

# Spirit of Providence

N E W S L E T T E R

VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 6 • November 2011

## Youth Ministry

Welcome to **Tim Lucchesi** who is joining us in youth ministry. He will be meeting with parish teens after the 5:30 p.m. Sunday Mass on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, helping develop a community built on healthy values in a culture that too often promotes negative choices. Asked

his goals, Tim replied, "They're generic goals that come down to prayer, service, simplicity and community. They enable one to become a fuller person, able to better incorporate faith into daily life."



In addition to guiding the youth groups regular meetings, Tim will be working to plan and promote other activities such as trips to the pro-life march in January and the Steubenville conference next summer. In

addition the group will be conducting the annual Luke 18 retreat for eighth graders this spring.

A native of Annunciation parish and a Vianney alum, Tim attended Fontbonne where he was involved in retreat planning and assistant choir director. He is currently studying history at Washington Univ. Tim is a member of the REAP (Retreat Evangelization And Prayer) Team, the archdiocesan retreat ministry of the Catholic Youth Apostolate which conducts retreats for first communicants, confirmation candidates, and area high schools. In his limited free time Tim enjoys baseball and teaches fifth grade PSR at Annunciation. He is also working on a music CD, his second, to raise funds for the REAP program.

Next month you'll be seeing television commercials inviting Catholics to come home. You'll hear stories of real people who drifted away but felt a tug at their hearts inviting them home to their family in the Church. If that's your situation we hope their stories will encourage you and serve as your own personal invitation to join again our parish family. You are always welcome.



## It's Official!



Archbishop Robert Carlson with students from OLP, Annunciation and St. Michael's Schools, future students of Holy Cross Academy, following the press conference announcing their schools will consolidate beginning in Fall 2012. At the recent Archdiocesan Pastoral Assembly the archbishop cited this effort as an innovative model for enriching and strengthening Catholic education. For information on the collaborative agreement visit the parish website, [www.olpstl.com](http://www.olpstl.com).

## Sharing Blessings Through the Year

As we enter a season of thanksgiving and Christmas festivities it's an apt time to recall ways in which we as a parish community reach out to share. As Christ so powerfully told us, whenever you've clothed, fed, sheltered, or comforted "one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40). We can give funds through special collections for needs such as the Campaign for Human Development, the missions, and the St. Vincent DePaul Society. Parishioners also provide material help through a number monthly and annual collections. Here is a survey of those efforts.

On the first full weekend of every month the **Reach Out** program collects canned and dry goods for the food pantry at Sts. Teresa and Bridget on North Grand. Not sure what to give? You'll find suggested items listed in the prior week's bulletin. Food and cash donations in the boxes in the vestibule are important aid for this neighborhood.

*Sharing / continued on p. 3*



## Looking Toward Advent

Father Dave Rauch

November has arrived with grey skies, barren branches and cold dark nights. Nature becomes dormant as the first frost puts an end to the growing season. Nights on the deck eating barbeque are replaced by evenings around the fireplace, behind securely closed doors and windows. Even with all our technology we begin feeling isolated and even lonely. I can only imagine the isolation people felt years ago out on the farms and even in small towns. It is a time for introspection, reflection, prayer and planning for the next year.

In the Sacred Liturgy, Ordinary Time ends and the Season of Advent begins in preparation for Christmas. Advent struggles to compete with the ever-earlier start of the most important shopping time of the year. More than ever, businesses depend on Christmas sales in order to make a profit for the year. No wonder Advent struggles for recognition in the face of this competition for our attention. To keep Advent we must take control of our calendar and our lives in order to make choices that allow us to honor the religious significance of these weeks of the year.

I suggest you have a household meeting. Decide what you want to do to keep the spirit of Advent and Christmas. Write down your decisions so everyone remembers what they are expected to do before during and after. Spread these activities out all during Advent and Christmas. The four weeks of Advent gives us plenty of time for even a weekly household activity. And we can embrace the Church tradition of celebrating Christmas as an octave, a feast lasting eight days. We don't have to squeeze everything into one or two days. For years in my family we celebrated our Christmas gift giving a few days after December 25. Christmas Day became time for Mass and a large family gathering. Another day became time to be together without having to rush. It was so much nicer. The Church offers us Twelve Days of Christmas to encourage us to spread the season out into more manageable portions. Don't follow our culture and start way too soon but end way too early.

