



# ALL SAINTS

*A Stewardship Parish*

Volume 17, Issue 9

## Inside

- 3 "Coincidental" Stewardship
- 4 Questions & Answers About Our Annual Stewardship Renewal
- 6 All Saints Catholic School Welcomes Students Back to Class
- 7 Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House: *A Place to Truly Encounter the Lord*

*Our Parish Newsletter:*

*Spreading the news of Christ at work in our community.*

## Christian Initiation at All Saints: *Leading to Discipleship and Following Jesus with Our Lives*

**M**uch has changed in the world over the past several months, and for many people, the crises of 2020 have provided an opportunity for self-reflection and a search for meaning. And for some, it has led them to seek something more — something they have found in faith and the Catholic Church.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process (RCIA) is an opportunity for people interested in learning more about the faith to prepare to receive the Sacraments of Initiation — Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. In some cases, there are also those who have been baptized, and come to the Church, seeking to be fully initiated, receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and/or Eucharist. The process varies in length, based on the needs of the individual preparing for the sacraments, but is typically one year. For children who are older than 7 and have not been baptized, the RCIA for children is a two-year process, adapted to their needs.

“RCIA is a process that leads people to discipleship and following Jesus with their lives,” says Sister Mary Paul Haase, Coordinator of RCIA. “It’s a process that includes worship with the community, study of the Scripture and catechesis of the Church, and an aspect of serving the community.”

*continued on page 2*





# ALL SAINTS

page 2

## RCIA and RCIC at All Saints *continued from front cover*

Typically, the formation process includes weekly Sunday catechesis, following attending Mass together as a group. However, since the start of the pandemic, the RCIA Inquiry sessions for adults have been meeting via Zoom, and will continue to do so into the new school year. The formation is primarily focused on the four pillars of the *Catechism*, what we believe, our sacraments, morality and prayer. A group of volunteer catechists assist Sr. Mary Paul, sharing these teachings.

“I hope they come to a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and want to follow Him with their life,” Sr. Mary Paul says. “I hope that they are deeply touched by the beauty of the Church and the Church’s teachings, and have the help of the sacraments to live their lives to be saints.”

Sponsors also play an important role in this process. Serving as mentors and intercessors, they are fully-initiated Catholics, who journey alongside catechumens (unbaptized) and candidates (receiving Confirmation and/or First Eucharist) through their formation. In a particular way, since formation now takes place remotely, sponsors serve to provide one-on-one support to their catechumen or candidate, answering questions, and praying with and for them.

“The sponsor is a fully initiated Catholic who loves their faith and wants to welcome and journey with inquirers who are considering becoming Catholic,” Sr. Mary Paul says. “Candidates and catechumens feel more connected to the parish through what the sponsor shares with them about their own life experience and their own faith journey.”

Sr. Mary Paul encourages active parishioners who are looking for a way to become involved in service, even as most ministries remain on hiatus, to consider being a sponsor, walking with someone preparing to enter the Church.

***“I hope they come to a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and want to follow Him with their life. I hope that they are deeply touched by the beauty of the Church and the Church’s teachings, and have the help of the sacraments to live their lives to be saints.”***

— SISTER MARY PAUL HAASE

“[A good sponsor] is someone who has had a real encounter with Jesus, has a life of prayer, wants an authentic Christian community and wants to serve the parish in the way of sponsoring a new person,” Sr. Mary Paul says. “They don’t have to know all the answers, but they have a deep love [of God].”

Although most catechumens receive their Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil and candidates are fully initiated shortly thereafter, this year was obviously a bit different. However, after months of waiting, they were able to celebrate the Sacraments in May.

Sr. Mary Paul encourages those who would like to explore the Catholic faith or prepare to receive Sacraments of Initiation to consider joining RCIA. She also offers a reminder that there is no commitment and people are able to grow and learn at their own pace.

“Don’t be afraid to make a phone call, send an email to find out more,” Sr. Mary Paul says. “Do not be afraid. Take the next step. It’s beautiful. Our faith is good, true and beautiful, and it’s life-changing and it fills us. It’s the answer to every question we may have in our hearts. Don’t be afraid to take the next step.”

