



**SAINT TIMOTHY**  
CATHOLIC CHURCH



## The S.O.S. Human Trafficking Ministry: *Serving as Christ and Standing Against Injustice*

**T**hough we tend to associate slavery exclusively with the past, the sad truth is that it still maintains its damaging presence in modern-day society through human trafficking. Generating billions of dollars annually, this underground form of slavery holds captive approximately 21 million children, women and men worldwide in an endless cycle of use and abuse. And the state

of Florida is currently third in the nation in facilitating this horror.

“There is no mercy, no chance of kind treatment, no way [for us] to know where or who they are,” says St. Timothy parishioner Theresa Swanda. “It is a certainty that these people are treated like animals, becoming branded like cattle, brainwashed and drugged into a stupor of submission. And

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*St. Paul and St. Timothy S.O.S. members*

September 2019

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## The S.O.S. Ministry *continued from front cover*

once captured, these people average six more years of life.”

This is why St. Timothy's S.O.S. Ministry — Speak Out on Slavery — is so vital to our community, and is dedicated to stopping human trafficking in the Tampa Bay area. This is accomplished primarily by providing education and creating a greater awareness of the evils of human trafficking. The ministry also helps support local agencies designed to care for, support and heal rescued human trafficking victims. Over the years S.O.S. has expanded to three distinct chapters at St. Paul's in Tampa, Espiritu Santo in Safety Harbor, and our own branch here at St. Timothy. Together our hope is to more fully become Christ to those in need, becoming His instruments of hope and redemption.

“It's all about being God's hands and feet, voice and advocates to rebuke the work of Satan unceasingly and stand up for what is right,” Theresa says. “It is not easy. It takes courage, piety, fortitude, prayer and determination. Yet, it is the Holy Spirit who calls and sustains us in these terrible trials. And with our ‘YES,’ God works miracles.”

Just as with other pro-life endeavors, working to stop human trafficking can be difficult, seeming almost futile at times. After all, its victims are unseen, making it easy for us to forget about them entirely. And we rarely witness the direct fruits of our labors against it. Yet, as Catholics we have a solemn responsibility to stand up against injustices, particularly those that are crimes against humanity.

“If we are to be true faithful Catholics, we must concern ourselves with these issues,” Theresa says. “We must be involved. There are many ways to help. The most important of these is prayer and advocacy for which you never have to leave home. For those who can and want to step out further, we have a thriving Life Ministry for them and many areas needing help.”



*Though they may not always see the fruits of their labors, S.O.S. members are doing their part to fight the good fight here on earth.*

S.O.S. Ministry provides parishioners with tools and resources to better join in the pro-life fight. Always in need of new volunteers, the ministry welcomes any adult or teen interested in joining. Monetary donations are also deeply appreciated, helping the ministry perform even more good works in the Tampa Bay area. Love offerings can be made at any time directly to the ministry or through periodic special events such as the recent Beloved and Beautiful Afternoon Tea.

No matter your contribution — be it the gift of time or a monetary donation — parishioners can be confident that they are giving to a worthy cause. And though we might not live to see the end of human trafficking or abortion in our lifetimes, at least we can say honestly when we meet our Lord that we did our best.

“We know our little group will not stop abortion or human trafficking alone but we have many helpers around the world,” Theresa says. “Our collective and personal holiness will rise like incense in God's sight, and change the world and thwart evil.”

*For more information about St. Timothy's S.O.S. Ministry, please contact Theresa Swanda at 813-843-3375.*

*A Letter From Our Pastor*

## Getting Our Priorities in Order

Dear Friends in Christ,

I know that many people are not on a school year calendar. But for many of us, the beginning of the school year brings a livelier rhythm to our schedules as life just seems to get busier. Therefore, this seems to be a good time to think about our priorities and to pray for God's guidance.

It has been said that the truly important is often pushed aside by the merely urgent. So, as you review your priorities, please make sure that you include what's really important!

First of all, be sure to include time for God, as well as for job, family and recreation. Of prime importance, make sure that Mass on Sundays is a top priority — that's the most important event of the week. In addition, reserve some time for personal Scripture study, as well as prayer with your family or a prayer group — then incorporate that into your daily and weekly routine.

There are many forces pulling at us as we decide where to use our talents. For most of us, our jobs claim the lion's share of our time and sometimes threatens to engulf our whole lives. We also have responsibilities to our families and legitimate calls for service to the community — that obviously includes the Church. We have lots of areas for service right here in our own parish — religious education,



music, serving as an usher, or any one of the many ministries in which you may use your talents to grow closer to God.

Finally, we have to set priorities for using our money. As Christians, we are responsible to God for the use of the financial resources He has entrusted to us — no matter if it's a lot or a little — and to make a return to God in thanksgiving. In this regard, Scripture gives us the tithe as a goal. Working toward a tithe may mean some changes in your priorities, but I can tell you from personal experience

that those who have adopted the tithe as their standard of giving experience a joy rooted in the spiritual growth that occurs as we continually live out the "three Ts" of stewardship — time, talent and treasure.

