

College of the Holy Cross

CrossWorks

Hand in Hand

Newsletters

Summer 6-1-2019

Hand in Hand, Summer 2019

Follow this and additional works at: <https://crossworks.holycross.edu/dca001-hand-wi-1991>



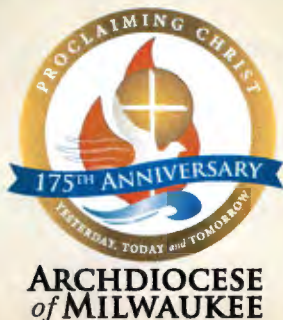
Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), and the [Disability Studies Commons](#)

Repository Citation

"Hand in Hand, Summer 2019" (2019). *Hand in Hand*. 64.

<https://crossworks.holycross.edu/dca001-hand-wi-1991/64>

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Newsletters at CrossWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Hand in Hand by an authorized administrator of CrossWorks.



**ARCHDIOCESE
of MILWAUKEE**

IN THIS ISSUE:

Welcome1
 Fr. CK's Corner2
 Terri's Memo.....2
 The Old Main Building
 at St. John's.....8
 Deaf Permanent Deacons
 in the History of the Archdiocese
 of Milwaukee9
 History of Ephpheta Sodality
 of St. John the Baptist11
 History of the Deaf Cursillo.....14
 Catholic Deaf History at
 St. Andrew Church, Delavan ...16
 Catholic Deaf History
 in Waukesha19
 The History of Catholic
 Deaf Ministry in the Northern
 Part of the Archdiocese
 of Milwaukee.....20
 A Concise History of the Catholic
 Deaf in Kenosha.....22
 Passing the 10 Year Mark with the
 What's Up Newsletter23
 Reflecting on Changes
 in the Catholic Deaf Young Adult
 World25
 My Lenten Day Reflection.....27
 Our Deaf Nuns.....29
 Interpreted & ASL Masses
 Throughout the Archdiocese...30
 Contact/Subscription31

WELCOME!



**By Fr. Christopher
Klusman**

On behalf of the Office of the Deaf Apostolate, welcome to our special commemorative newsletter for the

Archdiocese of Milwaukee's 175th Anniversary. This is truly a very special newsletter filled with many priceless "jewels"! In the articles presented here, we hope you will also enjoy and learn more about the long-storied histories of the Catholic Deaf community in this archdiocese. It is our dream that this will be the beginning of a spark towards greater knowledge, awareness, and enthusiasm to investigate, preserve, and share more of the rich history of our Deaf Apostolate in its 150 years of existence and ministry in this archdiocese.

As your Director, I want to thank all of the writers who submitted their articles for this commemorative newsletter. The time, hard work and wealth of experiences poured onto their articles are appreciated, more than I could say. I'm grateful that they are preserved in this newsletter. I also want to thank everyone who has served in any capacity in the evangelization efforts, towards the betterment of the Catholic Deaf community in this archdiocese, in the past 150 years. Our current successes are only because of the efforts begun from the very first person who carried onto all of the others in our history who served for

the Deaf Apostolate in this archdiocese to this day. I also want to thank Judy Guhl, our Production Manager, who helped in correspondences through communicating, collecting and submitting articles, as well as proofreading the articles, etc. Thank you! I enjoyed interacting with all the writers in this newsletter through all the stages in the articles' development! The success of this newsletter is ensured because of your love for the Deaf Apostolate. May God reward you for this.

One great fruit that resulted from this experience was the uncovering of our rich history of the Deaf Apostolate in this archdiocese. There is so much to sort through, digest and to piece together. A startling realization is that much of our history is still not documented, organized and disseminated, so this experience reminded us to begin today the preservation of our storied history. We also hope that in the upcoming Hand in Hand newsletters, there will be articles devoted on various figures, places, and organizations of our history, so as to better understand and appreciate all that has occurred before us, as well as the wisdom we can gain from them.

Enjoy reading this newsletter and keep the Deaf Apostolate in your continued prayers, for the continued success and growth in the years, decades and centuries ahead!

Happy 175th Anniversary, Archdiocese of Milwaukee!

MISSION STATEMENT - DEAF APOSTOLATE

The Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee exists to enable all Catholic Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to participate fully in the liturgical, educational, pastoral, spiritual, and human concerns ministries in the Church.

FR. CK'S CORNER



DEAF PRIEST MEMOIRS

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

A rare gift that occurred throughout the history of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's 175 years is the ordination of a Deaf priest. Up to now, records have shown that there have only been about 25 Deaf

priests in all of history! Not only that, there are only two "Deaf priest and Deaf deacon" pairs in the world, and the Archdiocese of Milwaukee currently has one of them: Deacon David Sommers and me.

Never in my life have I ever thought that I would be ordained a priest. One of the things about the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is that it is one of the several cities in the United States that has a long, strong and storied history of the Catholic Deaf. For many decades, both of our national and regional Catholic Deaf conferences were attended and supported by many Catholic Deaf leaders from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, many of whom have received national and regional Catholic Deaf awards for their service.



▲ St. John's School for the Deaf in St. Francis, WI.

all that out because of one terrible thing that happened in our archdiocese: the horrible actions done over many years by Fr. Lawrence Murphy. This doesn't mean that we ignore that horrible thing (which we will never do), but that we must also share the many other great things about our long and amazing history with the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

► FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued on Page 2.



▲ Group photo of many Deaf priests at ICDA-US Conference 2013 at Gallaudet University. This was an extremely rare occasion of many Deaf Priests in the same place from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the USA.

There is an idiom which says, "Do not throw the baby out with the bathwater." What that phrase means is that you do not throw out the good with the bad. As you can see in this newsletter, there are so many decades of incredible Catholic Deaf history that we can't throw

TERRI'S MEMO



THE HISTORY OF THE DEAF APOSTOLATE IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

Terri Matenaer

I am truly blessed to be part of the Deaf Apostolate and to see the growth throughout the Archdiocese's 175 years of existence.

Our Archdiocese of Milwaukee started as a diocese on May 5, 1844, with the arrival of a German-speaking Swiss-born Bishop John Martin Henni. In 1868, boundaries were being created to form two other dioceses in Green Bay and La Crosse. Blessed Pope Pius IX formally created the area of southeastern Wisconsin as the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in 1875.

