



The Heartbeat

A Publication of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church
www.ihmparish.com

Fall 2020

THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

by Ann Williams

"School" has a whole new meaning these days due to mandates resulting from Covid-19. School leadership is challenged to keep students and staff safe while effectively teaching students in the classroom, online or both.

While we now know that the virus primarily affects the elderly with underlying health issues, it does not discriminate among ages. Last spring all schools were closed to protect students and staff and to prevent its spread. That began an educational odyssey for students, families and people far beyond the schools. Online learning was the only educational option then.

IHM School administration and staff immediately stepped up and created an online learning plan. Regardless of their employment situations, parents had to play a greater role in their children's education. Collaboration between the school and parents enabled students to finish the 2019-'20 curriculum and successfully meet grade standards.

This fall, IHM School parents have the option of in-person or online instruction for their children. IHM's in-person learning program follows diocesan guidelines that are based on CDC, state and local requirements to protect students and school personnel. Details of the plan, *Living Our Mission in Today's Reality*, can be found on the diocesan website.

According to Principal **Holly Lake**, all but a handful of families have chosen in-person learning, and the school is well prepared for both in-person and online instruction. Parents may change their option after the first quarter. All Catholic schools will utilize the diocese's shared learning management system, Canvas, "for organizing instructional materials and facilitating learning," as well as its shared Google domain. Mrs. Lake says that the staff has been outstanding in adapting to online teaching as well as other changes. Teachers have "studied" Canvas all summer and prepped for live classroom videoing for online learners.

These changes come at a significant cost. Sanitizing, cleaning, new technology and other expenses have increased the school's budget that was set very early in the year. The CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) provides funding to support these expenses. However, Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Attorney General Dana Nessel have sued the federal government to change how nonpublic schools receive these funds, significantly reducing what is available to them.



Mrs. Simon's 2nd graders are masked up and ready to learn.

The Killgoar Foundation's 2020-'21 allocation of \$202,000 has already provided tuition assistance to 53 families and 96 students to date. Bishop Walkowiak, a strong advocate of Catholic education, has earmarked an additional \$1,000,000 in assistance for diocesan school families impacted by Covid. An anonymous donor has funded the purchase of PPE equipment for our staff, and the Home-School Association is addressing other needs. Even so, the additional expenses will create a budget shortfall.

A successful Catholic school requires a supportive pastor, parish leadership and parish-wide support; dedicated school leadership, i.e., administration and board of education; committed staff, involved parents and volunteers. IHM School has all of that, plus the Killgoar Foundation! Despite today's challenges, our school will continue to provide the excellent spiritual and academic foundation for which it has been known for nearly 70 years.

PARISHIONER PROFILE:

Rose and John MacKenzie

by Terry Moore



The MacKenzies - Rose; Luke, 1 yr.; Lilly, 3; Johnnie, 6; and John

Recently celebrating their tenth wedding anniversary, **Rose and John MacKenzie** place faith, fidelity and trust at the center of their marriage. How trusting? Well, they put a successful bid on a house in the Ridgemoor area without Rose ever having seen it herself—being on the other side of the state pursuing her nursing education. “Our realtor really wanted us to see this house,” recalled Rose, “so John looked at it in the dark one night and we put a bid on it at seven the next morning. I knew I could trust him,” she added with a laugh.

As with their new house, their affection for IHM was immediate and unhesitant. “We were looking for a vibrant parish with a good school. When we attended our first Mass at IHM in 2011, we knew we were home,” said Rose.

Their path to the area and IHM began when John, a native of Houghton Lake, accepted a teaching position with East Grand Rapids Public Schools. After renting an apartment in Comstock Park, they looked at homes closer to where he would teach. Thus began John’s nocturnal ‘home inspection.’

The MacKenzies were first introduced to each other by a mutual friend when they were students at Saginaw Valley State University. “It started as a friendship and grew into a relationship,” said John. They also discovered their shared values and religious roots. “I grew up as a Missouri Synod Lutheran—which I joke is ‘almost Catholic’—and my family stressed a religious upbringing. We attended church every week.” After a “robust” Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), John became a Catholic on Easter of 2010.

