

## An Inside Look at **SPIRITUAL DIRECTION** *Fostering Love Between the Creator and His Creation*



**S**piritual direction is a guided conversation of love between the Creator and His creation. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, one may choose to embark on a journey of allowing another into their interior life of prayer to help listen to the Holy Spirit's promptings. We are never called to live our faith life alone — and for some, the call to a deeper intimacy with our Lord can be a challenging invitation to respond to.

Parishioner Tammy Stewart went through a two-year program at Benedict Inn, where she went through classes, practicum, and spiritual direction.

“When I began the internship in 2020, I felt really uncertain about being a director, but decided to continue my

discernment as I went through the internship,” Tammy says. “Through the encouragement of my instructors and supervisor, I decided to take the leap of faith and become a certified spiritual director. It has been such a joy to accompany directees in their spiritual lives.”

Those in high school and older are able to participate in spiritual direction. However, it is required that there be a desire for it and that one has a regular prayer life.

“A spiritual director's role is to pray for the directee and to listen deeply,” Tammy says. “We not only listen to what the directee is saying, but we listen on behalf of the Holy Spirit, paying attention to any stirrings in us which could be a question to ask or an image to share. We

*continued on back cover*

# Strengthening Your Catholic Faith:

## *A Guide to Spiritual Growth and Faith Formation*

The journey of faith is a lifelong commitment, a continuous process of deepening our relationship with Christ and understanding the teachings of the Church. To improve your faith life and foster a closer connection with Christ, it's essential to engage in meaningful practices and explore Catholic literature that can provide spiritual nourishment. Here are some ideas to help you enhance your faith and some insightful Catholic-based books to read.

### **DAILY PRAYER AND REFLECTION**

Building a strong connection with God starts with prayer and reflection. Setting aside time each day for prayer, whether it's the Rosary, the *Liturgy of the Hours*, or simply speaking from the heart, allows you to commune with the Divine. To complement your daily prayer, consider reading *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis, a classic work that guides Catholics in developing a deeper prayer life and drawing closer to Christ.

### **ATTEND MASS REGULARLY**

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Catholic faith. Regular attendance at Mass is crucial to growing closer to Christ. It's not just about fulfilling an obligation — it's an opportunity to receive the body and blood of our Lord and Savior. For a deeper understanding of the Mass, *The Lamb's Supper* by Scott Hahn offers insights into the biblical roots of the Eucharist and its significance.

### **STUDY THE BIBLE**

The Word of God is a rich source of spiritual growth. Dive into the Scriptures, attend Bible studies, or join a Catholic reading group to explore the teachings of the Church. *The Catholic Study Bible* with commentary is an excellent resource for gaining a deeper understanding of the Bible's teachings and how they relate to your faith.

Utilize the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' New American Bible online at [www.bible.usccb.org/bible](http://www.bible.usccb.org/bible).

### **ENGAGE IN FAITH FORMATION PROGRAMS**

Our parish offers faith formation programs, which can provide a structured way to learn about the teachings of the Church. These programs can include courses on Catholic theology, morality, and the history of the Church. Contact the parish office for information about available opportunities to deepen your faith and understanding.

### **READ CATHOLIC LITERATURE**

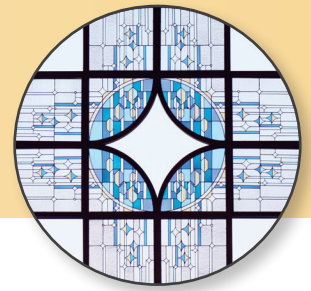
Immersing yourself in Catholic literature is a powerful way to improve your faith formation. *Introduction to the Devout Life* by St. Francis de Sales is a classic that offers practical guidance for leading a life of holiness. *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis is a thought-provoking work that explores the Christian faith from a broader perspective.

### **SEEK SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE**

Having a spiritual director or mentor can be immensely beneficial in your faith journey. They can offer guidance, support, and insights that help you grow spiritually. Consider reading *Spiritual Direction: A Guide for Sharing the Father's Love* by Fr. Thomas Acklin and Fr. Boniface Hicks to understand the role of a spiritual director in your life.

Improving your faith life and growing closer to Christ is an ongoing process. By incorporating these practices and exploring Catholic literature, you can deepen your understanding of Church teachings and develop a more profound relationship with our Lord.

Remember that faith formation is a personal journey, and it is never too late to start or continue on the path to spiritual growth.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

# Reflecting on the Beauty of the Family During National Marriage Week

Dear Parishioners,

**A**s we enter the month of February, we are reminded of the many blessings of love and family, particularly during National Marriage Week, celebrated from Feb. 7-14. This week offers us an opportunity to reflect on the beauty and sacredness of the Sacrament of Matrimony and the vital role marriage and family play in the life of the Church.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) reminds us in their teachings that marriage is not merely a human institution but a divine vocation — a sacramental bond that mirrors Christ's love for His Church. The grace of this sacrament strengthens husbands and wives to love each other selflessly and to serve as the foundation of the domestic church, the family. In their document *Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan*, the bishops write:

*"Marriage is a unique communion of persons, a sharing of the whole of life. It calls for fidelity and openness to new life, both of which flow from the very nature of the marital covenant."*

In a world that often challenges the permanence and sanctity of marriage, the Church invites us to bear witness to God's enduring love. For married couples, this witness begins in the home — through shared prayer, sacrificial love, and the nurturing of children in the faith. Families, then, become schools of virtue and communities of life and love, radiating



Christ's presence in the world.

