



SAINT TIMOTHY
CATHOLIC CHURCH



"Open Your Heart" While Walking the Camino de Santiago

A few years ago while attending a wedding, Michelle Barry listened to anecdotes from people who had traversed portions of the Camino de Santiago.

In that moment, the Holy Spirit gently nudged her heart. She felt called to engage in this physical challenge, sensing that it would help her grow emotionally and spiritually. And it did.

"As I was walking, I felt myself changing and becoming better aligned with whom God has called me to be," Michelle says. "I felt this change in my heart and such an awareness of Christ in my life. I realized that my faith has such a long way to go."

The Camino de Santiago is a "bucket list" item for many people who feel called to walk this network of ancient pilgrimage routes leading to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in the northwest corner of Spain.

"The Camino is very unique in that it calls a diverse group of people and gives a different experience to each individual, regardless of where you come from or what your story is," Michelle says. "The richness of its history and the spirituality of the Camino are so sorely needed in today's world."

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Michelle Barry and her group started in St.-Jean-Pied-de-Port, France, and then walked across the Pyrenees to Roncesvalles, Spain.

May 2019

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Camino de Santiago *continued from front cover*

Before beginning the Camino, Michelle prepared physically and spiritually. She started walking long distances about six weeks in advance. She also collected intentions from many people and brought them in a journal with her to pray for along the way.

“By the third day, I realized that the walk itself is a prayer, and it was more about feeling like I am in the presence of God and listening for Him,” Michelle says.

In August of 2018 Michelle joined a small group of pilgrims who traveled together to spend two weeks walking a portion of the French Way, the most popular route, which begins in France.

“The first day is the hardest because you walk over the Pyrenees mountains, and it is uphill for about 10 miles,” Michelle says. “As you walk across the Spanish mountains and countryside, you have an incredible opportunity to connect with God in a way you can’t during the busyness of daily life.”

Together, the group walked about 15 miles a day and would usually begin around 8 a.m., though one day they began at 3:30 a.m. Every evening, they would explore the Spanish town in which they were lodging that night and celebrate Mass. In total, they walked approximately 200 miles and ended in León, Spain.

“The route was very rural, but there are many little villages along the way kept in existence by the pilgrims,” Michelle says. “Sometimes you’re walking with people, and sometimes you’re walking in silence. There is no sense of being rushed, and it’s beautiful to let things unfold on this natural timeline.”

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims walk the Camino each year, and while many do so to participate in a spiritual pilgrimage, others aren’t necessarily even religious.

“I felt a very strong connection to the larger Christian community knowing this same path had been walked by so many people before,” Michelle says. “There are crushed shells along the path, and the crunching sound they make became this meditative background noise. I felt like I could turn off my mind and open my heart.”

This summer Michelle will return to Spain to complete the pilgrimage with her group beginning in León and ending at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.



Michelle Barry walks the Camino de Santiago.



The Camino de Santiago is marked by either signposts with arrows, yellow arrows painted on buildings through the towns, or even arrows on the path made out of stones.

As a mother of three and a wife for nearly 30 years, Michelle would encourage anyone hoping to recharge and reconnect with God to participate in the Camino.

“Listen to those little sparks from the Holy Spirit and be open to those opportunities,” Michelle says. “Maybe this is a message especially for mothers. Take that time away, even when you don’t think you need it, and do whatever the Holy Spirit is calling you to do.”

Honoring Our Lady in May

Dear Friends in Christ,

As people of faith, we often refer to May as “the month of Mary.” For centuries, Catholics throughout the world have included special devotions to Mary in their activities during this month. Best known, I’m sure, is the widespread and ever-popular practice of May Crowning — crowning an image of Our Lady with flowers.

May is certainly a beautiful time — it is, after all, a month full of renewal and celebration. For many Americans, cold March winds and dreary April showers have given way to blooming flowers and trees. Yet, it’s not only flowers and trees that reflect the newness and joy of May.

Many students in junior high, high school and college are celebrating their graduations, and will soon be moving on to new phases and exciting opportunities in their lives. And of course, it

is the month when we celebrate Mother’s Day, honoring and extending our gratitude to the women who have faithfully raised and nurtured us.

And May is most certainly a month of joy for all of us who claim the Church as our spiritual home. This year, we spend the whole month in the Easter season, which closes with Pentecost in June. Thus, the joy of the Resurrection and the glory of the Ascension are the themes that fill our Christian calendar.

