



SAINT TIMOTHY
CATHOLIC CHURCH



GIFTED Ministry Creating Atmosphere of Loving Acceptance

As the parent of a disabled child, St. Timothy parishioner Dino Scanio understands and promotes the importance of hospitality, support and love within our parish community.

“I want my son to feel embraced, welcomed, and loved,” Dino says. “When you deal with disabilities, sometimes all the family or individual has left is their faith. It’s so important for parishes to have a place specifically for families with loved ones who have disabilities where they can come and feel welcomed, accepted and be able to grow in their faith, regardless of physical or mental disabilities.”

Beyond his personal experience as the father of a disabled child, Dino has spent his entire professional career advocating for children with disabilities. As such, he feels passionate about the importance of having parish ministries and events specifically for these children and families. That’s why he helped establish St. Timothy’s Growing



Some of our GIFTED children and adults.

in Faith Together Every Day – GIFTED – Ministry.

“We hope to not only minister to these families, but to also usher them in more fully into the life of the Church,” Dino says.

Always taking place on a Saturday, GIFTED monthly gatherings begin with members attending the 5:30 p.m. Mass together. Afterwards, families travel to the Youth Center where they can share a meal,

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October 2017

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GIFTED Ministry continued from front cover



Some kind of faith-based craft or activity is always prepared for our GIFTED children and adults, put on by teen and adult volunteers.

enjoy fellowship and finally listen to a presentation on a topic pertaining to disabilities.

“We try to bring in experts from both within and without our community to speak on a wide variety of topics,” Dino says. “In the past, for example, we’ve had someone speak on the IEP (Individualized Education Program) process for children with disabilities in the school system, have had a musical therapist come and share about the benefits of musical therapy for both adults and children, and I’ve given a talk on navigating the healthcare process.”

In this way, parents and family members of disabled individuals can receive much needed support and enrichment, reminding them that they are not alone. Meanwhile, the special needs children and adults are able to enjoy their own faith-based activity or craft in a separate room, coordinated by youth and adult volunteers. This ends up being a tremendous blessing for GIFTED volunteers, who are concretely reminded of their own blessings while also being shown the meaning of true, unselfish love.

“Love, joy, pure innocence – these are the gifts that come from this ministry,” Dino says. “We have some Down syndrome teenagers and adults, for example, who are by nature very, very loving, open and compassionate. These are qualities that you just don’t see freely expressed in everyday society. I think being involved in this ministry really teaches you how to be humble. We tend to take for granted the gifts of our health and intelligence, so when our youth are able to come and help these individuals who are so grateful, it really opens their eyes to their own gifts.”

Still a relatively young ministry, GIFTED hopes to continue evolving so that it can better meet the needs of our parish family. Yet, to do this effectively, more volunteers are needed. We need experts to present to our GIFTED parents, individuals who are willing to assist with food and, most importantly of all, we need volunteers who are eager to show Christ’s love to our disabled parishioners and their families. To learn more about GIFTED or to get involved, please contact Dino Scanio at dinoms@verizon.net.

“Here I Am, Lord.” But Are You Really There? Are You Responding to God’s Call?

Dear Friends in Christ,

Throughout the Bible we hear people say, “Here I am, Lord,” or something similar. Normally, it is a response to a communication, a call, from God. In the Old Testament Book of Exodus, for example, it states, “God called out to him from the bush: ‘Moses! Moses!’ He answered, ‘Here I am’” (Exodus 3:4). We often speak in the Church about the fact that we have each received a calling from God. We also regularly say that one way to respond to that call is to live a life of stewardship.

Of course, the truth is that many do not hear God’s call because they are either not listening or they do not want to hear it. Of course, that is not how we should feel. I could write about my own call, but right now, I would rather address your call.

This is a time of year when there are calls from those in need all around us. Some of those calling are ministries right here in our parish. Before I address our response, it is important to emphasize that we need to hear the call. To hear something, we have to be listening.

The second issue is our response to the call. Do we indeed say, “Here I am”? Or, do we choose to say and do nothing? Stewardship is a call to action, a call to do something to share with and to help others. In the Old



Testament passage cited above, Moses responds, “Who am I?” (Exodus 3:11) – meaning he feels unworthy and unable to fulfill this call from the Lord. God’s answer is everything, as He says to Moses simply, “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12). Thus, we receive the call; we are to respond to God making it clear that we are ready. We may quite likely feel (as Moses did) that we are unprepared for what God may be asking us to do, but His response to Moses was the same as His response to us – “I will be with you.”

That is enough to empower us and strengthen us to try to serve God and fulfill His desires for us. Of course, there is one other call to which we need to respond. It is, as Christ said many times, “Come follow Me.”

As we enter this part of our personal year, this part of our calendar year, and this part of our Church year, may we be ready to listen, to respond, and then to do – full with the knowledge that the Lord is with us always!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Kenneth J. Malley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light gray rectangular background.

Rev. Kenneth J. Malley



Jerry and Liliana Gimenez

“You Get to See t

For some people, service is such a part of who they are that they can't really ever “switch it off.” This certainly seems to be the case for parishioners Jerry and Liliana Gimenez, who retired from their family business several years ago, only to end up taking on new jobs that allow them to continue to serve their community. And they both love what they do so much, they have no intention of retiring again any time soon!

