



The Eye Opener

of St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Community

O'Fallon, Illinois

September 2016

Sweeter than ever: 16th Annual Oktoberfest is on tap

By Kathy Sjoquist

Looking for a fun night out? Looking for a way to help our parish? Look no further than St. Clare's upcoming 16th Annual Oktoberfest! Every fall on the last Saturday of September, we honor our region's German heritage with this great fundraising event. Our Oktoberfest is a festival for the entire family with great food and drink, games and raffles, a fun run, live music and much, much more!

New this year, we're adding a fun new attraction that appeals to all ages: The local favorite "I Dood It!" game. Players toss balls in a fast-paced race to land five in a row, with a great prize for the first person to complete the challenge and triumphantly shout "I Dood It!"

Add to this our returning favorites, including inflatables, games and pony rides for the kids; plus bingo, poker, pull



Photo by Jack Leisure

tabs, cake wheel and more, and you've got a full slate of fun for everyone.

This event is open to the public and attracts visitors from throughout the region. While we enjoy this annual opportunity for fun and fellowship, we also count on the revenue generated by Oktoberfest to help pay down our parish mortgage. Our 2015 Oktoberfest profit exceeded \$50,000!

We invite you to become a part of the

Want to go?
What: St Clare Oktoberfest, with food, entertainment, raffles and games
Who: For everyone
When: Saturday, Sept. 24, 4-11 p.m.
Where: St. Clare School grounds
Want to help?
Volunteer online at www.stclare-church.org, after Mass or call a committee chairman

excitement as we prepare for our 16th annual event on Saturday, Sept. 24. As a member of our parish family, your involvement is crucial to our success.

Here's how you can help:

- Buy and SELL raffle tickets! Raffle ticket sales make a major contribution to our festival profit!
- Become an Oktoberfest sponsor, with opportunities to promote your business or workplace and enjoy tax

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Making a difference It's time to share your talents, interests to help out

By Kathy Sjoquist

What if the things you enjoy doing the most were coincidentally the exact things that made someone happy? That filled an urgent need? That helped make our town, our nation, our planet Earth better places to live?

What if all it took to start thanking God for your talents and abilities was a few hours of time and a willingness to serve?

Put aside the "what ifs" and prepare to get involved in real, meaningful and satisfying ways — doing things you love to do — as an active member of one or many of St. Clare's parish ministries.

Enjoy gardening, yard work, cooking, working with kids, sharing your faith, researching issues? Maybe you'd love creative family time working on a service project, quiet time in prayer or a robust group discussion about social issues.

Think about what our parish has to offer — and what you can offer our parish — as you consider signing up for ministries during our Stewardship of Time and Talent in October. Whatever your interests, our parish's many ministries provide an amazing array of opportunities for you to become an involved, engaged member of the St. Clare family.

More than 60 ministries are available in social outreach, adult faith formation, youth and family faith formation and parish life. With so much to offer, there is something for everyone from parents and tots, students and singles to families and even the most "senior" parishioners.

New ministries to consider this year include a grief support group, Our Daily Bread food deliveries to shelters, the annual Work of Human Hands sale, a retreat team and a religious vocations committee.

2016 Stewardship of Time & Talent

Oct. 7 Ministry handbooks mailed and on line at www.stclarechurch.org

Oct. 8-9 Stewardship witness talks during Masses

Oct. 15-16 Commitment Weekend!
Turn in signup cards during Mass

Can't attend Mass during Commitment Weekend? No worries! Drop your card in the regular collection basket any weekend or send it in to the parish office. Thank you for your support of St. Clare Parish!

As you consider your options, please note that we also have a constant need for volunteers to prepare and serve food

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Volunteering adds to happiness

I was inspired to read an article in “U.S. News and World Report” magazine that focused on how people who volunteer to help others feel more happy with their lives. Psychological research in the article had this to say, “People who volunteer tend to have higher self-esteem, psychological well-being and happiness. Children who volunteer are more likely to grow up to be adults who volunteer, and communities with lots of volunteers are more stable and better places to live.”

To me it sounded like the writer had interviewed our own parishioners, who often tell me how much they enjoy volunteering at St. Clare.

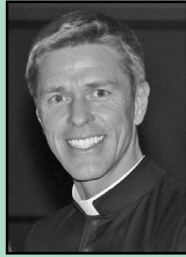
I am especially edified when I see some of our children grow into their high school and college years and still continue volunteering in our liturgical ministries.

Our parish vision, which is rooted in biblical stewardship, continues to challenge and encourage parishioners to set aside part of their time each week to serve God and others in our parish ministries.

In the spring and summer, we had

From the Pastor's Desk

By *Father
Jim Deiters*



a large number of new people sign up for our liturgical ministries. This September, there will be hundreds of volunteers making our Oktoberfest so successful. In October, watch for our stewardship drive, which invites parishioners to sign up for ministries in the areas of parish life, social outreach, faith formation and more.