As we rejoice with Mary at her Son’s triumph over sin, Satan and death, we also remember her faithfulness to God’s will throughout her life. Indeed, she can be viewed as the model of Christian stewardship. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops pointed to her in their pastoral letter on stewardship: “After Jesus, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who by her example most perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship in their fullest sense. All of their essential elements are found in her life: she was called and gifted by God and she responded generously, creatively, and prudently” (*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 41).

As we enter into the month of May, let us take time to gratefully reflect on the newness and joy that surrounds us. And in doing so, let us follow the Blessed Mother’s example of total dedication to God as we rejoice in the blessings He gives us, this month and beyond!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Kenneth J. Malley





A PATH OF “ Leslie and Ralph D’Elia Reflect on

If you had told Leslie and Ralph D’Elia 10 years ago that one of their sons would soon be following a call to the priesthood, they might not have believed you. And yet, today, they simply couldn’t imagine their son, Ralph, taking any other path in life! Reflecting on the journey that brought their son to the seminary, the D’Elia’s marvel at the way God’s plan has unfolded in their lives.

While Leslie was raised in the Catholic faith and her husband was brought up Baptist, the couple did their marriage preparation and baptized their children in the Catholic Church. Later, they began attending a Baptist church together as a family. When Ralph’s work took the D’Elia family to Fort Myers, they found themselves drawn to a beautiful Catholic Church in Lehigh called St. Raphael.

Attending some of the Masses at St. Raphael, Leslie discovered how much she missed practicing her Catholic faith.

“I wasn’t finding that fulfillment in other churches,” she says. “So I told Ralph that I wanted our children to receive the sacraments and I wanted it to be something we could fully embrace. We became parishioners at St. Raphael, and my husband went to Mass with us every Sunday.”

Making the decision to recommit to the Catholic faith was life changing for Leslie and, in turn, for the whole family.

“It was a big turning point for us,” Leslie says. “I really felt like I had come home. It was just something that really resonated with me. There was such warmth and love in that church. Looking back on it, you can really see God’s hand as He takes you through the journey.”

It was at St. Raphael Catholic Church that the D’Elia’s son, Ralph — the oldest of three boys and a sophomore in high school — first became involved with the church youth group and began forging his own way in the Catholic faith. Under the direction of youth minister Laura Pardo, Ralph began to learn more about the faith and Church teachings. Soon, he became an altar server.

When Ralph, then a junior in high school, first told his parents that he might have a vocation to the priesthood, they weren’t very surprised. After all — as his father would point out — how many high schoolers have a picture of the pope hanging in their rooms?! However, when he was a senior, Ralph began to wonder if he might instead be called to attend college and eventually marry. He visited a seminary that year, but ultimately decided to enroll at a state university instead.

As a student at the University of South Florida, Ralph was on track for a potential future career in law. Yet in his senior year, he was revisited by a familiar call. Leslie recognized the longing that had returned to her son’s heart, and was pleased when he began to meet with a spiritual director. Following his college graduation, Ralph spent time on retreat in Alabama and came back strengthened in his call to the priesthood.

“He came back and said it was a beautiful experience,” Leslie says. “What blew his mind the most was that he was sitting in Mass there, and an older gentleman touched his arm and said, ‘You are discerning the priesthood, aren’t you? I’ll pray for you.’ He came back and said he absolutely knew what he had to do, and I told him, ‘When God calls, you have to say “yes,”



The entire D’Elia family traveled to Vatican City for Ralph’s ordination to the transitional diaconate in September 2018.

'PURE JOY': A Son's Journey to the Priesthood

because that's where the true joy and love and peace for your life comes from."

Ralph is currently doing his Major Seminary in Rome. With a Master's in Theology already completed, he is now working on a license in Moral Theology. His entire family traveled to Rome last fall to witness his ordination as a transitional deacon.

"I looked at him beaming during the diaconate ordination, and it was pure joy," Leslie says. "It's hard to put into words what that experience was like. Our whole family and 22 parishioners from St. Timothy were there. My in-laws were in awe, and they just embraced it. They couldn't be prouder of him, either."

