

# CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter Connecting Disciples of Jesus  
with One Another and the Lord

**March  
2023**

We are a Welcoming Community that Inspires Disciples of Jesus  
to Share God's Love and Transform the World.



We grow as we *CONNECT* through  
service, community, worship,  
and faith sharing.



## DIVINE MERCY PARISH

SACRED HEART CHURCH · ST. PHILIP THE APOSTLE CHURCH





The other day someone was walking between the rectory and the parish center. They proceeded along the sidewalk that runs along the rectory garages and empties into the alley.

They were observant to their surroundings as they were walking and mentioned to me that they noticed that some of the trees back there are beginning to bud. I hope by the time you are reading this that more and more of our trees are budding.

Spring is on the way and it can't come soon enough! It always gives all of us a lift to see signs of life bursting forth from trees and assorted other plants.

In the same way, there are beautiful signs of life budding forth in our parish. Alpha is continuing to go strong, and as a result, people are not only growing in faith but getting involved in various projects, initiatives and ministries. We have both women's and men's groups starting up.

This March issue of *Connections* brings you more

witnesses to the growth taking place at Divine Mercy. I hope you enjoy reading what these witnesses have to offer. May we all be inspired by their witness.

Slowly, buds shoot forth in springtime. In similar fashion, God's grace is active and working among us to make disciples, build church, and serve others.

*Fr. Steve*

**Join us for Mass during Lent:**  
**Saturday:** 5:00 pm at Sacred Heart  
**Sunday:** 8:00am at St. Philip  
 10:00 am at Sacred Heart  
 4:30pm at Sacred Heart

**Weekdays:**  
 8am on Monday (SH)  
 8am on Tuesday (SPA)  
 8:30 am on Wednesday (SH School Mass)  
 8am on Thursday (SH)  
 8am on Friday (SPA)

## STAFF YOU SHOULD KNOW

**Pastor** - Rev. Steven M. Lanza,  
 slanza@divinemicynorthshore.org

**Retired Resident** - Rev. Robert P. Heinz,  
 rheinz@archchicago.org

**Deacons** - Mike McNulty (retired), Gerry Keenan,  
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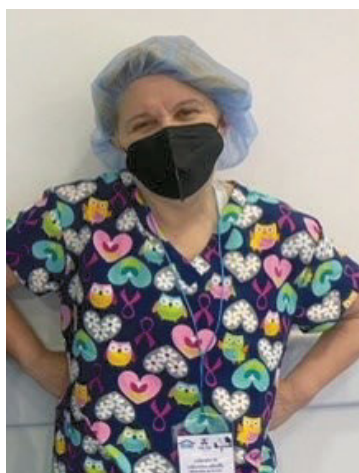
## Marjorie Sasso Burke | Connections by Liz Riggs

Marjorie is a force for good.

A loving mother of three and grandmother of two, Marjorie has dedicated her life to serving others. She has worked as a surgical nurse with Children's Memorial/ The Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital since 2001 and serves as the Nurse Coordinator for the Silver Service Children's Foundation. Silver Service is an all-volunteer group of medical professionals that travels to Colombia to perform pediatric orthopedic surgeries to underserved children at the same high level of care that the children would be given here.

As a result of these experiences, Marjorie says not a day goes by that she is not grateful. She is intentional, faith-filled and inspired by an innate desire to help those in need. When Marjorie sets her mind to something, she becomes laser-focused and sees it through to the end and with great success.

Marjorie was a St. Philips' parishioner many years ago until she moved away. She returned during the pandemic because she "felt like something was missing at her former parish". She recalls watching a live-streamed mass one Sunday morning and feeling like the homily was written specifically for her. She finds the Divine Mercy community to be



welcoming, down-to-earth, friendly and accepting, which is exactly what she was longing for. This past fall, when she saw Fr. Steve after mass, she asked for his prayers as she was setting off for another medical mission trip to Colombia. He was excited to learn more and share her story with our parish!

This last visit marked Marjorie's 25th trip to Colombia. The typical team of medical professionals comes from across the United States with the sole purpose of treating children with significant orthopedic conditions who have no access to care or cannot afford care. The team is comprised of two anesthesiologists, six surgeons, three residents/fellows, and eight nurses. The children they serve range in age from three weeks to 20 years old, although there is no limit, and children will be seen into adulthood as needed. The most common conditions that are seen are rickets, hip dislocations, arthrogryposis, and club feet.

