

Prison ministry gives participants hope

When we read Matthew 25, we hear Jesus speak about feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick.

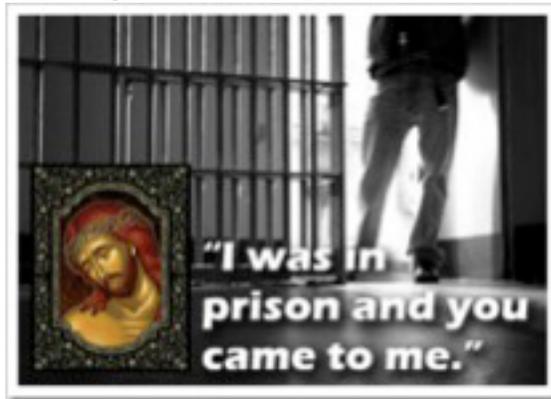
Most of us can relate to doing these simple corporal works of mercy ourselves. But very few see themselves ever involved directly in prison ministry.

There are several reasons for that. Visitation in jails and prisons is restricted for security reasons, and the number of opportunities to serve is limited. If we don't know anyone in prison or jail, we are not likely to choose to get involved. And, of course, going behind locked gates to work with criminals is a scary idea.

Archbishops Jerome Hanus and Michael Jackels have made ministering to those in prison a priority, both by serving personally within the walls of Anamosa State Penitentiary themselves, and by supporting volunteer activities through Catholic Charities Jail and Prison Ministry.

One of those activities has been an RCIA program at Anamosa to provide formation for those wishing to enter the Catholic Church. Every Tuesday for the past decade, a group of about 10 volunteers from Dubuque and Cascade has traveled to Anamosa. They make up what is known as the "outside team" of catechists, working with an "inside team" of prisoners who have already embraced the Catholic faith.

The inside team takes on the responsibility to evangelize in the prison yard, inviting others to attend the Tuesday sessions. Over the years, dozens have been baptized, professed the Catholic faith, and have been confirmed through this process.



We learned quickly that these men do not fit the stereotypes, which we may have had about prisoners. We found articulate, well-informed, largely self-taught students on fire with a love for God and a deep appreciation for the traditions of the Catholic Church.

St. Anthony Parishioners who have taken part in this weekly ministry are Steve Gulyash, Deacon Bill Mauss, and John Mauss. Deacon Bill's ministry also includes leading Sunday services in the prison chapel when a priest is not available for Sunday Mass. John and Steve also go down early each week to lead a group of men in the Rosary before the RCIA session.

We learned quickly that these men do not fit the stereotypes, which we may have had about prisoners. We found articulate, well-informed, largely self-taught students on fire with a love for God and a deep appreciation for the traditions of the Catholic Church. Our time spent at Anamosa seems more like time in a monastery than a prison, where the "monks" are

faithful disciples seeking to grow in personal holiness. The level of discussion rivals that of a college theology class.

Their greatest challenge is to not let their physical separation from society be a spiritual isolation. They desire to be a part of the universal Church and the communion of saints. The weekly presence of the "outside team" helps to insure them of their inclusion in the larger Church community. All of us involved in this program agree that we gain much more than we give in any of these sessions.

There is another aspect of our Jail and Prison Ministry: the outreach to people returning to their communities from incarceration. We have a number of St. Anthony parishioners involved as mentors and circle members, and I hope to tell that story in a future article of *The Voice*.

St. Anthony parishioners 'Impact'-ed

Impact, the Program

Impact is a two year formational and informational Archdiocesan Program that meets on a monthly basis at an assigned location. The program is financed in thirds, with one-third of the tuition coming from the participants' parish, one-third from the Archdiocese, and one-third from the participant.

There are assigned readings each month along with a presentation by a Loras College Faculty member. Following the presentation, the participant is expected to write a 500-word reflection paper on the subject and then discuss it with a spiritual mentor of the participant's choosing.

