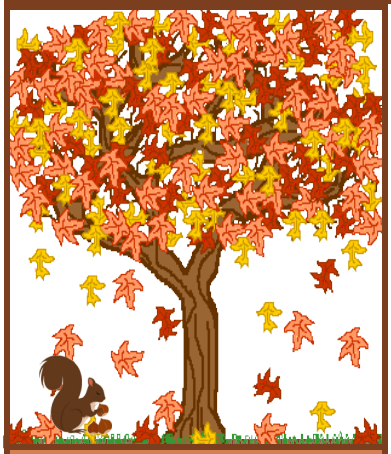
Autumn

SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Volume 12 Issue 1



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I love autumn
the one season
of the year
that God seemed
to have put there
just for the
beauty of it.

Lee Maynard

Autumn Blessings

The season of Autumn presents numerous opportunities for us to praise God. It is a time of the year when our senses are inundated with the sites, sounds, and smells of the season. It is also the time of year when, after we've enjoyed the more relaxed summer schedule, life begins to gear up once again. Often the temptation is to get so involved in life's daily activities that we miss the beauty God invites us to behold during this amazing season.

What might God be saying to us throughout this season of Autumn? It seems to be a time which calls us to be more introspective and reflective. The vibrant colors of the season stop us in our tracks. The colors of orange, red, yellow, green, and brown are everywhere on trees, pumpkin patches, apple orchards, fields and gardens complete with a bountiful harvest. Cars stopped on the side of the road to take in the brilliance of the countryside is a familiar site. Isn't it true that we find ourselves wanting to simply stay in the moment? It seems as though God is trying to get our attention and our spirits respond.

Autumn brings that day when light and darkness are balanced. Once again God is showing us that when life is balanced, peace abides. Take notice of the night sky during this season. The stars appear to be shining more brightly, like diamonds glistening in the darkness. Spending time gazing at the night sky brings a peacefulness to the soul. Percy Bysshe Shelly says "There is a harmony in Autumn and a luster in its sky, which through the summer is not heard or seen." Thus we celebrate peace and harmony found in the "luster in its sky" another Autumn blessing.

God is always bestowing blessings upon us , we simply need to look beyond the obvious to the deeper meaning found in the mystery of all of creation. May God's blessings fall upon you like the leaves of Autumn!

Count Your Blessings!

Missionary Disciples desire to know Jesus and to make Him known to others

Back Row: Sr. Noël Chabanel Hentz SSJ, Sandra McKee, Patrick Bates, Nancy Keefe, Rose VanEpps, Julie Gould, Sr. Norma Bryant SSJ, Sr. Angelica Rebello SCC, Patricia Spaziani, Tamara Miller.

Seated: David Liscomb, Amanda Morgan, Cathy Chirico, Alice Busler, Sr. Diane Marie Ulsamer SSJ, Colleen Schraenkler.

Absent: Sarah Schantz, Anita Henry, Nancy Kall, Laura Johnson, and Nicole Alman

We are blessed to have twenty-one men and women who have accepted the call to be Missionary Disciples in our Religious Education Program for People with Disabilities. These catechists have committed themselves to serve the Lord, ready to spread the Gospel message of love to the people who participate in our program.

Congratulations to Julie Gould and Patrick Bates who completed the Diocesan Growth in Faith Program and are now Certified Catechists. Patricia Spaziani and Tammy Miller received a Certificate of Recognition for nearly completing the course. These four catechists were honored at the Diocesan Celebrate Christ Conference in Lake Placid on October 21, 2017.

Annual Appeal Summer & Fall Donations

We appreciate your support!

Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Mills	*$40*	
Mr. and Mrs. James Lafferty	*$25*	
Mr. Joseph Coniglio	*$300*	*in memory of Salvatore & Dolores Coniglio*
Mr. Kenneth Baker	*$25*	*in memory of Wilma Baker*
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Butler	*$50*	
Anonymous Donor	*$400*	
Dr. and Mrs. Ron Perciaccante	*$20*	
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bruno	*$25*	*in memory of Patty Bryant*
Mrs. Tammy Miller	*$100*	*in memory of Madden Todd and Lyle Miller*

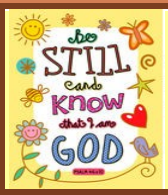
Special Religious Education Program
Watertown, New York

Mission Statement

Jesus' mission on earth was all-inclusive. He desired his Father's love be known and experienced by all.

The Religious Education Program for People with Disabilities provides spiritual enrichment and opportunities for personal growth which nurture their steadfast faith in God.

Revised in June 2016 by the Watertown Catechetical Board



Praying the Psalms

This year the participants in the Friends of Jesus and the Interfaith programs will be studying eighteen of the one hundred and fifty psalms in the Book of Psalms. Each time we meet we will read a particular psalm and discuss the particular theme and lessons of the psalm. To help us grow in our relationship with Jesus, we will memorize at least one line which we can use as a short prayer.

