- Manage payroll reporting information.
- Ensure the parish is compliant with all tax and insurance responsibilities.
- Placing orders for whatever the parish needs, such as wine, hosts, Prayer Remembrance cards, etc.
- Managing and coordinating the church’s schedule of events, including baptisms, weddings and funerals; festival or social events that might require use of the Scalabrini Center; coordinating meetings for the Buildings and Grounds and Finance committees.
- Assist with the bulletin by typing Prayer Remembrance and memorials, and give financial information as needed.
- Attend quarterly diocesan business administrator meetings as well as Parish Council meetings.

“Running a parish office is extremely important,” Terri said. “Honestly, I didn’t realize all that is involved because when I started, COVID had pretty much stopped everything, and we didn’t have the feast or even Masses at that time so there wasn’t as much to do. Once everything started coming back again, so did all the work that goes along with it. I think the parish office is like a central processing unit and is what makes the parish function. While everyone has a specific job they do, the office ties it all together.”

Personal touch important

In addition to all the work, the personal touch is crucial.

“It’s also important because I am the person someone sees when they come into the office or talks to when they call on the phone, so I feel there is also a hospitality aspect involved,” Terri said. “I have received phone calls from people just needing to talk to someone, and if Father Cesta isn’t available, I try to help.”

“I also get calls from grieving family mem-

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Life is well worth the wait

Jean Reale believes timing is everything

Nearly everyone in the parish knows John Reale Jr. and his mom and dad. Getting to be almost equally as well known is John's wife, Jean. They have been married for 12 years, and Jean has taken on more prominent volunteer roles in the parish. To paraphrase "Law and Order," this is her story.

Nearly everyone in our parish knows your husband. How did you two connect?

John and I met through the online dating site CatholicMatch.com in March of 2009. We were both nervous and skeptical, but it worked out. I believe that our faith, love and devotion to the Lord is what brought us together. Timing is everything, and though we met later in life, I believe in the saying, "Good things come to those who wait."

How did your relationship progress?

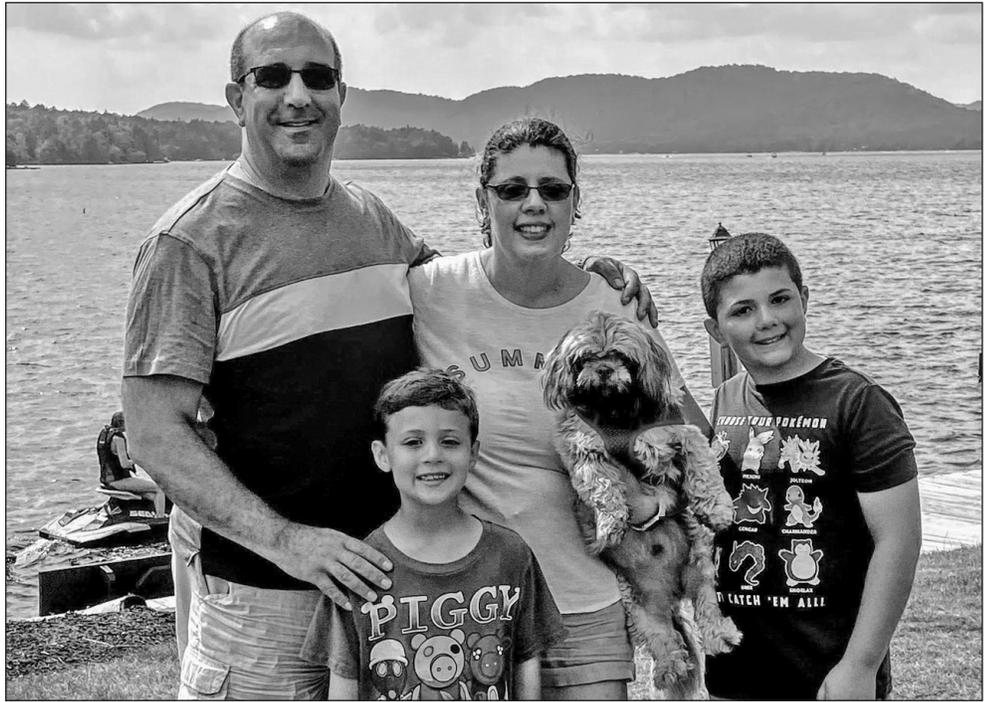
In May of 2009, we had our first date, and by November on our six-month anniversary, John proposed to me with both our parents' blessings. He proposed at the Florentine Café where we had our first date. I ordered a crème puff, and when the waitress brought it out, there in the middle of the crème puff was the exquisite ring with the words "Marry Me" written on the plate in raspberry sauce. I was so excited. I shouted "YES!" of course.