Jerry and Liliana sold their family business in order to retire eight years ago, and Liliana spent a year helping out with her newborn grandson before returning to work at the prompting of a friend.

“I was very happy being retired, but a friend of mine from church said she had a part-time position as an administrator opening up at the Foundation of Life Pregnancy Center, and asked if I would like to try it,” Liliana recalls. “So, I gave it a try, and soon I was working 40 hours a week. Six months later, I was made a manager at one place and then six years ago, we opened another location in Tampa. Now, I’m managing both locations. So,



Liliana and Jerry Gimenez

we were going to retire, but our passions called both of us back to work!”

While Liliana’s passion for life brought her back to the working world, for Jerry, it was a desire to serve Spanish-speaking migrant

workers and their families. In 2003, he began a Spanish ministry here at St. Timothy and was thankful for the great generosity that other parish groups showed during the collections for that ministry. Now, Jerry works as the mission coordinator of the

“Everything we have belongs to God, and we are just stewards of it. Our passion for the poor is what guides us and drives us.” – Liliana Gimenez

Find Blessings in Service the Face of Christ"

Santa Maria Mission run by St. Mary Catholic Church. The mission provides a weekly Mass – as well as help with spiritual and physical needs – to Spanish-speaking people in the Tampa neighborhood known as “Suitcase City” due to its highly transient population.

In his work with the Santa Maria Mission, Jerry has witnessed again the great support of the priests and parishioners here at St. Timothy.

“A lot of things I do at the mission, we wouldn’t be able to do without the overwhelming generosity of St. Tim’s,” Jerry says. “We are reliant on the Men’s Club and St. Vincent de Paul, and many times if I’m running short on food or funds, I just make a phone call and it’s taken care of. We are also grateful for all of our priests – whenever you have a goal or a need, they make it happen.”

While Liliana and Jerry have certainly earned the right to retire after their many years in business together, they are finding that the rewards of their current jobs in service are more than enough reason to continue working every day. Their inspiring stories are plentiful, though they can each point to one that has truly stuck with them.

For Liliana, it is the memory of a couple that was heading into the abortion clinic next door to the Foundations of Life Pregnancy Center that decided to come into

the center for an ultrasound after being encouraged to do so by the high school prayer group on the sidewalk outside the clinic. The young couple had tears in their eyes when they saw their 22-week-old baby on the ultrasound monitor. The next day, they called Liliana at the center to tell her they had decided against an abortion after all. Liliana checked in with the new parents a year later, and although their financial situation was difficult, the mother happily described her baby boy as “the apple of his daddy’s eye.”

Reflecting on his work at the Santa Maria Mission, Jerry recalls arriving at the mission one day with a trailer filled with generous donations from the St. Timothy community. When an elderly woman spotted a mop among the many items in the truck, she asked if she could have it, explaining that her husband was suffering from dementia and made messes that she had difficulty cleaning from the floor. When Jerry gave her the mop, the woman cried “as if she had been given a precious jewel,” and she continues to thank Jerry every time she sees him.

The moments like these – and a deep gratitude for all the gifts they have been given – are what keep Jerry and Liliana working long past their planned retirement date.

“It’s an ongoing thing, every day and every week, when you go to work and you end up seeing the gifts of Christ working through you,” Jerry says. “My family was able to bring me here from a third world country in South America when I was 15 years old, and I was able to meet my wife 5,000 miles from home in New York. Imagine – her from Argentina and me from Uruguay! We raised beautiful children and were able to give them a Catholic education and now have eight grandchildren. So, if you look at all the treasures that you receive, how can you not give back to those who don’t have as much?”

Like Jerry, Liliana sees her service work as a beautiful way to give back in thanksgiving for the many blessings received.

“It comes from a deep understanding that everything we have belongs to God, and we are just stewards of it,” she explains. “Our passion for the poor is what guides us and drives us.”

And if you are wondering when this couple might finally retire for good, the answer is – don’t hold your breath! For now, they can’t imagine a life without service.

“The truth of the matter is, when you get to see the face of Christ every day where you work, that is not a job,” Jerry says.



Join the Ranks and Honor the Dignity of Life in October

All Catholics are summoned to action. However, not all of them respond.

Pope Benedict XVI's homily during the April 2008 Papal Mass, held at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, directed all Catholics to respond when they are called to action:

"The Church... is called to proclaim the gift of life, to serve life and to promote a culture of life... this is the message of hope we are called to proclaim and embody in a world where self-centeredness, greed, violence, and cynicism so often seem to choke the fragile growth of grace in people's hearts."

October is Respect Life Month. Respect Life Sunday, as designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is celebrated each year on the first Sunday of October.

And as we face the looming culture of death, we are all summoned to action. An apostolic exhortation by Pope St. John Paul II, titled *Ecclesia in America*, described this culture of death's effects on the "powerless" within American society:

"I am thinking here of unborn children, helpless victims of abortion; the elderly and the incurably ill, subjected at times to euthanasia; and the many other people relegated to the margins of society by consumerism and materialism. Nor can I fail to mention the unnecessary recourse to the death penalty ... Faced with this distressing reality, the Church community intends to commit itself all the more to the defense of the culture of life" (*Ecclesia in America* 63).

