

St. Francis Solanus

NEWSLETTER

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An Inside Look at **Austin's Army** *Banding Together for Parish and School Maintenance*

Fr. Austin Albers, a long-time priest at St. Francis Solanus, had an idea to help the parish save money. Instead of paying outside people to come in to fix things, paint, and other needs, why not form an "army"? That army, Austin's Army, has been together for many years, meeting at 8 a.m. each Monday to start their work.

Ed Zanger has been a member of Austin's Army for about eight years. He serves alongside more than 10 others, with Tom Rakers as the longest-serving member at 24 years. Tom Freese has served with the group for about 20 years. Joe Bernhardt is a second-generation member after his father, Carl Bernhardt, a longtime member, passed away.

"I heard some guys talking about it, so I decided to get involved," Ed says. "I am sure glad I did."

Ed was a professional painter, retiring about eight years ago. He decided, at that time, that he would use his talents at St. Francis Solanus.

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Austin's Army has been together for many years. Then members meet at 8 a.m. each Monday to start their work.



Summer Stewardship:

Sharing Time, Talent, and Treasure Away from Home

As summer approaches, many of us look forward to well-deserved vacations and time away from our daily routines. It's a time for rest, relaxation, and rejuvenation. However, we are called to live out our faith not only in our familiar surroundings but also when we're away from home. The concept of stewardship, which emphasizes sharing our time, talent, and treasure, remains a guiding principle that we can practice and uphold during the summer months.

Stewardship is not bound by location or time. It is a way of life that extends to all aspects of our existence, including our vacations and summer adventures. This concept encourages us to be mindful of our blessings and to share them in gratitude to God. Here's how we can continue to practice stewardship during the summer:

Sharing Time

Even while on vacation, we can dedicate time to our faith. Attend Mass at local churches or parishes in the places you visit (go to www.masstimes.org to find a church and Mass times anywhere). Participating in the Eucharist is a beautiful way to maintain your spiritual connection and to be part of different faith communities.

Sharing Talent

Our unique talents can be shared, even while on vacation. If you have musical skills, offer to sing, or play an instrument during Mass. If you have teaching abilities, volunteer to lead a Bible study or faith formation session in the local parish you're visiting. Your talents can enrich the faith experiences of others.

Sharing Treasure

Your financial contributions to the Church should not be limited to your home parish. Consider

sharing your treasure through the offertory at the parishes you visit during your travels. But don't forget to uphold your stewardship of treasure commitment to your home parish, even while you are away (you can register for electronic giving or mail your envelopes in during your travels). Your financial support helps maintain the churches and supports their ministries.

Engaging in Acts of Charity

While on vacation, look for opportunities to engage in acts of charity. This might involve volunteering at local food banks, shelters, or other charitable organizations. Your efforts to help those in need reflect the Catholic principles of stewardship.

Fostering Family and Community Prayer

Summer vacations often provide quality family time. Use this opportunity to foster family prayer and reflection. Gather for daily prayers, Bible readings, or discussions about your faith. Encourage and support one another in living out your Catholic values.

Promoting Evangelization

Use your summer travels to spread the Good News. Share your faith and engage in conversations with fellow travelers. You may have the opportunity to answer questions, share your experiences, and offer a positive witness to the Catholic faith.

Summer can be a time of spiritual growth, service, and witness. By practicing stewardship during our summer vacations, we remain committed to our faith, contribute to the Church's mission, and fulfill our call to be good stewards of God's gifts. Whether near or far, home or away, stewardship is a timeless and universal principle that enriches our lives and the lives of others.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Celebrating Our Fathers as ROLE MODELS IN THE FAITH this Month

Dear Parishioners,

As we approach Father's Day, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the significance of this day for our Catholic community. Father's Day is not just a secular holiday for us; it holds deep spiritual and moral importance, reminding us of the crucial role that fathers play in our families and in our faith.

In the Catholic tradition, we are called to honor our fathers and mothers as one of the Ten Commandments teaches us. It is a commandment that carries profound spiritual implications. Honoring our fathers is a reflection of our respect and love for the authority and guidance they provide within our families. It is a way of showing gratitude for their sacrifices, their love, and their unwavering support throughout our lives.

Fathers set a powerful example in the Catholic faith for their children. Just as God the Father is a model of perfect love and guidance for us, earthly fathers are called to reflect this divine love in their families. By nurturing and guiding their children with love, faith, and moral values, fathers become living witnesses to the teachings of Christ. They play a pivotal role in shaping the spiritual journey of their children, instilling in them the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.