Over the years the Archdiocese was growing, building new Catholic churches, schools, hospitals, and other programs, while also welcoming religious orders and missionaries. During that time, Fr. Bruener accepted two Deaf students with the hope that the teachers at the Pio Nono School could be trained to teach the Deaf children. St. John's School for the Deaf opened in 1876 and used the upper rooms of the old Pio Nono gymnasium. The original school building was completed in 1879, with the chapel wing added in 1893. By the fall of 1876, seventeen students enrolled, and St. John's School for the Deaf was in operation until 1983. The school was closed due to lack of funding. Many of the teachers were the Franciscan sisters who belonged to the Order of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, OSF, with the addition of more lay teachers beginning in the early 1970's.

St. John's School for the Deaf became a central place for the Deaf to learn and continue their Catholic faith formation. Deaf people from around the area joined together with the students for Sunday Masses. The Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist was formed on February 12, 1911. Its purpose, as said by Fr. Eugene Gehl, was to help keep the Catholic Deaf together for their souls' sake. Fr. Gehl had plans for the future of the Sodality and helped start classes for those who wanted to prepare for their Christian duties. Even today, Ephpheta continues to hold their annual mission retreats and invites



▲ Fr. Gehl

► TERRI'S MEMO - Continued on Page 6.

► FR. CK'S CORNER -

Continued from page 2.

Through my vocation story, it is a powerful lesson that God always sees His people's prayers. While He heard the cries of the Israelites slaving away in Egypt, He did the same for the Catholic Deaf community in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Only two blocks away from St. John's School for the Deaf, I was brought home as a newborn baby. Growing up in the same house, I would often bike through St. John's School for the Deaf in awe, as well as to attend Sunday Masses there until the property was sold. I was baptized, received my First Holy Communion and experienced my First Confession at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, which is across the street from St. John's School for the Deaf.

Little did I know the significance of my birthdate, which I came to learn later as a seminarian. My birthday is August 21, which is the day of two significant events. First, it is the same birthdate as our patron saint of the Deaf, St. Francis de Sales! Extraordinary is the impact on the Deaf community through his encounter of a deaf man, Martin.

Finding out that he was deaf, St. Francis de Sales agreed that he would learn sign language from Martin, while teaching him about God and the Catholic Faith, thus administering the Sacraments of Initiation, as well as the Sacrament of Confession for him. At that time, the Deaf were forbidden to learn about catechesis, to which St. Francis de Sales found as horrid! The Seminary that I attended throughout my six years there of formation is called *St. Francis de Sales Seminary!*

Secondly, I found out that Fr. Murphy died on... August 21. Coincidence? I don't think so. I truly believe that God has somehow planned all this through His Providence for those things to happen on August 21.

My vocation story comes with its many surprises and twists. First and foremost, I would not be where I am today if it weren't for my two greatest role models: my parents. They tried in every way to make sure that the Catholic faith is of the utmost importance, as well as to frequently participate in the sacramental life of the Church. As I got older, I was amazed that I was able to enroll as a student at St. Thomas More High School, which is (surprise!) next to St. John's School for the Deaf. There has always been a hunger, a desire in me, which I wasn't really able to



▲ A beautiful picture of St. Francis de Sales and Martin signing the Trinity together.

completely identify with yet. But I sensed it through my excitement through Scripture and Theology classes at St. Thomas More High School. When I was a student at UW-Madison, I was blessed to meet more people who taught me more about having a deep relationship with Our Lord, such as what it means to visit the Blessed Sacrament. One close friend mentioned that I had to meet a priest who serves in the Diocese of Rockford, IL. That priest used to be a teacher for the Deaf and a sign language interpreter who eventually found his calling to the priesthood.

I met the priest, who introduced himself as Monsignor Glenn Nelson. He was teaching a Bible Study session. As he began to teach, I was blown away! I noticed the hunger inside of me say, "That is what I've been so hungry for." The way he taught was incredible: in fluent ASL, while at the same time, teaching such amazing content. I learned so much more about Scripture, doctrine, the life of the saints, and more. He interweaved it all seamlessly, and that left me panting for more.

Then, I found out that Monsignor Nelson offered Masses in ASL, to which I enthusiastically attended. It was incredible, to say the least, to see Mass directly in ASL. What meant a lot to me was that he eventually asked me if I was interested in becoming a lector, to which I enthusiastically accepted and did. Later on, he asked if I could serve as an acolyte, even serving him during the Holy Week Masses. It brought a whole new perspective and depth for me.

Eventually, after some time, I felt so blessed and wanted to thank him for these opportunities that I wasn't able to find elsewhere. My plan was to express my utmost gratitude to him after Bible Study. ***It became one of the most defining and pivotal moments which altered the course of my whole life.*** After thanking Monsignor Nelson, at that moment, impelled by the Holy Spirit, he asked me a startling question: Have you thought about the priesthood? I was floored, answering spontaneously, "How? I'm Deaf." Up to then, I had never seen or met a Deaf priest so I never considered that as a possibility. Plus, in my years with



▲ Monsignor Nelson and me. He and the Rockford Catholic Deaf community kindly surprised me with a "Congratulations" cake at my being accepted into the Seminary!

► FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued on Page 4.

► FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued from page 3.

the Deaf, I knew the challenges of services for and with the Deaf, such as the challenges of having interpreting services at a private institution, such as a seminary. His answer couldn't be more perfect: "If God wants you to be His priest, He'll make it happen." Generously, he offered to meet with me once a month for discernment.

Looking back, I didn't miss this difficult time of trying to figure out God's vocation for my life. I thought I would get married and have a family. Yet, it was a time of grace. It was during this prayerful time that I began to notice more of how God was preparing me on the road to the priesthood. Many signs that happened throughout my whole life, to which I was "blind" and never took much note of before. It was as if God had me blindfolded and waited for the right time to untie and take off my blindfold. All I could think of was, I want to respond like the Blessed Virgin Mary: "Behold! I am the [servant] of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

As a result, the first step was to apply to the seminary in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, since it is where I was born, grew up and where my family lives. Shockingly, I got accepted and ended up studying there for 6 years: my first year in Pre-Theology, four years of Theology, with an additional year of being a full-time intern at a parish (at St. Andrew in Delavan under Fr. Brian Holbus), and a clinical summer experience under Fr. Jeremy St. Martin and Fr. Shawn Carey in the Archdiocese of Boston. And, St. Francis de Sales Seminary generously provided sign language interpreters too! Even to this day, I still can't explain it.

