

The Ameliorator

St. Amelia Church

September-October 2011

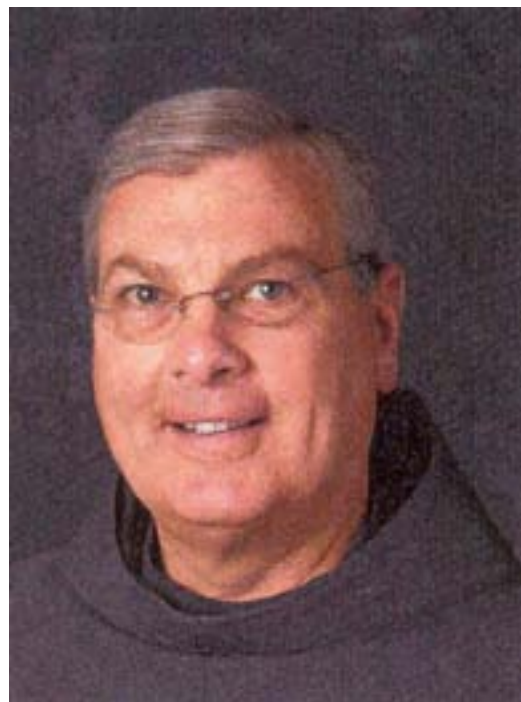
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Tonawanda, NY

New Bishop's Path to the Crozier Began in Our Parish

When Pope Benedict named Father Greg Hartmayer the new bishop of the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia, on July 19, there was special rejoicing in Tonawanda. The path that is leading to his episcopal ordination and investiture with the crozier – symbol of the office of bishop – began here. Father Greg, son of Sally and the late Jack Hartmayer of Rochelle Place, grew up in our parish. With his siblings Doug, Jack and MaryJo, he attended our school.

“I had the greatest admiration for the priests and sisters at St. Amelia’s - Msgr. McHugh, Father Kelly, Father Ochs, the Felician Sisters – they were larger than life, very much present in the school, and good role models,” Father Greg recalls. “The school gave me a great education, and a firm foundation in the faith, which built upon what my parents were doing at home. I was an altar server, and a Scout in Troop 202. CYO was an important part of my life, too. I was elected President, and received the ‘Manus Christi’ Award from the diocese. Tim Russert was one of the kids who received the award with me.”



Greg attended Cardinal O’Hara High School, where he experienced the powerful attraction of the Franciscan way of life, and he enrolled as a seminarian upon his graduation in 1969.

“Greg was a prayerful, spiritual person as a seminarian”, remembers Msgr. Bob Mack, who served here as associate pastor in the seventies, “a good and faithful follower of St. Francis”.

He was ordained a priest in the spring of 1979, and celebrated his First Mass in our Church. For many years he was involved in his community’s education ministry, and served as principal at O’Hara, and at St. Francis High School in Athol Springs. In 1995 he was named pastor of St. Philip Benizi Church in Jonesboro, Georgia, and served there for 15 years. Most recently he has been pastor of St. John Vianney parish in Lithia Springs, Georgia. He will be ordained a bishop and installed at the Cathedral in Savannah on October 18. Msgr. Mack and Father Tom will represent our parish at those ceremonies, which begin at 2 p.m. and will be carried live on EWTN, and re-broadcast later the same evening.



Parish Women Launch Spirituality Program

The head of the Diocesan Office of Parish Life is coming this month as the first speaker in our new Women's Spirituality Program. Kathleen Heffron will speak following a continental breakfast that begins at 8:30 in the Rectory Meeting Room on Saturday morning, September 17.

The new program is known as "Women at the Well", a reference to Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman recounted in chapter 4 of John's Gospel. The women's program is a companion to the Men's Spirituality Program, now in its eighth year, known as "Emmaus", reminiscent of the account of the disciples' meeting Jesus on the road, a story Luke recounts in chapter 24 of his gospel. The Emmaus Program was the subject of a front page article in the August edition of the Western New York Catholic.

"Father Tom invited some women for breakfast on June 18", explains Karen Trimper. "He had a list of some sixty women who had been recommended by his staff as people who might be interested. He selected twenty, pretty much at random. At that initial meeting, we formed a Steering Committee of seven, which Father Tom asked me to chair. The other members are Kathy Andolsek, Marilyn Coughlin, Aimee Gruber, Deb Miller, Tricia Ruh, and Pat Swartz".



