



# THE SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

PARISH NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2010

## ROB MARO TO CONTINUE FAITH JOURNEY AT MOUNT ST. MARY'S SEMINARY

**R**ob Maro has been Blessed Sacrament's Director of Religious Education (DRE) for eight years, and all who know him realize he's a very special guy! Now, in this Year of the Priest, something special has happened to him: Rob has discerned that he will explore the possibility of becoming a priest and will attend Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD beginning in September.

Born and raised on Long Island, Rob earned a bachelor's and master's degree from the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. After several years of teaching and serving as Director of Tutoring at his alma mater, Rob came to Washington, accepting the position as Blessed Sacrament's Director of Religious Education. Here he has lead candidates in their preparation for the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, and Marriage. Directing the School of Religion, he has lead hundreds of teachers over his eight years, has guided record numbers of converts to Catholicism and has strengthened the faith of Catholics in their programs of Adult Formation.

Rob is excited about attending the seminary, his next move in his faith journey. There, he will study Latin, Biblical Greek, and theology and enhance his already-developed study of philosophy. He will pray for guidance to know God's will in his discernment about becoming a priest. For Rob, the six year seminary program will be reduced to five years in consideration of his education and his extensive work as DRE.

Rob noted, "Discernment does not happen in a vacuum. It was the encouragement of my family, friends, co-workers, and the parishioners I worked with that helped me have the courage to make this step." He credits the leadership, guidance, and encouragement of our pastor, Father John, who provided the role modeling to inspire him. Rob said, "It has been an incredible honor and privilege to work with Father John."

The Affiliate Program of the archdiocese also helped Rob in his decision. This group meets once a month for prayer, a meal, and fellowship and assists men in guiding them in their discernment process.

Rob will serve a pastoral summer and short-term assignments in a parish, and we can only hope that the assignment will be here. Rob, you'll always be at home at Blessed Sacrament! We send you forth with our thanks for your devoted service, our continued prayers, and our love.



Artwork by Sofia Crouch  
Grade 6

*Editor's Note: Rob will be in his position until the end of July. He's looking for catechists for next year. Let's honor his legacy by volunteering for this opportunity to share the faith with young people. Call him at 202.449.3989; email: rmaro@blessedsacramentdc.org.*

## MESSAGE FROM FATHER JOHN



Dear Friends,

Now that we have just celebrated Memorial Day and the unofficial beginning of summer has begun, I want to say a word of thanks to all those who worked so diligently throughout this year to make this a very special year for Blessed Sacrament. The months have flown by. It has been a busy time for your priests, your staff, and all of our parishioners. The key word for me and for all of us seems to be "balance." How do we find balance in our work, family, relationships with those we love, quality time for prayer and all of the other expectations life places upon us?

I think that's why late May and early June always brings me longings for summer: the end of the school year, the end of all of the board meetings and committees, the reduction of time for most of the boards and organizations which I support, and generally fewer things that need to be done the rest of the year. With so many parish activities for all of us throughout the year, there is rarely enough time for a quiet evening, a day of prayer, a walk on the beach, a leisurely dinner with friends, or just time to really enjoy a good novel or two. Sadly, I must admit those things don't happen nearly as often as they should from September to May. There are so many expectations, so many requests, so many calls, emails, faxes, etc...! To be honest, things don't really slow down around the parish until mid-to-late June, after school closes on June 11 and the faculty begins to wind down and take their own leisure.

I share this with you because this is my schedule; those are my pressures that keep me so busy. trip to the beach or other special place. Even so, I am very much aware that your schedules and expectations are very often far heavier than mine. If you have children, all the sports and school activities have kept you busy all throughout the school year. If you are a student, you've been

working very hard and looking forward to the summer days when you don't have homework and papers due. If you are a busy executive, you look forward to quality time with your family and those you love with a summer trip to the beach or other special place.

Thanks again to all those who have worked so hard for the parish this past year, especially to those who publish this newsletter. I particularly want to thank Pat Watson, our Editor; and Delphine Clegg, who is Editor of the parish bulletin among other things, for all of their behind-the-scenes efforts to give our parishioners the opportunity to look into the lives and activities of our parish community on a regular basis by communicating a sense of the ebb and flow of this very vibrant parish.