Rose also grew up in small rural town in Michigan, Fowler. The youngest of nine children, she described “growing up on a dairy farm in a very Catholic family” where she observed her dad kneeling beside his bed to say his morning and evening prayers and watched her mom attend daily Mass. “As the youngest, I witnessed the prayer life of my parents and my older siblings especially when my brothers and sisters got married and had children of their own,” said Rose.

Prayer remains a cornerstone for John and Rose and their children. Both take strength and solace from their commitment to the Adoration Chapel. For John: “It provides meaningful silence and a quality prayer time, keeping me centered even after getting out of bed at 3 a.m.” Rose interjects: “At a retreat, Fr. Troy challenged a group of parish men about overnight Adoration and John felt personally called to organize 30 men to cover those times.”

To Rose, the Adoration Chapel is also “the most stressful hour of my week because I bring my children.” She says the trade off of keeping them quiet for an hour is for them to see how prayer is a priority in her life as it was for her as a young girl. “John and I want them to be exposed to Christ in the tabernacle.”

Finding their home at IHM has meant an active parish life for the MacKenzies. Space limitations curtail a full description but it includes the Men’s Ministry, Women’s Bible Study, Pre-Cana program, Couples Night, Natural Family Planning instruction and the Technology Committee for IHM School.

At its core, IHM represents to the MacKenzies a “home away from home, a caring faith community.”

“We really lean on living in community,” said John. “At IHM we see how people lean on each other, support one another and rally whenever there’s a need.”



The *Fall* UNGATHERING

by Deb Moore



IHM's 15th annual Fall Gathering will NOT be held this year on Thursday, October 16. We'd love to get together as usual at Cascade Hills Country Club to enjoy each other's company during an evening out, but it's NOT to be. With the threat of COVID-19 still at hand, such a gathering is impossible this year.

The goal of the yearly event is to raise funds for our maintenance fund while building camaraderie within our parish community. Over the past 15 years, parishioners have donated more than \$215,000 with the funds being used to repair leaky roofs in the church and school, rework drainage issues and repave the parking lot, update the landscaping and maintain our campus in general. Ongoing needs are constant. Some problems can be anticipated while others pop up unexpectedly.

The 2020 committee decided to hold the Fall UNgathering this year in lieu of a real live gathering. How will it work? You will receive your invitation in the mail as usual shortly after Labor Day. You also will see notices in the bulletin and banners outdoors. As always, committee members will be in the Narthex after Masses the last weekend in September and the first two weekends in October to take your "reservation." This is to encourage you to make a donation despite the fact there will not be a live party. For a walk down memory lane and so those who have not yet attended a Fall Gathering can see how much fun it will be next year, you'll see a selection of photo boards of past Fall Gatherings and Tewksbury parties in the Narthex. Plans are underway for a short YouTube video to welcome you to the non-event on October 16 and listen to this year's speaker, School Principal Holly Lake. Alas, we will miss our usual wonderful musical entertainment, but we will hold the Student Essay Contest.

Event chairs **Mark** and **Maureen Norton** and co-chairs **Brian** and **Monica Reeder** hope that parishioners will support the cause as generously as in past years. According to the event chairs, "A primary example of what the maintenance fund provides is reconfiguring the school entrance this summer to provide greater student safety. We are confident our community will continue to support the maintenance fund with giving hearts to cover this improvement and other needs that will arise."

Fr. Troy added, "We pray our people remain gathered in spirit as we ungather this fall."

The Fall Gathering committee is committed to making the best of a bad situation by still raising needed funds for campus maintenance. Immaculate Heart of Mary parishioners have always been generous and we hope you'll get into the spirit by making a contribution to this important parish fund. While it's regrettable that we will NOT see you on October 16, please make your presence and support known through your generous donation. Thank you!

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY *Fall Un-Gathering*

**The Fall Gathering Committee would
like to invite you to stay at home
and support our parish!**

Funds raised support the IHM Parish
Maintenance Fund to aid in the ongoing
repair, restoration, and renewal of our campus.