Respect Life Month is the perfect time to prayerfully examine our consciences in light of these critical issues, which directly violate the dignity of the human person. This includes not only the evil of abortion, but also euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, capital punishment, and contraception – all of which are vital contributors to the pervasive culture of death.

So we must individually ask ourselves, "Do I, in my personal, day-to-day choices, respect life? If so, do

I boldly proclaim this belief or merely stand idle? Do I exercise my right to vote and support candidates who promote a culture of life? Am I known within my home, family, and/or workplace as someone that respects life?"

As with every movement of a Christian heart towards goodness, it is imperative that our efforts issue forth from a prayerful foundation. The work of the Holy Spirit allows us to receive the zeal necessary to promote the sanctity of human life, even in the face of suffering.

This October, please pray for a revitalization of the culture of life. Every night, as a family, meditate on the prayer from John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*. As you pray, allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with apostolic boldness, and ask the Lord to guide your heart towards ways in which you can personally contribute to the culture of life.

The call is clear, the stakes are set, and all Catholics are summoned to action. How will you respond?

St. Pope John Paul II's Prayer for the Revitalization of the Culture of Life

*O Mary, bright dawn of the new world, Mother of the living,
to you do we entrust the cause of life*

*Look down, O Mother, upon the vast numbers of babies not
allowed to be born, of the poor whose lives are made difficult, of
men and women who are victims of brutal violence, of the elderly
and the sick killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy.*

*Grant that all who believe in your Son may proclaim the Gospel
of life with honesty and love to the people of our time.*

*Obtain for them the grace to accept that Gospel as a gift ever
new, the joy of celebrating it with gratitude throughout their lives
and the courage to bear witness to it resolutely, in order to build,
together with all people of good will, the civilization of truth and
love, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life.*

—St. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*

Service to Remember Loved Ones and Bring Comfort to the Grieving



When a loved one passes away, grief can become overwhelming. Long after the funeral has ended, those closest to the deceased must find a way to carry on without their loved one. In these difficult moments, it can be comforting to remember their salvation through Jesus' resurrection and to honor their memory in a meaningful way.

For those who have died within the past year, St. Timothy offers a special service to commemorate their lives through the All Saints/All Souls Candle Light Remembrance Mass. The service is part of a two-part ritual in relationship to St. Timothy's Funeral Ministry.

"This is a great spiritual way to recall our loved ones and encounter inner peace," says Funeral Ministry Coordinator Cathy Summers. "It is a noble and exalted form of bereavement."

As Cathy explains, the first part of the rite takes place just before the funeral Mass, when a candle is lit in conjunction with the recording of the deceased person's name in the Book of the Departed. Then, on the Saturday prior to All Saints/All Souls Day, the remembrance Mass is celebrated in honor of anyone who passed since Nov. 1, 2016.

A large cross filled with white sand is brought into the Day Chapel for the Mass. One hundred white tea lights are placed in the sand within the cross and, one by one, relatives and friends of the deceased are invited to come forward and light one of the candles as the name of their departed family member is called. Email invitations are sent to make sure family members of those who had a funeral or memorial service at St. Timothy's in the past year can be present, but if no one is available, the candle will be lit by a member of the Funeral Ministry.

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– Cathy Summers, Funeral Ministry Coordinator

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Service to Remember Loved Ones and Bring Comfort to the Grieving *continued from front cover*

“Once the entire roster of departed names is read, our priest invites anyone who had a loved one die during that particular time frame, from anywhere in the world, to come forth, say the person’s name aloud, and light a tea candle,” Cathy says. “It is absolutely a wonderful experience and a beautiful sight.”

Now a long-standing tradition at the parish, the two forms of candle lighting were initiated in 1993 under the pastoral leadership of Msgr. Dennis Hughes and Grief Counselor Brenda Covini. Both rites are meant to remember those who have died and ask God to grant mercy on them in judgement.

“The ceremony of the candle-lighting rituals have become a very integral part of our Funeral Ministry and to our funerals as a whole,” Cathy says.

The All Saints/All Souls Candlelight Remembrance Mass will take place on Saturday, Oct. 28, at 9 a.m. in the Day Chapel. The names of those who had a funeral or wake at St. Timothy in the last year are registered with the parish office. The designated family contact person will be emailed an invitation regarding the Candlelight Mass, and an RSVP is requested to confirm attendance.

If you are a parishioner and a loved one has passed within this year’s time frame but did not have a funeral service at St. Timothy, you may also contact the office to submit the name of your family member or friend to be remembered at the Candlelight Mass. Please call the parish office by Tuesday, Oct. 24 at 813-968-1077 with your name and the name of the deceased.

• **Mass Schedule** •

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 p.m. • Sunday: 7:30, 9, 11 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. • Daily: Mon-Sat 9 a.m., Wed 6:15 p.m. • Holy Days: 9 a.m. & 7 p.m. Vigil: 7 p.m.