On April 24, 2010, I was ordained to the transitional diaconate. Then I was ordained to the priesthood on May 21, 2011.

Did you catch that again? I'm laughing because my ordination date was on the 21st! The number "21" is probably the number that has the most significance for me. Also, while my classmates met to plan/prepare for our priestly ordination, we discovered that May 21st is the Memorial of the Mexican martyrs, St. Christopher Magallanes and companions. I couldn't believe there is a Memorial of St. Christopher on my ordination day?! As I was laid prostrate on the Cathedral floor during



▲ My ordination to the priesthood picture with Archbishop ListECKi on May 21, 2011.

the Litany of the Saints, St. Christopher was one of the saint names being sung and beckoned.

The story of my name is also another story of God's Providence. I'm the youngest of the four, after my brother, Tom. When my brother Tom noticed that he was born on Christopher Columbus day, he asked his parents why he wasn't named Christopher instead? My parents were surprised for they never even noticed that. So, Tom told my parents that if they ever had another boy, they have to name him Christopher. When I came, it was a name already set by my brother, Tom. To my surprise, I came to love the name, *Christopher*, because it means, in Latin, "Bearer of Christ." That name truly shows the significance of my vocation as a priest: *In Persona Christi*, which in Latin means, "In the Person of Christ." I truly believe that names have a significance in everyone's lives.

Having already passed my eighth anniversary, I sit here and reflect on the past eight years. The years have gone by in a blink. During my first four years, I served part-time in the Deaf Apostolate and part-time Associate Pastor at St. Roman Parish. In June 2015, I continued to serve part-time in the Deaf Apostolate, while serving as a part-time chaplain at St. Thomas More High School. As of August 2018, my time increased with the Deaf Apostolate to 75%, while my time as chaplain at St. Thomas More High School decreased to 25%.

Sometimes, I wake up in the morning in disbelief that I'm a priest. The past eight years allowed me the privilege of meeting so many people. I've been deeply touched by their lives, examples, and stories. I cannot say that there weren't many challenges that I've encountered these past eight years, in addition to the six years at the seminary. I am thankful to have also experienced many grace-filled moments. I often think of my last eight years in light of St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata's quote: "I am a little pencil in God's hands. He does the thinking. He does the writing. He does everything and sometimes it is really hard because it is a broken pencil and He has to sharpen it a little more."

While my heart aches at how few Deaf priests there are, especially with our struggle in having direct access to God's Word and the sacraments in American Sign Language (ASL). My sole focus these past years is to provide access and understanding of the beauty of God, His Church, the Catholic faith, the sacraments, service, and Deaf Culture:

- Access has opened up more to the sacraments. It still touches me deeply that the Deaf community can go to a Deaf priest for Confessions in their language (ASL).

► FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued on Page 5.

► **FR. CK'S CORNER** - Continued from page 4.

Sometimes I chuckle that they are so lucky because even I don't have a Deaf priest in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee who I can go to for Confessions in ASL. Not only that, but they can receive other sacraments in their language and receive homilies that include Deaf Culture, history, and Deaf historical figures. I've been so blessed with beautiful experiences in the celebration of the other sacraments with many people, such as Baptisms, Confirmations, Matrimony (Weddings), and Anointing of the Sick. Celebrating funerals has been a humbling experience, especially in presiding at so many funerals for our deceased Catholic Deaf leaders. I will never forget them.



▲ The Zoellick family surprised me with a thoughtful gift: Sissy (a talented artist) painted a picture of Darth Vader signing "I Love You." I always am touched by people's thoughtfulness through things like this...

- While the Deaf truly enjoy having their own Masses, as we can celebrate many cultural components of it, we also do Masses with the Deaf and hearing communities. Many hearing members have told me various comments, such as: "Thank you for sharing with us that Deafness is a gift from God. I've always thought it was a punishment or that Deaf people felt ashamed of being Deaf." "I never knew that ASL is a language. I thought it was gestures or mime." "I have heard of the "Deaf and Dumb" offensive label, but now I know that it is not true. I was pleased to learn that there are various Deaf people who have PhDs, college degrees, high school degrees, or even people who didn't graduate from high school. The point is that there is diversity in the Deaf community as in the hearing community." And: "I never knew that there is Deaf culture, in which they have a language, customs, etc." We fear the unknown, and my hope is that through their authentic encounter of knowing better the Deaf community and their world that they come to know them as real people with a real language. All Deaf people want is access to God and to belong, just as the hearing people do too.

A few years ago, I remembered visiting the burial site of Fr. Eugene Gehl, who served with the Catholic Deaf community



Fr. Gehl's tombstone: "Priestly Life spent entirely for the Deaf."

for many decades at St. John's School for the Deaf. On his tombstone is engraved a beautiful quote: "Priestly life spent entirely for the Deaf." God Willing, this continues to be my goal, my mission, with His Help.

I'm so grateful for the service of my hearing brother priests who continue to serve in whatever ways possible to our Catholic Deaf Community, especially Fr. Don Zerkel, Fr. Bill Key, and Fr. Brian Holbus. In my years at the seminary and through the priesthood, I also miss visiting with our dear Sisters: Sr. Martha Ann Czarnyszka, OSF, Sr. Mary Claude Telderer, OSF, and Sr. Margaret Peter, OSF (formerly Sr. Mary Walter) of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi who have served the Catholic Deaf community for many decades. I have to share with you a powerful story about Sr. Martha Ann. Right before I was ordained to the priesthood, I visited her as she was dying. Sr. Martha Ann was only able to attend my ordination "in spirit and prayer." After ordination, Fr. Mike Depcik, OSFS, Deacon Patrick Graybill, and a few others went to visit Sr. Martha Ann. They told her about my ordination and that it was done and that I was finally, "Fr. Christopher." They could tell by her facial expression (at that point, she couldn't move her arms) and that her eyes welled with tears filled with joy, she indicated through facial expressions that she understood their message. And then later that day on May 21st (again, the 21st), she passed away. I know all the sisters' powerful prayers from heaven are with us, always.



▲ Sr. Mary Claude Telderer, OSF, signing, "I Love You." I will never forget her.

Please continue to keep me in your prayers, as I will continue to keep you all in my prayers. Who knows what will happen in the years ahead?

Happy 175th Anniversary to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee!