Donations can be made with the enclosed card,
or online at ihmparish.ejoinme.org/2020fallgathering

We understand that this pandemic has burdened many of our homes financially. Unfortunately, our parish home has been no different. Although we will not be able to celebrate in person this year, we can offer IHM the stability it needs to properly care for its buildings and grounds. We humbly ask each parishioner to donate as generously as they are able.

Please contact the Fall Gathering Committee with any questions.
fallgathering@ihmparish.com

*Thank you in advance for
your generosity.*

EVENT CO-CHAIRS

Mark and Maureen Norton 616.322.8448
Bryan and Monica Reeder 616.634.4902



FALL SESSION OF MEN'S MINISTRY BEGINS

by: Paul Dymowski

*A friend is a friend at all times,
and a brother is born for a time
of adversity.*

— Proverbs 17:17

Studies show that modern men lack authentic male friendships. Aristotle categorized three types of friendships: utility, amusement and virtuous. Utility and amusement are not bad types of friendships, but they often lack quality and are usually short lived. These friendships easily fall apart as life circumstances change. The rarest friendships today are the ones based on support and accountability in leading a virtuous life, a brotherhood where men challenge each other to grow in their relationship with Jesus and to be the best version of themselves.

When men have a virtuous friendship, they are brothers in Christ and this gives them what their hearts are restless for, to be in friendship with Jesus. As Jesus said to the apostles, "No longer do I call you servants. For the servant does not know what the Master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15).

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish has been blessed with a strong Men's Ministry program for many years. During this time of uncertainty and fear, IHM Men's Ministry is here to help restore hope and keep the faith flourishing. As we launch the program this September, it will be a time for men to grow in virtue together in order to become the men, husbands and fathers we are called to be.

Given COVID-19 restrictions, we are preparing to start this year with virtual sessions. *That Man Is You (TMIY)* has provided the resources for virtual sessions and has made it easy for us to transition to in-person sessions once health restrictions are lifted. This year's program promises to be engaging and challenging, with several different speakers focusing on the theme *The Fight of Faith*.

That Man Is You begins on Friday, September 18 at 6:30 a.m. Please email mensministry@ihmparish.com for more information and to sign up.

2020-'21 Men's Ministry Core Team

Eric Olivero
Mike Dunlap
Dave Iacopelli
Kim Eadie
Paul Bunce
Dave Snyder
Andrew Walsh

Brett Huffman
John MacKenzie
Dan Heintz
Kevin Solt
Rob Hamly
Joel Arends
Paul Dymowski



Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Fruitfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control

by Karen Weber

The title above pretty much sums up the qualities of our newly consecrated religious. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit ripened this summer and Immaculate Heart of Mary was blessed with three of our own giving their lives to the service of God and His Church. Hundreds of thousands of prayers, over many years, have been said at the end of masses and in our beautiful adoration chapel for our youth to answer God's call to holiness.

On June 6, 2020, **Dominic Couturier** was ordained a priest of Jesus Christ at the Cathedral of St. Andrew. Father Dominic came to us 13 years ago, with his cousin, Fr. Troy, and found a home. He worked in his family's business and with our youth ministry program before deciding to enter Mundelein Seminary. While we have had men join other religious orders (Oblates, Holy Cross, Franciscans), Father Dominic is the FIRST diocesan priest from our parish.

On July 22, 2020, **Sister Peter Grace (Kelly) Weber** professed Final Vows with the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Sister spent the past eight years, after graduating from the University of Notre Dame, preparing to give a total gift of herself to her bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Modeling herself after the fruitful virginity of the Blessed Mother, she has become a spiritual mother to her high school students, as well as their English teacher.

On August 2, 2020, **Sister Mary Rose Thomas (Natalie) Weighner** took First Vows with the Franciscan Sisters of the Martyr Saint George in Alton, Illinois. Since its founding in 1869, this order lives by the Franciscan spirit of obedience to God's will as they seek to serve the poor and needy. Sr. M. Rose Thomas was attracted to the order, after graduating from Creighton University and working as a Mayo Clinic nurse, because of their nursing ministry.

