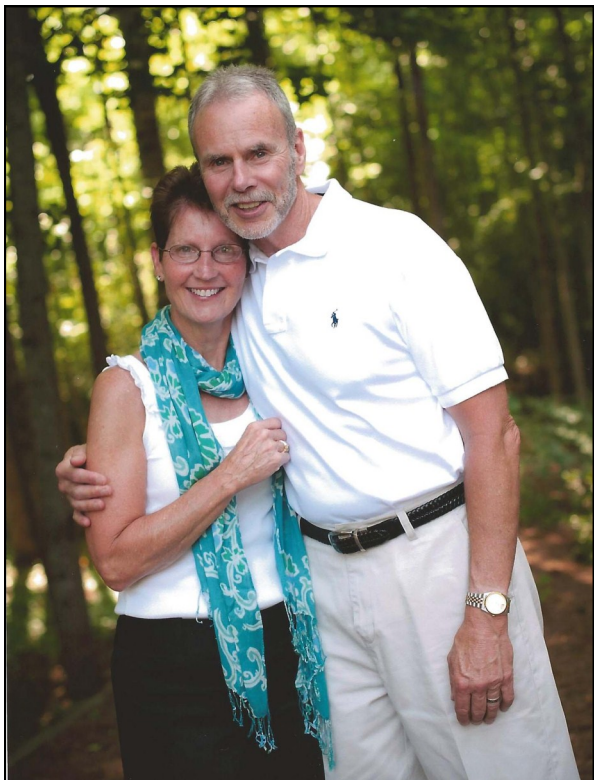




Holy Cross **REACHING** *out*

February 12, 2012

Volume 16 Number 2



Parish Mission Scheduled March 19-21

Deacon Bill (right) and Marian Monahan are the speakers for the parish mission for the English-speaking community, Mar. 19-21. The theme of the Monahans' presentations is love, loss and redemption. Photo by Kristen Leigh Photography.

Monahan is a Global Fellow with Catholic Relief Services.

Marian Monahan is spiritual director and religious educator and has served St. Brendan's as director of faith formation and discipleship. She holds a continuing education certificate in pastoral studies from Loyola University, New Orleans, and received her training for the ministry of spiritual direction in Atlanta by completing the RUAH program in May of 2002. Monahan has continued her formation and an active ministry of spiritual direction and retreat work. She is involved in an interfaith contemplative prayer group.

The Monahans are members of the parish Haiti outreach ministry and have made a number of trips to Our Lady of Fatima Church in Bassin Zim, Haiti. They are active members of their parish's JustFaith community. Both serve on Ignatian Spirituality Project retreat teams for homeless men and women at Ignatius House.

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By LOU ERBS

Mark your calendar. A parish mission is scheduled for Lent with separate presenters for the Anglo and the Latino communities.

Deacon Bill Monahan and Marian Monahan, his wife, will discuss the theme of love, loss and redemption during three evening sessions on Mar. 19-21 and a morning session on Mar. 20. The weekend prior to the mission, they will speak at each of the English Masses.

Rev. Victor Reyes, pastor of Our Lady of La Salette in Canton, Ga. will conduct the mission for the Latino community on the same dates.

Deacon Bill Monahan was born in Boston and educated at Boston College and Dominican College in Blauvelt, N.Y. from which he earned his degree in social sciences. In 1991, he was ordained a permanent deacon of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn. In 1992, Monahan and his family moved to Atlanta. He currently serves as a deacon at St. Brendan the Navigator Catholic Community in Cumming, Ga. Monahan's main area of ministry in this parish of 3,500 families is marriage preparation, validations and marriage enrichment. He serves on St. Brendan's liturgy committee.

Class Underway to Prepare Adults for Confirmation



Confirmation Preparation for Adults is a class to assist practicing Catholics who have never received the sacrament of Confirmation. The class is taught by Barb Garvin, second from left, director of religious education. Attendees preparing for Confirmation on April 15 include, clockwise from center right, Jose Manuel Cortez, with his support Vivianna Mejia, and Ariana Aquilar. Photo by Paul Dulion.