The first group, or cohort, to complete the program began in the fall of 2013 with a retreat at American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls. With the exception of a couple of dates, meetings were held at St. Mary's Parish in Manchester. The final meeting concluded with a liturgy at St. Mary's presided over by Archbishop Jackels.

The Impact Experience

Being part of Impact, the Archdiocese of Dubuque's lay formation program, was an exciting, challenging, and spiritually rewarding time. It was exciting because we had the opportunity to meet regularly with Catholics from all over the archdiocese, to share ideas and thoughts with them, and to learn from them. It's amazing that, though we are one church, we have so many different experiences of parish life. It was challenging because we met almost monthly in Manchester, Iowa, from September through May for two years. That meant making special arrangements with family because of conflicts with birthdays or other

events.

We are blessed with adult children who were willing to compromise on dates a few times to make sure we could get to our Impact sessions.

It was challenging because we read a book before every session to prepare us for topics ranging from spirituality in today's world, to the history of the church and the bible.

It was challenging because we were stretched in our understanding of Church teaching, and of what it means to be Catholic in today's environment, among other things.

It was spiritually rewarding because we learned so much about prayer and experienced different forms of prayer.

It was rewarding because we delved into personal, gifts, talents and charisms, and how we use them to evangelize in our world without even realizing we ARE evangelizing.

It was rewarding to be affirmed in what we are doing, and rewarding to be challenged to find new ways to serve the people of God in the world.

Carol Balong

Fr. Steve often reminds us in his homilies that we are all called to evangelize. I have sat in the pew and thought how great it was that I, as a layman, am empowered to do that very thing.

Impact brought home to me the why, the what, and the how of father's statement. It led me through a process of looking at and experiencing various types of prayer. It was based on scripture. And it provided an awareness of the developing devotional life within the church, particularly in today's younger adults.

Impact provided various tools to analyze my gifts, talents and charisms. It helped me to know myself better and gain a vision of how I could make a contribution toward

evangelization. It also was a benefit for my professional career as well.

I made many new friends through Impact. We had great discussions. And there were times when the assigned readings made me angry. But one thing came through to me loud and clear. The church is not the hierarchy. The church is the people of God. I am the church. My wife, my children, my grandchildren, the people next door, and the people I work with are the church. And we are all called to bring Christ to the world—to make an Impact.

John Balong

Teaching in the Catholic school system provided me with a unique opportunity to continue my faith journey. Teaching religion challenged me to continue to learn more about my faith and to share this with my students. These wonderful young people challenged me to not only know my faith, but to live it daily.

Upon retiring from teaching two years ago, I was looking for another way to continue on my faith journey. I believe our faith is constantly growing and changing and we need to be open to this growth. The Impact program provided me with this opportunity. Monthly readings and meetings helped me to learn more about my faith and challenged me to find new avenues in which I could share my faith and serve my parish community.

I would recommend this program to anyone who is searching for a venue in which they can continue their faith journey. It was sometimes a challenge to complete the readings each month, but I looked forward to each meeting knowing I would leave there inspired by the speakers and the Impact participants. Prayerfully consider this program in the next weeks; it will be worth your effort.

Jennifer Stork

Anointing of Sick sacrament taps into power of the Holy Spirit

On Wednesday, May 13, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick was celebrated at St. Anthony's.

The Sacrament of the Sick brings the power of strength and healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. The sick person may receive strength to bear sufferings and obtain the forgiveness of sins through the Holy Spirit.

The recipients of the sacrament may be those whose health is impaired by sickness or old age, those about to undergo surgery, those who are elderly and weakened by age.

In the epistle of St. James we hear "Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the Church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise them up and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven."

Following the Mass/ Anointing of the Sick, all enjoyed a gathering in O'Malley Hall for refreshments and fellowship. Thanks to all who generously gave of their time to help make this special occasion a very memorial event for all who attended.