Our faith reminds us that fathers are called to be the spiritual leaders of their families, creating a foundation of love and faith upon which their children can build their own relationships with God. They are entrusted with the responsibility of passing on



the traditions and values of our Catholic faith, ensuring that the flame of faith continues to burn brightly in the hearts of the next generation.

On this Father's Day, let us remember to pray for all fathers, both living and deceased, within our parish community and beyond. Let us express our gratitude for their love, their sacrifices, and their unwavering dedication to their families. Let us also pray for those who may have struggled in their role as fathers, that

they may find the strength and guidance to become the fathers that God intended them to be.

It is a day for us to offer our love and appreciation to our earthly fathers while also recognizing the great example set by our Heavenly Father. As we honor our fathers, we honor God's plan for the family and the vital role fathers play in nurturing faith, love, and moral values within our homes.

I encourage all of you to spend this Father's Day reflecting on the importance of fathers in our lives and in our faith. Let us celebrate their love, cherish their guidance, and pray for their well-being. May God bless all fathers with the strength and wisdom to continue being the spiritual leaders and loving role models our families need.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Steven Arisman".

Fr. Steven Arisman, Pastor

St. Francis Solanus

BRINGING THE *Celebration of the Mass* *Parish Stewards Enjoy Ta*

On Thursday mornings at 10 a.m., Bobbi Talken and a handful of volunteers are at Good Samaritan Home for Holy Mass. Good Samaritan Home is a facility that holds various levels of care from independent living to rehab to assisted living and full nursing home care.

"They have all phases of care," Bobbi says. "They have an Alzheimer's unit, all different stages of illness. We bring Mass to them."

The group shows up early to get the Catholic residents to the Social Hall for Mass.

"We go at about 9:30 a.m.," Bobbi says. "The volunteers get the residents. Most of them are in wheelchairs, or we walk with them. I set up the altar. We make sure we have enough hosts for however many people are there. It's different every week. Some have appointments and some just don't feel that well that day."

There are about 10 volunteers, and Bobbi is the contact for them.

"Everybody's not always there," she says. "Sometimes they're sick or they go on vacation. They let me know if they're not going to be there. We have certain people who do certain things. We have a reader who reads the Epistles. If she can't be there, I need to find somebody else."

Volunteering with the Good Samaritan Mass group is more



(Front row, from left) Judy Duesterhaus, Jim Smith, Darlene Mayes, Bobbi Talken, Edna Trimble, Allen Jochem; (back row, from left) Steve Lowenberg, John Lammers, Clara Schmidt, Jayne Lammers, Maureen Makarewicz

than attending Mass or taking residents down to the hall.

"It's a very important ministry," Bobbi says. "Just taking the residents to Mass is stewardship. They're glad to go to Mass. I don't know what would happen if it weren't for the volunteers to take them, and take them back to their rooms afterwards. They get Holy Communion. Most of them don't get to go out to their home church. This is their only chance to receive Holy Communion."

There is a bit of work involved, though — it's not just attending Mass.

"There is a lot of walking going to get the residents," Bobbi says. "Good Samaritan

Home is a big home, sprawled out. It's not an easy job, but it's a fulfilling job."

Bobbi knows from personal experience how special this ministry is.

"My mother-in-law was in the nursing home for 12 years," she says. "I know how important it was to her. I know how important it is to these people. To get to go to Mass and receive Holy Communion is very important."

The residents receive assistance if needed during Mass. Fr. Thomas Donovan from St. Anthony of Padua Parish celebrates this Mass.

"Some of them can't hear," Bobbi says. "We have hearing

Mass TO Good Samaritan Home

Bringing Residents to Liturgy

devices that they can clip on their ears to hear. We pass out missals so they can follow along with Father. He can give Reconciliation to any resident who wants that. It's such a blessing for so many people.

"If I'm ever in a nursing home, I hope I have someone to take me to Mass somewhere, wherever it happens to be, and have a priest who can give me Holy Communion," she adds.

Serving the residents at Good Samaritan Home

not only blesses the residents, but also the volunteers.

"I think for a lot of us, it's an opportunity to go to Mass another day," Bobbi says. "It's a way to make people feel loved and cared for. We can do that once a week and take them to Mass. There are so many people in nursing homes who don't have any family close by. They come when they can, but they can't come routinely and do this sort of thing. I think it's just in your heart."

To serve with this ministry, contact Bobbi Talken at 217-223-4788 or rtalken57@gmail.com, or Roger and Phyllis Knuffman at 217-223-9844 or rknuffman@att.net.