Eleven months later we were married at Mount Carmel Church on Oct. 30, 2010, with a beautiful Mass and ceremony celebrated with all our family and friends. After the ceremony when we stepped outside, John surprised me with a performance by the Red Band. What a unique and thoughtful gift. I loved it.

When John asked me if we could exchange our vows at Mount Carmel, I was honored. Attending Mass with him and meeting all the parish community that welcomed me with open arms it has truly been an inspirational and faith growing experience becoming a member of St. Mary of Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament Parish.

John and you love to volunteer in our parish. What are some of the things you do?

I am a eucharistic minister at 10:30 Mass on Sunday. My husband and I have been volunteers on the Marriage Team for several years talking to couples that were planning to be married in our parish about our experiences in being newly married and how faith plays an important role in marriage. I am a volunteer at our parish festival in July, helping to make our famous pizza frita. I have helped decorate the church for Easter and have been a participant in the Easter Vigil Mass for many years, helping with the water bowls and carrying the banner.



The Reale Family: John, Jean, Matthew, Christopher and Chewy.

It is truly one of my favorite services to attend. The music, the symbolism and the parish community coming together are what make it so enjoyable.

Why is volunteering in our parish important to you?

It is a rewarding experience that helps me feel more connected to God, gives me a sense of purpose and I like to help do good for others, such as the parish community. It is also a wonderful way for me to express my gratitude and strengthen my faith.

You and your family love the outdoors. What are your favorite things to do?

We love camping — we have a seasonal site in the Adirondacks that we spend our summer weekends at. We enjoy hiking, boating, swimming and taking in all that nature has to offer. Sitting by the campfire roasting marshmallows and making Smores or going out for ice cream. We like spending time together as a family going on family trips, like Hershey Park this past summer and Disney World three years ago.

You love to travel, too. What are some of your favorite places?

My favorite all-time place to travel to is Italy. John and I both shared the same dream to one day go to Italy and we did for our honeymoon in May of 2011 for 10 days with a tour group. It was a dream come true. We saw all the popular tourist sites from Rome to Florence, to Tuscany, Venice, Capri and finally Positano along the Amalfi Coast. It was a trip like no other that we will have many amazing lasting memories and we promised ourselves we would return for our

Please see JEAN REALE, Page 7

Jean Reale

- **Age:** 47.
- **Family:** Husband John, sons Matthew and Christopher.
- **Education:** Graduated in 1996 from Springfield Technical Community College in Springfield, Mass., with an associate degree in applied science.
- **Employment:** Clinton Tractor and Implement Co. for four years as a part time accounts payable administrator. Before that I worked at the Bank of New York in Oriskany for 19 years in the Reconciliation, Accounting and Tax Departments.
- **Things I like to do in my spare time:** Bake. Decorating our house, especially for the holidays. Watching a good movie with a bowl of popcorn.
- **Favorite movie:** "The Goonies."
- **Favorite TV show:** "Chicago Fire" and "Chicago PD."
- **Favorite musical artists:** Michael Buble' and Josh Groban.
- **Favorite quote:** (1 Corinthians 13: 4-8A) "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ... And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Kenny living his dream

He loves his job, his daughter, his fiancée, his life

At age 27, Kenny Lacy says life is turning out pretty good. He's working in his dream job, has a daughter and is about to be married.