Our goal is to learn how to use the psalms as another form of prayer. The first verse that we memorized was from psalm 107:1 "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever." This verse is a prayer of praise and thanksgiving. We talked about the many things that we experience in our world for which we could thank God. It is inspiring to listen to the participants pray with such sincere hearts. They are aware of what is happening in the world and realize how good God is to His people. One participant pointed out that even though bad things have happened recently, good people have offered to help people they don't even know.

It is our hope that by learning a few key verses from the psalms, our participants will grow in their relationship with the Lord. Each small group has made a Psalm Box which is placed in the center of their group circle. When they gather after the large group session, the psalm verse for the lesson is recited in a variety of ways and then placed in the Psalm Box. Each week the verses will be pulled out of the box and used as the opening prayer.

After only having four lessons, the participants are able to pray the four verses they have learned. If someone begins the first few words the entire group chimes in to complete the verse. Our goal is to help the participants see that using the psalms for prayer can draw us closer to God and help us to understand His deep love for each one of us.

Some of the participants and staff of the Friends of Jesus Program

Watertown Catechetical Board Members

2017-2018

President

Mr. Patrick Henry –OLSH

Vice President

Mrs, Sandie Butler—St. Patrick's

Pastors

Msgr. Robert Aucoin

Rev. Steve Murray

Rev. Jonas Tandayu, MSC

Program Coordinator

Sr. Diane Marie Ulsamer SSJ

Committee Chairperson

Alice Busler

Religious Education Coordinators

Holy Family

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St. Anthony's

Sr. Sahayarani Selvaraj SCC

St. Patrick's

Elizabeth Bamann

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Sr. Constance Marie Sylver SSJ

Parish Representatives

Sandie Butler—St. Patrick's

Katie DeMarse—Holy Family

Randy Belina—St. Anthony's

Patrick Henry—OLSH

Secretary

Sr. Noël Chabanel Hentz SSJ

Calling Upon The Holy Spirit

Each year we begin our program by calling upon the Holy Spirit to help us grow closer to Jesus. The Friends of Jesus program begins with the Liturgy. This year Father Das was the celebrant.

The participants served as lectors, altar servers, and bearers of the gifts. I think Father Das was impressed with the level of prayerful participation from the members of this very enthusiastic faith community.

The Interfaith group also starts their program with a special Prayer Service. Several of the participants read from the scriptures and offered prayers of intercession. Everyone lifted their voices in song, giving praise to God.

At the end of our time of prayer the participants gathered in their small groups and made "Praise God" banners. Everyone went home with a banner that could be displayed as a reminder to always praise God for the many blessings received every day.

God Gives us Reason to Rejoice

Recently we studied Psalm 5 and the group activity was to reflect on the meaning of verse 11. Throughout this year's study of the psalms we are all going to try to memorize at least one verse of every psalm we study. To help the participants memorize Psalm 5:11 we engaged them in a group activity. Each group had to think about what we have to rejoice about and complete an acrostic using the word REJOICE. Below you can read what the various groups created.

Relax in
Every
Joy
Offered
In
Christ
Eternally

Reconciliation
Everlasting Love
Joyfulness
Overflowing kindness
Inspiration
Caring
Eternal Forgiveness

Remember to see God's goodness.
Every morning should begin with prayer.
Jesus saves us from the evil of sin.
Obeying God's will brings happiness.
I choose God to protect and lead me.
Cherish the love that others give.
Every night share your joys with God.

Let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them sing joyful praises forever.

Rising every morning to pray
Exult or praise unto the Lord
Judge no one, let God be the judge
Open your heart to the Lord
It is good to worship, praise, and rejoice in the Lord
Conform to God's will, not your own
Expect God to protect you with His shield of love.

Rejoice in the Lord
Everyone has limitations
Jesus is our Father
Oh God, hear my prayers
Imagine life without God
Crying to God for help is ok
Enemies can't defeat us if we believe God is with us

Fundraising Committee

Left to Right: Sandy Petrillose, Michael and Cathy Deline, Katie DeMarse, Theresa Male, Jacob Johnson, Mary Margaret Henry, Sister Diane Marie Ulsamer SSJ and Elaine Grant **Absent:** Sarah Schantz, Patrick Henry, Cindy Bufalini, Alice Busler, and Steve Petrillose

What a great group of volunteers! The members of this committee have met several times this summer to plan the fifth annual Fall Auction. Every member of the committee has a specific task to accomplish before the event on November 4th. Cathy Deline and Mary Henry are the co-chairs of the auction. Together they do a terrific job organizing every detail. Cathy and Mike Deline are the contact persons for donations. They travel all over the city picking up donated items that are too large for people to bring to us. Mary is in charge of the kitchen and, believe me, no one should leave the event hungry! She has even added Jo Norris' famous fried dough to the menu. Katie DeMarse is the ticket sale organizer. She spends most of her summer numbering and grouping tickets. Katie and her family also donate the lottery tree for the raffle. Sister Diane designs the poster and Sandy Petrillose has them printed at Production Unlimited. Everyone on the committee solicits the various businesses around the area for donations. Although Sister Noël Chabanel is not technically a member of the committee, she does many task around the office to help with the preparations for the big night.