By PAUL DULION

Last year a new education class started without much notice. The class is Confirmation Preparation for Adults and is designed to assist parishioners who are practicing Catholics but for some reason did not receive Confirmation.

Confirmation Preparation for Adults for 2012 is now under way. I attended a meeting on Jan. 23, which was the second of six bi-weekly classes that end Mar. 19. Two people attended; however, Barb Garvin, director of religious education, told me that several other people had expressed interest. Class size may increase.

Garvin opened class with a prayer. Attendees then spent a few minutes doing a spiritual life profile to give them an idea of where they stood in their relationship with God, others and themselves. Garvin explained this exercise is a snapshot of where each person is at the present, but his or her status can change from time to

time. For example, a profile taken after going through baggage claim at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport and driving home on I-285 at night would probably be different from one completed after a volunteer or church activity. Attendees went over how to use this tool to develop a spiritual growth plan.

The next hour or so was spent reviewing the Nicene Creed and what the beliefs meant to the class members. Attendees went over the traits that connect all Catholics and talked briefly about how they would describe their faith to others. Garvin provided the group with information and homework.

Confirmation is the final Sacrament of Initiation. It is an invitation for the Holy Spirit to come into our lives and through the Spirit's blessing send us forward to a better Catholic life. Like an example used in class, just pouring chocolate syrup into milk doesn't make chocolate milk; one has to stir. The Holy Spirit is the

catalyst that makes us more like Christ.

One of the six participants in last year's class, Barbara Galiano, did not remember exactly why she wasn't confirmed after she took instruction in the Catholic Faith and made her First Communion, but she described the Holy Cross class as "just right" for her needs. The length and timing of the course fit right into her schedule and she wanted to take the step to receive Confirmation.

"I knew a lot of the subject matter, but hearing other people's perspectives and discussions that we had as the Catholic faith was explained helped me to better understand," Galiano said.

If you are an adult who has not received Confirmation, please consider attending this class. The class meets 7-9 p.m. in room 16 of the religious education building. There is no charge. For information call Barb Garvin at 770-939-3501, extension 233.

International Thomas Merton Society, Atlanta Chapter

By DORIS BUCHER

Emile Farge says that anyone who is interested in prayer and personal spirituality would be interested in the monthly discussions of the International Thomas Merton Society. Farge is the chair of the local chapter.

“The best way to discover Merton is to read his journals,” he said. The group is currently reading the fourth volume of those journals, *Turning Toward the World: The Pivotal Years*. The process of the discussion group is to read a selection from Merton’s writings before the meetings. Each person flags 2-3 items they would like to discuss. No one is “in charge” in the manner of a formal class. It’s a visit.

When asked what got him so profoundly interested in Merton, Farge said it was reading Merton’s book *New Seeds of Contemplation*. In this work, Merton shared his vision that everything that happens is a springboard for contemplation. Such ordinary things as cutting grass or cooking food can and should be able to take us to a more permanent place. Farge found *New Seeds* so inspiring, the thought struck him he could read a chapter a day and profit from it. He joined the local chapter of The International Thomas Merton Society which was led at the time by Victor Kramer, the founder of the Merton Annual and a speaker who has visited Faith Matters.

Farge has shared a lectern on occasion with

Phillip Thompson, who gave two talks on Merton for Faith Matters in January. Thompson related the monk’s life story. Thomas Merton was a Cambridge scholar, sometimes described as a playboy, a young man with no beliefs who converted to Catholicism after coming to the United States and studying at Columbia. His deepening faith led him to become a Trappist monk and to write an account of his spiritual journey in a book that became an instant best seller, *The Seven Storey Mountain*. Merton believed that the purpose of life is to focus on reality and that God is the ultimate reality, the creator of all that is. He insisted that contemplation should not be reserved for monks and clergy, but should be practiced by everyone as a way to hidden wholeness. Merton died while attending a conference in Thailand in 1968 where he was electrocuted by a shock

from a faulty electric fan.