This year many families will need to cut back on their spending on gift giving. That's not really so bad. Christmas isn't about things but about persons: Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; our spouse, children and grandchildren to name a few. Doing things is often better than getting things. How much more stuff do any of us really need? I hear of more and more families getting together to make cookies or pasta or other home cooked traditional foods. I hear of others preparing and serving

a meal to someone who is alone or needy. I hear of families adopting other families and spending on them what they would have spent on one another. What about a Christmas Novena at home? Or daily prayer together? I think the challenging times in which we live could encourage us to examine our priorities and discover creative new ways to remember and honor the birth of our Lord and Savior.

*From Marilyn Price  
Parish Nurse*

## Waist Size as a Predictor of Health

The average American waistline is expanding. In fact, it has never been bigger. Federal health surveys show that over the past four decades, the mean waist size for men has grown



from 35 inches to 39 inches. For women the average waist size has grown from 30 to 37 inches. Researchers are beginning to understand the complex physiology behind a simple truth: the smaller the waist, the better the life.

Predicting a person's long-term health may be as simple as taking a waist measurement. Fat around the waist has been linked to a greater risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke, hypertension, breathing problems, disability, some cancers and a higher mortality rate.

**Measuring Your Middle** To determine if you have too much belly fat, simply measure your waist.

- Place a tape measure around your bare stomach just above your hip bone.
- Pull the tape measure until it fits snugly around you, but doesn't push into your skin.
- Make sure the tape measure is level all the way around.
- Relax, exhale and measure your waist, resisting the urge to suck in your stomach.

For women, a waist measurement of 35 inches or more indicates an unhealthy concentration of belly fat. For men, a waist measurement of 40 inches or more is considered cause for concern.

**Belly Fat and Health** The trouble with belly fat is that it is not limited to the extra layer of padding located just below the skin. It also includes visceral fat. This is a type of deep fat that packs itself around internal organs and secretes powerful body chemicals. Excessive amounts of visceral fat produce

*Waist Size / continued on p. 4*



## Another Joint Venture

ACTS retreats in St. Louis have enriched personal faith, established friendships, and built involvement in parish communities. As more parishes adopt this program, finding available retreat facilities and dates has become increasingly difficult. The ACTS core teams at OLP and Annunciation parish in Webster Groves have joined forces to make fuller use of the openings available at LaSalle Retreat Center where we have conducted our retreats. Members of the core team schedule retreats, identify retreat leaders, and provide support. The retreats are conducted by teams of fellow parishioners, veterans of an ACTS retreat. We encourage you to join us for our 2012 retreats. The women's ACTS retreat will be held March 29-April 1. The men's retreat will be June 21-June 24.



. The OLP-Annunciation ACTS Core Team: seated (l. to r.): May Reardon, Kathy Wayman, Anne Maus, Mary Randant. Standing: Milke Marchi, Tom Schmitt, Jim Goodloe, Jim Moore, Fr. Dave Rauch, Rick Wedel. Not shown: Jay Hendren and Mariann Wedel



*Providence Will Provide*  
**Work in Progress**

As you have probably noticed, the parking lot has been re-stripped. We have had some safety concerns about the back lot and the lack of visible striping. This was especially evident when we had funerals or other events with many visitors. We were able to have the lots striped at a very reasonable cost. We have already begun talking with contractors about the repaving that will occur next summer.

We are nearly two thirds of the way through our capital campaign! If you have any questions about pledge payments, please feel free to contact Judy or Julie at the rectory office. As always, thank you so much for your ongoing support of Our Lady of Providence.

## Sharing / continued from p. 1

A number of parish cooks prepare and freeze the same chicken noodle recipe for the **St. Patrick's Casserole** program. They deliver their contribution to a station outside the school on the Saturday before the first Sunday of the month. These meals feed the homeless served by St. Patrick's Center downtown. Foil pans are provided. For information talk with Tracy Stanton (843-8831).