During National Marriage Week, I encourage our parish community to celebrate and support marriage in a variety of ways. Couples might take this time to renew their vows, pray together, or attend Mass with their families. For those discerning marriage, this is a moment to reflect on God's call and seek His guidance. And as a parish, let us pray for all married couples, for those facing challenges in their relationships, and for families striving to grow in holiness.

As Pope Francis reminds us in *Amoris Laetitia*, "The strength of the family lies in its capacity to love and to teach how to love." Let us strive to strengthen our families, making them places of peace, joy, and faith where God's love can flourish.

May this National Marriage Week be a time of renewal and grace for all married couples and families in our parish. Together, let us uphold the beauty and dignity of the Sacrament of Matrimony as a sign of hope for the world.

In Christ,

Fr. Peter Marshall  
Pastor



# THE ART AND ENVIR

## *Working to Elevate Our Worship*



If you visit the great cathedrals, shrines, or basilicas, you are quickly reminded that the physical beauty of the church elevates our minds to God. The love of beautiful things is ingrained in our souls, impressed on us from the very beginning of time. In turn, when we enter a beautiful space, our hearts are drawn in reverent awe of His creation. Here at St. Jude, we know that having a beautiful space draws our hearts higher to heaven as we celebrate the Mass.

In order to care for our church and craft a reverent environment, a team of dedicated parishioners works to carefully decorate and clean the church. This team comprises the Art and Environment Ministry, which Marie Frey has been coordinating for over seven years.

“I used to be a professional wedding planner so when I retired, I was asked to be the coordinator for this ministry,” Marie says. “There are ten of us in this ministry and it is a great group of people.”

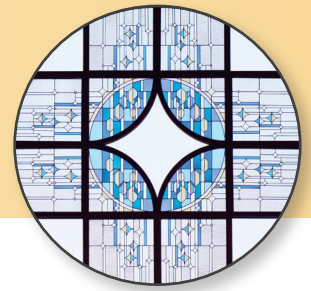
Marie meets with Fr. Peter every few months in preparation for the upcoming liturgical seasons and to determine when the décor needs to be changed. They have a large storage space dedicated to the organization of the banners, artwork, and linens used for the church.

“The worship is enhanced by the banners, artwork, plants, and flowers,” Marie says. “We work to keep think clean and inviting for the praise and worship of God. Twice a year, we deep clean all of the vessels, linens, and the monstrance. We also care for the candles in the church and replace them as needed,” Marie says.

The members not only give of their time, but also their talents. They are very creative, crafty, and capable so they are able to help save the parish money by doing a lot of the work themselves. Instead of hiring a florist, the ministry members order flowers from a wholesaler and take care of the arrangements themselves. They also fix and mend things as they are able. Last year, they reupholstered the chairs in the church which took several months.

*“The worship is enhanced by the banners, artwork, plants, and flowers. We work to keep think clean and inviting for the praise and worship of God.”*

— **MARIE FREY**



# ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY

## *and the Beauty of Our Church*

"As a team, we meet two to three times a year," Marie says. "We have lunch and talk about what is coming up on the calendar. Our members have different things that they are in charge of so it makes it easier. Everyone is great about stepping in and helping if needed."

This behind-the-scenes work is so important to the parish and making sure our church is warm, welcoming, and inviting. Since many changes happen on holidays, the ministry members work really hard to make sure that it doesn't impact family time. For some of the bigger

holidays that require a quick turnover — like Christmas and Easter — extra hands are always welcome. The seventh and eighth-grade classes at the school come and assist for Christmas. It is something that they look forward to helping with each year.

Just as we care for our homes by keeping them clean and decorated for the different seasons, we are called to care for our spiritual home at the parish. For families who wish to get more involved with their children, this is a great opportunity to help during the busy seasons.

**Anyone interested in joining the Arts and Environment Ministry or assisting with some of the holiday help may contact Marie Frey at [mariefrey04@gmail.com](mailto:mariefrey04@gmail.com) or 317-459-1485.**



# OUR HOSPITALITY MINISTRIES

*Building the Kingdom of God and Fostering a Warm, Welcoming Environment*



**B**uilding the Kingdom of God is at the heart of Christian stewardship, and hospitality is a fundamental pillar of putting stewardship into action. As followers of Christ, we are called to make disciples of all nations and, therefore, spread the Church and God's Kingdom on Earth to every corner of our world.