I wish all of you a very happy, relaxing and restful summer as the frenetic activity of our hectic lives becomes offset by the beautiful summer days that refresh and renew us for the busy fall to come. If there is one thing I know for sure, these wonderful weeks of summer are essential to all of us. Come September, we will be as hectic as ever once again!

Peace to all,  
Father John



*Artwork by Stephanie Tanzi, Grade 6*

## GIRL SCOUTS LINK GARDENS TO HOMELESS



By Lisa Greenberg

**B**lessed Sacramento's fourth grade Girl Scouts dedicated their April meeting to building container gardens out of plastic buckets for Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place (CCHFP) group homes. Troop Leader Jeannette Pablo seized on an idea suggested at one of the Blessed Sacramento Coffee and Doughnut mornings and together with parent volunteers, Meghan McCaleb and Keith Morrison, guided her Scouts through this important service project.

At the April meeting, the Scouts read aloud a short explanation of how the gardens would be an important resource for bringing fresh salad materials to formerly homeless men and women, now living in the CCHFP group homes. Then they set to work with a battery operated drill, industrial scissors, plastic buckets, gallon milk jugs, and dirt. Following the University of Maryland Extension Service directions for a self-watering container, they created nine separate planters, each with a reservoir of water below the potting soil. Meanwhile, volunteers with the community garden project had started tomatoes from seed to transplant along with radishes and lettuce. In just a few weeks, when the CCHFP clients come home from school or work, they will be able to gather some "fresh from the garden" lettuce for a nutritious salad. In two months, they will be picking their own tomatoes fresh from the vine!

Shrine of the Blessed Sacramento's Troop 3622 is the largest one in the Washington Metropolitan area and the girls love to have fun, but they are

committed to service projects. This year the troop collected cans for the Greg Gannon Food Drive, coats for the National Center for Families and Children, and accepted donations to the Save the Children fund for Haiti while selling Girl Scout Cookies. However, the container garden activity topped the list in popularity. The girls loved using the drill and constructing the containers. The meeting ran overtime because the girls insisted on completing the project because "it was for the homeless." With parents waiting patiently, the girls finished the job.

Bill Long, volunteer coordinator for CCHFP, will also be taking three containers for the offices on Wisconsin Avenue. Those planters will supply tomatoes and lettuce for the drop-ins who gather at CCHFP for companionship, medical services, and counseling.

The Scouts were essential to the success of the outreach of the Blessed Sacramento Community Garden to those in our neighborhood and city who most need access to fresh food to augment their daily nutrition. By taking the gardens to the people in the form of planted containers, the community garden introduces new skills in gardening and increases the nutrition and quality of food for its neighbors.

If interested in volunteering with the Blessed Sacramento Community Garden, please contact Lisa Greenberg at [eogreenberg@gmail.com](mailto:eogreenberg@gmail.com) or the Social Concerns Office at 202.449.3987.

## CATECHISTS OF THE YEAR RECEIVE PHILIP L. BRACH AWARD

This year's Catechist of the Year awards were conferred on Don Kosin, Nancy McDermott, and Janie Shuler, all teachers in Blessed Sacrament's School of Religion. Every year the School of Religion confers awards on catechists who exhibit excellence in teaching and the ministry of catechesis. Awardees show distinct Christ-like qualities in the way they care for their students, parents, and fellow catechists. The award recognizes a particularly creative and innovative approach to the religious formation of youngsters and one that engages the parents in an effective and meaningful way. Catechists from the Sunday and Tuesday programs of the School of Religion are eligible for this award and are nominated and chosen by parents of the students.