*If you would like more information, please contact Sister Mary Paul Haase at [mhaase@allsaintsdallas.org](mailto:mhaase@allsaintsdallas.org) or 972-778-0326, or Kathy McDermott at [kmcdermott@allsaintsdallas.org](mailto:kmcdermott@allsaintsdallas.org) or 972-778-0328.*



# "Coincidental" Stewardship

Dear Saints,

The famous author G.K. Chesterton once said, "Coincidences are God's way of staying anonymous." Since fully embracing the stewardship way of life, coincidences have become cherished experiences for which I thank God — and rightly so! While God stays anonymous, coincidences are His way of interacting with the world He created. Importantly, as we have been continually impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and with many of our circumstances changing day to day, we can be grateful for His "coincidental" intervention.

As I continue to witness the grace-filled effects of the stewardship way of life on our parish, and in my own life, it is definitely God's hand at work in our lives of faith. If some identify a coincidence as a "surprise blessing" that lifts the spirits and draws one closer to gratefulness to God, we cannot deny that in those circumstances that God is giving us the grace to live and celebrate our faith. So, let's celebrate the coincidences!

Celebrate the coincidence that Chesterton himself converted to Catholicism late in his life, yet wrote book after book affirming and defending the Catholic faith long before his conversion. Four years after Chesterton joined the Catholic Church, he wrote a phenomenal book called *The Catholic Church and Conversion*. It is one of the best works on conversion to Catholicism, as well as a wonderful description of conversion to the stewardship way of life. The same experiences, or "coincidences," apply when we find ourselves drawn into the understanding, practice and expression of discipleship, known to us as "stewardship."

Chesterton describes conversion in three steps.



"The convert takes his first step rather unwittingly when he decides he's going to be fair to the Catholic Church," he wrote. The convert to stewardship must also dispel the "myths of stewardship" and give it a chance.

This first step of conversion then leads to a long and enjoyable second step, which is the utter fascination of learning what the Catholic Church really does teach. Chesterton says, "It is like discovering a new continent full of strange flowers and fantastic animals, which is at once wild and

hospitable." For the stewardship convert, it is recognizing that stewardship is a practical way of living the Gospel. It makes sense, and others are doing it with joy and passion. What they have, the convert also wants.

Then, the convert to Catholicism suddenly realizes with a shock that he can no longer be detached and impartial about the Catholic Church. The convert to the stewardship way of life realizes this is the way he or she wants to live — and makes the commitment to do so.

If this were not true of what Christ has called us to be, I would not be writing this today. If this were not true of our commitment to stewardship, you may not be reading this today. And, if this were not true of a stewardship parish such as ours, we would not be the faithful stewards we are today. Wouldn't you also agree it is a "coincidence" to thank God for each day of our lives?

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Alfonse Nazzaro  
Pastoral Administrator



## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

# Annual

**T**his has most certainly been a trying and unusual year, as we have navigated through uncharted waters. In the face of great uncertainty or difficulty, it is easy to become complacent. Yet, this is not what God calls us to do. We are called to live stewardship as a way of life — in the good, bad or uncertain times. In moments of trial, God raises up saints!

Our Stewardship Renewal reminds us that God's gifts never stop being poured out. In turn, we never should have reason to stop thanking Him. So, let us take this Stewardship Renewal as an opportunity to strengthen our relationship with God in the midst of our rapidly changing world.

*Commitment Weekend is  
October 3-4. Don't forget to  
return your Commitment Card!*

### **How do I use my Commitment Card?**

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving. It is designed to be used by the whole family.

**Time Section:** Everyone should be able to check the boxes to commit to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days or to view the Masses online during the crisis. In addition to those commitments, try to check at least a few other items. Daily prayer should be a priority for every person trying to grow closer to God. We recognize that the current crisis may impact your ability to carry out your commitments. Know the Lord sees what is in your heart and is pleased with your best efforts.

**Talent Section:** You can either sign up for new ministries or re-commit to your current ministries. Be sure to write your first name next to the ministry! This is especially important if the card is being used by more than one person.

**Treasure Section:** Clearly print how much money you plan to give each week or month to our parish. Try to take a step toward giving five percent of your income to All Saints.

### **Issues like my age, physical limitations, and the current crisis prevent me from being active in the parish. Should I still turn in a Commitment Card?**

Yes! The first section of the card — Stewardship of Time — is the most important because it allows you to make commitments to prayer. Even if you can't join a ministry or make it to Mass on Sunday, you can still pray for our parish. Your spiritual support has tremendous value in the eyes of God.

