

BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH

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LANDSCAPING MINISTRY MEMBERS SHARE TIME AND TALENTS TO BEAUTIFY PARISH GROUNDS

The members of our Blessed Sacrament Landscaping Ministry freely offer their time and talents to make sure our parish campus stays attractive and cared for. Scott Hiatt, Maintenance Director for Blessed Sacrament, coordinates the ministry that does everything from mowing grass to planting flowers to removing snow.

“We try to make all the areas look nice,” Scott says.

The parish owns mowers for cutting grass, as well as a tractor used to plow snow. One of the mowers can be converted to a snow plow if needed.

There are no organized ministry meetings for the six members, and the members arrange their work schedules on their own. Gathering workers is no problem, as those who cut the grass often will ask a friend to help, or the word will go out at church.

“For snow removal, it’s usually me and another fellow,” Scott says. “We just come out when we get a big snow.”

While winter does mean the work of snow removal, the ministry is much busier as the growing season arrives in early April and runs through October. At that point, leaf removal becomes part of the duties. In the meantime, the ministry members make sure the landscaping bushes are trimmed and the necessary fertilizer is applied. The work

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Last winter, the lawn was just beginning to turn green, but when it fills out our Landscaping Ministry keeps it cut and tidy.



Last winter, our Landscaping Ministry worked hard to keep our parking areas and walks safe.



PENTECOST:

A LESSON IN STEWARDSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP

Celebrated 50 days after Easter, Pentecost holds immense significance in the Catholic Church. It marks the day when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles and Mary, empowering them to spread the Gospel. This event is not only a cornerstone of the Church's liturgical calendar but also a powerful lesson in stewardship and discipleship.

Pentecost, often referred to as the “birthday of the Church,” underscores the central role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Catholic. The Holy Spirit is a gift from God, just as all our talents, time, and resources are. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and Mary reminds Catholics that their own lives should be characterized by the openness to receive and share the gifts God has bestowed upon them.

■ **SHARING THE GOOD NEWS:** One of the primary messages of Pentecost is the universal mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel to all nations. The apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke in languages they did not know, allowing them to communicate with people from various backgrounds. This moment teaches Catholics that the call to discipleship and stewardship is not exclusive but extends to all people. Catholics are called to be good stewards of the Good News, sharing it generously and inclusively with others, just as the apostles did.

■ **BEING EMPOWERED FOR SERVICE:** Pentecost is a reminder that the Holy Spirit empowers individuals for service. The apostles, who were once fearful and uncertain, were transformed into bold witnesses of Christ's teachings. This transformation illustrates the transformative power of the Holy Spirit and how it equips Catholics for service to the Church and the

world. Stewardship, in this context, entails using one's talents, time, and treasure to serve others and advance the mission of the Church.

■ **UNITY IN DIVERSITY:** The diverse crowd present at the first Pentecost, representing various nations and languages, highlights the theme of unity in diversity. Catholics are called to embrace and celebrate the diversity of God's creation while recognizing the common bond of faith. This is a vital aspect of stewardship — respecting the unique talents and backgrounds of each individual within the faith community and utilizing these differences to build a stronger, more vibrant Church.

■ **BEING RESPONSIVE TO GOD'S CALL:** Pentecost serves as a reminder of the apostles' responsiveness to God's call. They were willing to leave behind their old lives, filled with uncertainty and fear, and accept the mission to spread the Gospel. This act of responding to God's call is fundamental to discipleship, which encompasses a willingness to be generous with one's time, talents, and treasure in service to God and others.

Pentecost is a pivotal moment in the Catholic Church's history, and its significance extends beyond the historical event. It is a lesson in stewardship and discipleship, emphasizing the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the call to share the Good News, the empowerment for service, unity in diversity, and the responsive nature of discipleship. Catholics are reminded that, like the apostles, they are called to be good stewards of the gifts and blessings they have received, using them to serve and enrich the Church and the broader community. Pentecost serves as an annual reminder that the Holy Spirit continues to guide and empower Catholics on their journey of faith and stewardship.