You last were featured in "More Good News" in January 2012. How has life changed for you in the last 11 years?

Life has changed quite a bit. I've graduated high school and college, had a child, got engaged, became a homeowner and got my dream job.

Back in 2012, you said you were going to go to Syracuse University. You did. How was your college experience.

College was everything I wanted and more. I made lifelong friends, had once-in-a-lifetime experiences and learned so many things that helped shaped the person I am today.

You said you wanted to become a sports broadcaster or a crime scene investigator. You're now a sportswriter for the syracuse.com and [The Post Standard](http://ThePostStandard.com). What is being a sports reporter like, and do you enjoy it?

I absolutely love my job. Being a sports reporter is an actual dream. Being paid to attend games and ask the important questions that everyone cares about and deliver that news to the public is something that I truly enjoy.

Do you still hope to be a broadcaster and what would be your dream job?

I think my broadcasting dreams have changed at this point. Rather than being a play-by-play guy I think I'd rather be a writer that also does sports talk TV like Michael Wilbon or Tony Kornheiser. At this point I'd say my dream job would be to cover the Syracuse University basketball team full time.

So, what happened to becoming a crime scene investigator?

AP Chemistry class my junior year of high school happened! In all seriousness, I still think it's something I could have enjoyed doing, but after experiencing that class I'm not sure if I could have envisioned myself taking nothing but science classes for four years in college.

Talk about things changing in 11 years. You have a 4-year-old daughter and are engaged to be married. How has fatherhood changed you and your perspective on life?

Fatherhood has certainly changed my perspective on life. Having a person that relies on you for everything certainly changes your outlook on life fast. There's nothing I wouldn't do for my daughter, and I thank God every day that he blessed me with my beautiful little family.

When you were in our parish, you were an altar server and lector. What do you remember most about those days?

I remember the pride I used to have in being part of Mass whenever I was scheduled as a server or lector. I'm the type of person that loves being involved with things, so being able to contribute to Mass was something I always



Kenny Lacy with his daughter Alessia and fiancée Ashley.

Kenny Lacy

- **Age:** 27.
- **Family:** Daughter Alessia, 4; Fiancée Ashley Pape, 30.
- **Education:** Graduated from Proctor High School in 2013; graduated from Syracuse University with a bachelor's degree in African American Studies.
- **Employment:** Sports reporter for syracuse.com / [The Post-Standard](http://ThePostStandard.com); former sports reporter for the [Observer-Dispatch](http://Observer-Dispatch.com) (2021-2122).
- **Favorite movie:** "The Lion King."
- **Favorite TV show:** "The Office."
- **Favorite sport:** Football.
- **Favorite teams:** Atlanta Falcons, Syracuse Orange, New York Yankees.
- **Favorite quote:** "Success is not final; failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."

looked forward to.

How has being a parishioner shaped your life?

Being a parishioner shaped my life in so many ways, but I'd say the biggest way it did

was by teaching me to always keep faith and trust God. I had to take many roads to get to where I am today, but due to my faith I never doubted the paths I had to take.

Has it been difficult keeping up the faith as you have gotten older, gone to college and now a working dad?

Unfortunately, it has been hard to keep up with my faith as much as I did when I was younger. Between working sporting events on the weekends or doing extracurricular that my daughter is involved in, it seems like there's always something. But I still make time to make sure I thank God for all that's he's done and continues to do for me and my family.

What do you hope for your future and what advice would you give to young people?

For my future I hope to continue being successful in my career and for my family to continue to be happy and healthy. Advice I would tell younger people is that if you have a dream or goal, do not stop working toward it. There were plenty of times when it felt like I would never have the opportunity to be where I am now, but I refused to give up and kept my faith and now I'm working my dream job and have an amazing family and couldn't be happier.

Issac Jogues: A local saint

The Mohawk Valley is rich in history. From the indigenous peoples of this area and the Iroquois Confederation, through the colonial period and the American Revolution, it was a cradle of the development of our state and country even before the construction of the Erie Canal, which helped western expansion.