Among the twenty women at breakfast on June 18 were Tricia Ruh, Aimee Gruber, Marilyn Coughlin, Lenore Uhrich, Pat Swartz, and Karen Trimper.

"We met several times, and decided to follow the basic format that had been so successful for the men: we will meet on the third Saturday of each month, following the 8:00 Mass, with a continental breakfast at 8:30, followed by some group prayer, then the speaker around 9 o'clock, for perhaps 30 or 40 minutes, then some questions, discussion, and fellowship. We have a long list of potential speakers, but we are open to suggestions."

"Kathy Heffron is a great choice to kick off this venture", Father Tom noted. "You will laugh, and you will learn, but you won't yawn! She brings great insights into feminine spirituality, based on her experiences in 47 years of married life, with four children and eight grandchildren."

Mrs. Heffron has worked for the Diocese of Buffalo for 26 years. For many years she headed the Office of Church Ministry. Previously she taught religion at Holy Angels Academy and St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute.

"Our speaker for October - that would be the 15th - is Sr. Johnice of the Response to Love Center", Karen Trimper added. "And I want to mention that the Meeting Room in the Rectory is now handicapped-accessible, because of a chair-lift that was recently installed."



Building Houses Helps Students Build Their Lives

by Michael Hamp

A group of Canisius High School students traveled to Newburgh, New York recently to help build houses for Habitat for Humanity. Among them were parishioners Antonino Monti and Michael Hamp. Newburgh is a small, very poor city on the Hudson River, north of New York City. In former days, it was a booming port city, but with the decline of the shipping industry, it slowly became a dead city. As the economy worsened, illegal activity – drug trafficking, thievery, gang violence – became rampant in the poorer sections of town. It was to this poor and dangerous environment that the Canisius students came.

“Knowing that you’re helping to change someone’s life is an incredible feeling.”

The students group was led by Mr. Ron Ahrens and Ms. Staci Schick. We worked eight hours a day to get the houses completed by the target date. Each day we would travel from our quarters at the St. Isaac Jogues Retreat Center in Cornwall to the houses in Newburgh. There we would meet the Habitat director, Brady Quinn, to be assigned our tasks for the day. Tasks ranged from installing cabinets to nailing trim to transporting supplies. We went home each day bone tired, but energized by what we were accomplishing. “Newburgh was an experience I will never forget”, said Antonino Monti. “Knowing that you’re helping to change someone’s life is an incredible feeling”.

But the trip was more than just an opportunity for service. Each night we spent time reflecting



One of the homes the students helped to complete.

on the teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola. We pondered topics like what it means to be “men and women for others” and how to live simply, with only the necessities and not the luxuries. There were several exercises designed to bring each person closer to God, helping them realize how God is active in each person’s life.

“It was a great spiritual experience”, notes student Michael Haar. “I mean, I really felt God was there with me helping me along. This trip was one of the greatest experiences I have had in my life”.

The trip was made possible by generous contributions from many St. Amelia parishioners. The students are grateful for that support.

Michael Hamp is beginning his junior year at Canisius High School.

Grandparents Day Liturgy



Sunday, September 11 at 11 a.m. Refreshments after Mass Under the blue tents.

Lifecchain: Sunday Oct. 2



Spend an hour standing up for life. Join us at Niagara Falls Boulevard and Glenalby Road from 2-3 p.m.

Driving Course Saves You Money And Might Even Save Your Life!

Without question, driving is a challenge today! Drivers must see, think, and act undistracted, and with more accuracy than ever before, in order to stay safe on the road. Also, in these uncertain economic times, the cost of driving is forever increasing, especially insurance premiums. Fortunately, there is a remedy for both these problems right here in our parish.

For the past several years, the parish has been offering a Defensive Driving Course, which saves drivers 10% on their liability and collision insurance premiums for three years, and can reduce up to four points on their driving record.

“The class was a great refresher for me, and a wonderful learning experience for my 18-year-old son who just got his license. I would highly recommend that parents take the course with their sons or daughters”, comments Chris Richard of Amherst, who took part in a recent course here.

“I always would take the course for the insurance discount, and was usually bored. But this time the course moved a quick pace, and I learned a lot”, says Debbie Howe of Tonawanda.

