



MAY 2020

WICHITA, KANSAS

New priest is grateful for parish family

The first time I remember thinking about becoming a priest was in second grade. My class at St. Francis was preparing to receive our First Communion, so the priests would come to visit us and teach us about the Eucharist. I remember how happy they were, and their excitement for us as we prepared to receive the Body of Christ for the first time. This left an impression, and caused me to think that maybe being a priest would be cool. Maybe this is what I wanted to be when I grew up.



Although this was the first time the priesthood ever crossed my mind as a real possibility, it certainly was not the first seed of my vocation planted in my life. I think the seeds of my vocation go back even farther than my life.

My vocation is, of course, an echo of Jesus' invitation to the first disciples to follow Him. But more concretely for us here at St. Francis, my vocation is an echo of Monsignor McGread's decision to implement the stewardship way of life at this parish. It is an

echo of my parents embracing this way of life, sharing their time, talent and treasure with their parish community. It is an echo of the example of faithful parishioners, who inspired me and whose support provided me with a Catholic education, first at St. Francis, and then across the street at Bishop Carroll. It is an echo of the witness of many priests, teachers and friends with whom I grew up, who revealed Christ to me by the way they lived.

As the seeds of my vocation planted here at St. Francis come to fruition, I am filled with deep gratitude to God, to my family and friends, and to all of you. This parish where I grew up provided me with so many opportunities to meet Christ and to experience His call, even when I was not aware of it or was not willing to listen.

The more I look back on my life up to this point, the more I recognize that my vocation is not a product of my own efforts or choice. It has, certainly, taken great effort and many decisions on my part to get to this point, to

finally arrive at ordination to the priesthood. But this effort and these decisions have only been cooperation with grace, simply saying yes to this gift that God has chosen to give me.

It is with wonder and joy that I recognize that I have received this gift only through my family, friends, teachers, priests and fellow parishioners here at St. Francis.

Jesus is alive, and He remains present and active in His Church. I have experienced this reality for as long as I can remember here at this parish, and I am so grateful to all of you who have made that possible. My priesthood, this new way of life that is now offered to me, is a gift, and one that I am only able to receive through you.

Thank you for everything. Truly, my vocation, my yes to this gift, is only an echo of a yes that I first witnessed here at St. Francis of Assisi.

—Fr. Hayden Charles

Editor's note: SFA parish son Deacon Hayden Charles was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Carl A. Kemme on May 23 at Church of the Magdalen in Wichita. See photos on pages 2 and 3.

Be patient, kind during these trying times

I had a song stuck in my head the past few days. George Harrison performed a song called “I got my mind set on you.” The song, I believe, related to that feeling you get about a special someone whom you want to spend time with. No one else can take their place. One line in the song that I keep coming back to is, “It’s gonna take time, a whole lot of precious time, it’s gonna take patience and time ... to do it right.” This song relates to how I am feeling as we return to Mass.

I think the word that I have heard most often over the past two months is weird. Life is a little different and weird. Our normal routine has been turned upside down. Nothing seems very normal.

I have found the return to Mass to

be different. We returned by wearing masks, distancing ourselves, not singing songs or sharing the sign of peace. It is different and unsettling for many of us. We want things to return to how they were, but that still seems to be an elusive goal.

I think the reason this song has been stuck in my head is the basic message. What is helping me to eliminate the changes and distractions around me is to keep my mind set on Him. It is an effort, but I want to keep my focus on Jesus. As the song says, “It’s gonna take patience and time,” which are qualities I struggle with. It is my desire to try to return to normal as quickly as possible. That is not going to happen on my timetable.

We are working to follow Bishop Kemme’s guidance and leadership

and safely return to the parish we know and love. This is not going to happen on my schedule. We are all going to need to be patient and kind with one another. Decisions will need to be made and modified. Trust in your pastor, our priests and the leadership team to try each day to make the best decisions we can to protect our most vulnerable parishioners.

By setting my mind on Jesus, we are asking for the Holy Spirit to guide our parish family through these challenging days. It is going to take patience and time to do this right. We are asking for your continued prayers as we navigate the choppy waters the lie ahead. St. Francis, pray for us.

– Pat Burns,

Director of Stewardship & Finance



Fr. Hayden’s First Mass



Fr. Hayden Charles celebrates his first Mass as an ordained priest on May 24 at St. Francis. Following Mass, Father is surrounded by his family (left to right): sister, Chloe; dad, David; mom, Liz; and brother, Chase.



Photos by Lauren Rebecca Photography

Now is time to invite Holy Spirit into your life

Happy Pentecost!

Our God is a gentleman. He will not force a relationship upon us, but freely invites us to love Him. Jesus Christ entered into human history to invite us into a living relationship with God the Father. And having promised to be with us, even to the end of the ages, Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit among us so that we might remain in Him and He in us. Therefore, He has made us temples of the Holy Spirit so that the spirit of God might dwell in us richly.