Our little corner of that area is rich in the growth of the Catholic faith in America. In the fall issue of this periodical, we shared the story of recently canonized St. Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, who on one of his visits to the United States (Sept. 15, 1901) blessed the cornerstone St. Mary of Mount Carmel Church.

The very first canonized saints on the North American continent have roots down the Mohawk River in Auriesville.

Isaac Jogues and his companions were the first martyrs of the North American continent officially recognized by the Church. St. Isaac Jogues was born at Orleans, France, on Jan. 10, 1607, and later was ordained to the priesthood.

In 1636, as a 29-year-old member of the Society of Jesus, he gave up a career as a teacher of literature in France to work among the Huron Indians in the New World. He and his companions, under the leadership of Jean de Brébeuf, arrived at Three Rivers (Trois Rivieres), a tiny French trading post on the St. Lawrence River in Quebec.

Among Father Jogues' possessions was a small Mass kit that his mother had given him. Jogues hoped that the Hurons, who were completing their summer's trading, would allow him to travel hundreds of miles inland with them when they returned home. He gained their confidence and respect through his physical prowess on their journeys, gathering wood, portaging their canoes and supplies, and adapting to their difficult life.

But Jogues' positive contributions were counterbalanced by the European's introduction of influenza among an indigenous people who had no resistance during his and his companions' first winter among them. It was only through determination, faith and hard labor that they convinced the Hurons not to expel them.

The Hurons, who lived in the north, experienced frequent incursions from their southern neighbors, the Iroquois, who had obtained guns from the Dutch colonists. The lopsided encounters resulted in bloody outcomes, on the one side from superior arms and on the other from revenge.

In the summer of 1642, the Hurons decided



A.J. VALENTINI

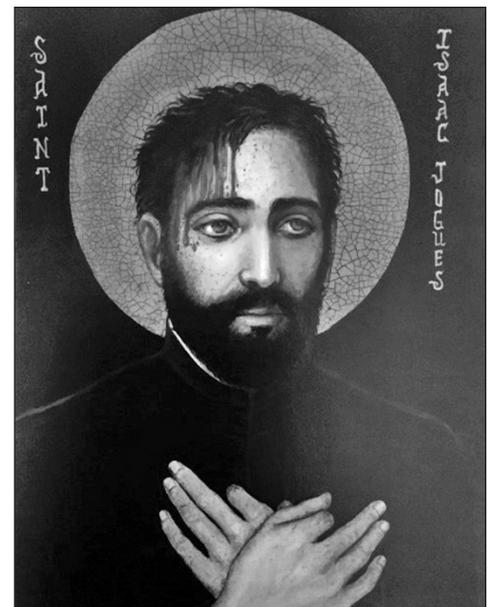
that their annual trading trip to Three Rivers would be too dangerous since Iroquois war parties were infiltrating the area. Realizing that a lack of medicine and supplies would cause much suffering, Father Jogues, some Christian Hurons, and French laymen made the trip on their behalf. On their return, the group was attacked and captured by Mohawks, members of the Iroquois nation. They were driven through many villages and tortured until they arrived at Ossernenon (near present day Auriesville) with open wounds and broken bones.

Jogues faced his captivity with courage, encouraging his fellow captives to forgive their captors and offer their sufferings to God on their behalf. One captive was forced to cut off Father Jogues' thumb to assure their captors that the missionary would never use weapons against them. Most of the captives suffered terrible deaths.

It seemed that the Mohawks were saving Jogues; however, perhaps as protection against reprisal from the French. He ended up in the service of a respected old Mohawk woman who protected him and even called him "nephew." While acting as his "aunt's" porter to a Dutch town, the men of the town offered to help the priest escape. A Dutch sea captain returned the broken, battered and maimed Jesuit to France. Several of his fingers had been cut, chewed or burned off. Pope Urban VIII gave him permission to offer Mass with his mutilated hands: "It would be shameful that a martyr of Christ not be allowed to drink the Blood of Christ."

