Use available tools to do something worthwhile

My family is one of farmers, ranchers, bankers and engineers. People who grow and build things. People who improve others’ lives, and allow them, in turn, to positively impact yet even more people.

Growing up on the farm, Dad made sure each of us boys knew how to operate a cutting torch and welder, and knew how to handle all his various tools. Dad considered it something of a failure whenever we had to drive to town to buy a new part, as that meant we weren’t able to engineer a repair on our own.

He had an encyclopedic knowledge of his tools and what each of them could do. However, whenever I surveyed them, all arranged neatly in their place, what I saw was a sure path to scraped, bleeding knuckles. Much to my dad’s chagrin, I simply wasn’t as mechanically blessed as some of my kin.

When I told my dad I’d been accepted into and was headed to law school, his honest-to-goodness reply was, “Why? Wouldn’t you rather do something worthwhile?” Not exactly a ringing endorsement.

Dad and I had no idea the path the Lord was putting me on would lead me to working for Jesus’ Church. Somewhat ironically, it has brought me to a larger family of fellow Catholics who themselves are builders of sorts.

Over the past several years, I’ve had the humbling privilege of working with many families taking the steps to best provide for their loved ones, while extending their stewardship through thoughtful estate planning and planned giving. These are people who are helping to build the future of their parishes and our diocese, and along the way positively impacting a multitude of people, who will in turn touch many more lives.

I’ve witnessed and helped people who – while maximizing the financial security of their own families through proper planning – also help build parishes, provide a quality Catholic education to our children, feed the hungry, provide medical help to those in need, support seminarians on their paths to the holy priesthood, and much more. All of this is done through proper selection and use of the right tools, which ensures many more people will in turn be touched.

If you’ve been putting off building your estate plan and extending your stewardship through planned giving, I put to you my Dad’s question: “Why? Wouldn’t you rather do something worthwhile?”

Several tools are available for your use to help build the future of St. Francis, while also doing what’s best for your family. The impact you’ll have by doing so will blossom well beyond the here and now. Even better, the use of these tools will not result in scraped knuckles.

If you’d like to learn more about the tools you and your professional planner might use, contact me at the parish office for a confidential, free-of-charge discussion; let’s do something worthwhile together.

– Travis Pearson, Parish Life Administrator

UPCOMING EVENTS

April
All April events at the Church and School are canceled until further notice, including the SFA School Alumni Reception.

May
1 ............... May Crowning @ 2:30 p.m.
2-3 ......................... Lifesaver Sunday

Full calendar available on SFA website.
Boy Scout Troop 762 receives new honors, including Troop of the Year

The trophy case in the Scout room gained another plaque this month, and our uniforms gained a new patch. SFA’s Boy Scout Troop 762 was named “Troop of the Year” and was awarded the “Pope Paul VI Catholic Award of Excellence” at the annual awards ceremony.

Both of these were very nice honors to receive, but we already knew in our hearts we have a great troop! In addition, we received some individual awards.

The Pope Paul VI award is bestowed upon troops that excel in providing opportunities for growth in faith, practice of faith and acts of charity. The standards are high, and we were given the highest honor of Gold level.

Our Scoutmaster, Carl Davis, received the “Scoutmasters Key” award, and I was given the “Spark Plug” and District Merit awards.

We had a great evening at the awards ceremony. Our senior patrol leader, John Rongish, was proud to accept the awards on behalf of the troop.

Any boy who would like to know more about Scouting and living his faith while learning skills for life, please join us (Monday’s at 7 p.m. in Stewardship Hall – after Parish events resume their normal schedule), or call John Rongish at 990-6647.

– Sandy Rongish
All of us hope to age gracefully. As we mature, our hope is to advance in years seamlessly and without too many major breakdowns. Our desire is to continue to run like a well-oiled machine. These are certainly our prayers for our parish facilities as well.

Over the past few years, in conjunction with the Faith Forward visioning process, the Operations Council has been focusing on our parish buildings and grounds. We’ve listened, taken surveys and asked for your hopes and dreams. We have done a thorough facilities assessment and made the determination that now is the time for action.