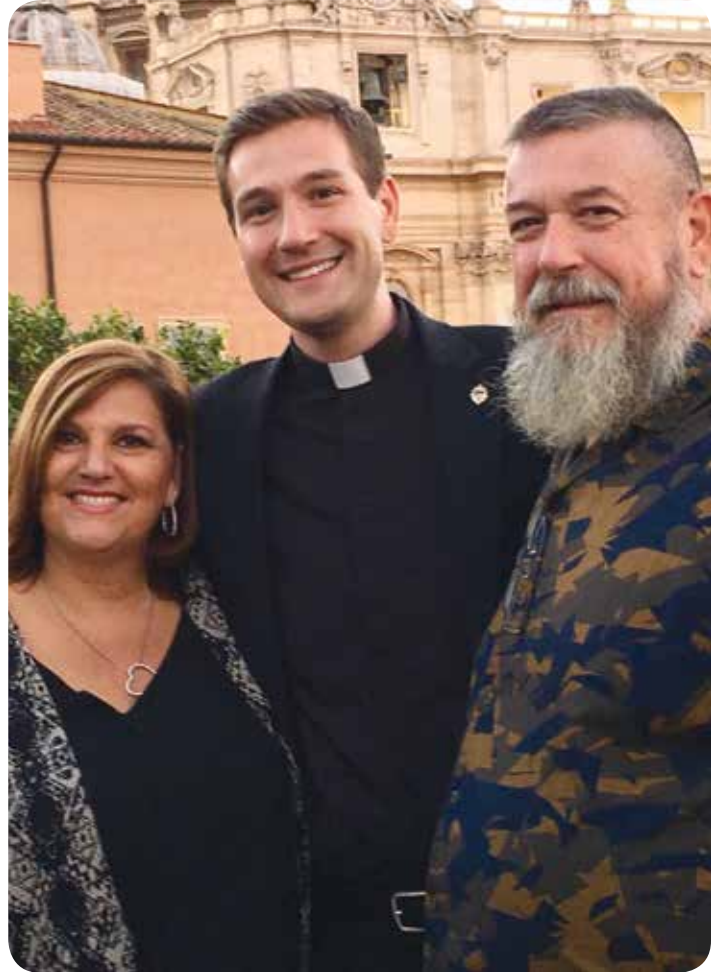
Leslie's husband, Ralph, is equally proud and thankful to see how much joy this calling has already brought his son.

"He is so happy," Ralph says. "There was never a doubt from the time he said this was what he wanted to do. Leslie and I knew that he was leaning toward this from a young age. I can't say enough how proud I am of my son. He's turned out to be a beautiful young man."

Looking to the future, Leslie prays that the priesthood will continue to be a fruitful calling in her son's life.

"My wish for Ralph is that he remains as joyful as he is now," she says. "He has a beautiful humility about him, an ability to connect with others, and a great sense of humor. So that's my hope — that he remains that person who will touch so many people's lives, and that others will experience what I have through him.

"His journey has enriched my faith life and impacted me profoundly," Leslie adds. "When I step back and see the fulfillment that following God has brought him, he is a living example to me. It makes your faith stronger watching God and His hand at work. It's just amazing!"



The entire D'Elia family traveled to Vatican City for Ralph's ordination to the transitional diaconate in September 2018.

It was also Ralph's path to the priesthood that brought the D'Elia family here to St. Timothy. When Ralph was assigned here for a summer of pastoral training, the whole family fell in love with our parish. Now, they are incredibly thankful to have become part of such a warm, dynamic and supportive faith family.

Ralph D'Elia will be ordained a diocesan priest at the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle on May 18, 2019 at 11 a.m. He will say his Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Timothy on May 19, with a reception to follow. We hope that many of our parishioners will come out to give Ralph and his parents our congratulations and support on this momentous occasion!



Celebrating the Stewardship of Mothers During the Month of May

We celebrate Mary during May, and during this month, we also celebrate Mother's Day. It seems fitting that we honor our mothers during May, since Mary is given to us by God as the example of true Christian motherhood.

Those who are called to be mothers have been blessed by God and called to fulfill a very important responsibility. Mothers are the vehicle through which God brings new life into this world. When we talk about Christian stewardship, we talk about sacrificially returning to God what we have been given. What can more clearly be a demonstration of complete sacrifice than the relationship between mother and child during the nine months of growth in the womb? During these nine months, the child's life depends on the actions of the mother as her energy and nourishment goes directly to the growing baby.