A Letter From Our Pastor

CIRCLING BACK TO THE BASICS OF STEWARDSHIP

Dear Parishioners,

Our parish has been committed to living Stewardship as a Way of Life for a while now, and I thought this might be a good time to circle back to the basics. Perhaps some of you hear the word “stewardship” and are still not sure what to think.

Wherever you fall in your understanding of stewardship, you may find yourself wondering why you even need to participate in the first place, or how you can possibly give more of yourself to God when you are already pressed for time, energy, and money.

As you try to answer these questions, the first thing to remember is that God is the source of the “three Ts” of stewardship — our time, talents, and treasure. If it were not for God, we would not have any of these.

The second key element on which to focus is to consider how you are receiving His gifts. Do you feel entitled to all He has given you, and perhaps demand even more from Him? Or do you thank Him for His abundant

generosity, and as a sign of your gratefulness, return a portion back to Him?

God, in His infinite love and mercy for us, grants us these gifts during our time on Earth, even though we do not deserve them. As a sign of appreciation, we can give Him a return on His investment.

If God gives you a free Saturday afternoon, you could take your kids to Confession instead of watching TV, playing golf, or scrolling through your phone. If God gives you cooking skills, you could prepare a meal for a family with a newborn baby instead of going shopping.

Financial choices are applicable to stewards, as well. Do you waste your financial resources or take them for granted? Do you carefully think about what portion you should return to God?

However deep your understanding of stewardship, remember that it is not a rule or mandate — it is an invitation. No one is “forced” to live the life of a good steward. Our realization that God has blessed



us — wherever we are in our faith journey — should drive our yearning to give back of our time, talent, and treasure.

Out of love for our Creator — and to continue to grow in His love — we should desire to give stewardship, as a way of life, a try.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Martin Egging
Pastor

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MEET THE **REIN FAMILY**

FINDING HOME AND LIVING STEWARDSHIP DAILY

The Rein family has a long history here at Blessed Sacrament.

“We received all our sacraments here, including marriage in 1998,” Jim Rein. “So Blessed Sacrament is a special place for us.”

Jim and his wife, Christi, both grew up in Grand Island, and their families have been members of Blessed Sacrament for many years. After college, they moved to Colorado where they lived for 14 years. While living in Colorado the Rein family made the trip back to Grand Island in 2007 to have JT, their son, baptized at Blessed Sacrament with family and friends. They moved back to Grand Island in 2010.

Upon making the move back to Grand Island, Jim experienced the faith in a new light.

“I went through RCIA after moving back to Grand Island,” he says. “That process opened my eyes to stewardship and what it meant to be part of the parish family and sharing my time and talent. After I was confirmed, I began lecturing at Mass and serving on committees at Blessed Sacrament.”

Now, the whole family participates in our parish community through various ministries and activities. Jim is a lector and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. He is also a member of the Stewardship Committee, Finance Committee, Knights of Columbus, and is a School Board member at Grand Island Central Catholic.

“Each one is important to me for different reasons,” Jim says. “I think overall just



Jim, Christi, and JT Rein are all actively involved in our community.

being involved in the parish is important. By volunteering, we can help our parish and the community in different ways.”

JT serves as a lector and is a former altar server. Christi helps out with Spring-A-Ling and was a religious education instructor for six years. The entire family serves with Habitat for Humanity and Fall Fest.

“We, as Catholics and Christians, have been given gifts from Christ,” Jim says. “We want to share them with others.”

Stewardship plays a significant role in the Rein family’s life. Each year, they discuss together the Stewardship Renewal process.

“We reflect and pray on what or where we can

“We reflect and pray on what or where we can be more active, and areas we want to become involved. It’s important to take this time for reflection and then support stewardship for our parish and our community.”

— Jim Rein

Y IN OUR FAITH COMMUNITY

be more active, and areas we want to become involved,” Jim says. “It’s important to take this time for reflection and then support stewardship for our parish and our community.”