What a privilege it is to be temples of the living God! What an honor it is to have the Holy Spirit dwell in our souls as in a tabernacle! What a consolation it is to know that we have the power of the Holy Spirit to aid us at our every moment!

“Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God” (1 Cor 6:19).

Remember your baptism: when you first received the gift of the Spirit who drove out original



Message From
THE PASTOR

sin, filled you with God’s life and made you members of Jesus’ body. Remember your confirmation: when the fullness of the Holy Spirit rushed upon you and completed His work in you, making you witnesses unto the whole world. Were these sacraments mere rituals for you? Were they hoops you once jumped through, but memories of the past with little effect on your present?

May this not be so! We cannot live with a mediocre spiritual life. God did not call us to mediocrity nor to a spiritual status quo. Jesus himself said, “I have come to give you life and to give it more abundantly.” And again, “I have come that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete.” This life, this joy, is the lived presence of the Holy Spirit in

your heart, mind and soul. Make yourself aware of this presence, this Pentecost; let it reignite the fire of God’s life within you.

Fight to realize the Holy Spirit in your inner self! Seek Him! Cry out to Him! Pray this prayer frequently:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Remember, our God is a gentleman; He will extend an invitation to us but will not force us to accept it. We ourselves must accept that invitation by in turn inviting Him into our life. We do this when we cry out to the Holy Spirit: Come!

So, stoke up the flames of your love! Make this Pentecost a true experience of exuberance in the Holy Spirit. You were not made for mediocrity but greatness. Let the “power of God fall upon you” and let the Holy Spirit motivate you. Have a happy Pentecost.

Fr. Hayden’s Ordination



Left: Bishop Kemme ordains parish son Hayden Charles on Saturday, May 23, at Church of the Magdalen. Right: Also ordained that day was Luke Downing (left), who will be SFA’s new parochial vicar starting June 16; he is replacing Fr. Isaac, who is moving to Holy Savior Parish.

Students crown Mary in small ceremony

May Crowning is an annual tradition where we choose a boy and girl to represent the eighth grade at the SFA School crowning of Mary the first week of May; this year it was May 8. Teachers and administrators chose Dustin Stephenson and Kara Chippeaux for the honor.

There were many candidates worthy to crown Mary; it was a difficult choice, made even harder this year because usually every eighth grader gets to participate and has an opportunity to do something to help us honor Mary, but with the coronavirus

circumstances the rest of the students were unable to attend this year.

Traditionally, we have a living rosary with the whole school and sing Marian hymns to honor Mary. The eighth graders say parts of the

rosary and are lined up in a rosary formation outside of the pews.

All students are invited to bring flowers, and we put them in vases to line the Communion rail.

This year, a few members of our SFA faculty and administration

were present at the event: Miss Mally, Mrs. Lang, Mrs. Carter, Mr. Allen, Mrs. Krier, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Mernagh and myself. Miss Mally sang “Hail Mary: Gentle Woman,” while others took pictures, videotaped the procession, and provided support to Dustin and Kara.

It was so good to be together – even in our small group – to do something special to show our love and honor of Mary as a school community.

– Greg Goertz,

Eighth Grade Teacher



Dustin S. and Kara C. – chosen for the honor by school administration and faculty – crown Mary on May 8 in the annual tradition of May Crowning at SFA School. Although the student body was unable to attend this year, a small group of faculty and administration were in attendance.



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.

Hospitality

“Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do’ (John 14:12). We know what work Jesus did: He fed the hungry, he cared for the sick, he befriended the stranger and the outcast, and he loved the children. This is the work of serving and protecting. This is the work we are called to do.” – Pope Francis, A New Call to Stewardship

Service

In the early Church, some of the faithful retreated to the desert to live a life of solitude, prayer, fasting and meditation to grow closer to God. Yet, Thomas Merton writes that hospitality trumped all other spiritual practices. These fourth century desert Fathers would cheerfully break their fast and prayer to graciously receive guests. “All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ.”



Parishioner John Rongish stands with his aunt, Kellie Hogan, on April 24, the day she was sworn in as a Sedgwick County judge. Hogan has worked in Juvenile Court for 23 years and has assisted with more than 1,000 adoptions. She helped John earn his law merit badge for Boy Scouts last summer.