Welcomed home as a hero, Father Jogues might have sat back, thanked God for his safe return and died peacefully in his homeland, but his zeal led him back once more to the fulfillment of his dreams. In a few months he sailed for his missions among the Hurons.

In 1646, he and Jean de Lalande, who had



offered his services to the missionaries, set out for Iroquois country in the belief that a recently signed peace treaty would be observed. They were captured by a Mohawk war party, and on Oct. 18, Father Jogues was tomahawked and beheaded. Jean de Lalande was killed the next day at Ossernenon.

The first of the Jesuit missionaries to be martyred was René Goupil, who with Lalande, had offered his services as an oblate. He was tortured along with Isaac Jogues in 1642 and was tomahawked for having made the Sign of the Cross on the brow of some children.

The Rev. Anthony Daniel, working among Hurons who were gradually becoming Christian, was killed by Iroquois on July 4, 1648.

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PARISH BUSINESS

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bers and elderly women who are lonely and oftentimes just need to hear another person's voice," she said. "I try to be attentive and compassionate to each person and let them know that I, as well as our entire parish, care about them. I also have a woman who comes in regularly asking for help to explain her Social Security and Medicare benefits and bills to her. Because of this, it's important to create a loving and welcoming environment for all who enter the parish office."

Volunteers are crucial

Terri has two volunteers who help in the office: Carol Trinco on Mondays and Bev Franz on Thursdays.

"(Volunteers) are critically important," Father Jim said. "A parish dies or closes when they are missing."

Terri knows firsthand that's true.

"Volunteers are the lifeblood of our parish, and we depend on them more than just for helping out in the office," she said. "We have volunteer teams who rotate to count the collection every week; volunteers who help to clean and maintain the church and parish center; volunteers who form our Buildings and Grounds Committee, Finance Committee, Parish Council and trustees. Volunteers play an important part in our liturgies, such as our Music Ministry, sacristans, greeters, lectors, ushers, eucharistic ministers, altar servers, those who wash and iron our church linens and help to decorate and clean our church. Volunteers who are catechists and teach our faith to the young children and teens in our parish as well as all the volunteers who work our parish festival and other social events.

"Our parish has only four employees, plus Father Cesta, so we could never be as successful and vibrant as a faith community without all the wonderful men, women, teens and youths who give of their time and talent to help make our parish what it is," Terri said.

Looking to the future

As far as the future of the parish, it is solid, though Father Jim does have a concern and hope.

"As with all Catholic / Christian communities, those under 50 years old who are having a crisis of faith or who don't practice the faith (is a worry)," he said. "Although we're not in a suburban setting, hopefully (the future has) an increase in the under 50-year-olds. Let the quality of worship and welcoming spirit attract that age group."

Terri said she gets a lot of satisfaction from her job.

"I often think about my grandparents and parents, especially my grandmother and mother, who loved our church so much," she said. "The shrine parking lot was once part of their backyard! To be able to work in a place that meant so much to them, and a place where I have so many wonderful memories, is truly a blessing. I love hearing the church bells ring every hour and think of everyone who has given so much to our parish. Father Cesta is so easy going and great to work with, plus there is never a day he doesn't make me laugh!"

JEAN REALE

Continued from Page 4

25th wedding anniversary.

It seems from the day you were born, family has been a priority. Describe what your life has been like.

I am the oldest of two. I was born Aug. 15, 1975, in Syracuse, and I have a sister Kelly, who is two years younger than I. My parents have been married 48 years and are semi-retired, living locally. I attended Catholic school through grade 3 and then public school in North Syracuse before my father was relocated for his job to Massachusetts, where I attended high school, college and worked for a few years before returning to New York when my dad was relocated again, this time to the Utica area for his job.

I was 21 when we returned to New York where I lived in Whitesboro for 14 years before meeting John. We have a family dog, a Shih-tzu named Chewy. We adopted him in August of 2021 during COVID. He is an energetic, fun loving, playful and affectionate dog that we quickly became in love with and happy to have as part of our family.