Jim is a CPA and partner with Pinion, specializing in estate planning. Christi stays at home, ensuring things run smoothly. JT, a junior at Grand Island Central Catholic, is involved in a number of activities including tennis, golf, Student Council, Quiz Bowl, and youth leadership training. The Reins enjoy family vacations and spending time together as a family.

“We continually strive — through our time with parish ministries, time, talent, and treasure — to bring Christ’s Kingdom here on earth,” Jim says. “As a family, we attend church regularly, eat meals together, and pray together. These activities keep us grounded and connected to our faith.”



JT Rein serves as a lector and is a former altar server.

LANDSCAPING MINISTRY *continued from front cover*

takes place over a four-to-five-acre area.

The work the ministry does is that of stewardship for our parish.

“Absolutely,” Scott says. “People take a lot of pride to help the areas of the church look nice, whether it’s picking up broken branches, making the grass areas look nice, or planting the flower beds. They take a lot of pride.”

Ministry members will share their talents not only through physical labor but also by offering suggestions for landscaping care. The members also helped a parishioner with an Eagle Scout project, installing a statue and flowers in the front of the church.

“They did a really good job,” Scott says. “They made the front of the church look really, really nice. They took a little guidance from us, but they did it mostly on their own. They did an awesome job.”

Besides making sure that our church campus is welcoming in its beauty, the Landscaping Ministry members draw spiritual growth from their work. They also enjoy camaraderie as they work together.

“I think we do have fun,” Scott says. “We all communicate with each other and everybody lets each other know if something needs to be done, and shares how things are going.”



When the shrubs and bushes fill out and bloom, the Landscaping Ministry members keep everything in shape.

Anyone interested in joining the Landscaping Ministry may contact Scott Hiatt at 308-379-9666.

DEEPENING YOUR FAITH: THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF CATHOLIC PODCASTS



In the digital age, where information flows ceaselessly, Catholics are finding solace and spiritual growth in the world of podcasts. These audio treasures not only serve as a source of inspiration but also as powerful tools for deepening one's faith and understanding of Catholicism. Let's explore how embracing Catholic podcasts can be a transformative journey for believers, accompanied by a curated list of the top 10 Catholic podcasts that you can easily access online.

The Power of Catholic Podcasts

Podcasts have become a cornerstone of modern communication, allowing individuals to consume content on the go. For Catholics seeking to fortify their spiritual journey, podcasts offer a unique blend of convenience and depth. Whether you're commuting, exercising, or simply relaxing at home, these audio programs provide a space for reflection and education, and serve as companions in the journey of faith.

Ten Catholic Podcasts for Spiritual Growth

- 1. Catholic Stuff You Should Know:** Delving into various aspects of Catholicism, this podcast combines humor with profound insights, making complex topics accessible to all.
- 2. Word on Fire Show:** Hosted by Bishop Robert Barron, this podcast explores the intersection of faith and culture, offering a deep dive into the teachings of the Church.
- 3. Pints with Aquinas:** A lively exploration of the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, this podcast invites listeners to engage with the rich intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church in a friendly, conversational style.
- 4. The Catholic Talk Show:** Covering a wide range of topics, from history to current events, this podcast provides a fresh perspective on Catholicism with a dose of humor.

- 5. Catholic Answers Live:** A live call-in show where apologists answer questions about Catholicism, providing valuable insights into the teachings and practices of the Church.
- 6. The Liturgy Guys:** Exploring the beauty and richness of the liturgy, this podcast offers a deeper understanding of the rituals and traditions that form the heart of Catholic worship.
- 7. The Jeff Cavins Show:** Hosted by Bible scholar Jeff Cavins, this podcast delves into Scripture, offering listeners a profound and practical understanding of the Word of God.
- 8. Catholic Feminist:** A thought-provoking exploration of feminism and its intersection with Catholicism, this podcast encourages critical reflection on gender issues within the context of faith.
- 9. Catching Foxes:** A candid and humorous take on the challenges and joys of living out the Catholic faith in the modern world, this podcast is both relatable and insightful.
- 10. Among the Lilies:** Designed for Catholic women, this podcast explores topics relevant to their spiritual and everyday lives, fostering a sense of community and solidarity.