Although this relationship may change to some extent after the child is born, a mother's sacrifice for her child is far from over after the birth. The role of the mother is critical in the child's development — both

spiritually and physically — throughout life. Mothers provide the comfort, nurture and support necessary for their children to become productive citizens and responsible Christians.

The job of a mother is not an easy one. This is a fact that Mary, the mother of Jesus, knew very well. She worried when her young Son appeared to be lost, only to find Him later in His Father's House. She was probably concerned as Jesus began His public ministry — not knowing what difficulties and rejections He would encounter along the way. And Mary must have experienced great anguish as she watched her Son's body being crucified to a cross.

May all mothers look to Mary as their model for motherhood and ask her intercession as they strive to fulfill their God-given role in their children's lives. During the month of May, let us all take some time to express our appreciation to our mothers for allowing us to come into this world, for loving us, and for serving as an example of what it means to be a steward for life.



Parishioner Shaun Fowler Reflects on the Joys of Teaching



Shaun and Maggie Fowler with their children, Noah and Janie

During this Teacher Appreciation Month of May, we are happy to extend our deepest gratitude to all parishioners who serve our community as teachers. While their primary task is to educate our youth in the academic curricula, we all know that, in reality, teachers do so much more — they show our children love and support, they help them develop socially and emotionally, they build their self-esteem and they give them a sense of belonging. The list of ways in which teachers serve our families and communities is endless, and we feel blessed to have many of these selfless servants here in our parish family at St. Timothy.

Parishioner Shaun Fowler has been teaching at Steinbrenner High School since it first opened 10 years ago. Four years prior, he had been teaching at an elementary school. And before that, he was on a quite different path, pursuing a career in the corporate world.

After years of working for Toshiba, Bell South, and a Tampa bank, Mr. Fowler decided it was time for a change.

“My work wasn’t fulfilling to me,” he says. “Now I talk to my students about how, when I was in college, I felt the calling to be a teacher, but I copped out on that because I thought, ‘There’s no money in teaching.’ Years later, it suddenly came back to me, and my wife, Maggie, supported me. I definitely didn’t ignore the calling this time!”

Now a teacher of Human Geography, World History, Government, and History of the Vietnam War, Mr. Fowler couldn’t be happier with his career change. His prior experience in the business world is still an important part of his life, though, and he uses it to enrich his teaching.

“We have fun [with the lessons],” he says. “Some topics aren’t the easiest or most exciting, but I like to bring real-world experience in since I did work in the corporate world. We look at the curriculum and how you might use it in the world outside of school.”

Mr. Fowler’s favorite aspect of teaching is being able to witness firsthand the academic and personal growth

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Parishioner Shaun Fowler Reflects on the Joys of Teaching

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that takes place in his students — from the time they first enter the school as freshmen to the day of their high school graduation.

As a history teacher, Mr. Fowler is also thankful for the opportunity to increase the students' awareness and gratitude for those who have gone before them.

"The Vietnam class is an elective, so the seniors taking it are choosing to be there," he says. "They're taking the class to see what those who fought for our country did for us. When I have Vietnam veterans come speak to the class, the students are very interested. And they surprise me — they're shaking the veteran's hand as they're walking out, thanking him or her for their service.

"I like that they appreciate what the soldiers of the past and present do," Mr. Fowler adds. "And I'm thinking, 'Okay, maybe the future actually looks good!'"

In all he does as a teacher — and as the Steinbrenner High School assistant baseball coach — Mr. Fowler strives to show compassion. If a student is acting out, he seeks to find what might be causing the issue and help the student

work through the situation. And what Mr. Fowler has found over the years is that not only is he making a difference in the lives of the students, but they are making a huge impact on him as well.

Since landing here in the Tampa area 15 years ago, the Fowlers have enjoyed seeing where life has taken them. Not only has one of them found a greatly rewarding career in teaching, but also they and their children have found a vibrant faith community to call home right here at St. Timothy. Mr. Fowler serves as a Eucharistic Minister and has taught Children's Faith Formation in our parish, while his wife, Maggie, is a lector.

"When we first came to St. Timothy, it was brand new, and it was a place where we could jump in and help out," Mr. Fowler says. "We really feel connected to everyone."

Our parish is thankful for the many teachers who, like Mr. Shaun Fowler, have made St. Timothy their faith home. We are truly blessed by their tireless dedication to helping today's youth grow in mind and spirit!

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.