BAPTISMS

Samuel James, son of Clinton & Theresa Gillette, March 14

Jack Ryan Cosmas Chrysologus, son of Ryan & Hannah Oster, March 14

Amelia Rose, daughter of Brandon & Chelsea Weller, March 14

Emmalynne Jay, daughter of Joshua & Kaitlin Leonard, March 22

Abigail Miryann, daughter of Joshua & Kaitlin Leonard, March 22

James Augustine, son of Anthony & Tory Seiler, April 1

Josie Clare Quyen, daughter of Aaron & Riley Nguyen, April 26

Jentri Mae, daughter of Ryan & Jennifer Jones, April 26

NEW PARISHIONERS

Kian Farley

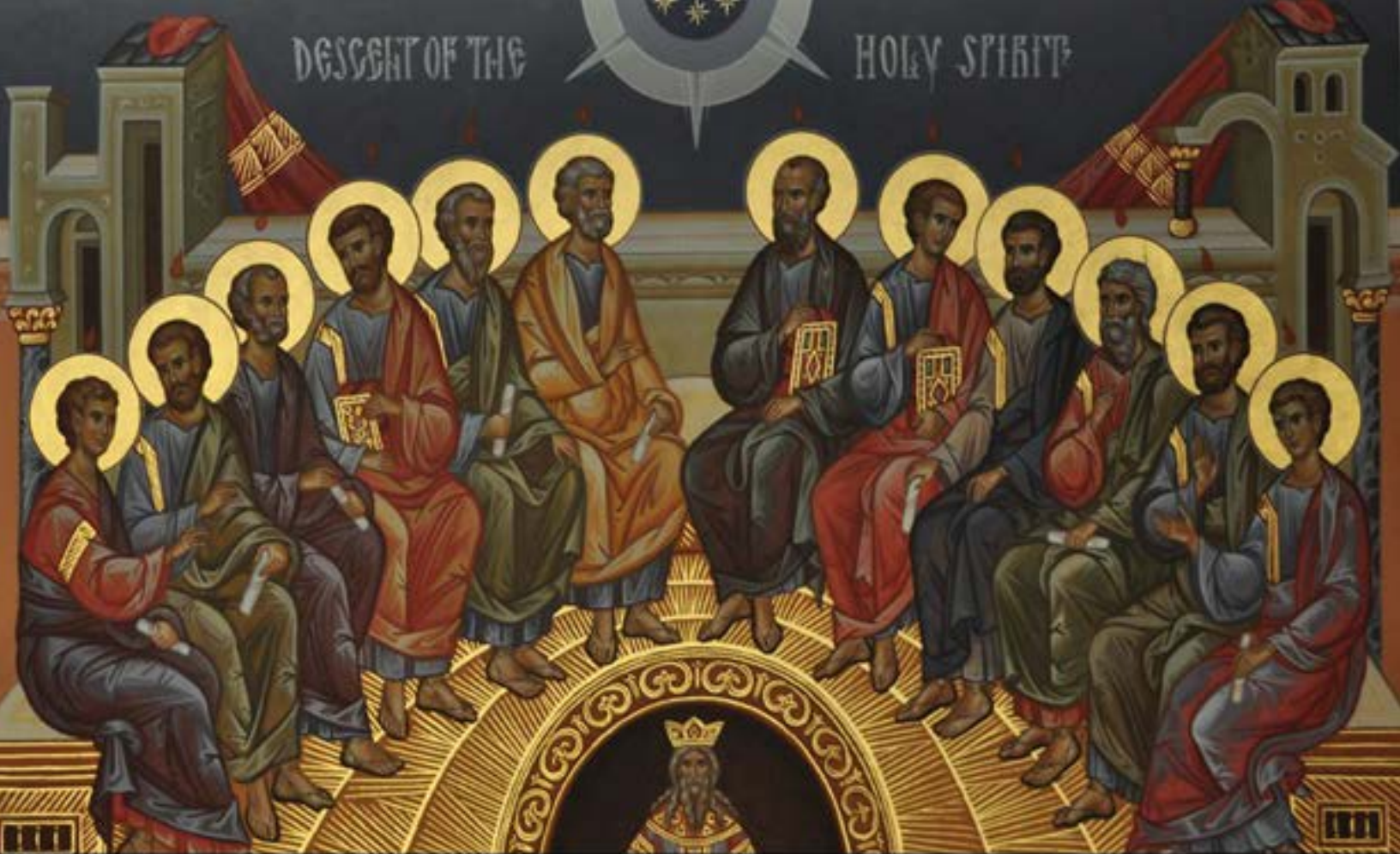
Steven Farley

FUNERALS

Frank Overwaul, brother of Theresa Overwaul and Wilma McDaniel, April 8

Stewardship Thought

Pentecost today can be a time when we feel the power of the Holy Spirit in our own lives, sense a renewing of our purpose, and hear the call to serve a hurting world with love and grace. It can be a reminder that God's work continues to be done through ordinary people of God, called and empowered by God's own Spirit to do God's work in our world.



“And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Luke 24:49

Parish Son Ordained
- page 1 -

Annual May Crowning
- page 4 -

e-Vernacular Only in May

Due to the current pandemic and a need to reduce expenses where we can, we will use email and social media only in May to distribute the Vernacular. There will be no hard copy of the parish newsletter mailed to parishioners this month, after which we will decide what to do about future issues. Thank you for your understanding.