### **One time I turned in a card, but no one ever called me when I signed up for a ministry.**

If this happened in the past, please forgive us! And don't give up on filling out your Commitment Card! We have a very good plan to call every person interested in joining a new ministry. If for some reason the ministry leader does not call you within four weeks of turning in your card, let the parish office know.

### **How much should I give?**

Your gift is entirely dependent on how much God has given you. At All Saints, we ask that you give five percent to our parish, one percent to the diocese, and four percent to other charities. Why a percentage of income? First, because the tithe (10 percent) is a scriptural benchmark that the Church has honored for centuries (see Malachi 3:10). Secondly, we give a percentage of income because it is a common-sense standard by which everyone can equitably support the parish. Most of all, we give because we believe God comes first in everything, even finances.

### **What if I can't fulfill my financial pledge?**

While our pledge is not a "contract," we should all make a good-faith effort to fulfill it. Of course, if your financial circumstances change — if you lose your job, for instance — then the amount of money you give the Church will change, too. Likewise if you get a raise or bonus. The biggest reason



# ABOUT OUR *Stewardship Renewal* .....

many people don't fulfill their pledge is that they attend Mass at another parish when they go on vacation, attend a wedding, etc. If you're out of town, just make up for the missed Sunday when you write your next check to the parish. Using your envelopes is a good way to see which Sundays you missed.

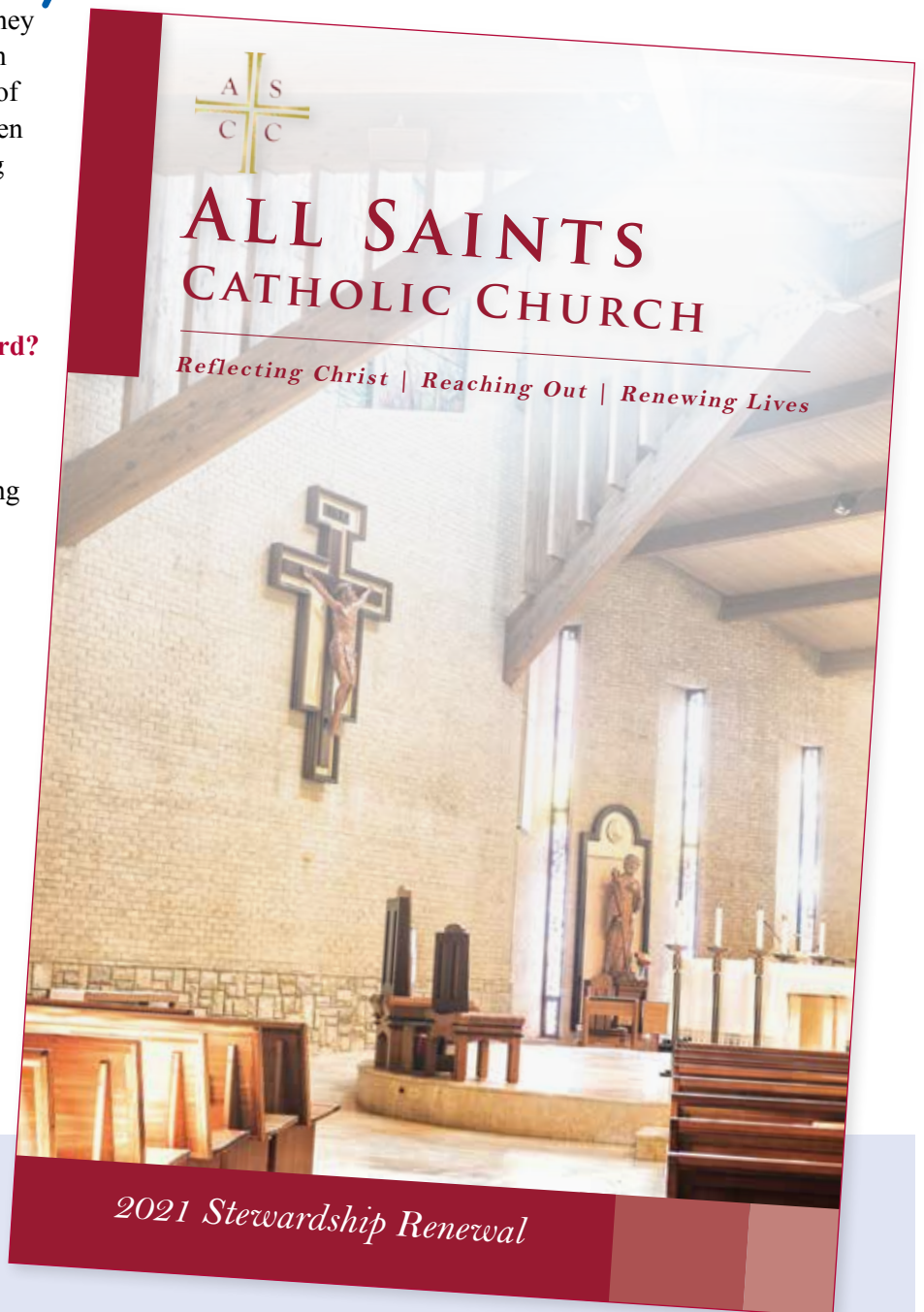
## **Even before the crisis, I didn't go to Mass frequently. Why turn in a Commitment Card?**