The Atlanta chapter meets from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every fourth Saturday in the library of St. Thomas More. Currently eight members gather. Although the group is 75 percent Catholic, people of all religions or no religion are encouraged to join. There are no local dues. Those who choose to do so send \$40.00 a year for the journal and the annual published by the society’s center at Bellarmine University. International meetings and retreats are held in alternating years. The most recent international meeting was held in Chicago in September, 2011, and the theme was Merton and Technology.

For more information, e-mail Emile J. Farge at efarge2@comcast.net.



Drawing of Merton’s hermitage by Lindsay Nevin. From the Web site: <http://www.thomasmertonsociety.org/heart.htm>.

Eucharistic Ministers to the Homebound Find Joy in Service

By PAM DORSETT

There is joy in service to others as a Eucharistic minister to the homebound. Ministers who take the Eucharist to those who cannot come to Mass because of sickness, injury or infirmities due to old age, will tell you so.

Mary Lynne Scarbrough, a Eucharistic minister for 18 years, said she's taken Communion to the homebound for about 13 of those years. She made the decision to serve the homebound because it seemed like a natural progression in her service as a Eucharistic minister. When her parents became ill several years ago, she took the Eucharist to them. After her parents died, Scarbrough found that visiting the elderly and bringing them Communion fulfilled a personal need.

"I've met some of the nicest people. You become part of the family for someone you've visited a long time," she said. "With a lot of people, after you see them once or twice, you develop a friendship and have a visit. I don't have parents or grandparents or elderly aunts or uncles. It kind of fills a void in my life. Sometimes I think I'm the only person who's visited them, touched them, talked to them."

For Jeanne Smith, who takes Eucharist to residents of Meadowbrook Nursing Home in Tucker, the interactions with the people she visits fulfill her needs. She described the severe physical damage and limitations as the result of illness and aging for one



Eucharistic ministers, left to right, Eileen Anandappa, Jane Walker and Mary Lynne Scarbrough receive a blessing from Deacon Tom Silvestri, far right, at the end of Mass. Photo by Pam Dorsett.

woman whom she visits. And yet, according to Smith, "Every time I knock on the door and go to her, she smiles."

Smith said she visits the Alzheimer's unit at Meadowbrook so she can give blessings and greet the residents. "It's just so wonderful and I try to dress well because they like fashion," she said.

Smith began her ministry with taking Communion to people in their homes, but she said over time she was scheduled more often for the nursing homes because fewer Eucharistic ministers wanted to visit the nursing homes.

John McMahon, who serves the residents of Northlake Gardens Assisted Living in Tucker, visited nursing homes early in his ministry when he lived in Florida. He said several Eucharistic ministers had a Communion

service for residents and visited with them. McMahon moved to Atlanta, joined Holy Cross in 2006 and resumed service as a Eucharistic minister to the homebound a couple of years later. His service to Northlake Gardens evolved over time, he said, as other Eucharistic ministers retired. Even though McMahon's grandmother lives at Northlake Gardens, he would go there even if she didn't.

"I've found it rewarding. I get to meet people and I like being around elderly people," he said. "They're from all walks of life. I encourage them to tell stories when they younger. I try to be upbeat and talk to everybody."

Eileen Anandappa coordinates Eucharistic ministers for the homebound. She knows how special it is for the

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How the Process Works for Background Checks

By PAM DORSETT

Church employees and volunteers for some types of service are required to have background checks. Holy Cross ministry leaders learned about the process at workshops conducted Aug. 20 and 27, 2011.

Jennifer Broel, safe environment director for the archdiocese, talked about creating a safe environment for the community. She explained the application process for volunteers, including the necessity of background checks for persons who work with minors and vulnerable persons.

Individuals who work directly with children under 18 years of age or other vulnerable persons must complete applications and have background checks and all safe environment policies in order to volunteer. Vulnerable persons include those individuals receiving direct services from volunteers, such as the disabled or sick. For example, volunteers who make home visits or who transport persons to appointments need to have background checks.

According to Broel, "The purpose of the background checks is to protect our community, not only minors, but all of us."