How to Access These Podcasts

To embark on your faith-enriching journey, simply visit the websites of the respective podcasts listed above or search for them on popular podcast platforms such as Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts, or Stitcher. Subscribe to stay updated on the latest episodes and let these podcasts be your companions in deepening your Catholic faith.

Catholic podcasts offer a unique and accessible means for believers to grow spiritually and learn more about their faith. Embrace the transformative power of faith in your ears and let these podcasts accompany you on your journey of Catholic discovery.

COOKIE MINISTRY

PROVIDING REFRESHMENT AND ESSENTIAL COMFORT FOR THOSE GRIEVING A LOSS

When mourning the loss of a loved one, even the smallest gesture of kindness can make a huge impact. A hot cup of coffee, a glass of water, and a cookie may not seem to be important at first glance. However, they can offer a great sense of comfort and essential support to those in need.

The Cookie Ministry strives to provide comfort and hospitality to those grieving the loss of a loved one. An offering of refreshments — cookies, coffee, and water — is provided after the Vigil Service.

Sandie Czarnick has served as this ministry's coordinator for the past few months. When she is notified of an upcoming Vigil Service, she reaches out to members who bake the cookies and members who help serve the refreshments. This ensures that the family and friends will have this small gesture of support from the parish family.

"It is a tough time for any family," Sandie says. "It gives them a place to gather and visit about their loved one and to see friends and family. It is a small way that we can provide comfort to those who have lost a loved one or friend."

The Cookie Ministry is made up of about 40-45 parishioners who step up to help when needed.

"We usually have a few days' notice, which gives me time to contact those who have volunteered as bakers and those who I will be asking to serve," Sandie says. "I typically ask for two dozen cookies per baker, and there are two servers who prep the coffee, pour the water, and

hand out the cookies to the families."

The Cookie Ministry is a great way to get involved and give back to members of the community who are in need. The work is not difficult and the time commitment is minimal. The ministry is open to any parishioner who feels called to participate.

Sandie knows the importance of this ministry firsthand, having witnessed the impact that this simple gathering can have on those who are grieving.

"It is such a good way to give back and to help parishioners in their time of need," Sandie reflects. "Everyone appreciates what we do. People come up and thank us for being there and for serving them. This isn't why we do it, of course, but it makes it clear that this is a needed and appreciated service."



To learn more about the Cookie Ministry, contact Sandie Czarnick at 308-380-8158.



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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a significant event in the Catholic Church, commemorating the visit of the Virgin Mary to her cousin, Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. This event, celebrated each year on May 31, holds profound theological and spiritual significance in the Catholic Church.

Encounter with the Messiah

The meeting of Mary and Elizabeth is a poignant moment, as the first recorded encounter between Jesus, still in Mary's womb, and John the Baptist, in Elizabeth's womb. According to the Gospel of Luke, when Mary greeted Elizabeth, the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy. This profound connection is a testament to the divinely ordained roles of Jesus and John in the plan of salvation.

A Sign of God's Presence

The Visitation is a powerful sign of God's

presence and grace. It is during this visit that Elizabeth, inspired by the Holy Spirit, proclaims Mary as "blessed among women" and acknowledges the significance of Mary's role in God's plan.

Mary's *Magnificat*, a beautiful hymn of praise to God, is also recited during this encounter, emphasizing the importance of humility, gratitude, and recognizing God's blessings in one's life.

Celebrating the Feast of the Visitation

The Feast of the Visitation is celebrated on May 31 in the Catholic Church. On this day, Catholics are encouraged to attend Mass. May we reflect on the Visitation's significance and continue to draw inspiration from Mary's faith and charity, on this day and throughout the year.