Because this is your chance to turn over a new leaf! Why not make a commitment to God to come to Mass every Sunday once the crisis is over, and until then, commit to viewing the Mass online each week, then write down that commitment? Even if that's the only commitment you make, take a step forward. Jesus Himself is waiting for you!

## **What happens if I don't return my Commitment Card?**

We will send you a reminder letter to encourage participation. Please make every effort you can to participate. Our Stewardship Renewal is a very important annual event in the life of our parish. You and your family are part of what makes All Saints a great community! Most importantly, your commitments are actually promises to Christ Himself. All of us are called to give back to God a portion of what He has given us.

*Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your Commitment Card.*





# ALL SAINTS

page 6

## All Saints Catholic School Welcomes Students Back to Class

*By Gabe Moreno, ASCS Director of Advancement and Mission*

**A** new year. Very few things compare to the hope and promise of the beginning of something new. Each year in August, All Saints begins a new school year with lots of smiles, laughs, hugs and high fives. Students and families arrive early to socialize and see friends many haven't seen in three months. It is always a joyous occasion.

This year, All Saints begins a new school year differently. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to change many of our traditions. This year, there were no large gatherings, no hugs, no high fives, and all the smiles were covered by masks. Nonetheless, it was a joyous occasion.

Staff members with hidden smiles and an infrared thermometer welcomed students learning on campus. After a health screening, students were allowed into the building where they immediately washed their hands, headed to their classroom, and found their seats and personal supplies behind a clear acrylic desk shield.

The health and well-being of our students at All Saints are paramount. We have spent the last five months working on a plan to safely welcome families back to campus. It has been nice to see the fruit of all that labor come to fruition in the form of students learning in their classrooms.

Under the leadership of Fr. Alfonse, Principal Shana Druffner, and Nurse Jamie Nystrom, All Saints developed

a comprehensive safety plan that is the model for Catholic schools in the Diocese of Dallas. This safety plan has been published in the bulletin and on the ASCS website for people to view. It has also received praise from inside and outside of our community. Many people have commented that we are going above and beyond to ensure safety. We are doing everything possible to keep our community safe and healthy.

Some of the safety protocols put in place rely on people and behavior, but others necessitated spending additional funds. The acrylic desk shields, electrostatic disinfecting machine, new nurse office to separate well and unwell students, and the necessary technology upgrades to ensure students participating in the remote learning program receive the same level of excellent instruction All Saints is known for all came with additional costs.

This year, All Saints is once again participating in North Texas Giving Day on Sept. 17. This annual day of giving is an opportunity to come together and support our community. I hope that you will participate in this event and help our community offset some of the additional costs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Scheduled giving begins on Sept. 1 and ends on Sept. 17 at midnight. To show your support of All Saints, visit [www.northtexasgivingday.org/all-saints-catholic-school-dallas](http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/all-saints-catholic-school-dallas), and donate what you are able. Any amount helps, and together we can ensure the health and well-being of our community.

## TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT CYBERBULLYING

**N**o matter the online platform or how much or little kids or teens engage in social media, establishing an openness to talk about what they are doing online, who they are interacting with, and what sites and apps they are using is key to setting the tone for potentially more difficult conversations.

It is OK to express support for their technology use and acknowledge the value in it for them. As we all know, technology is here to stay. Set age-appropriate limits and discuss expectations. Allow them to negotiate and collaborate on an agreement. By doing this, they will be more likely to take ownership of their behavior and you will have a more solid foundation upon which to hold them accountable. Let them

know that you, as their parents, reserve the right to look at their devices, if you feel there is a concern about their safety or if they demonstrate an inability to use technology safely.