If you look around the parish you will see an abundance of volunteers who have discovered that giving of their time and talent adds greater happiness to their lives. This contributes to St. Clare Parish being such a wonderful place! Many thanks to all of you who serve in our parish ministries, and a big welcome to those who are just beginning to get involved.

Special event: Showing gratitude in your prayer

God invites us to each celebration of the Mass, but the predictability of our ritual-based liturgy can result in confusion, disengagement and plain old boredom. Catholics often become disengaged at Mass. Some have left the Church because they “don’t get anything out of going to church.” If this sounds like you or someone you know, you’re encouraged to attend a special event, “You’re Invited: Showing Gratitude in Prayer,” at 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 6 in the Fellowship Hall.

Stephen Eros, Director of Liturgy and Music, and John Gomez, a Deacon-in formation, will lead this faith formation session on ways to make your prayer at Mass deeper and more fully engaged. Grandparents and parents will learn how to explain the different parts of the Mass to their children. Teens and youth will have a chance to connect to the many fascinating rituals we celebrate in each Mass.

Baptisms

We welcome the newly baptized: **Camden Paul Dziurdzy** and **Alina Margaret Dziurdzy**, children of Caleb and Melanie Dziurdzy; **Sophia Andrea Ramirez**, daughter of Domingo and Stephanie Ramirez; **Luke Allen Grubofski**, son of Chad and Julia Grubofski; **Logan Paul Bordenave**, son of Christopher and Stephanie Bordenave; **Eric Sean Pierce**, son of Ryrone and Rosario Pierce; **Elliot Vincent Harter**, son of Jon and Lisa Harter; **Jackson Robert Grapperhaus**, son of Cole and Elizabeth Grapperhaus; **August Thomas Merculief**, son of Theodosy and Natalie Merculief; **Isabella Carolyn Roman** and **Julia Grace Roman**, daughters of Johnathon Roman and Kara Powers Roman; **Axton Carter Fix**, son of Brian and Ashley Fix; **Jacob John Crain**, son of Dennis and Melissa Crain; **Ezra Paul Rotz**, son of Brandon and Elizabeth Rotz; **Ryan James Prest**, son of Adam and Erin Prest; **Sophia Anna Marie** and **Thomas Andrew Moseder**, children of Thomas and Alison Moseder; and **Catherine Sarah Lang**, daughter of David and Maria Theresa Lang.

16th Annual Oktoberfest (continued)

benefits as you support our parish.

- Take on a leadership role within the Oktoberfest ministry. Our current committee members eagerly welcome the opportunity to mentor fresh talent from our growing parish family.

- Serve as a general volunteer before, during and after the event. Signups are available at all weekend Masses.

- Donate a prize to the raffle stand, basket raffle, silent auction or bingo. This can be merchandise, gift cards/certificates, services, condo stays or tickets for concerts, sporting events, air travel — you name it!

- Donate a cake or pie to the German dinner or cake wheel or food or drink to the dinner or other booths.

Year after year, the participation of every parish household makes Oktoberfest a success. In our 16th year, we plan to raise our steins and toast the best Fest ever. Thanks for joining the fun and supporting St. Clare, and we’ll see you Saturday, September 24, at Oktoberfest!

Big Otto, big prize!

What are the odds you’ll walk away from this year’s Oktoberfest \$10,000 richer? Better than ever.

Yes, that’s right! This year we’re selling just 250 Big Otto raffle tickets, making the odds of winning very sweet indeed. Big Otto raffle tickets are \$100 each and will be available after Masses, in the parish office and at the Fest. As a bonus, every Big Otto ticket is included in the drawings for all our Li’l Otto raffle prizes, as well.

Our \$10 Li’l Otto Raffle features a fantastic array of prizes, including a television, a \$100 gas card, a fun “Night on the Town” and more.

Selling raffle tickets to your friends and family is an excellent way to support St. Clare and promote Oktoberfest. For more information or to obtain tickets, contact raffle chair Ellen Gravlin, ellen.gravlin@charter.net, or call the parish office.

VBS offers fun way to learn about Jesus



Children ages 4-10 headed to the Vacation Bible School Barnyard Roundup in July to learn about Jesus as the Good Shepherd. This year's St. Clare and Corpus Christi VBS featured Bible stories, games, crafts, snacks, music, dance, recreation and a skit each day, plus a special treat of farm animals one day. Thanks to our 100 volunteers who helped make it a wonderful learning experience for the children.



Photos by Madison Luechtefeld and Jane Dotson

Ways to pray with, for our faithful departed

The Solemnity of All Saints, a holy day of obligation, is Nov. 1. We're privileged to pray as a community and celebrate the Eucharist with the "cloud of witnesses," and ask for their continued intercession.

Mass Schedule

- 7 a.m. at St. Clare Church
- 8:30 a.m. at St. Clare School gym
- 7 p.m. at St. Clare Church

Check the Oct. 29-30 bulletin for Mass times at our neighboring parishes.