An Inside Look at Austin's Army *continued from front cover*

When the other Austin's Army members learned of his professional experience, they were excited to add his skills to the team. The men bring various skills, from an electrician to a plumber and a woodworker.

The men usually work until about noon, sometimes gathering on other days to complete larger or more critical projects. The schoolteachers, principal, and janitors write down their needs, and Austin's Army is there to help. In the summer, the list of projects they need to tackle gets longer.

"It feels good to give of our time to save the parish money," Ed says.

For Ed, the fellowship is a significant benefit of Austin's Army. He enjoys spending time with the other members, with the shared goal of completing projects. The men take breaks when they want and work for as long as they wish. They've done

everything from painting lines on the parking lot to building an office in the gymnasium. Once per month, they load and deliver food shelf items. They've laid brick and painted bedrooms in the rectory — the list goes on and on.

"Fr. Austin started this to save the parish and school money, and we are still doing that," Ed says. "Most members are retired, and we enjoy using our skills to benefit the parish and school."

Ed enjoys seeing the kids at the school and appreciates that they are always so friendly to the Austin's Army members. In addition to his work with Austin's Army, Ed is a member of the Holy Name Society. He also enjoys the fellowship of this group, including the Ash Wednesday Fish Fry, Palm Sunday Chicken Dinner, and the Pancake and Sausage Breakfast.

To get involved in Austin's Army, contact Ed Zanger at 217-430-9236 or bigedzanger@comcast.net.

St. Francis Solanus

HABEMUS PAPAM: POPE LEO XIV

A Faithful Steward for a New Chapter in the Church



The Catholic Church entered a new chapter on May 8 with the election of Pope Leo XIV — formerly Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, O.S.A. — as the 267th successor to St. Peter. A Chicago native and member of the Augustinian order, Pope Leo XIV is now the first American pope in the Church's history. His election is a powerful reminder of the Church's global reach and the vital role of the Americas in its future.

He follows Pope Francis, who died in April after more than 11 years as our Holy Father. Pope Francis made a lasting mark through his deep concern for the poor and marginalized and his call for a "Church that goes out." His papacy inspired many, as he pushed boundaries around certain pastoral and doctrinal issues.

While Pope Leo shares Pope Francis' pastoral

heart, Leo XIV may be more traditional in his approach, and many see his election as a joining of the Church's desire to reaffirm timeless truths and extend mercy in a world that needs both.

Pope Leo's background tells a story of missionary zeal and service. He spent years in Peru, walking with the people, building community, and forming future priests. He knows the importance of meeting people where they are, and will hopefully demonstrate how truth and charity can go hand in hand.

His choice of the name "Leo" reflects inspiration from Pope Leo XIII, known for his teachings on social justice and the dignity of work. It's a name that signals a pope who wants to lead the Church with wisdom, courage, and deep concern for the common good.

For those of us committed to stewardship as a way of life, there's much to admire in our new Holy Father. From his years of missionary service to his humble leadership style, Pope Leo XIV has lived the call to stewardship — receiving God's gifts gratefully, nurturing them faithfully, and sharing them generously.

In one of his first public messages, he said, "The mission of the Church is Christ's, not ours. We are stewards, not owners." That simple statement gets to the heart of what stewardship is all about. It's not about control, but trust. It's about placing our time, gifts, and resources in God's hands and using them for His glory.

Pope Leo XIV is a reminder that living our faith fully — with truth, charity, and courage — is the best witness we can give in a divided world.

Let's pray for our new Holy Father as he begins this sacred mission. And let's follow his lead — living as good stewards, grounded in the Gospel, and ready to serve the Church and the world with joyful hearts.

The Holy Name Society

Men of the Parish Joyfully Providing Support to Our Church and School

Here at St. Francis Solanus, we have been so blessed to have the Holy Name Society supporting our parish and school for many years.

The Holy Name Society, which welcomes all men of the parish, seeks to provide financial assistance for the various needs of both the parish and school. This is done utilizing regular fundraisers and events throughout the year, including fish fries, the Palm Sunday chicken dinner, the Red, White, and Blue breakfast, as well as the Pancake and Sausage Breakfast every November. The money raised is then given away.

"There is always something needing to be purchased," says the Holy Name Society ministry leader, Mike Zanger. "You never know how much you'll make for a given event."

Recently, the ministry helped to fund around \$9,000 in plumbing needs for the parish and school with help from the Ladies of St. Francis Ministry. It also helped with the replacement of all the stools in the school. While the ministry has helped with some other community efforts as well, the majority of their support goes to the school and parish specifically.