Priorities are certainly a part of life. As you review your own priorities, especially now that many regular routines are starting up again, ask yourself how you will use the time, talent and treasure entrusted to you by God.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Kenneth J. Malley





## THE JOURNEY HOME *The Rite of Christian*

When parishioner Randall Carter was growing up, his father was in the Air Force, so his family lived in many different places. When it came to church, they usually attended non-denominational Protestant services.

“Then, I married a highly dedicated, devoted Catholic woman and we raised the kids in the Catholic Church and Catholic schools,” Randall says. “I attended church regularly also, and participated in the church, along the way. But unlike most children, I was never baptized. And over the years — for probably the last 30 years — I thought about that a lot.”

This past Easter Vigil, Randall was welcomed into the Catholic Church, alongside other catechumens, receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist.

“I really wanted to be Baptized in the Catholic Church because the more I attended and watched and listened, it struck me that it really was the true Church, founded on Christ’s life and His sayings,” Randall says. “It’s what I wanted to do — it just took me a long time to get there.”

Deacon Ed LaRose works with those adults who want to enter the Church or become fully initiated, through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process, or RCIA. This process — which can range in length, usually lasting a full liturgical year — is an opportunity for those who want to become Catholic to learn more the teachings of the Church and what it means to live as a faithful Catholic.

“It’s a period of transformation,” Deacon Ed says. “We introduce people to Scripture so as to deepen their prayer life and relationship with Christ, we introduce them to the sacraments, we expose them to the various parts of the Mass, and explain what is going on and why it’s being done that way. We talk to them about Catholic social teaching, and we explore with them the holy days and our devotion to the saints.”

In addition to those who have never been baptized, the RCIA process also helps prepare adults who have been baptized, yet for one reason or another, have not yet received the Sacraments of Confirmation and/or First Eucharist.



*The RCIA process is an opportunity for adults who want to receive the Sacraments of Initiation to prepare and learn about the faith*

## WELCOME TO THE CHURCH: The Initiation of Adults

“I’m hoping they’re going to be transformed and develop a closer relationship with God and Jesus,” Deacon Ed says. “We don’t expect them to become Ph.Ds in theology. This is just the beginning, hopefully, of a lifelong examination of the faith and their beliefs.”

Deacon Ed invites those who are curious to learn more about the Catholic faith, or want to complete the Sacraments of Initiation to come and check out the RCIA process.

“We have both those who have committed [to becoming Catholic] and those who just want to dip their toes in the water,” Deacon Ed says. “We tell them, ‘There’s no commitment, come on over!’ Sit in on these sessions, it’s like Catholicism 101. If you’re interested in continuing, fine — if you want to spend more time, that’s fine. If you decide this isn’t for you right now, that’s fine too. There’s no pressure. We want people to be transformed and that transformation happens at different times with different people, depending on where they are in the journey.”

Deacon Ed also encourages parishioners to support those preparing to receive sacraments, both through prayer, as well as by serving as an instructor for the RCIA classes, or as a sponsor for an individual who will be entering the Church.

“We are always looking for people who want to be on our team,” Deacon Ed says. “Our long-term goal is to have the entire parish involved in the RCIA program. We’re looking for prayerful people who are willing to journey with the catechumens and the candidates, and be available to help them grow in their faith and answer their questions in a non-judgmental way.”



*This past Easter Vigil, parishioner Randall Carter was welcomed into our Church, receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist.*

For Randall, who is now a fully initiated member of our Church, finally receiving the sacraments was a beautiful occasion, one which he often reflects back upon.

“The whole process was wonderful, it was uplifting, it was enlightening,” Randall says. “I think about it extremely often and feel really delighted. I think my relationship with God has changed. I feel more comfortable with myself and the end of times — it brings a lot of peace.”

*If you would like more information about the RCIA process, or if you’re already a fully initiated Catholic who would like to serve those who are preparing to enter the Church, please contact Deacon Ed LaRose at 813-968-1077 or [deaconed@sainttims.org](mailto:deaconed@sainttims.org).*



## ST. GREGORY THE GREAT: *Laboring for the Kingdom of God*

Sept. 3 is the feast day of St. Gregory the Great. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the Feast of St. Gregory also falls around the time when Americans make our national observance of Labor Day. While a shining example of Christian virtue, St. Gregory the Great also sheds light on the fuller value and purpose of labor and human work.

St. Gregory was born in Rome around 540 to a wealthy family, with several family members noted for holiness of life. He was raised and educated during times of great trial, both for the Church in general, and for Rome, a city besieged by several waves of barbarians.

Gregory was made prefect of Rome at a young age. He struggled with the call to give all in following Christ, but finally chose a monastic life, donating his estates to the founding of monasteries. His three years of monastic seclusion were some of the most enjoyable of his life.

Once Gregory was ordained as a deacon, he was sent to the Court of Byzantium as ambassador, where he struggled greatly with the court's worldly atmosphere. Having provided, with some difficulty, six years of faithful service to the court, he was joyfully recalled to Rome. Gregory was appointed abbot of St. Andrew's Monastery, which under his leadership, produced many monks who were later renowned for holiness of life. He was later chosen to be a missionary to England. This demonstrates how highly regarded Gregory must have been by this time, for after he was sent away, an uprising immediately arose among the populace of Rome. A team of messengers was then dispatched to bring him back, which they successfully did.