Celibacy for the Kingdom is grossly misunderstood in our world. It is not a rejection of the vocation of marriage, but a YES to live as a visible icon on earth of the heavenly marriage awaiting us with Christ, our Bridegroom. Starting with God's call to them, their YES was a total gift of self so as to witness to the world the joy of coming to know, love and serve God. I was privileged to attend all three of these extraordinary Masses and their smiling faces told the beautiful story of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit available to us all.

Rejoice and be glad...and keep praying for vocations!



Left: Fr. Troy with the newly ordained Fr. Dominic and seminarians, Peter Wasinski, Max Farrell and David Jameson.



Right Childhood friends Sr. Rose Thomas and Sr. Peter Grace become sisters in Christ.

SPOTLIGHT **TUESDAY MORNING PRAYER GROUP**

by: Sue Jakubowski

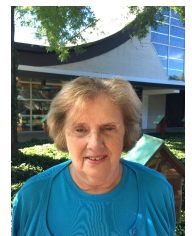
The world has changed quite a bit since 1973. But one consistent line of connection across the past 47 years has been IHM's Tuesday morning prayer group, which began to meet regularly that year to pray together a novena to Our Lady of Hope. A former IHM priest was instrumental in introducing this devotion to our parish, and since then, this group's faithfulness to prayer has undoubtedly brought many graces to our parish community. The novena emphasizes Mary's message of "hope through prayer and the cross." In addition to the novena, the women also pray for their own intentions as well as on behalf of our entire church. Included are prayers to the Holy Spirit, St. Michael, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the Memorare; and prayers for vocations, life, unity, and world leaders. Although the format has changed over the years, the group's weekly meetings are a vital force in our parish, as the women can here attest:



Ruth Tierney: Ruth is one of the original members of the group and has continuously participated. She recalls having been on a retreat at Marywood and feeling the promptings of the Holy Spirit to do something. When Fr. Joyce encouraged a group of women to form and pray, Ruth was all in. She describes the group as a good place to form holy friendships.



Jackie Isherwood: Unlike Ruth, Jackie is a newcomer to the prayer group, but she recognizes how God is working within it. She finds it to be very welcoming, and she is grateful for the members' friendliness. Jackie remarked they are willing to help each other in any way, and she encourages anyone to join. She promises you will "feel" how prayerful and devoted the group is.



Ardis Veneklase: Ardis is a 30-year member of the group. She especially likes the time they spend on petitions and thanksgiving for the many favors granted. She noted there is great camaraderie among the women and never a shortage of things to say. She has met many wonderful new friends over the years and is thankful that Our Lord drew her into the group.



Bernadette Mack: Bernadette joined in 1999 after being invited by **Phyllis Kozminski**. When she joined, many faces were new to her, but she has since developed many deep friendships and is very thankful to be part of it. She appreciates how important the confidentiality aspect is—you're free to pray and discuss anything. Bernie emphasizes that you never know where your prayers impact others; the ripple effect of prayer is wonderful to contemplate.



Lou Simpson: Lou first joined in 2007 but had to step aside when she needed to help care for her husband. She rejoined the group in 2013 at the prompting of **Anne Copps** and likes the community aspect of the prayer. She has very much missed the regular meetings of the prayer group during the pandemic, as the unity of praying together is something that is irreplaceable.

It will be exciting to see what blessings the group's prayers will bring for their next 50 years of meetings! The ladies welcome newcomers, especially seniors seeking to deepen their prayer life and broaden their community. If interested, contact Ruth Tierney at 281-7641 or Bernadette Mack at 245-7382.

Parish Bulletin Board

Catholic Faith Formation This Fall

Theme: “Pray, Hope and Don’t Worry” —Padre Pio

Pray: Our focus is to encourage families to make prayer time a part of their daily lives, something they look forward to and enjoy doing together.