The next step in this process is to develop a Master Plan to present to the diocese. This Master Plan will include a prioritized list of our greatest needs. It was clear to the Operations Council that the parish was willing to support, over the next five years, the needed repairs and renovations but not undertake the construction of any new buildings on the campus.

Some of the major areas of concern are:
- Replacing the aging roofs
- Updating HVAC systems in the church, school and St. Clare Hall
- Renovating the sound system, lighting, flooring and pews in church
- Remodeling and updating restrooms in the school
- Improving campus security
- Repairing the Bell Tower
- Other projects are still being discussed as to their necessity and feasibility

The projects identified have been reviewed and prioritized by the Parish and School Councils, and estimated costs have been determined.

As we move forward in preparing and presenting this Master Plan to the diocese, we ask for your prayers. We believe the Holy Spirit is guiding us in this process as we look forward as a parish family. Modernizing our parish facilities will take effort on everyone’s part.

We have been blessed with incredible stewards who have guided us to this point in time. Now is our turn to lead our parish forward to serve our mission for the next 25 years. It is our hope that we can avoid the breakdowns and age gracefully.

St. Francis, pray for us.

– Pat Burns
Director of Stewardship & Finance
ACTS offers deep connections of faith, friends

Eagerness and excitement mixed with hesitation and insecurity – so many feelings go into getting on a bus and experiencing one of St. Francis’s newest offerings: ACTS. Our parish is the first in Wichita to offer this national program dedicated to Adoration, Community, Theology and Service.

Last summer the first group of SFA women and men attended retreats led by members from Catholic parishes in Tulsa, Okla. It was a blessing that some summer retreatants were called to assist the Tulsa teams in the January women’s retreat and February men’s retreat. Attendance for both winter retreats saw increases in participants over the first set. Part of that success comes from the conversations the first participants were able to share with those considering joining the winter sessions.

You have those “Holy Spirit moments” in your life. As Jim McAnarney discussed the program at Mass, I felt this tug I needed to participate. I am so grateful I answered the call. That was the first of many moments where the Holy Spirit moved me through ACTS.

Those moments were also evident to parishioner Mike Hybl.

“Get on the tandem bike with Jesus. Take the back seat, let Jesus steer, listen to Jesus, talk with Jesus, create an enduring relationship with Jesus,” Hybl said. “Start pedaling and enjoy the journey.”

It is obvious in talking with other SFA parishioners who attended the retreats that each person received something unique from it.

“Get on the tandem bike with Jesus.”
—Mike Hybl

“My biggest takeaway was how important community is in our faith journey,” said Nikki Wankum, who attended the women’s retreat in January. “We need each other to pray with and for, to learn from, and to hold each other accountable. I walked away rejuvenated and ready to work on my relationship with God and to try to deepen my prayer life.”

This is a program that will allow you to connect with your faith and with your brothers or sisters in Christ.

“The most important and profound realization for me was that I am not alone,” said Mark Kittrell. “So many of the people I heard from and spoke with had experiences that mirrored my own. The conversations I had involved either me hearing what I needed at that time, or me telling the other person what they needed to hear.

It was that rare feeling of being exactly where you feel you were meant to be.”

Embrace your journey with Christ by being part of the third set of ACTS retreats later this year. Wankum offered advice to those considering attending: “I definitely encourage you to try the weekend, but my suggestion is go with NO expectations. Pray before you go that God will teach you what He wants you to learn and not what you think you need! Also, resign yourself to their schedule and not your own; be flexible!”

Kittrell also encourages parishioners to pray about attending the upcoming sessions. He added, “There is something here for everyone who attends, so just keep an open mind and know that you will be so very welcome.”

Future retreats will be led by teams based in Wichita. For more information, contact Maria Newman for the women’s retreat or Jim McAnarney for the men’s retreat.