Connect expectations to your family values. Use language that reflects facts (something that was said or something you heard or observed), statements of consequence (certain actions are helpful or hurtful, effective or ineffective), or personal preferences ("I didn't like seeing that"). Refrain from judgmental language (e.g., good/bad, stupid, nice, etc.). These kinds of evaluative words can heighten emotions and shut down open communication.

Please visit [StopBullying.gov](http://StopBullying.gov) for more information.



## Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House: *A Place to Truly Encounter the Lord*

**M**odern life is busy. We are so often hurrying from one event or responsibility to the next, never feeling like we have adequate time to accomplish what we are “supposed to” in a day. For many of us, this is what makes the idea of a retreat — particularly a silent one — so daunting. *Where on earth can we find the time for such a luxury? How can we possibly stay still and silent for three whole days?*

Parishioner Al Schneider says this is exactly how he felt about silent retreats until he attended his first one — begrudgingly, he admits — at Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House roughly 30 years ago.

“I really went kicking and screaming,” Al says. “I had avoided going for years, and was finally persuaded to go by a fellow who was a retreat captain at our parish back then. But then, after I went that first time you couldn’t have kept me away. It was one of those things that the more often I went, the more often I wanted to go. And I’ve never missed my yearly retreat since.”

Parishioner Andrea Popp also initially held some reservations about attending a Montserrat Retreat. A born talker, she wondered how she could possibly remain silent that long. But when she finally agreed to go, she was amazed to discover how easy it was to maintain that silence.

“Just like my friend promised, I had no trouble not talking,” Andrea says. “The retreat center consists of 30 acres which you are free to roam around and explore throughout the retreat. That makes it easier not to talk to each other, spending that time instead talking to God and looking inside yourself.”

So, while the silent aspect of the retreat is often thought of as a barrier, both Al and Andrea describe it as the great gift of the retreat experience. There in the silence, free from all the noise and distractions of life, retreat participants are able to truly focus their hearts and minds on God, and hear God’s voice in a profound and life-changing manner.



*The peaceful grounds at Montserrat, which lend themselves to prayer and reflection*



*The perfect place to stop and think*

“I remember looking up on the stairwell wall while I was walking up the stairs to my room that first time and noticing a sign that said, ‘Listen.’” Al says. “That sign really jumped out to me and it’s what I’ve carried with me year after year — because in that silence, you have time to truly think and be with God.”

“When I am either walking the campus at Montserrat or sitting in a chair on the grounds, it is impossible for me not to see God in everything around me — the sky, the water, the clouds, the beauty, even the squirrels, the ducks and

*continued on back cover*



# ALL SAINTS

## Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House *continued from page 7*

birds,” Andrea adds. “When you truly focus and reflect and *listen* like that, you can actually see more clearly any issues you might be experiencing, whether it’s with family, a spouse, relationships, friends, work and such. I definitely experienced several of those issues in the years I have been to the retreats, and each time I came out with a perspective that I had not seen before. One just gains a peace by just being here. And this just lends itself to becoming closer to God.”

For those unfamiliar with Montserrat, the retreat house is located on the peaceful shores of Lewisville Lake in Lake Dallas, and is meant to be a place of external silence so that individuals may truly listen to and converse with God. Weekend retreats are offered

for both men and women throughout the year, typically beginning Thursday evening and ending Sunday afternoon with lunch. Though each retreat varies slightly in terms of retreat presidors and participants, each one revolves around the Jesuit spirituality and its concept of discovering God in all things. It truly is a time to retreat from the hustle and bustle of the world so as to become spiritual rejuvenated.

“I think that we don’t give enough time to just *be* — to stand back and really reflect,” Andrea says. “That is exactly what you can do at Montserrat. It is a place of quiet, peace and prayer — a time to gain a deeper perspective on your life, a place to come to know God better in an intimate and personal relationship.”

*If you are interested in learning more about the Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House and upcoming retreat opportunities, please visit [www.montserratretreat.org](http://www.montserratretreat.org) or contact either Al Schneider at 972-333-7958 or [alan@rtsrealestate.com](mailto:alan@rtsrealestate.com), or Andrea Popp at 972-980-7876 or [a.popp@tx.rr.com](mailto:a.popp@tx.rr.com).*

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