

We Are Called

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Welcome to the first quarterly newsletter, *We Are Called*.

We Are Called serves to inform parishioners about ministry at Most Precious Blood while also helping us grow in our relationship with the Lord.

St. Peter tells us “Put all your gifts at the service of others.” That’s what God is telling us. Christ tells us not to light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but instead put it on a mountaintop where it will be seen and useful.

There is only one you. Just like a fingerprint, God created you to be unique with your own distinctive DNA, your own looks, your own likes and dislikes, and your own talents and abilities.

Jesus not only calls people to him but also forms them and sends them out in service (Mt 10:5; Mk 6:7; Lk 9:1). Being sent on a mission is a consequence of being a disciple. Whoever wants to follow Christ will have much work to do on his behalf – announcing the Good News and serving others as Jesus did.

Jesus’ call is urgent. He does not tell people to follow him at some time in the future but here and now.

Is God calling you to share your faith, time and talent?

Finding Hope in the Cross

By International Catholic Stewardship Council

Do you ever think about how you experience the cross of Jesus Christ? Do you ever think about the power of that cross in your daily life? Is the cross even relevant to your life? It is to stewards of the Lord, who recognize the hope Christ brings through the gift of his cross. They acknowledge that for them, the cross is their *only* hope.

Being good stewards of our life in Christ is not easy, but to embrace the cross is not only countercultural, it seems absurd. Then again, we cannot avoid what Jesus said to his disciples: “If you wish to come after me you must deny yourself and take up your cross daily and follow me. For if you wish to save your life, you will lose it; but if you lose your life for my sake you will save it” (Luke 9:23-24).

“For if you wish to save your life, you will lose it”

The cross is more readily embraced by people of faith who suffer, are poor, broken, or are the victims of such things as violence, oppression or natural disasters. They see the cross as the hope that no matter what has happened to them, God will see them through. The Father did it for Jesus who hung on the cross, so surely their sufferings will be redeemed by Jesus’ sufferings.

Where people possess much material abundance, comfort and leisure, however, there is a tendency to de-emphasize the cross, to draw away from it. They can’t touch it or feel it so they wish to “save” their lives by looking to other things: power, wealth, fame, relevance, being the center of attention. What is preached about the cross from the pulpit sounds good, but in reality something more tangible is desired.

Christ emptied himself completely in humble obedience, allowing himself to suffer and die out of compassion for the world (Philippians 2:6-11). Good stewards follow his example and work day-to-day to empty themselves and live com-

passionately; most noticeably by sharing their lives with others.

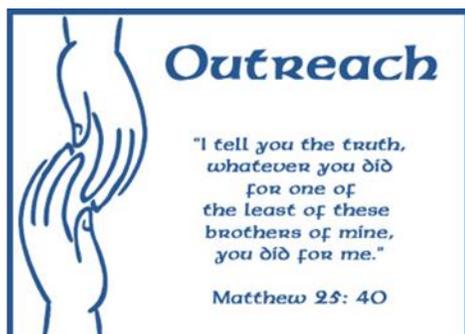
As we approach the climax of our liturgical year, the Easter Triduum, let us ask the Holy Spirit for an even deeper awareness of the cross in our lives. Let us find hope in the cross and pray that as we embrace it, we too will experience in a special way the joy of new life in the risen Lord.



A PRAYER FOR LENT

*Christ Our Savior,
As our Lenten journey brings us closer to Easter,
we see with a deeper awareness
our world’s desperate need to experience
the healing power of your justice and peace.
Make us sacraments of your mercy
and instruments of your compassion.
Show us how to be better stewards of your people;
through our families,
our brothers and sisters
with whom we share your Eucharist,
our neighbors, and the stranger.
Show us how to carry the cross
so that by dying to ourselves,
we may give new life to others.
And strengthen our faith, so that
we may proclaim your Easter triumph more confidently,
every day, in word and deed. Amen*

SHARING BLESSINGS WITH THE POOR



"Our parish communities are measured by how they serve 'the least of these' in our parish and beyond its boundaries – the hungry, the homeless, the sick, those in prison, the stranger (Mt 25:31). Our local families of faith are called to 'hunger and thirst for justice' and to be 'peacemakers' in our own communities (Mt 5:6,9). A parish cannot really proclaim the gospel if its message is not reflected in its own community life. The biblical call to charity, justice, and peace claims not only each believer, but also each community where believers gather for worship, formation, and pastoral care."