**"We are the only hope they have and we get so much more out of it than we put in."**

In addition to her work in the clinic and during surgeries, Marjorie serves as Nursing Coordinator on the foundation's Board. As such, she organizes all the required paperwork necessary for the group. A team approach among the nurses helps determine





## A Parishioner You Should Know (Continued)

what supplies and implants are needed for the next trip. Marjorie finds what can be donated through sources such as the Hospital Sisters Mission Network or Americares, and determines what needs to be purchased. She participates in several fundraising efforts, including selling surgical scrub caps that she makes herself. All donations go towards the costs of the trips.

The medical team begins the week with a clinic on Sunday to see the potential children who would benefit from surgical care, and then is followed by five days of surgeries. It is an intense week with long hours, but Marjorie says that between the group themselves, hospital staff in Buga, and their partnering charity, Casa de Colombia, it does not feel like hard work at all.



The children and their families are so grateful for the care given by the medical team, because it brings them hope that one day their child will

be able to live a more normal life. One of her favorite parts of this experience is when she and the team return, a child who could barely walk before surgery, will now come running up to her to give her a hug.

Marjorie is very grateful to her husband Tom, who fully supports this mission knowing that every six months, she will ask him to help pack up items in the storage space, and that their entire living room will be overtaken by stacks of duffel bags filled with surgical supplies, toys and other items for the children.

When asked if she has a favorite quote about faith or life, Marjorie did not hesitate. She recited the quote her mom wrote to her in a card several years ago:

**"Lord help me to remember that nothing is going to happen to me today that You and I together can't handle."**

With these words serving as sort of a mantra, Marjorie can handle life's difficult challenges with grace, gratitude, community and perpetual faith.

For more information or to donate to the Foundation's efforts, please visit this website:  
<https://www.silverservicechildrensfoundation.org>



## Connected Through Evangelization

### YEAR ONE OF DIVINE MERCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

You might be wondering how implementation of our Strategic Plan is going. To refresh your memory, our 5-year Strategic Plan addresses the areas of:

evangelization; community; discipleship; ministry; and worship.

Our first year focuses on the area of evangelization: *Divine Mercy Parish aspires to be a people who evangelize, who share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Parishioners of all ages will learn how to comfortably share how Jesus enriches their lives and to invite and welcome others to come to their own encounter with the Lord.*

Our specific goals for year one as outlined are:

- Increase Alpha completion among Divine Mercy parishioners.
- Help parishioners, young and old, identify and share their own story of Jesus.

- Promote why the "Good News" is good.
- Engage post-Alpha participants in faith sharing and community experiences (50% Alpha participants).

So how are we doing on our goals?

Parishioners continue to register for ALPHA. There are currently four groups of people going through ALPHA: a Tuesday evening session, a Wednesday morning session, a Sunday morning session which includes our Children's Ministry parents, and a monthly Sunday evening session made up of our Family Faith Connections community. Additionally, Youth ALPHA is ongoing in both our Children's Ministry and Family Faith sessions.

We are beginning to see the fruits of ALPHA come to life. When we began the Renew My Church process and implemented ALPHA in 2019, we were told by our mentors in the Archdiocese and Divine Renovation that it would take at least 5 years for Divine Mercy to begin to see real change. We are happy to report that change is afoot, despite the



# Connected Through Evangelization

challenges presented by the pandemic.

You've probably noticed that the pews are more crowded on the weekends, particularly our Sunday 10:00 a.m. Mass which is bustling with young families and children. There's typically people standing in the back of church and young children running up and down the ramp in the Gathering Space.

As one parishioner recently shared with us, "It is so cool to walk into church these days and feel welcome, recognize and say hi to some people we know, etc. I never used to feel that way. I attribute it to Alpha and all the work that you...are doing. Keep it up! You're making a difference for sure."



Events have taken place in the last several months that have allowed parishioners to share their own story of Jesus within the community of Divine Mercy. We heard from Siobhan Hill at the January Women's Club gathering, Alison Small at Advent by Candlelight, Alpha witnesses at Mass, and all the parishioners who have shared their stories through this communication vehicle for the last several months. These stories of faith found in **Connections** are from parishioners who have shared their own story of Jesus. We are determined to promote all this good news! How can we not?

Evangelization is sharing how your faith has impacted your life. Just as the disciples were commissioned by Jesus to share the good news, to go and make disciples at the end of Matthew's Gospel in Chapter 28 verses 19 and 20, **so are we!** "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Jesus is with us on this journey. And the power of the Holy Spirit is with us as we welcome others to Mass or Alpha or Bible Study or Super Fun Saturday or a simple conversation about faith. We just need to invite.