Hope: This year, Faith Formation will be taught using a homeschool model. Families register, are given the necessary materials, and work through them at home. We will return to face-to-face instruction as soon as we are able per the guidelines of the state and diocese for Covid-19. The Faith Formation staff and catechists will be available to answer your questions and assist in any way possible.

Don’t Worry: Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati said, “Jesus is with me, I have nothing to fear.” Pope St. John Paul II said, “Be not Afraid.” Grace will abound in your efforts to bring your family closer to Christ!

This year gives us the opportunity to grow and learn new ways to accomplish our theme goals. Let us pray for our Faith Formation program and for the families in their efforts as we navigate these new experiences.

PARISH STAFF CHANGES

A few staff changes were made over the summer months.

Prisilla Baldwin retired from her post as Pastoral Associate to tackle full-time grandmotherhood. We wish her the best of luck and happiness in this next phase of her life.

Stefanie Iwan, former Youth Minister, moved into Prisilla’s former role as Pastoral Associate. We send Stefanie our good wishes on her new position, as well.

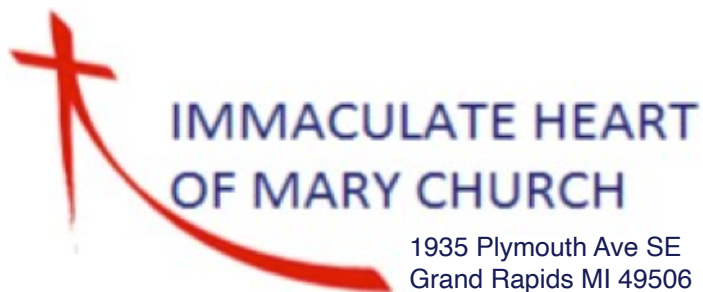
John Maxwell is our new Director of Youth Ministry. John said, “I moved here from San Diego, California in late July. Since graduating from the eighth grade, I volunteered and worked in my home parish’s youth ministry program. For the past two years I have been in the San Diego Seminary and worked as a missionary in the Bronx, New York. I am excited to be in Grand Rapids—even though you have an “actual” winter—and work with the wonderful youth in our parish. Check the IHM YM website for all the updates and news as we return to our “new normal.” Best wishes to John!

MEMORABILIA WANTED

COVID-19 Stay Home, Stay Safe idea: self-isolation can be boring! Why not clean out your attic, basement, closets and drawers? **Contact Deb** if you unearth any IHM parish or school memories to donate to the Archives. Anything and everything goes—photos, programs, logo clothing and uniforms, trophies, rosters, report cards, etc.

Deb Moore, Parish Historian,
490-2652 or djbmoore@comcast.net





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UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 13 Parish Picnic - *Cancelled*
- 18 Men's Ministry begins, 6:30 am
- 26 Life/Edge Night Parent Night Meeting, 7-8:30 pm
- 26 Life Night begins
- 27 Faith Formation Virtual Kickoff
- 30 Edge Night begins

OCTOBER

- 11 St. Vincent dePaul Breakfast - *Tentative*
- Mid-Fall Virtual Ministry Fair - *Watch the bulletin for more details*
- 16 Fall UNGathering

NOVEMBER

- 26 Thanksgiving Day Mass
- 25 Christmas Day Mass @10:00 am

DECEMBER

- 24 Christmas Eve Masses @4:00 & 10:30 pm
- 25 Christmas Day Mass @ 10:00 am

IF YOU ENJOY READING THE HEARTBEAT, your help would be appreciated. We are in serious need of writers (ages 16 and up) as well as story ideas. For example, perhaps your group or project could use some advanced notice of an activity or is looking to increase its participation. For either, contact Deb Moore at djbmoore@comcast.net.



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Did you know IHM has a Facebook page? Please "like us" on [Immaculate Heart of Mary - Grand Rapids](#) and follow all of our updates, postings and communications. We are just a click away!



Download the MyParish app at no cost to your IOS or mobile device by going to the App Store or iTunes. Keep in touch all week with IHM updates, news, events and more. It's a great faith-building resource.