The sexual misconduct insurance company that covers the archdiocese requires background checks. The paperwork must be completed every five years by all Church personnel, including volunteers.

The Web site for the archdiocese lists the components of the application process for volunteers. See www.archatl.com/offices/ocyp/senvironment/volunteers.html.

Minors complete a volunteer application and submit a school reference form, which must be received directly from their parish or school.



Safe environment director Jennifer Broel explained the background check process back in August. Photo by Tom Probst.

All adult volunteers complete an application that includes the last four digits of the social security number. If the ministry includes work with minors or vulnerable persons, a form to complete the background check is required, which includes the entire social security number. Applicants read several documents and view a videotape. These documents and videotape comprise the safe environment policies for the archdiocese.

The pastor screens applications. Parish personnel run the background checks. At Holy Cross, office manager Beth Butler, assisted by volunteer Pat Reiley, handle the background checks and Barb Garvin, director of religious education, also processes some.

Lexis Nexis runs the background checks. Credit reports are only

included if the individual will be handling money. Driving records are checked if the volunteer position requires it, such as driving people to appointments.

Butler said the information is kept in a locked cabinet. The information is transmitted electronically to the archdiocese via HRi-Portal, which is password protected. At the archdiocese, three people have access to the information, Broel said, herself, Charles Thibadeau and Stephanie Landrum. Broel said the information is kept in a protected server.

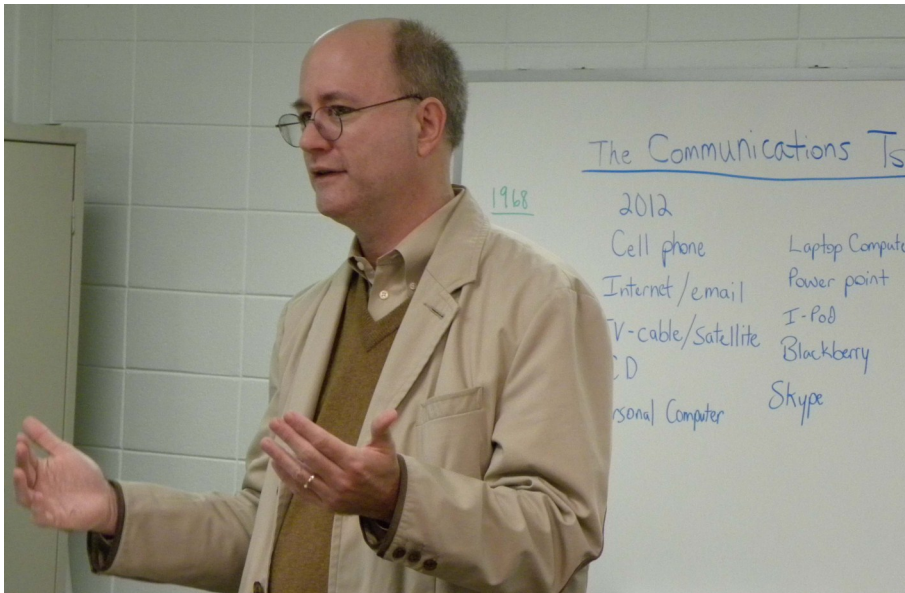
The parish and archdiocese are sensitive to concerns about identity theft and take numerous measures to safeguard volunteers' confidential information to prevent an occurrence.

Archdiocese of Atlanta Safe Environment Policies

Volunteers in contact with children and vulnerable individuals must read and sign these documents:

- Sexual Abuse Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Ministerial Standards for Educators and Educational Volunteers Who Have Regular Contact with Children and/or Vulnerable Individuals
- Ministerial Standards When Dealing with Vulnerable Individuals
- Safe Environment Adult Compliance Form which serves as the Video Acknowledgement Form. Volunteers must view the videotape entitled, "You Matter."