The people who are considering joining the Catholic Church are also sharing their stories of encounter with their sponsors, godparents and catechists. Consider all of our candidates for Confirmation and First Eucharist. They are encountering Jesus in a new way, and we are doing our best to help them share those stories with others.

We have established programming to move parishioners beyond Alpha.

## **Interested in learning more about Scripture?**

Try Fr. Karjte's Bible Study.

## **Interested in more of those conversations about faith that were so engaging in ALPHA?**

Participate in The Chosen series during Lent, or the Saturday morning Men's Inspirational Study Group, or Connect group gatherings as they are rolled out.

## **Interested in putting your faith into action?**

Participate in our monthly Uncle Pete's Ministry to serve the less fortunate (a great family activity), serve lunch at A Just Harvest on the third Sunday of the month, tutor at St. Moses the Black on Tuesday or Thursday mornings. The students really benefit from a few hours of your time.

## **Interested in deepening your prayer life?**

Participate in our daily Zoom rosary - the link is on our website homepage. Attend Eucharistic Adoration at either of our worship sites and spend more time with Jesus. Also consider attending the Stations of the Cross on Friday nights at 6:30pm at St. Philip during Lent, another great family activity.

## **Interested in getting more active in the parish?**

Attend events like Super Fun Saturday, or take the plunge and volunteer to help in some capacity at Mass. We really need Greeters, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Sacristans and Choir members. Training is provided and you determine the amount of time you want to commit.

## **Interested in getting to know others who are like minded at Divine Mercy?**

Help out at events like Party in the Park, be part of the Women's Club, or be part of the Alpha hospitality team, or give an hour each month by being part of the Sunday Social team who hosts hospitality after the 8am and 10am Masses on the second Sunday of each month.

Each of these things will help you grow in your faith and build the faith community of Divine Mercy. We've seen it happen, and we welcome you to be a part of it. **Jesus invites you to be a part of it!**

Yes, year one of our Strategic Plan is going quite well!

## **DIVINE MERCY PARISH**

1077 TOWER ROAD  
WINNETKA, IL 60093  
847-446-0856

[www.divinemercynorthshore.org](http://www.divinemercynorthshore.org)

## **WEEKEND MASSES**

Saturday: Sacred Heart Church - 5pm

Sunday: St. Philip the Apostle Church - 8am  
Sacred Heart Church - 10am  
Sacred Heart Church - 4:30pm

## **SACRED HEART CHURCH**

1077 TOWER RD.  
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# The Viking Wire

## WE ARE SACRED HEART!

We love to shout from the rooftops that our core values and root beliefs make Sacred Heart School unique. One of those core values is to teach our students to do the right thing no matter who's watching. In early February, a very special visitor was watching, and he walked away from his visit impressed.

Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Chicago Greg Richmond came to meet our students and staff and get to tour the school. He also addressed the assembled students, teachers, and others at our weekly student mass. His time here clearly made an impression: "I was so impressed by my visit to Sacred Heart School," Mr. Richmond said. "There was a strong sense of community, good teaching, and wonderful students. Students answered tough questions in the Geography Bee, and the Pre-K students' art project was delightful. What a great place to be a student!"

It shouldn't surprise anyone that Superintendent Richmond came away thinking Sacred Heart is a great place. Our students don't just learn; they thrive, and our test results tell the story. In our math program, run by our dedicated and cohesive faculty, **ninety-three percent** of our students tested at grade level or above. Not to be outdone, our student's reading performance isn't far behind, where **ninety-two percent** of our students tested at grade level or above. These numbers are a testament to our kids, amazingly dedicated teachers, and talented support staff. Another crucial factor is our ability to connect with every student, thanks to our smaller class sizes. Because of our class-size advantages, teachers and specialists can work with every student and tailor their teaching to the individual child's needs.

Superintendent Richmond and Father Steve

From left, Superintendent Richmond, Principal Margaret Webb, Assistant Principal Jennifer Sullivan

Sacred Heart's Principal, Margaret Webb, has seen this firsthand. "I was observing one of our middle school



classes recently," she said, "and each student participated in every discussion. They all had input and interacted with the teacher and the other students. And when it was time to split into groups, they all did so seamlessly and smoothly. You don't get that kind of learning atmosphere in larger schools." A veteran educator with decades of experience, Principal Webb knows what a difference smaller class sizes makes, "our class sizes ensure that no student gets lost or can hide in the back of the class," she says. "This type of individualized education is one of the reasons Sacred Heart is a great place for kids to learn and grow."