—Aaron Leiker

UPCOMING ACTS RETREATS

Women: Aug. 27-30
Contact: Maria Newman
(316) 519-1771

Men: Sept. 17-20
Contact: Jim McAnarney
(316) 655-2240

“Get on the tandem bike with Jesus.”
2020 ACTS Retreat Participants

SFA Women’s ACTS Retreat, January 2020

SFA Men’s ACTS Retreat, February 2020

Vernacular Mailing Opt-Out

Would you like to receive the Vernacular via email, instead of receiving the print version in the mail? If yes, please send your name and email address(es) to sfac@stfranciswichita.com – with the subject line of “Vernacular Mailing Opt-Out” – and we will email you a link to the monthly parish newsletter each month and remove your household from the Vernacular mailing list. This is optional, but will help us save on postage for those who prefer to receive the newsletter this way. Thank you!
Stewardship Focus: Pillars of Life

This is a regular series created by our Stewardship Council shedding light on the Pillars of Life: service, prayer, formation and hospitality.

Service
“God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God’s many blessings. Are you called to preach? Then preach as though God himself were speaking through you. Are you called to help others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies, so that God will be glorified through Jesus Christ – to him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.” – Peter 4:10-11

Hospitality
We recall Jesus’ words: “What you do to the least of my brothers and sisters you do to me” (Matthew 25:40). Christ gave us the exquisite example of hospitality at the last supper when he got on his knees and washed the disciples’ feet (John 13:3-17). And he commanded us, who would claim to be his followers, to do likewise. If we really took this command seriously, we should be tripping over each other as we approached strangers in our churches trying to make them feel welcomed. Jesus went on to say that we would ultimately be judged by God, in part, on the basis of the hospitality we extend to strangers; “For I was a stranger and you welcomed me,” (Matthew 25:35) – Excerpt from: “Company’s Coming – A spiritual Process for Creating More Welcome Parishes” by Dr. Richard J. McCory

FUNERALS

- Emily Saengerhausen, daughter of Carol & Barry Saengerhausen, sister of Katherine Saengerhausen, Feb. 6
- Nancy Hindle, mother of George Hindle, Cathy Trimmell & Barbara Jo Crawford, Feb. 18
- JoAnn Schwartz, mother of George Schwartz, Myles Schwartz & Thomas Schwartz, Feb. 21
- Hai Bui, husband of Thanh-Tam Bui, father of Joseph Vu Bui, Frank Trinh Bui, Christopher Van Bui, Nicholas Hoa Bui & Theresea Mai-Linh Bui, Feb. 22
- Ralph Hight, husband of Armida, father of Lisa Pinkerton, Becky Hawk & Karen Rae Reardon, Feb. 24

BAPTISMS

- Carter Joseph, son of Matthew & Marissa Straka, Feb. 1
- Kailer L, son of Kenny Vuong & Tien Nguyen, Feb. 9
- Macklan George, son of Luke & Danielle Ford, Feb. 9
- Landyn Lee, son of Jesse & Megan Spencer, Feb. 15
- Bentler Rion, son of Matthew & Alyssa Mellington, Feb. 22
- Tyson Dean, son of Matthew & Kim German, Feb. 22

NEW PARISHIONERS

- Isaac & Jackie Schmitz
- Mike & Patricia Williams

The Vernacular
This monthly newsletter is published by and for the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. It is mailed to each registered parish household by the end of each month.

To submit articles, photos or story ideas, send them via email to sfavernacular@gmail.com. Photos must be high-resolution print quality images.

Contacts for The Vernacular are news editor Lanette Belton, 722-3952, and copy editor Ann Walden, 249-2430.

Deadlines for submitting information are the beginning of each month.

New volunteers — especially reporters, photographers and layout editors — are always welcome.
SFA parishioners and friends enjoy dancing and fellowship at our third annual Mardi Gras Dinner and Dance Feb. 22 in Cana Hall. The theme this year was “Through the Decades” with decade-related costumes encouraged. George’s French Bistro catered the dinner. A special thank you to event organizer Christina Brouillette.
“And if Christ has not been raised, then empty [too] is our preaching; empty, too, your faith.”

1 Corinthians 15:14