*~Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

Ninety-five percent of every dollar contributed to the Sunday collection stays within the parish. These resources are used to meet the Spiritual, Educational, Operational, and Capital needs of the parish. We are committed to wisely using the gifts you share with us.

Five percent of every dollar contributed to the Sunday collection goes to help those in need of charity and justice.

Sharing our Blessings not only shows God our gratitude for all He has provided, it is also a visible sign of our trust in Him to provide us with all we need.

The Care and Outreach Commission acts in a careful manner and as prayerful stewards of the tithe offertory. Allocation of the parish tithe is done prudently, looking for those opportunities that will have the greatest and longest lasting benefit, always in line with the principles of the Gospel message and Catholic Social Teaching.

As our parish plans for the future, the offertory tithe will continue to be used to build God's Kingdom — being models of Christ to our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

A recent recipient of the parish tithe is HOPE Helps in Oviedo. HOPE's mission is to prevent and reduce homelessness in Central Florida by equipping individuals and families to become self-sufficient through Housing, Outreach, Prevention and Education.

HOPE addresses the issues facing individuals and families in crisis by networking with local agencies and organizations, partnering to become more effective, studying best and emerging practices, and developing innovative problem-solving ideas in a comprehensive, coordinated, and strategic fashion.

HOPE Resource Center provides assistance where other agencies cannot. The Food Pantry assists over 100 families per day in our community and proceeds from the Thrift Store benefit the families in need.



Joyful Giving from the Heart

Parishioners generously Share with Others

“...Caring Connections is here for any and all parishioners in need”

Most Precious Blood recently held a “Soup-er bowl” canned food drive for the HOPE Foundation. HOPE’s mission is to prevent and reduce homelessness through Housing, Outreach, Prevention, and Education. We were blessed to have collected over 1000 cans for this organization.

It was a wonderful success and both “teams”

won...it was a tie!

Our ministry, Caring Connections, is here for any and all parishioners in need. In your time of need, please know that we keep all information confidential and want to help in any way we can.

For more information, please contact Lola Votta sadiehallone@bellsouth.net

Matthew 25:35 For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in.

The Parish Tithe

We have all been taught to tithe, but did you know that parishes as a whole tithe, too? A parish tithes from their offertory each week. This practice is based in scripture:

The Lord said to Moses: “Give the Levites these instructions: ‘When you receive from the Israelites the tithes I assigned you from them as your heritage, you are to make a contribution from them to the Lord, a tithe of the tithes;” - *Numbers 18:25-26*

Our parish increased its tithe last year from 3% to 5% of the offertory. This tithe is used to give back to the community. It helps to fund all of our Care and Outreach projects within our parish, such as our Caring Connections Ministry and Advent Outreach. We assist parishioners in need as well as people in need in the local area. A few of the outside agencies we support on an ongoing basis include: HOPE, Boys Town, Catholic Charities, Catholic Campus Ministry, Pathways to Home, JMJ Life Center, and Oviedo Crisis Pregnancy Center. A recent donation to HOPE enabled that agency to relocate their food pantry facilities and thrift store to a new location that will better equip them to serve the needs of others in the community. In this way, we are reaching wide. Thank you for your commitment to serving the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. For any questions or volunteer opportunities email Tim & Marcia Boehm at mheobt4321@msn.com

MINISTRY OF CONSOLATION



"Blessed are they who mourn; they shall be consoled." Mt 5:3

The mission of the Ministry of Consolation is to walk with and support those who are grieving for lost loved ones.

This ministry helps grieving family members make all the necessary arrangements for the Funeral Mass of the deceased. We assist the family in planning the funeral liturgy by helping them select the readings, music and prayers.

Our faith teaches that when one person in the community suffers, so do we all. Thus, at the time of the death of a loved one, we minister to the grieving through the Ministry of Consolation by witnessing to the love of God.

Future activities are: February 21, in St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, Central Deanery North Day of Reflection, Compassionate Presence, Ministering in a Time of Loss. This activity is for both the Ministers of the Sick and the Ministers of Consolation.

The Diocese of Orlando is planning a 2-day (full days) training for new Ministers of the Consolation. The dates are March 14 and 21, St Mark's in Viera Beach.

If you are interested in learning more about this ministry, please contact Carmen Morell, morell.carmen@gmail.com

Prayer of Solace

May Christ support us all the day long, till the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then in his mercy may he give us a safe lodging, and holy rest and peace at the last.