Early Childhood Center getting a face-lift

Our St. Anthony and Our Lady of Guadalupe Early Childhood program continues to grow. We currently have one preschool program and three Pre-k programs, wrap-around care and before- and after-school care for school age students. We are open from 6 in the morning until 5:30 at night.

The area currently housing this program (the lower level of the Stemm building) is in the process of a major renovation. We have four classrooms which are getting fresh paint, new carpet and new tile floors. In addition, the restrooms are being totally remodeled with new plumbing, fixtures, partitions and

paint. The cost of this renovation is \$40,000. The painting, plastering and window repair is being done by Holy Family and St. Anthony maintenance personnel, which is helping us keep the cost down.

The cost is being split between St. Anthony's and Holy Family. Thanks to your contributions to the capital improvement fund, we have the money to proceed with the project. Everything should be in place for the beginning of school in the fall of 2015.

Pre-K is offered to all children four and five years of age, five days a week. Parents choose the program that is best for their child and family.

We have an English Pre-K program, a Dual Language Pre-K (taught in English and Spanish), and a Spanish Immersion Pre-K that is taught in Spanish. These programs are offered free to all four and five year olds that live in the state of Iowa, because of the State of Iowa Four Year Old Preschool Grant.

Our purpose is to provide the best quality educational learning environment for our students. This renovation will enhance the learning environment. Parents and parishioners are always welcome to come and see our students in action.

KC Corner

Chivalry lives!

Knights seeking recruits to help make a difference in a variety of ways

Becoming a Knight of Columbus can transform your life. As a Knight, you have an opportunity to support your parish, give back to your community and grow in your faith. These are just some of the reasons to become a Knight. We are a band of brothers, a network of men in communities around the world dedicated to doing good in the service of God and our neighbor.

In our 130 years of existence, the Knights of Columbus has grown to 1.8 million members serving in over 15,000 councils.

Here at St Anthony's, we support a variety of community and parish causes. Our fundraising efforts support seminarians, the developmentally disabled, right to life initiatives, Catholic education, youth groups and parish needs.

We welcome you to join us in our efforts and hope that you consider sharing your gifts, skills and energy as a fellow Knight. Providing for the needs of others is an incredibly

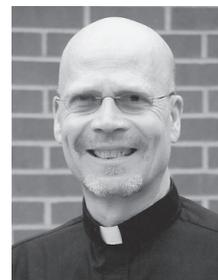


gratifying pursuit.

As Knight you can make a real difference in the life of those in need. Every new member who joins our ranks enables us to increase our capacity to serve. We invite you to share in fun, fellowship and service as a brother Knight and grow as a Catholic gentleman.

If you are interested or would like more information please contact Dave Ayers at 563-583-7014 or Mike Lombardi at 563- 582-1929

Notes from Fr. Steve



Sometimes in our daily lives we have the opportunity to defend our faith. Almost all families have members who no longer

practice the Catholic faith. All of us know people who have made comments about our faith that produce more heat than light.

I would like to offer a few ways to deal with situations that may arise in which we need to defend our faith.

1. People won't remember what you said as much as how you made them feel. Try to be civil and kind. Talk about what the Catholic faith has meant to you. Speak about the ways the faith has strengthened you in difficult times.
2. Be positive. Some people see the Church as a big organization that has lots of rules. Yes, the Church has guidelines and policies, but so does a golf course. As a person of faith, talk about how you, yourself, have found joy in being a Catholic. Show an attitude of gratitude that you find value in the lived faith of the Church.

3. Be compassionate. It can be difficult, but try to be compassionate even if the discussion gets a little heated. Sometimes we need to be listeners. Nothing disarms a person more than when you counter anger with quiet. Sometimes an individual may have been hurt in some way. Compassion can be a wonderful witness.

I'll have a few more pointers in the next edition of *The Voice*. God reward you.

Father Steve

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Last four issues available on St. Anthony website: www.stanthony-dubuque.org