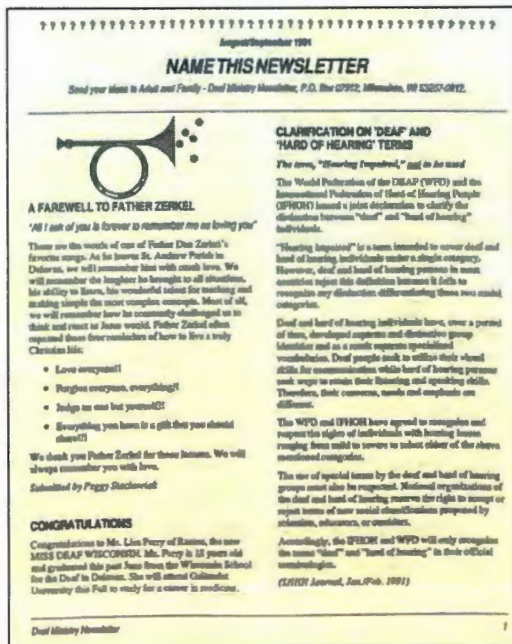
► **TERRI'S MEMO - Continued from page 2.**

several priests and other members of the Catholic Deaf community to talk to the group about various religious and church teachings. The Sodality became part of the International Catholic Office of the Deaf (ICDA) in 1949. Fr. Gerald Hauser, from Milwaukee, was among the first group of priests to form this organization.

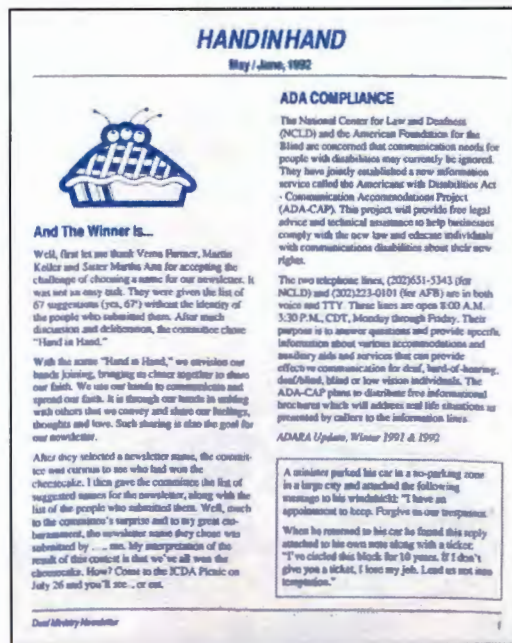
When St. John's School for the Deaf closed in 1983, the building became the St. John's Center, a multi-use Roman Catholic center and home to the Archdiocese's Deaf Ministry program, which was led by Fr. William "Bill" Key from 1983 to 1990. In 1990, the building was sold to the City of St. Francis to become Deer Creek Elementary/Intermediate School. Our Deaf Ministry program then moved to the archdiocesan central offices (Mary Mother of the Church Pastoral Center), while the Deaf community began church services at St. Lawrence Parish on Layton Boulevard. They eventually moved to St. Matthias Parish on 92nd and W. Oklahoma Avenue.

Over the last few decades, we had several people who led the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Ministry Office for the Deaf community in southeastern Wisconsin. The people who have served as pastoral workers with the Deaf community are Fr. Donald Zerkel, Fr. Bill Key, Fr. Scott Leannah, Cyndi Deeher-Koob, Katy Nielsen, Pam Conine, Patricia Bronk, Terri Matenaer, and Fr. Christopher Klusman. Our previous Coordinators of Deaf Religious Education & Deaf Ministry for Delavan include Peg Stachowiak, Patty Kostechka, and Jennifer Paul. I apologize if I missed anyone else.

We had two Deaf men ordained as Deacons: Martin Keller in 1988



▲ *The 1st Hand in Hand Newsletter for August/September 1991.*



▲ *The May/June 1992 newsletter that announced this newsletter's new name as the Hand in Hand Newsletter.*

and David Sommers in 2000. Martin passed away in 1993 and Deacon David continues to serve today.

Fr. Christopher Klusman, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's first Deaf priest, was ordained by Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI on May 21, 2011.

Sr. Margaret Peters wrote in the St. John School for the Deaf's 100-year Anniversary booklet in 1976, "We are proud of the thousands of deaf persons who have benefitted from our program. Grateful for the past, we accept the challenge of the present, and look forward to the future with hope and trust in Divine Providence, which has supported us for the past 100 years."

Our *Hand in Hand* newsletter is the official newsletter of the Deaf Apostolate office. The first newsletter was the August/September newsletter published in 1991. Eventually, in the May/June 1992 newsletter, the newsletter announced the conclusion of a contest for a new name of this newsletter. After 67 anonymous suggestions, a committee of Verna Farmer, Martin Keller and Sr. Martha Ann Czarnyszka, OSF, worked hard and chose "Hand in Hand" as its new name.

Quoting from the Hand in Hand newsletter from May/June 1992, "With the name, 'Hand in Hand,' we envision our hands joining, bringing us closer together to share our faith. We use our hands to communicate and spread our faith. It is through our hands in uniting with others that we convey and share our feelings, thoughts and love. Such sharing is also the goal for our newsletter." From the July/August newsletter, the Hand in Hand newsletter's logo was revealed. Jill Baumgartner, the 1989 Miss Deaf Wisconsin, created the logo. The Hand in Hand newsletter is published quarterly. The newsletters from July/

► **TERRI'S MEMO - Continued on Page 5.**

► TERRI'S MEMO - Continued from page 3.

August 1992 to July/August 1997 were small booklets of 7 x 8-1/2. Then, from September/October 1997 to May/June 2005, the booklets grew larger to 8-1/2 x 11 with a newer logo,

but with no explanation of why the logo changed.

Special thank you to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for their continuous support to the Deaf Apostolate over the years since 1876.



▲ This Hand in Hand newsletter premiered the Hand in Hand logo of the hands.



▲ The Spring 2015 newsletter.



▲ This September/October 1997 Hand in Hand newsletter premiered with the new logo that we use until this day. There is no explanation of why the change in the logo occurred.



▲ Our most recent newsletter prior to this one in Spring, 2019.

THE OLD MAIN BUILDING AT ST. JOHN'S



By Mark Hansen

Throughout the 175 years of existence in which the Archdiocese is now celebrating; it had lent for more than half of its diocese lifespan, chiefly spiritual and to a lesser degree some financial support for the Catholic education of the deaf at St.

Francis, Wisconsin.