The death of Pope Pelagius II in 590 led to Gregory being immediately chosen by the clergy and people of Rome as the pope's successor. Some sources suggest that Gregory was dragged from his bed, while others maintain that he fled from the city and hid for three days.

Despite his initial unwillingness to accept the burden of the papacy, Gregory spent the final 14 years of his life devoting all of his energy towards his work as pope.

Gregory's life produced fruit that would continue to mature for centuries to come — guidance for the care of souls, reformation of the liturgy, sending missionaries to spread faith abroad, and much more. He is arguably one of the greatest foundational supports of medieval

Europe, and thus, of our own society today.

Americans celebrate Labor Day, the yearly tribute given to our country's workers. The day's purpose is to remind us of the real social and economic contributions made through the early Labor Movement, up to workers in the present day.

As Catholics, we can also celebrate Labor Day with a deeper Christian understanding of its purpose.

Jesus spoke often about "the Kingdom of God," and He taught us that it is already here — however, not in its perfect, final form. Christians receive the Kingdom at baptism, and they also build it inside themselves through the varied ways of working to grow in personal holiness. They also work to build the kingdom, just as Gregory did, by offering Christ-like service in all areas of their lives. Thus, in our own Christian lives, we continue the same work that St. Gregory performed, and to which all of us are called, in the building of the Kingdom of God.

## Former Major League Baseball Player Jim Snyder Reflects on Blessings of Career and Family

Sit down for a chat with retired baseball player Jim Snyder, and it soon becomes clear that, when it comes to blessings, Jim feels he has hit a home run in life! A parishioner of St. Timothy for close to 20 years and a resident of Florida for 40, Jim was born and raised in the much chillier climes of Dearborn, Mich. His father first taught him to play baseball when Jim was only 5 years old — a passion that would end up shaping his entire life.

Reflecting on his career in baseball, Jim feels grateful that he was able to work in the sport he loved for so many years.

“I played in the minor leagues for 14 years, and got to the major leagues for a cup of coffee when I played for the Minnesota Twins,” Jim says. “Then I managed in the Cincinnati Reds organization from 1966 until 1977. It was a great organization, called the ‘Big Red Machine’ back then when we had Pete Rose, Johnny Bench and Tony Perez.”

In the following years, Jim would remain in the majors and minors in various roles, including manager of the Seattle Mariners, coach with the San Diego Padres and the Chicago Cubs, and director of instruction with the Chicago White Sox.

“In all of this, I was blessed, because I got what I wanted to achieve as a player — which took a long time — and then again in management,” Jim says. “I was blessed by the Lord in being able to attain my goals.”

While his fulfilling career surely makes an appearance as Jim counts his blessings, his greatest treasure in life is the family he created with his late wife, Gysele. The two met when Jim was managing a Double A club for the Cincinnati Reds, and they were married for 45 years before she passed away in 2018.

“She was a great wife, and a great baseball wife,” Jim says. “We had a great relationship. I would take her to spring training with me, and when I was coaching, she



*Jim Snyder with his late wife, Gysele*

would even come with me for the bed checks [to make sure the players were in bed on time]!”

As a coach, Jim strived to nurture not only the players’ baseball skills, but their work ethic and their faith as well. At spring training, he would arrange for Sunday Masses and bring in priests and other religious leaders to talk to the players about their faith. Jim wanted to ensure that when the players moved on from baseball, they would have other things in their life to sustain them.

Jim knows from firsthand experience what a difference the Church can make in the life of an athlete. The professional sports world can be a tough setting, and Jim himself began straying from the faith at one point in his career. Then, as he likes to put it, a

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## Jim Snyder *continued from page 7*

metaphorical “two-by-four” hit him across the back of the head and brought him back to Jesus!

Several years ago, Jim’s life changed direction once more when his wife, Gysele, was diagnosed with cancer and Jim decided to retire.

“You think you’re immortal as you go through life and that these things won’t happen, but it happened,” he says. “I was a ‘Sunday Christian’ and thought I knew a lot about the Bible from listening to the Bible, but after Gysele passed away, I wanted to find something more. I joined the Brothers United in Christ [at St. Timothy] and they have been fantastic.

“We meet on Wednesdays and it’s been a blessing,” Jim adds. “We discuss our lives and go into the Gospel and it’s a learning situation for me. These guys have really brought me deeper into my faith. They and Fr. Malley have helped me through tough times.”

Reflecting on a life well lived — and the four children and six grandchildren who continue to enrich his life — Jim is grateful that the Lord has always remained at his side.

“I have received a lot of blessings from Jesus, and now I do a lot of things to thank Him for my career and my family,” he says. “It’s just been a faithful life. Baseball has always been a big part of my life, but Jesus has, too.”

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*“I have received a lot of blessings from Jesus, and now I do a lot of things to thank Him for my career and my family. It’s just been a faithful life. Baseball has always been a big part of my life, but Jesus has, too.” — Jim Snyder*

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### *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.