Once again this year Jake Johnson is donating a week's stay at his island home on the St. Lawrence River. The going bid last year was $2,500 for the week. Mr. Ron Monnat and Nancy Henry both wanted the island, so Jake gave up two weeks. If you are interested in bidding on the island you may want to ask Ron and Nancy what their island experience was like.

In addition to the island, Jake is also going to donate a $1,500 gift certificate from his Landscaping Business or Garden Center. Presently we are selling tickets for this raffle item. The tickets are $5.00 and can be purchase from Sarah Schantz at the business office at St. Patrick's parish or you can get tickets from Sister Diane at the Watertown Catechetical Office in the Greystone Building at 1 Sterling Place.

On behalf of the board and the participants of the Special Religious Education program, I would like to thank all of the members of this committee. Their hard work enables us to provide the extra social events, art materials, and yearly trip for the participants. We have a great program because there are many benefactors who believe in our people with disabilities. Many thanks to all those who support the well-being of our people and this program.

Come join the fun!

Fall Auction

Benefit to Support People with Disabilities

Saturday, November 4, 2017

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Gym
320 West Lynde St.
Watertown, NY

Featuring: Auctioneer Mel Busler

Doors Open 11:30AM
Early Bird Preview & Ticket Sales
Food & Drinks Available for Sale
Fried Dough - Jo Norris' Recipe!
Children's Auction 6:00PM
Live Auction Begins 6:30PM

Yum, the best ever!

Live Auction

New or Never Been Used Items
Do you have an item you would like to donate to the live auction? Call Mike and Cathy Deline 782-4781 or the WCB office 782-0030.

22 inch Scarlett O'Hara collectable doll with display case

Make a bid on a 2018 membership at the Willowbrook Golf Club

Make a bid for a week's vacation on an island in the Saint Lawrence River

Antique oak drop leaf desk in great condition

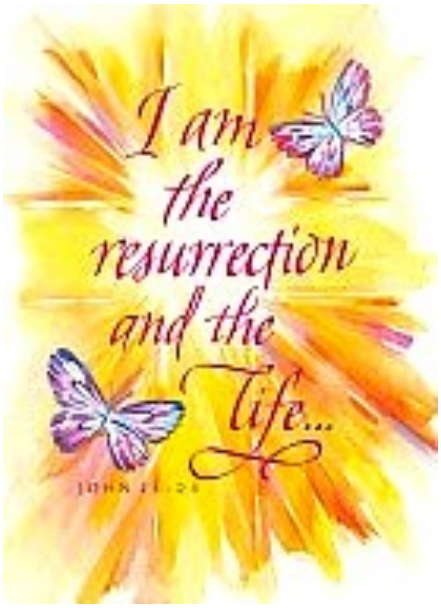
Silent Auction

50 or more Theme Baskets and Gift Certificates

Raffles

Lottery Ticket Tree and Money Cake

In Memory of…



Marilyn K. Adams

May 5, 1924 – October 8, 2017

Loretta A. Erdner

September 18, 1934 – October 8, 2017

The heavens were blessed on October 8, 2017 when God called two exceptional ladies home. Marilyn and Loretta were both active members of the Special Religious Education community. I was fortunate to have known both of these women. As I reflected on my encounters with Marilyn and Loretta, I simply felt blessed to have known them. Both Marilyn and Loretta were gentle, loving, and deeply faith-filled women. They loved the Lord and had a fervent desire to share His love with others.

Marilyn will be remembered for her infectious smile and tenacious zest for life. Very little prevented Marilyn from having a good day. She will best be known for being a faithful advocate for people with disabilities: an active member of the Special Religious Education program, a weekly Interfaith participant with her daughter Martha, a volunteer on the Special Education Committee from 2006-2012, and a reliable helper with weekly sessions and special social events. In addition, she was one of the co-founders of the JRC program. Marilyn was my inspiration during the Interfaith sessions on Tuesday nights. I could always count on her words of encouragement and affirmation. Her beautiful smile, deep faith, infectious spirit, and zest for life will truly be missed.

Whenever I was in the presence of Loretta, I always felt an indescribable peace. Loretta's personality overflowed with gentleness, kindness, and a loving demeanor. Her love for the Lord was deep and her faith strong. Sharing her faith and love of the Lord was a huge part of her life.

Loretta was actively involved in the early formation of the Special Education Program. She served on the Watertown Catechetical Board from 1974-77 took a short break, returned in 1986 –1994 and again in 2004-2006. Loretta and Joseph Erdner continued their support of people with disabilities as benefactors by contributing to our annual appeal.

I pray that Marilyn and Loretta will now enjoy their eternal reward. We will all miss these two exceptionally good and faithful servants of the Lord who have touched our hearts with their loving and gentle spirits.