The one thing I am most grateful for is my family. They are a constant, they have brought joy and craziness to my life, they give me purpose and remind me of God's love.

You have two sons, Matthew and Christopher — both born in the same month. How convenient!

Matt was born June 11, 2012, our first, followed two years later by Christopher, born June 23, 2014. Yes, both were born in June, which was not planned, but helps make it simpler to have one combined birthday party. Matthew is now 10 and in fifth grade, loves soccer, video gaming, riding his bike, building with LEGOS and is a member of the Cub Scouts.

Christopher is now 8 and in third grade. He loves martial arts, is a green belt after just 14 months. Learning to play the violin for the first time, is a video gamer and happiest when he is jumping on the trampoline doing flips and tricks. Both boys are altar servers at 10:30 Mass on Sunday and attend religious-

ISSAC JOGUES

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His body was thrown into his chapel, which was set on fire.

Jean de Brébeuf was a French Jesuit who came to Canada at the age of 32 and labored there for 24 years. He went back to France when the English captured Quebec in 1629 and expelled the Jesuits but returned to his missions four years later. Although medicine men blamed the Jesuits for a smallpox epidemic among the Hurons, Jean remained with them.

He composed catechisms and a dictionary in Huron and saw 7,000 converted before his death in 1649. Having been captured by the Iroquois at Sainte Marie, near Georgian Bay, Canada, Brébeuf died after four hours of extreme torture.

Gabriel Lalemant had taken a fourth vow — to sacrifice his life for the Native Ameri-

ed classes regularly.

How would you describe your faith growing up and how does that compare to what it is now?

I would describe my faith growing up as a constant and very important in helping to instill many values and beliefs that I have incorporated in my life from childhood to adulthood. I attended religious-ed classes, received my sacraments through Confirmation, attended church every Sunday, holidays and Holy Days of Obligation with my family. As well, my parents were volunteers in many ways throughout the parish we belonged to when I was a child. I also attended Catholic school from K-3.

To compare my faith to what it is now, I would say I have developed a deeper understanding of God and why it is so important to have him in my life and to share that with my children. My husband and I continue to raise our boys as both our parents did in the Catholic faith so that we can encourage spiritual growth in their daily lives and to help them find meaning, purpose and happiness in life.

It seems like you and John were destined to be together. Do you feel that way and do you believe God had a hand in it?

Yes, I do believe John and I were destined to be together, and that God absolutely had a hand in bringing us together. I believe in the saying, "Good things come to those who wait." And it sure did. I felt comfortable being myself around him and I knew within a few months he was the one I was going to marry and spend the rest of my life with.

What advice do you have for young people who believe there might not be a match for them out there?

Do not give up, have faith in God and take time to understand yourself. If you are a happy, positive and self-confident person, then the right person will come along. And you will know the right person for you will be someone you know you want and need in your life and adds to your life in ways you most value. As the saying goes, "Love comes along when you least expect it."

cans. He was horribly tortured to death along with Brébeuf.

The Rev. Charles Garnier was shot to death in 1649 as he baptized children and catechumens during an Iroquois attack.

The Rev. Noel Chabanel also was killed in 1649, before he could answer his recall to France. He had found it exceedingly hard to adapt to mission life. He could not learn the language, and the food and life of the Indians revolted him, plus he suffered spiritual dryness during his whole stay in Canada. Yet he made a vow to remain in his mission until death.

These eight Jesuit martyrs of North America were canonized in 1930. A shrine on a hill overlooking the Mohawk River has been built near the spot of the martyrdom of these sainted men.

— Sources: www.franciscanmedia.org/; <https://stisaac.org/the-life-of-st-isaac-jogues>



Holiday magic is back

The Christmas season over the last few years has been hit or miss due to the pandemic. Things seemed closer to normal this year as the parish celebrated Thanksgiving, the Christmas gala, "A Jazz Nativity" performance and the birth of Christ. Here's hoping for a healthy, prosperous new year.



View more photos on the parish website at www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com