St. John's opened on 10 May 1876 with two students stationed at Pio Nono's wooden gymnasium and went through three official name changes until its closing on 29 May 1983. However, this project had never been a "cakewalk" as it had required self-sacrifice in the act of duty from the Sisters and, yes, deaf pupils.

Special collections raised by Fr. Breuner, the first rector that gave the deaf pupils a place of its own, a two-story cream city brick building that measured 30 feet by 70 feet in size when first occupied by January 1879.

A couple of bishops' bequeaths helped financed its subsequent growth mostly after the arrival of Fr. Gerend in 1889. He made the school self-supporting through the subscriptions to 'Our Young People' and sales of a few books authored by himself. I would characterize the Gerend era as constant conduct of parsimony. By 1894, an in-house chapel was completed to worship in as their own. The dedication ceremony was so large that it was conducted outside and spoken both in English and German.

When Fr. Gerend was advised to take a much-needed vacation to recharge his "batteries", in which he took his widowed mother to visit her native Austria and a pilgrimage to Rome for a private audience with the pope as the trip highlights that spanned over two months.

When Fr. Gerend returned from Europe in September of 1907 he found that but one room was left undestroyed by the fire that swept through his former fine institution. The children were compelled to go to a neighboring parish to hear Mass, but upon the return of their beloved president, he improvised an altar in the one room that is now serving as office, parlor, living room and chapel. This room was a classroom at the time of the fire, and on the blackboards, among scrolls and garlands of flowers, were scattered a number of maxims that have proved a great solace during the year of discomfort owing to the fire.

When Fr. Gerend said his first Mass in the little room his eyes caught one of the sayings and he used it as a text. It was: *"Nothing but religion is capable of changing pains into pleasure."* The other sayings that remained on the walls for over a year were the following:

"Constant occupation prevents temptation."

"Time, patience, and industry are the three great masters of the world."

"God will provide."

"To be happy you must be good."

"Patience is bitter but the fruit is sweet."

A curious thing in connection with these chalk-written maxims is that through the chemicals used at the time of the fire the words were so set on the blackboards that they could not be erased.

Soon, however, the boards were repainted and the comforting words erased from view, but doubtful if they ever are erased from the memory of those pupils.



These were busy days at St. John's, where the sound of the saw and the hammer were heard every working day for a whole year. The new building rose rapidly from its ashes, and the hall readied for receiving a large number of students at the opening of the fall term of school in 1908.

From fifty to sixty men were employed for several months in the work of rebuilding, and many of the larger and stronger boys of the Institute were also given employment at the rate of 20 cents an hour. These boys were distributed among the carpenters, the masons, and the plumbers, as they had learned a great deal in their respective lines. Some of the smaller boys had employed at cleaning the brick that went through the fire, and about fifty thousand prepared for re-use, which has been sold to the building contractors for \$6.00 per thousand.

The boys as told were all been anxious to help, not only for the earnings that come to them but for the love of the institution that was their home until they become self-sustaining members of society.

Fr. Gerend believes that "diligence is the mother of good fortune," and he certainly set those under his charge a good example, for he had kept his eyes on practically every piece of material that has gone into the structure, and for the greater part of the time served in the capacity of superintendent of construction.

Should we say this reconfigured main building was credited

► MAIN BUILDING AT ST. JOHN'S - Continued on Page 15.

DEAF PERMANENT DEACONS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE



By Deacon David Sommers

My name is Deacon David Sommers. I am the second Deaf Deacon in the history of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. This is a surprising fact, as many arch/dioceses in the world do not even have a Deaf deacon. In honor of our archdiocese's

175th anniversary, I am honored to share with you information about my predecessor and myself.



▲ Deacon Martin Keller

Our first Deaf Deacon is Martin Keller, Sr., who was ordained deacon on April 23, 1988. Below is his short biography.

Martin Keller, Sr. was born on June 19, 1930. He met his wife, Helen, at the Illinois School for the Deaf in the early 1940s, and they married on July 14, 1951, in Chicago, IL. He worked as a postal clerk with the USPS in Chicago until his retirement in 1980. They had 10 children: 5 girls (Mary, Virginia, Theresa, Marian, and Christina) and 3 boys (Paul, Peter, and Martin, Jr.). Martin was born Jewish but converted to Catholicism at the age of 19 (in 1950). He then moved to Milwaukee and lived in a house in close proximity to St. John's School for the Deaf. When he was ordained a permanent deacon, he was assigned to serve the Catholic Deaf community at St. John's Center (former location of St. John's School for the Deaf).

He was one of the first Deaf deacons in the world. He was a very active member of the International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA) since joining in 1961. He served in local, regional and national levels in leadership positions. He was named Man of the Year by the Milwaukee ICDA Chapter 7 Association. He founded the Youth Club, Seder

Meal tradition, Halloween parties to raise funds for needy and poor deaf families with food and gifts, Children Christmas parties, and a monthly recital of the Rosary that took place before Mass. Sadly, Deacon Keller was diagnosed with acute leukemia, which he had for almost three years and passed away at the age of 62 on March 1, 1993.



▲ Deacon Martin Keller and wife, Helen.



▲ Deacon Keller at his daughter's (Marian) wedding (Nov. 3, 1990).

I met Deacon Keller many times. When I attended his funeral, I was deeply struck by the entrance song and procession at his funeral Mass. There, I saw Deacon Ralph Hinch, who is a Deaf deacon for the Archdiocese of Chicago. It was at that moment that I felt called by God that it is the right time for me to follow Deacon Keller to become the next Deaf deacon. I told my wife, Susan, and everyone and they were all very happy.

But, let's go back to my life and how God led me to that day. I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on March 8, 1944. I attended St. John's School for the Deaf from age 3, during the

year 1947, and graduated eighth grade during 1959. For high school, I attended St. Rita's School for the Deaf in Cincinnati, Ohio and graduated from there in 1963. My wife, Susan, both attended St. John's School for the Deaf and St. Rita's School for the Deaf. We became engaged and married on June 11, 1966, in Milwaukee. We have three boys and a girl. In the order they came, their names are Ken, Jeff, Pam, and Mark. I attended the Milwaukee Midwest Welding School around 1962 and worked for the Kelley Company for 39 years, finally retiring in 2003.

I have served as President in various Deaf organizations, such as the Greater Milwaukee Association of the Deaf (GMAD), ICDA Chapter 7, and Wisconsin Association for the Deaf (WAD). I also served twice as Chairperson for the Greater Lakes Deaf Bowling Association.