Reaching Out *first published this article in the September 2011 issue.*



Phillip Thompson, executive director of the Aquinas Center of Theology, discussed Thomas Merton’s insights on contemplation and technology on Jan. 15 for Faith Matters. Photo by Pam Dorsett

**STATIONS OF
THE CROSS
FOR A
WORLD
LIVING WITH
AIDS
MARCH 2
7 P.M.
HOLY CROSS**

Faith Matters’ Speaker Presents Merton

By DORIS BUCHER

On January 15, Phillip Thompson, executive director of the Aquinas Center of Theology at Emory University, spoke with the Faith Matters’ group about the insights of the Trappist monk, Thomas Merton. Although Merton died in 1968 before many of our modern devices were invented, he foresaw the deep need for contemplation in a world of advanced technology.

Merton’s first question on technology was, “What is the purpose of life?” His answer was, “Focusing on the reality of God.” As Merton put it, reality is God, because God is the source of all that exists. He is ultimate being.

Monks actively seek God through prayer. Merton asserted their search should not be exclusive. Everyone needs to live with purity of heart and the primacy of love. This love is not sentiment. Putting love first requires deep inner transformation, becoming truly connected with and understanding the other. This search for hidden

wholeness is the search for wisdom – which is also called the Sapiential Quest.

In his book *New Seeds of Contemplation*, Merton maintained that contemplation is more than a prayer form. In the life of contemplation, everything we do is about connecting with God.

Technology challenges such a life. Technology emphasizes efficiency, productivity and progress over the growth of the individual and results in alienation rather than freedom. Technology encourages goals of wealth, power, fame and control while ignoring or minimizing ethical or spiritual considerations.

Merton asked what kind of world we want to live in and presented two options: Collectivity and community. Collectivity favors material progress, promotes an excessive focus on work and higher levels of production and cultivates passive technologies that dull human intelligence. Community, on the other hand, favors moral growth and human dignity, promotes

a conception of work that is in harmony with human creativity and dignity and invents technologies that sharpen the intellect.

We need contemplation because it opens us to the presence of God and the reality of all that is. Without contemplation our world becomes small and narrow and our actions become dangerous. The pursuit of wisdom – a pursuit of truth through love – embraces the entire spectrum of a person’s life.

**Faith Matters
meets Sunday
mornings from
10:30 to 11:25
in rooms 7&8
in the school
of religious
education.**

HIV and AIDS Ministry Donation Weekends

Mar. 10-11

April 14-15

May 12-13

June 9-10

The ministry
collects these
items before and
after Masses:

Hotel size

toiletries

Disposable razors

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste

Feminine hygiene
products

Deodorant

Socks

Shaving cream

Hats and gloves

Thanks for your generosity!

Blood Drive Sets Record for Catholic Churches in Ga.

By PAUL DULION

The Second Annual Bob Buechner Blood Drive, held on Dec. 10, 2011, was a success.

Mark Kelly, coordinator of the Blood Drive ministry, was impressed with the results.

“It was a terrific day. We collected 198 units of blood.

Because of the efforts of the people of Holy Cross, 594 lives were saved!” he said. “This makes this the sixth largest church blood drive in Georgia history and the largest Catholic Church blood drive in the history of our state! Holy Cross is a church truly blessed with angels.”

Congratulations to the Blood Drive ministry for a job well done.

Thanks to the many volunteers who helped with organization and staging. The ministry appreciates the generosity of local businesses that donated goods or services, which were given away during the drive. And special thanks to the over 200 community members who offered to give a unit of blood.

Give blood. Save a life.



Mark Kelly, coordinator of the blood drive ministry, was impressed with the results of the Second Annual Bob Buechner Blood Drive held on Dec. 10. Photo by Paul Dulion.

Parish Mission in March

From Page 1

They have been married for 40 years and have five children and six grandchildren.

According to the *Georgia Bulletin*, Rev. Victor J. Reyes was born in Barcelona, Venezuela in 1956. He earned an undergraduate degree in business from the University of Evansville in Indiana and then started the seminary program at St. Meinrad in Indiana, but dropped out.

Reyes said he came to Atlanta because classmates invited him to

visit. He made the decision to spend time in the archdiocese after meeting Rev. Don Kenny.