To do this, we must be hospitable and welcoming. We need to reach out to our neighbors and invite them into this great faith of ours and make them feel like they belong in the process. Here at St. Jude, we take this call seriously and have several ministries focused on hospitality and making people feel included and welcome when they come to Mass.

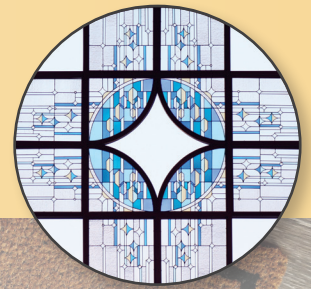
Parishioner Michael Larmour is the head of the Hospitality Ministries and oversees the groups that are tasked with creating a welcoming environment within our Church.

"It's very important for us Catholics to make our fellow Church goers feel welcome and loved because we have no idea what they are going through," Michael says. "Someone you made feel welcome might be brand new to the area and not know anyone or might be deciding between two parishes. By making them feel welcome, they are likely going to want to come back to St. Jude."

The Hospitality Ministries include the greeters, ushers, welcome center volunteers, and after-Mass receptions. The greeters hold the doors of the church open and welcome people in as they arrive for Mass. The ushers help parishioners find their seats and perform crucial tasks behind the scenes during Mass to keep things organized and everyone feeling comfortable. The welcome center volunteers help new parishioners get acquainted with our parish, and the after-Mass reception provides time and space for parishioners and visitors to come together in fellowship.

"St. Jude holds a monthly welcome weekend, formally known as Donut Sunday, where on Saturday after the 4 p.m. Mass, we have cookies and lemonade, and on





## Welcoming Community

Sunday after the 7:30 a.m. and the 10 a.m. Masses, we serve donuts, coffee, and lemonade, and sometimes hot chocolate, depending on the weather,” Michael says.

The welcome weekend is another great time for parishioners to spend time together, for their children to run around and play, and for families to connect. Overall, the fruit of the Hospitality Ministries is seen when we come together as a joyful community.

“Feeling welcome also helps with stewardship because the more welcome you feel and the better you feel about coming to a place, the more you want

to be involved,” Michael says.

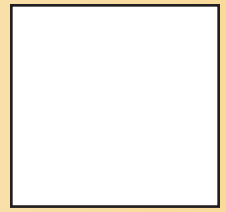
Michael believes that participating in the Hospitality Ministries is one of the best ways to offer your talents because it directly supports the mission of the church and encourages others to get involved as well.

“The time commitment for the various Hospitality Ministries is usually very low,” Michael says. “Anyone in the parish can be involved. I would love to get more families serving as greeters.

“All the ministries need volunteers, but our biggest need is with greeters,” he adds.

**If you are interested in joining one of the Hospitality Ministries, contact Michael Larmour at 812-390-4937, and he will help you get started.**





5353 McFarland Rd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46227  
(317) 786-4371  
www.stjudeindy.org

## **MASS SCHEDULE**

### Weekend Mass

Saturday Anticipation — 4:00 p.m.

Sunday — 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 11:45 a.m. (Sept-Apr)

### Weekday Mass

Monday/Wednesday/Friday — 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday/Thursday — 6:00 p.m.

### Holy Day Mass

See Bulletin

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tuesday/Thursday — 5:00-5:45 p.m.

Saturday — 3:00-3:45 p.m.

*Anytime by appointment*

# **An Inside Look at Spiritual Direction**

*continued from front cover*

are trained to put aside our own agendas, assumptions, and distractions in order to fully listen to the directee and the Holy Spirit.”

There are opportunities to meet one-on-one with a director once a month or also to participate in a group spiritual direction.

“The goal of spiritual direction is to deepen our relationship with God, to look to Him for direction in our lives, to grow in our prayer lives, and to take care of our spiritual lives just as we do our physical and mental health,” Tammy says. “It also provides companionship on the journey of faith as you have someone to talk to about your doubts, fears, joys, and suffering.”

St. Jude Parish has two rooms that were built in 2021 so as

to give a space for parishioners to meet for spiritual direction.

“As a society, we’ve become a lot more comfortable discussing mental and emotional health,” Tammy says. “We should take a similar approach in our spiritual lives.”

As St. Elizabeth of the Trinity once said, “Let yourself be vulnerable. Let your walls down, your carefully constructed fortresses breached, your fiercely guarded heart laid bare. Let your wounds be touched, your fears revealed, your deepest desires, damaged dreams, and most daring hopes unveiled before the Bridegroom, who has the power to redeem, restore, and resurrect them. Drop your independence and the idea you cling to so tightly — that you can do anything to protect and save yourself. And let Him love you.”

Those interested in spiritual direction, may contact Tammy Stewart at [tstewart@stjudeindy.org](mailto:tstewart@stjudeindy.org) or visit the archdiocese website at [www.archindy.org/worship/guidelines-spiritualdirection.html](http://www.archindy.org/worship/guidelines-spiritualdirection.html).