When Deacon Keller passed away, people actually looked at me and said I should be a deacon. I was about the age of 55 and married. I told everyone that I didn't feel called to be a deacon. Susan actually prayed that I would accept God's call to be a



▲ Assisting at Mass at a National Catholic Deaf Conference.



▲ With our 4 children all grown up: (From left to right) Mark, me, Jeff, Pam, and Ken with my wife, Susan, in front.

deacon. I remembered attending the ICDA-US Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota and was touched by Tim Owens' presentation about the five models of the Church. One of the five models hit me, it was about the importance of service. I studied at Sacred Heart School of Theology from 1991

▶ PERMANENT DEACONS - Continued on Page 10.

▶ **PERMANENT DEACONS -**
Continued from page 9.

to 1994 and received a certificate for lay ministry. Then, I studied at St. Francis de Sales Seminary from 1996 to 2000 for the diaconate. I was ordained to the permanent diaconate on June 3, 2000, becoming the second Deaf deacon of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. I later took more classes to receive faculties for preaching and marriage preparation and weddings.



▲ Giving a presentation at Catholic That!, an once-a-month formation session accessible to the Catholic Deaf community.



▲ Proclaiming the Gospel at Mass.

Throughout my diaconate ministry, I was first assigned to serve as a deacon at St. Matthias Catholic Parish. Aside from assisting at the Mass, I have taught ASL Classes, attended Parish Council and parish meetings, taught Bible Study in Milwaukee and Delavan, taught Religious Education in Milwaukee and Delavan, did Communion Ministry with the homebound and elderly, and presided at Baptisms and Weddings. For many years, I taught ASL to priests and seminarians

during the Religious American Sign Language (RASL) weeklong national sessions in Michigan and Illinois.

When Fr. Christopher Klusman was ordained a transitional deacon in April 2010, it was a neat honor to serve together as deacons for the 100 –anniversary of Ephphatha/ICDA #7 Mass with Archbishop Jerome ListECKI during the year 2011.

With Fr. Christopher's ordination as a priest in 2011, I serve alongside him for the Catholic Deaf community throughout the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. One amazing fact is that Fr. Christopher and I are one of the only two "Deaf Priest and Deaf Deacon" pairs in the world, alongside with Fr. Ray Fleming and Deacon Patrick Graybill for the Diocese of Rochester,



▲ Assisting Archbishop ListECKI with then-transitional deacon Christopher Klusman at Ephphatha's 100th anniversary Mass.



◀ Archbishop ListECKI blessing our new Ephphatha stoles (From left to right) Fr. Gerald Hauser, Fr. Bill Key, Fr. Don Zerkel, Fr. Brian Holbus, then-transitional deacon Christopher Klusman, and me.

New York. I assist him at Masses in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, throughout parishes that serve the Deaf community, as well as in the Diocese of Green Bay for a special Mass during the Advent, Lent, and summer seasons. We also do Masses, Communion Services, Bible Study sessions, and religious movies at Water Tower View (WTV)



▲ Having fun with the Catholic Deaf Young Adults at their summer retreat.

Apartments, the only Deaf apartment community in the state of Wisconsin. I also serve on the Deaf Apostolate Advisory Committee since its establishment.



▲ Very proud to be one of the only two pairs in the world of Deaf priest and Deaf deacon.

Susan and I felt blessed to be recipients of two prestigious national awards: the NCOD's Fr. David Walsh Pastoral Worker of the Year Award and the ICDA Pastoral Worker of the Year award. Susan and I were also recipients of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's Vatican II award in 1998.

Then came one of the most difficult experiences of my life: after celebrating

50 years of marriage with my dearest wife, Susan, she passed away on September 24, 2017. I was very touched by how many people came to her funeral to pay respects for all that she has done in her life. She is always beside me in all the things I do as a deacon.



▲ Celebrating Susan and my award from a National Catholic Deaf Conference. (Left to right) me, Susan, Arvilla Rank, and Fr. Christopher Klusman.

As I write this, I can't believe that I just celebrated my 19th anniversary as your deacon on June 3, 2019. I feel blessed with so many wonderful experiences during ministry.

My hopes for the future is that we have a church that the Catholic Deaf Community can call home. I also hope for our Catholic Deaf community to grow. I also hope that we will continue to

have more Deaf men answer God's call to the permanent diaconate to carry on the legacy of Deacon Martin Keller, Sr, myself, and Fr. Christopher Klusman. Happy 175th Anniversary, Archdiocese of Milwaukee. St. Stephen, patron saint for deacons, pray for us!



▲ At our 50th Anniversary reception after Mass.

HISTORY OF EPHPHETA SODALITY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

By Susan Koehn and Margaret Calteaux



This excerpt was taken directly out of the program, "Ephpheta! Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist 100th Anniversary – February 12, 2011."

These are the highlights compiled from the documents and record of Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist/International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA) Chapter #7 from 1911-present. We tried our best to be as accurate as possible and there is so much more to discover and much more information to read thoroughly in this short time that it was not possible to write everything. Hope you will enjoy reading this brief history of our organization.

The first few pages of the first Secretary book listed seventy (70) names of those who pledged themselves to become members of the Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist. On February 12, 1911, Fr. Eugene Gehl called the group together and helped with the first election of the new officers with the results as follows: President, Rev. Eugene Gehl; Vice President, Rev. Stephen Klopfer; Men's Secretary, Eugene Downey; Men's Treasurer, Henry Knoblack; Women's Secretary, Mrs. Kate Knoblack; Women's Treasurer, Mrs. Eliza Kuri; Sergeant at Arms, Patrick Ryan. At the end of the meeting, there was a balance of \$12.25.

During the first year of the Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist's existence, the writings show some rollercoaster happenings within the organization as well as some cultural struggles. However, they show the



importance of the presence of the officers and members as well as the announcements of those who did or did not make their Christian duties (Sacraments of Christian initiation) according to the rules of the Catholic Church. Each new member was admitted by the election of the Sodality members present. President, Fr. Gehl was given much credit in all his efforts to keep the Deaf Catholics together for their soul's sake. Fr. Gehl had plans for the future of the Sodality and helped start classes for those who wanted to prepare for their

Christian duties. The Sodality held their first picnic on Labor Day and made a profit of \$228.57.