Reyes did pastoral work at St. Jude's in Sandy Springs and Christ Our Hope Church in Lithonia. He then spent a year as pastoral administrator at the Grant Park Hispanic Pastoral Center. During that time he decided to go back to the seminary and complete his education so he could minister in the archdiocese as a priest. Reyes was ordained a priest in June 1994. He speaks English, French and Spanish and has some facility in Italian and Portuguese.



Faith. Academics. Service.

Catholic Schools

By MEGAN MALVOISIN and MARY O'CONNOR

This year, Catholic Schools Week was celebrated January 29 through February 5. The theme was *Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service.*

Holy Cross students attend a number of Catholic schools in the Metro Atlanta area, including Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. John Neumann, St. Thomas More, Our Lady of the Assumption, St. Pius X, Marist, and Our Lady of Mercy. We talked to some of these students about their experiences at Catholic schools related to the themes of faith, service and academics.

The teaching in Catholic schools influences students' relationships with God. Francesca Clemenceau, who is in the sixth grade at St. Thomas More, said that her religion class talks about how God is always with us and about God's love and forgiveness. Austin, Ryan, and Devin Summers attend Marist, where Austin is a junior, Ryan is in eighth grade and Devin is a freshman. All of them talked about the off-site retreats that Marist holds. Marist also sponsors annual mission trips to West Virginia and Peru. Emily Werner attends St. Pius X. She said the teachers guide students to become closer to God.

Catholic schools require students to participate in service projects. At St. Thomas More, one of the eighth grade's service projects is called "Pennies for Patients." This project raises money for people in poor countries for medical care. The third graders sell trail mix to also raise money

for this project. Students at Marist participate in a Habitat for Humanity project. They raise money for the project and work to build a house over 10 weekends. At St. Pius X, students have the opportunity to go on a mission trip each year to either Nicaragua or Jamaica.

Students who attend Catholic schools have their favorite academic classes for a variety of reasons. Werner likes her Spanish II Honors class because she knows she will eventually use Spanish. Austin Summers likes AP U.S. History best because he's fascinated by how our country was formed. He is also inspired by how the leaders shaped our country. Ryan and Devin Summers and Francesca Clemenceau all like math. The Summers like math because the subject challenges them, while Clemenceau favors math because the teachers do such a good job of explaining concepts.

In 2013, Catholic Schools Week will be celebrated January 27 through February 2.

Megan Malvoisin is a student at St. Pius X High School and Mary O'Connor attends Our Lady of Mercy High School. Reaching Out is happy to have both of these young people on staff.

Want to take photos for Reaching Out? Contact the editor at pgdorsett@aol.com.

Eucharistic Ministers Serve Sick, Elderly

From Page 4

elderly and the sick to have someone bring Communion to them.

"When my dad was terminally ill [in Sri Lanka], someone used to bring the Eucharist to him. As he was waiting for someone to bring the Eucharist to him, he prepared with prayers," she said. "I could see the glow in his face."

Anandappa takes Eucharist to the homebound herself because she feels that she is making someone happy when she does.

There are currently 20 Eucharistic ministers for the homebound. In the last two years, only one new person has chosen to participate in this ministry, Anandappa said. The ministry lost 5-6 Eucharistic ministers, two recently, because they did not want to submit information needed to complete the background checks required by the archdiocese for people who serve the vulnerable.

Scarborough, Smith, Anandappa, McMahan and others plan to continue to serve the homebound because of the needs the ministry fulfills, especially for those they serve, but also for themselves.

If you are or know a parishioner who is homebound due to illness or injury, even for a few weeks, or who is elderly, and would like to receive Communion, please contact Eileen Anandappa at 770-908-0062 or eileenanandappa@hotmail.com.

For clarification of archdiocesan-required background checks, a Reaching Out article, originally published in September 2011, explains the process and is re-printed on page 5 of this issue.

Reaching Out staff: Doris Bucher, Pam Dorsett, Paul Dulion, Lou Erbs, Megan Malvoisin, Mary O'Connor and Kassie Taylor. The *Reaching Out* staff welcome your comments and contributions. To contact the editor, e-mail pgdorsett@aol.com.