As Mike notes, the ministry also sponsors Boy Scouts Troop 22 of the parish, and has helped donate to an Eagle Scout Project.

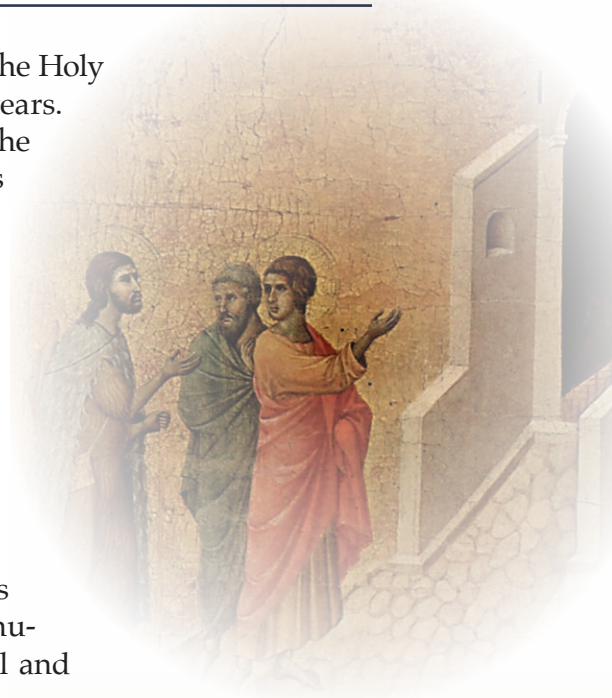
"We help them, and they help us," Mike says. "You never know what we're going to wind up giving money to and why, until somebody comes and asks."

Mike has been a member of the Holy Name Society since he joined the parish more than 35 years ago.

"I've been a member for a long, long time," he says. "I've seen a lot of things come and go. I've been involved because that's what you do when you belong to a church. If you're a member, I believe you should participate — physically help, not just in name only. It's part of being a member to be there and help when they need help."

The men gather for a meeting on the second Wednesday of every month at the Parish Center. The meetings are regularly advertised in the parish bulletin, and any man of the parish is invited to come out. With refreshments and a light meal during the meetings, it gives the members a chance to enjoy food and fellowship together while working on helping support the parish.

"We make great friendships amongst ourselves," Mike says. "We really enjoy being around each other."



*For more information about the Holy Name Society,
contact Mike Zanger at 217-257-7931 or mikezanger2@gmail.com.*

St. Francis Solanus

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How to Pray the Rosary with *Devotion and Purpose*

As Catholics, prayer is central to our spiritual journey, and the Rosary is one of the most cherished devotions. With its beads and meditative rhythm, the Rosary deepens our connection with God and helps us reflect on Jesus Christ's life. Here's how to pray the Rosary with purpose and devotion.

Prepare Your Heart: Quiet your mind and open your heart to God. Offer a prayer for guidance as you begin.
Start with the Sign of the Cross: Affirm your belief in the Holy Trinity, inviting God's presence.
Recite the Apostles' Creed: Reflect on this foundational statement of Catholic faith.
Pray the Our Father: As Jesus taught, acknowledge God as our loving Father and seek His will.
Meditate on the Mysteries: The Rosary's four sets of Mysteries — Joyful, Sorrowful,

Glorious, and Luminous — invite reflection on Christ's life. Contemplate their meaning as you pray each decade.
Recite the Hail Mary: Pray this on each bead, honoring Mary and seeking her intercession.
Conclude with the Glory Be: Praise the Holy Trinity and acknowledge God's glory.
End with the Hail Holy Queen: Ask Mary to guide you to her Son and intercede for your needs.
Closing Prayer: Express gratitude for this prayer time and ask for God's blessings.

The Rosary is a beautiful and powerful prayer that invites us to journey deeper into our faith and relationship with God. By following these steps and approaching the Rosary with reverence and devotion, may you experience the profound grace and blessings it offers in your life.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. • **Sunday:** 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m.

Weekday Mass: Monday - Friday, 6:30 a.m. • Tuesday - Thursday, 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 8:35 a.m. *during the school year* • Saturday, 8:00 a.m.

Confessions: Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. • Saturday, 8:30 a.m., 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.; **Exposition:** Wednesday, 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Holy Days of Obligation: Vigil 5:30 p.m.; **Holy Day:** 6:30 a.m., 8:35 a.m. on school days, 5:30 p.m.