The course is presented in a workbook format, and topics include traffic laws, defensive driving techniques, driver attitude and behavior, texting and cell phone usage, and driver impairment. The instructor is James J. Coppola, a professional driver who has been involved in driver safety programs since 1999.

For more information, including a schedule of classes, visit www.smartdriving.webs.com.



Stewardship of Talent Campaign Brings New Volunteers for Ministry

As a result of our drive for Stewardship of Talent in June, the parish received over 100 expressions of interest in parochial ministries. In addition to the campaign conducted in Church throughout the month, the school and the religious education office invited children to give of their talent. Forty-one young people in junior high grades expressed a willingness to serve the parish as altar servers and student lectors.

“We received 21 responses”, reported Carolyn Ruhland for the Outreach Office, “We have had seventeen interviews with people who are interested in helping. They volunteered for many aspects of our program. It was a wonderful response.”

“This was a successful campaign”, noted Stewardship Chairperson Bill Heffron at the Committee’s July meeting. “It is heartening to see such enthusiasm, especially on the part of our younger parishioners.”



New altar servers, Bobby Wolfe and Bailey Begovitch.



The school's fourth "Jammin' in June" festival took place the weekend of June 4-6, kicking off the estival season, and featuring music by Strictly Hip, Murphy's Law, The Good Life, Beatlemagic, Push Button Theory, Carl Matyka Band, Terry Buchwald, The Corrections, Bob Fera Band, and Nick Gagliardi, with food like BW's Fish Fry, Chia-vetta's Barbequed Chicken and Joe K's tantalizing roast beef.





Kyle Patterson became Troop 202's newest Eagle Scout at ceremonies in Don Miller Hall on July 24.



Sue Kroczyński and her son Joe were part of a contingent of 112 parishioners who cheered for the Yankees in Cleveland on July 5.



Thru the Lens



Fourth grader Haylee Hoffman was one of 232 public school pupils taking part in the Summer School of Religion in July.



First graders Samantha Tocke and Patrick O'Hanrahan enjoyed bring part of Vacation Bible School in early August.



Playing cards, pitching horseshoes, and devouring barbequed steaks were on the agenda at this year's Holy Name Stag on July 16.



A sculpture of Father Baker and his orphans, under the protection of an angel, adorns Our Lady of Victory Basilica. Parishioners spent an afternoon at the Shrine on July 17.



Cub Scout Connor Gilmartin helps process cans from Pack 202's used can and bottle drive on Saturday, July 16, which netted \$850 for the Pack treasury.



Participants in the summer Youth Retreat at Steubenville University in Ohio were Steve Lawson, Lauren Daniels, Brit-tany Sedor, Anna Turski, Francesca Harvey, Theresa Johnson, Delaney Nola, Joe Kroczyński, and Thomas Lawson.



Ken Lippert and his daughter Catherine prepare to make the Bike Trek July 23 on their "bicycle built for two".

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The Ameliorator is the bi-monthly publication of Saint Amelia Church. We mail it to members of our Saint Amelia Family, that is, registered parishioners, adult alumni of our school, and parents of children who attend our school. We also send it to people who live in the geographical area served by our Church, in order to keep them informed about who we are and what we are doing. If you do not wish to receive The Ameliorator, you can have your name deleted from our mailing list by simply calling 716-836-0011.

Prime Rib Dinner to Recognize Parishioners' Gifts of Talent

The annual Prime Rib Dinner, sponsored by our Holy Name Society, has been set for Saturday evening, November 5. This year's dinner will recognize several parishioners for the noteworthy sharing of talent, to the benefit of all members of our parish. This year the parish will pay tribute to *Jane Brown and Harriette Hoebel*, for their efforts in promoting Eucharistic Adoration and study of the Scriptures. *Joan Owczarczyk and Gail Lawson* will be thanked for their work in the parish Respect Life ministry. Two couples will be feted for their longstanding involvement in many areas of parish life: *Karl and Rita Reardon* and *Alan and Jackie Rebman*.

Two outstanding altar servers will also be recognized. This year's honorees are: *Alex Rusch*, a freshman at Kenmore East, and *Amelia Simpson*, a ninth-grader at Nardin Academy.

The dinner features succulent prime rib and all the trimmings, done by the chefs from West Seneca's "Market in the Square", assisted by Holy Name Members. Tickets are \$10 per person, and can be purchased at the Rectory, or from Red Traina, who can be reached at 838 4487.