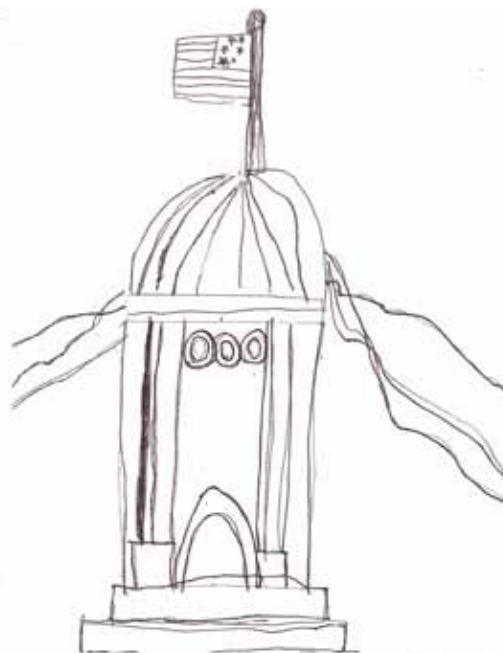
In 2009 the award was named the Philip L. Brach Award to honor the legacy of Phil, a parishioner who taught continuously for 35 years in the School of Religion. Phil was a man of faith, a man who believed and lived his religion, providing inspiration to those who knew him. Don Kosin, who worked with Phil for 17 years, and one of this year's awardees commented, "This year, having Phil's incredible grandson, Patrick, in my class made winning an award in his name all the more special."

The awardees jointly agreed that by teaching in the School of Religion they receive much more than they give. Students inspire the teachers who add another layer of understanding by having worked with the class. Nancy McDermott explained, "This is a way I can live out the Baltimore Catechism's message to know, love and serve God."

Many teachers are long-time veterans. They admit disliking the alarm clock ring on Sunday morning, but Don Kosin indicated, "Sharing Sunday mornings with my classes has been the high point of my week more often than not. I realize the importance of it when I see what my students get out of it and when I see former students---my first First Communion class is graduating from College."

Congratulations to the awardees and to all the teachers and students who have completed this 2009-10 year in the School of Religion. Well done, good and faithful servants!

*Editor's Note: Consider volunteering next school year as a catechist or as a classroom aide. Contact Rob Maro at: rmaro@blessedsacramentdc.org or 202.449.3989.*



Artwork by Perry Lindstrom  
Kindergarten

## GRATITUDE LOOKS GOOD ON YOU!

By John Dluhy, M.D.

**A** child's smile,  
A spouse's loving gesture,  
A beautiful sunrise,  
An observed random act of kindness,  
An historical event discovered,  
See God's Hand in this, be grateful,  
Feel grateful, and  
Say your gratitude to God.

Gratitude looks good on you!



Artwork by Ciara Jacobs  
Grade 2

## SHARE SPECIALS FOR JUNE

**S**ummer Meat Special and Pork Back Ribs Special from SHARE Food Co-op for June are real bargains with an assortment of steak, pork, chicken, and hamburger patties and spare ribs. The meat special and the separate monthly SHARE Value Package are just \$20 each; the normal retail price would be \$35. The ribs package is only \$16. You can order any or all of the packages separately or in combination.

SHARE at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament provides quality food at cost-effective prices. This valuable program is open to everyone in the community. There is no requirement to be a member of Blessed Sacrament Parish, or to purchase a package every month, or any other obligation. SHARE's major goal is to harness its buying power and cadre of volunteers to distribute high-quality, affordable and nutritious food on a cost-effective basis. By participating in SHARE you demonstrate a sense of solidarity with those who rely on this money-saving program to provide food for their families. Plus, you benefit from the cost-effective prices. For \$20 you receive approximately \$45 worth of fresh vegetables and fruits and name brand groceries in the Value Package.

Please see the June menu and order form at <http://www.blessedsacramentdc.org/> (click on COMMUNITY and then SHARE). For more information, leave a message in the Blessed Sacrament SHARE voice mailbox: 202.449.4611 or send an e-mail to [SHARE@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:SHARE@blessedsacramentdc.org).



*Artwork by Grace McGill  
Grade 6*



*Artwork by Henry Menn  
Grade 7*

## THANK YOU

**S**o many minds, energies, talents and hours go into the creation of our newsletter. We hope you enjoyed reading it this year.

To:

Father John, who contributed a regular newsletter column,

John Dluhy, M.D., who contributed a monthly column, "Justin Time,"

Judy Kearns and her talented art students at Blessed Sacrament School,

Other Chevy Chase congregations who provided information for the historical articles,

Many other contributing authors of articles that appeared this year,

Delphine Clegg who converted the print copy into an attractive format,

**Thank You** for making this newsletter possible.

Pat Watson, Editor

**Please note that our next newsletter will be published in September. Your articles/photos/information are always welcome. Please send your contributions to: [newsletter@blessedsacramentdc.org](mailto:newsletter@blessedsacramentdc.org).**