The biggest of our seasonal collections is coming up soon. The **Giving Tree** collects Christmas gifts for people of Washington County south of St. Louis served by the Rural Parish Workers in Old Mines. Look for Christmas trees on each side of the church trimmed with tags requesting a specified article of clothing for a man, woman, or child. Take one or more tags, shop, and wrap the gifts with their tag fastened to the outside. Return the gift to church by December 11. For information, contact Shirley Fasbender (849-9452).

In December we will also be collecting toys for children served by Sts. Teresa and Bridget parish as well as the St. Augustine Wellston Center.

As we go through the year there are opportunities to respond to a variety of material appeals. In January you can donate blankets for Energycare. In February we collect socks and underwear for children and adults served by St. Augustine Wellston Center and Midtown Catholic Charities. In March, the month of the Annunciation, of Mary's pregnancy, we ask for items for newborns to be distributed by Birthright. August brings the opening of school and a call for backpacks and school supplies for students served by the St. Augustine Wellston Center and Midtown Catholic Charities. At Thanksgiving Day Mass the St. Vincent de Paul collects canned goods for the Affton Christian Food Pantry supported by a number of congregations in our area.

These efforts are responses to a variety of needs felt by young and old without our resources. While financial donations are important acts of charity, each of these collections involves a step beyond—adding items to the grocery cart or taking advantage of the back-to-school sales. As you take that item off the store shelf you're have in mind the well-being of someone who isn't able to make that purchase. Thanks to all parishioners for their generous response to these requests.

*The Spirit of Providence is published bi-monthly to celebrate the many ways in which generous gifts of time, talent and treasure enrich our faith community. Suggestions, articles and and photographs can be submitted to Joe Dunne, 843-2563 or [jdunne63@yahoo.com](mailto:jdunne63@yahoo.com)*

# OUR LADY of PROVIDENCE

P A R I S H

8866 Pardee Road, St. Louis, MO 63123

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
ST. LOUIS, MO  
PERMIT NO. 175

## Live, from OLP, It's the Morning News!

Gaining experience and confidence in public speaking is a valuable life skill. This year with the support of a generous



gift from the Barry Sheets Foundation, Our Lady of Providence School has its own television broadcasting studio which provides speaking and broadcasting experience.

SmartBoards in each classroom enable viewing throughout the school. Each day's broadcasts is written and produced by students. It includes a morning prayer, general announcements, and birthday wishes. Broadcasts also included Special Reports on Pinwheels for Peace, ProvidenceFest, Operation Christmas Child, and several class field trips. Future plans look to both sports and weather broadcasts.

Eighth graders are serving as primary anchors/reporters, but each class will be participating in broadcasts throughout the year. This provides a great opportunity for students to showcase their collective accomplishments while at the same time building skills and gaining experience with technology. As they learn public speaking and communication skills they benefit from feedback based on the recording of their presentations. Reviews of the broadcasts have been phenomenal!

The students love to see their classmates and themselves broadcast on the big screen.

---

## **Waist Size** / *continued from p. 2*

hormones and other substances that can raise blood pressure, alter good and bad cholesterol levels, and impair the body's ability to use insulin.

**Trimming the Fat** Abdominal exercises and crunches will help will help tone abdominal muscles, but won't get rid of belly fat. To fight the bulge, stick to the basics.

- Eat a healthy diet. Include plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Choose lean sources of protein and low-fat dairy products. Limit saturated fats. Choose moderate amounts of monounsaturated fats found in fish, nuts and certain vegetable oils.
- Limit portion sizes. Even when making healthy choices, calories add up.
- Include physical activity in your daily routine. The Department of Health and Human Services recommends moderate aerobic activity, such as brisk walking for at least 150 minutes a week.

Remember, you can loose belly fat, it just takes patience and effort. Shedding even a few extra pounds will help you feel better and lower your risk of health problems.

*Sources:* Mayoclinic.com and *U.S. News and World Report.*