The philosophies, approaches, and beliefs we employ at our school will continue to help and enrich the hearts and minds of our students well into the future. And we also realize that it's not enough to sit back and talk about all of the good things we have done. Resting on the laurels of good testing results and high academic achievement is never acceptable. It just spurs us on to keep reaching for the best in our students and ourselves. After his visit, Superintendent Richmond said, "clearly, Sacred Heart has a bright future."

We could not agree with him more.



Mr. S and his third-grade class

## Sacred Heart School Core Values

Love  
Serve  
Engage  
Discover  
Persevere





# Engaging Children's Hearts

## WORDS OF WISDOM: WHY MASS MATTERS

Dan Hagedorn has been described as "the most positive person I know." Always smiling and happy to see you, it only takes a moment to realize that Dan's deep and active faith is at the heart of his being and optimistic outlook.

Ever since Dan and his wife, Terry, moved to Glencoe in 2000, Dan has been a hands-on Divine Mercy parishioner. A catechist for at least 14 years, Dan recalls he taught every grade from Kindergarten-8<sup>th</sup> grade while raising daughters Kinsey, now 23, and triplet girls Kelly, Sabrina and Bridget, who this year turn 21. He laughs remembering teaching Kindergarten and first grade with co-teacher Michael Chang, two guys trying to master the craft projects, roaming the aisles of Michaels Store with no idea what they were doing. "We were so out of our element," he joked, recalling how they were trying to buy supplies for Christmas ornaments the children made for their parents, each one featuring the child's photo.



He says teaching has enriched his faith life, giving him the opportunity to learn about the Old Testament, the Life of Jesus, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and more. "There is no greater honor than to be able to share our faith with the next generation of leaders," Dan said.

Dan's faith life goes right back to his roots where he and his two brothers were raised at St. Athanasius Parish in Evanston (now St. John Newman Parish) by two devout Catholic parents. Mass was integral to the family's routine: "If we missed St. A's Mass, we had to go to St. Francis Hospital at 4 p.m. where a Jesuit priest celebrated a 20-minute Mass," he recalled. If someone got there late or left early, they could expect an admonishment from the priest, reminding them that they ought to have 20 minutes to spare from beginning to end!

Dan's dad served as a lector, usher, Eucharistic Minister and even sang in the choir. His mom gave hours to The Cradle in Evanston so service was ingrained at a young age. "They raised my brothers and me to be active Catholics, showing us that faith was a pillar for their own lives," he explained. All the boys attended Loyola Academy, Dan received his degree from DePaul University and all of the boys continue to be active in their churches today.

Dan met Terry at a Halloween party hosted by a lifelong friend and they were married at Assumption Church in Chicago, which he calls one of the most beautiful small churches in Chicago. They moved to Glencoe when Kinsey

was one. Dan fondly remembers Music Director Todd Gresick allowing the family to sit in the choir loft during 7:30 a.m. Mass. "The girls were so young and we didn't want to be disruptive!" he added.

"Mass was always a special time to be together as a family," Dan noted. All four girls were altar servers and sang in the children's choir, which was led by Kathy Janega, whose "gift for music and snacks made it fun and special."

"Being an altar server was key for the girls. Being on the altar with the priest, wearing the robes, it teaches you a lot about the Mass. It's such an honor to serve on the altar during Mass plus, wow, what an eye opener to our faith. You are in the front row!" he added.

Dan inspires our Children's Ministry team with his fervent passion for Mass. "Mass is the cornerstone of our faith," he notes. "We come together as a parish. It's a small investment of time, and it's really important to stay connected. Jesus wants us to come together."

He has encouraged us to rethink our Children's Ministry sessions, to ensure they include a Mass. "We do so much with the formation stage, but the big picture is the Mass," said Dan. "It's the foundation of our faith and if the children have memories of going to church when they are young, there is a good chance they will go as young adults and adults."

His passion is contagious, inspiring us to think in new and different ways as we work to bring our children into a closer relationship with Jesus. Dan effuses enthusiasm for all Divine Mercy has to offer families: from A Just Harvest, where he, Terry and the girls made casseroles and recruited neighbors and volunteers for years; to Bernie's Book Bank; bake sales; food and coat drives, and more, all ways to live the faith. "As a parish, we do so many incredible things to help others whether it's Uncle Pete's, serving our sister parish or the New Trier Township. We do a lot! It's just an honor to be associated with such a great parish."

And, he added, you learn about all of these opportunities just by being at Mass!





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