Amen

Most Precious Blood

Partners with Kids of HOPE



There are thousands of children in Seminole County that receive free or reduced lunches at school, but what do they eat when they are on break or off for the summer?

The sad truth is, many of these children would go without.

During the school year, economically disadvantaged children have access to healthy lunches through their eligibility for the federal Free/Reduced School Lunch Program. During school breaks, these children may be home alone while their parents work or lack the financial resources to stock the fridge with food for their children. The negative economy has hit thousands of Seminole County families hard. At the same time that basic costs for food and utilities have escalated, parents have lost their jobs, had their hours reduced, and may be living on the edge of poverty. Very often after paying the rent, the utilities, and other basics, there is simply no money left for such essentials as food.

In 2009, a soft launch of the “**Kids of HOPE**” summer lunch program began. Since its inception, HOPE has served over 2,500 economically disadvantaged children, who may have gone without lunch.

The program has proven to be a success in our community. HOPE has worked diligently to assure “**Kids of HOPE**” are given healthy eating options, by providing foods with less sugar and salt, and more protein and healthy snacks. On average, 300 children receive lunches each week during the summer.

Most Precious Blood Catholic Church has partnered with “**Kids of HOPE**” to provide 600 packed bags that will feed 300 children for two weeks.

On the weekend of **May 30/31**, Most Precious Blood will be collecting the following food:

- Mac n Cheese
- Soup
- Canned Vegetables
- Canned Tuna or Chicken
- Vienna wieners
- Chef Boyardee
- Cold cereal (individual boxes or regular size)
- Hot cereal packets
- Raisins, applesauce cups, fruit cups
- Pudding cups
- Chewy granola type bars
- Popcorn
- Sandwich cracker packs
- Almond Milk boxes

On **Saturday, June 6** we will be packing 600 bags on MPB campus. We will need many hands. Children can decorate the bags. Bring your families to work together providing lunches for **Kids of HOPE**.

For questions or comments, please contact Sheila Madden 407-384-8805 or madden7474@yahoo.com

INSPIRATION FROM POPE FRANCIS ON THE BEATITUDES

Jesus looks deep into the heart of each one of us, who come burdened with our worries and weighed down by work-related problems, and he says to us:

Blessed are you who are here in line asking for bread and work.

Blessed are you who have a humble heart, and who neither feel yourself to be greater nor less than your brother and sister at your side.

Blessed are you who can be proud of not having any privilege except that of being my beloved child.

Blessed are you who have that righteous anger that is a hunger and thirst for justice. You know how to complain and protest, but without harming anyone; and you come first of all to ask your God and Lord.

Blessed are you who do good and, despite being misunderstood and criticized so often, don't lower your hope-filled arms.

Blessed are you who know how to cry with meekness and how to hope only in God.

Blessed are you not because of what you don't have, not because all your sufferings will now be resolved (there is always some suffering), but because the gift of God is so great that you can receive it only if your heart is immeasurably open. That is why Jesus calls blessed those who experience things that open and widen the heart.

We can say that when Jesus draws closer to our pain, we see things differently: Jesus speaks to us of the poor, the hungry, those who cry, those who are unjustly persecuted . . . but there is hope in tone of his voice, so that even hearing it consoles us. Blessed are you who cry now, because you will be consoled, he tells us. And that word is like he himself wiping away our tears.

Blessed are they who have not seen and have believed: this is the beatitude of faith! In every time and in every place blessed are those who, through the Word of God – proclaimed in the Church and witnessed by Christians – believe that Jesus Christ is the incarnate love of God, mercy incarnate. And this makes everything worth it for each one of us!

ADVOCACY AND JUSTICE

Most Precious Blood Advocacy and Justice and Youth ministry joined over 1,000 other people for the ninth anniversary March for Life at St. Augustine. We walked to defend life in our Nation's Oldest City. This was the first year that Most Precious Blood joined this walk and we filled the bus to 60% capacity! We will make this an annual event and looking forward to next year. Thank you to everyone who joined us.



Every year we have a Baby Bottle Campaign to raise money for JMJ and Oviedo Crisis Pregnancy centers. We gave out over 600 bottles this year. Parishioners can fill the bottles with loose change or checks and then return them to the Church after a couple of weeks. Last year MPB won the prize of the Silver Bottle statue, which sits proudly on Frances Stadler's desk in the office. Perhaps, this year, we will win the Golden Bottle.

For more information, please contact Leisha Schulz at leisha.schulz@cfl.rr.com