Fr. Michael J. McCarthy who started a mission in New York to have a Church for the Deaf in 1910 was invited to come to Milwaukee and gave a heart-to-heart talk to the Sodality followed by Benediction; in fact the members of the Sodality were inspired by this experience and they held a Benediction at the end of

► EPHPHETA SODALITY -
Continued on Page 12.

► **EPHPHETA SODALITY -**
Continued from page 11.

each meeting thereafter.

In 1912, Ephpheta Sodality celebrated the 200th Birthday of Charles-Michel



de l'Épée who was known as the "Father of the Deaf" and established a memorial statue fund. The celebration was a grand success

and had over 500 people at St. Hyacinth Hall near Becher and 14th Streets. They did the best they could to entertain the hearing people but complained about the lack of interpretation in the picture motions (movie).

The Ephpheta Sodality had two groups, the Gentlemen's section, and the Ladies section. The Gentlemen's section was to take care of the business aspects of the organization whereas the Ladies section was to take care of the well-being of the members. As more members joined the Sodality, their social activities had grown. Several committees such as the picnic, entertainment, and visiting the sick were formed to handle the affairs. Several activities were taking place throughout the city such as Gesu, Seminary Woods, St. Hyacinth Hall and St. John Institute for the Deaf and Mute. Ephpheta continued to hold their annual mission retreats and invited several priests to talk to the group about various religious and church teachings.

Ephpheta celebrated in September 1915 the accomplishment of passing the \$1,000.00 mark in their account for the purpose of organizing its own benefit society.

Fr. Michael McCarthy passed away while in St. Paul, Minnesota on a missionary trip for the Catholic Deaf.

The Constitution and Bylaws for the

Sodality and Aid Society for Catholic Deaf were revised.

There were lengthy concerns over the finance of the death benefits but emphasized constantly on the importance of Confession and receiving Holy Communion as a Body every month.

In 1918, a group of men from the Ephpheta Sodality joined the Knights of de l'Épée which provides death and sick benefits. The October meeting was postponed on account of the Spanish influenza. In 1919, a few women from Ephpheta Sodality joined the Ladies of de l'Épée.

In 1926-1927, Ephpheta produced a play called "Seven Capitol Sins" but did not perform it on the stage.

Fr. Klopfer preached throughout the year on the "Ten Commandments."

Ephpheta made an effort to have an annual trip to Holy Hill.

Fr. Klopfer presented a copy of "The Catholic Deaf Mute" which included several advertisements from various Ephpheta Sodalities.

Fr. Robert Neary from Winnipeg, Canada came for a visit to see St. John's Institute for the Deaf Mute and Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist.

A Catholic newspaper called "Sunday Visitor" was circulated and sold for only 2¢.

Fr. Klopfer emphasized the importance to remember the "Ember Days" on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.

In 1933, Fr. Klopfer encouraged the members to pray to God to help the President of the United States of America, Franklin Roosevelt. The meetings and gatherings went on as usual.

Fr. Gehl celebrated his 25th Jubilee with Mass and a picnic at the St. John Institute in 1934.

Ephpheta celebrated their 25th

Anniversary in 1936.

Ephpheta was brainstorming for ideas to raise funds for their organization.

During the mission in 1939, Archbishop Stritch was invited to talk with the Deaf group.

Fr. Monroe suggested to the Ephpheta Sodality to think about purchasing St. George Church on State & 16th Streets but did not follow through.

Fr. Monroe presented a movie about Betsy Ross who made the U.S. flag.

Fr. Gehl introduced Fr. Lyon to the Ephpheta group in 1940.

There were some concerns about the funds which were not large enough in case all paid members should die suddenly.

Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist 30th Anniversary was celebrated at Hotel Schroeder with a banquet and picnic in 1941.

In 1941, Fr. Fleming was introduced to the Ephpheta group.

Fr. Fleming received and showed a film about WWII and the attack at Hawaii by Japan.

Ephpheta encouraged all members to salute the flag whenever they enter the meeting room even if the meeting is in progress. They also suggested having the non-members stay in the back of the room while the business meeting is in progress and not to push them out especially after hearing the sermon. There were some concerns of conflicts of allowing non-members presence from a previous motion in 1939 which stated that non-members are not allowed at the business meeting. However, a motion was made to allow a member to bring a guest whom he thinks would be interested to join the Sodality.

A group picture was taken in 1945 for St.

► EPHPHETA SODALITY -

Continued from page 12.

Vincent DePaul's yearbook.

There were times where the "anti-Catholics" were being rude to the Deaf Catholics however Ephpheta stood strong and cooperative to make the Sodality better and safer.

In 1948, Fr. Gehl introduced Fr. Gerald Hauser to the Ephpheta Sodality.

Fr. Hauser spent a lot of time explaining some of the Church new rules made by Archbishop Kiley.

Praises were made to the Ephpheta of their loyalty and generous support towards their own members as well as keeping them together for socials and events.

Fr. Hauser spoke about the importance of Mass and showed a movie on "The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass" by Dr. Van der Beke.

Plans were made for the annual trip to Holy Hill in October.

Fr. Hauser reminded the group that October was the month of the Rosary and we should pray often and ask for Mary's help.

Ephpheta suggested to have Mass every Sunday at Gesu Church but would like to ask for Fr. Gehl's opinion and must have the Bishop's consent.

Dr. Van der Beke invited Ephpheta Sodality members to attend a Christmas party at the Marquette University campus.

Fr. Hauser received a letter from the Auxiliary Bishop appointing him as the Reverend Moderator for the Sodality and spiritual director for the Catholic Deaf of Milwaukee. The monthly "Ephpheta Newsletter" was published with Fr. Hauser as editor and several members would share the sections such as Sodality News, Sick reports, Births-Marriages-and Deaths, Sports, Milwaukee Silent Club Socials, and Jokes.

Fr. Hauser gave many good sermons throughout the year reminding us to act like Catholics and be aware of God's presence and continue planning the missions for the members of the Ephpheta Sodality.

Plans were made for the 40th Anniversary of Ephpheta Sodality at Hotel Schroeder.

In 1950, Fr. Gehl introduced Fr. Murphy to Ephpheta Sodality.

July of 1951, Ephpheta sent their first delegate to the ICDA convention in Buffalo, NY.

During the 1950s, there were many concerns of how to keep Ephpheta strong spiritually, financially and as an organization; many members got together and held many sessions with Frs. Gehl and Murphy.