Feast of All Souls

The Feast of All Souls is Nov. 2 and we will have Mass at 7 p.m. on that day to pray for the faithful departed. Praying for the dead is one of our duties as Catholics; it is also one of the Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Families who have lost a loved one in

the past year will be invited to participate in this special liturgy, which will remember their departed loved ones. A reception of food and fellowship will follow.

Thanks to the ministries that contribute to this beautiful event: Circle of Healing and Hope (bereavement), Grief Support Group, Welcome Committee and Wolfersberger Funeral Home.

Cub Scout Pack 94 has a new flag



Cub Scout Pack 94 Cubmaster Bill Milliken accepts the pack's new flag during a blessing by Deacon Dennis Vander Ven at the pack's May meeting. Cub Scouts Owen Hubbard, Christopher Bautz and William Bautz helped with the presentation. St. Clare Church is now the Chartered Partner of both Cub Scout Pack 94 and Boy Scout Troop 94.

St. Clare School news

WELCOMING NEW TEACHERS

Students and parents will see new faces at St. Clare School as new teachers join the staff to replace teachers who retired or moved.

Please help us welcome these new teachers: Sarah Feliciano, preschool; Kat Stone, preschool aide; Katie Wessel, kindergarten; Heather Hayden, first grade (previously at the preschool); Steffany Gundlach, fifth grade; Michelle Janes, eighth grade (previously computer teacher); Clarice McKay, eighth grade; and Tara Sill, computer teacher and nurse.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN

St. Clare School has been accepting many new enrollments after graduating a huge eighth-grade class last year, and now has 410 students. There are spots open for the 2016-17 school year for grades K-8. The school has three small kindergarten classes this year.

Tuition was not increased for the 2016-17 school year, and tuition assistance is available for families in need.

To find out more about the quality Catholic education and "all the extras" that St. Clare School offers, visit www.saintclareschool.org or call Principal Milissa Faust at 632-6327. Tours are available.

FAITH FORMATION

The theme for the school's faith formation program this year is "Build God's Kingdom." Students and staff will focus on our call to build God's Kingdom now

and live as Jesus asked us to do. Each homeroom received a gold crown to daily remind students that they are following the king.

The base of the building blocks is prayer. During the year other blocks will build an even stronger base — forgiveness, compassion, faith in action and more.

Students also are focusing on the emoji of YAY. In this way, they show that when they reach out to others, help others, pray and forgive, they are honoring those who build up God's kingdom. In doing so, they join the "Circle of YAY" and avoid the emoji of Yuck, which includes negativity, hurtful words and texts, name calling and bully actions.

"We are the Knights in the circle of YAY," says Director of Faith Formation Diane Overmann.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Parents enjoyed coffee in the cafeteria on the first day of school, Aug. 17, and families had a fun night out at the Korte Rec Plex on Aug. 27.

The Back-to-School Parent Night celebrated our parents and wonderful Catholic school on Aug. 23. St. Clare School board members hosted the event, which included introduction of new teachers, an update on exciting things happening at the school and parents offering testimonials about what the school has done for the faith lives of their children and themselves.

Respect Life Month full of life-giving opportunities

Our Respect Life Committee will host the annual Fontebella Baby Bottle Campaign in October to help celebrate Respect Life Month and raise funds for Fontebella Maternity Home in O'Fallon.

On the weekend of Oct. 22-23, parishioners and guests will hear a speaker before each Mass, see a display of Respect Life materials in the Fellowship Hall and pick up empty baby bottles to fill with loose change over a two-week period. The baby bottles full of your donations will be collected at each Mass on the weekend of Nov. 5 & 6.

You can also join the Respect Life Committee in witnessing to life on Sunday, Oct. 2, from 2 to 3 p.m. through the Life Chain, which is sponsored by the Belleville Area Right to Life. Our church will meet at Associated Bank on Highway 159 near the mall in Fairview Heights. Come be a prayerful witness to the pro-life movement. Bring a Rosary!

The St. Louis Archdiocese's Respect Life Convention is on Sunday, Oct. 16, in St. Charles, Mo. Several members of St. Clare's Respect Life Committee plan to attend. To attend the Convention, register online at <http://archstl.org/respectlife/page/annual-respect-life-convention#Registration>. Contact Mary Fleming at mbflem@sbcglobal.net for carpool information.

Trunk or Treat offers fall fun

Trunk or Treat – a Halloween-themed party on our parking lot – is back again, thanks to the Hospitality Committee. The event features decorated car trunks or hatchback areas and people passing out candy to children trick or treating in costumes among the parked cars.

Trunk or Treat starts at 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 28 in the church's east parking lot. People should come early to set up their displays as the parking lot will close to traffic at 6 p.m. Best displays will win prizes.

Hot chocolate, hot dogs, chili and chips are provided. Everyone is welcome to bring a crock pot of chili for the chili cook-off and a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry.

For the safety of the kids, please plan to stay until about 7:30 p.m., when the parking lot is re-opened to traffic.