Ephpheta Sodality sent a delegate to the third ICDA convention in 1952 in Boston and became Chapter #7, then later held its 7th ICDA convention in 1956 here in Milwaukee.

Fr. Murphy stressed the importance of attending and supporting the ICDA conventions.

Due to some confusion among the community, the group moved to change the name of the organization from Ephpheta Sodality to ICDA Chapter #7.

In 1965, Fr. Murphy took the time to explain the changes in the Mass and Vatican II.

Throughout the 1960s, there was some growth of various social events for the Deaf Community which valued being a close-knit community.

A letter was received from Archbishop Cousins in 1974 confirming Fr. Donald Zerkel to be the Spiritual Moderator for the Deaf Catholic community.

Fr. William (Bill) Key was ordained in 1975 and worked with the Deaf Catholic community at St. John's School Center until the building was sold in 1990.

As our Spiritual Moderator, Fr. Key encouraged the members to continue with the Cursillo movement.

Milwaukee ICDA Chapter #7 hosted the annual ICDA conventions in 1980 (#31) and in 1988 (#39).

In 1990, there were some talks about changing the name back to Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist to be the official name of the organization. Ephpheta relocated their organization to St. Lawrence where Fr. Key was assigned.

In 1997, Ephpheta relocated their organization to St. Matthias where they still gather and worship today. After the ordination of David Sommers, a permanent deacon in 2000, and Fr. Christopher Klusman, ordained priest in 2011, we grew stronger in our faith formation such as workshops, retreats, CatholicThat! series, Day of Reflections, and Bible Studies. Ephpheta was and still is very active even though we are small.

Note from the Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist history committee: Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist and International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA) Chapter #7 has supported the students of St. John School for the Deaf for their religion and leadership formation since the beginning and continue to support all of our Deaf Catholic community today with programs such as missions, retreats, formation classes, workshops and most of all to come together to pray and worship with our Catholic faith as one Body of Christ. Special thanks to all the people who have supported this organization for the past 100 plus years and to continue to remember all of our members both past and present for their dedication, support and hard work to help keep Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist/ICDA Chapter #7 alive today and forever.

May God Bless you all.

HISTORY OF THE DEAF CURSILLO

By Arvilla Rank



The first Cursillo for the Deaf was held at a retreat center in Glenview, Illinois in August 1970. What is a Cursillo? It is a short course in Christianity. Bishop Juan Hervas

and Dr. Eduardo Bonin began the Cursillo in Spain on the Island of Marjorca in 1949. Why? They wanted religion to be more meaningful for men. The trend was that religion was only for women.

It came to Waco, Texas in 1957. The first Cursillos in the United States were in Spanish. The first English Cursillo was in San Angelo, Texas in 1961. Fr. David Walsh made a Cursillo while he was serving as the International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA) Missionary for the Deaf. He organized the first Cursillo for the Deaf in August 1970. The first Deaf Cursillos had a Gabriel Richard Leadership course for two and a half days before the Cursillo began, i.e. from Monday morning to Wednesday at noon. The Cursillo began Wednesday night and ended Saturday night. All of the instructors and speakers were hearing. The Spiritual Director was Fr. Raymond Ellis of Detroit who, ten years before the Cursillo, had worked with the Deaf community. He did a beautiful job of signing the five spiritual talks. The lay team was from Fr. Ellis' parish in Detroit. Five priests who could sign, interpreted. About fifty Deaf people made the first Cursillo.

The second Cursillo was held in the same way in 1971 at the retreat center in Glenview, Illinois, again, with about 50 candidates. Fr. Ellis was scheduled to give the spiritual talks, but he died suddenly of a heart attack at the age of 48 shortly before the Cursillo. The five priests who had interpreted for the first



▲ Group sharing at Team Training in Marytown, Libertyville, Illinois in April 2018.

Cursillo gave the spiritual talks.

In 1972 and 1973, there were two Cursillos each year, one in San Francisco, California and one in Rochester, New York. Beginning in 1972, some members of the team were Deaf. Today, most members of the team are Deaf with some hearing Spiritual Directors.

The first National Ultreya/Reunion was held in Cleveland, Ohio in 1978. The Gabriel Richard Leadership Course was discontinued after the Ultreya because many people had difficulty coming for a full week and the cost was high. This was disappointing to the people who knew the value of the Leadership Course. The Cursillo continued to begin on Wednesday evening, ending on Saturday evening, for several years. Eventually, this changed to Thursday evening, ending on Sunday afternoon. Forty-five Cursillos were held in the United States and Canada before its 25th anniversary.

Until 1991, Cursillos for the Deaf were organized by the National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD). In about 1991 Sr. Ann Albrecht was appointed by the NCOD Board to serve as Spiritual Director of the Deaf Cursillo on a national level. Arvilla Rank was appointed as Lay Director, and Timothy "Timo" Owens as Assistant



▲ Cursillo #65 icebreaker, St. Mary of the Sea, Cape May Point, New Jersey, September 2017.

Lay Director. This group/team began arranging for Cursillos with grant funds and funding from NCOD and ICDA-US. The National team met and identified the need to develop training for Cursillo team members. Hearing Cursillo Spiritual and Lay teams meet weekly or bi-weekly throughout the year before the Cursillo to prepare their talks called rollos. Deaf Cursillo team members were preparing their own rollos and met only a day or so before the Cursillo. Sr. Ann, Arvilla, and Timo began to attend every Cursillo to develop the training. The first training was held the week before the 25th anniversary celebration of the Deaf Cursillo at the Glenview Retreat Center, where it all started. The anniversary Celebration was at Mundelein Seminary in Chicago in August 1995.

The 46th Cursillo was in St. Louis in 1996. All speakers were selected from those who attended the training. It was obvious their rollos were better prepared and the presenters had a deeper understanding of the Cursillo than before training. Team training began to be held before each Cursillo. Team members paid for part or all of their training. Eventually this became difficult. Individual or small groups

► DEAF CURSILLO -
Continued on Page 15.

► **DEAF CURSILLO** - Continued from page 14.

were trained by the Lay Director until grant funds became available to hold a more intense training in April 2018.

Two Cursillos were held in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. In June 1982, the 22nd Cursillo was held in Milwaukee at St. John's School for the Deaf, after the school had closed for the summer. Francis Perry and Terri Matenaer were Rector and Rectora. In October 2012, the 64th Cursillo was held at St. Benedict Abbey in Benet Lake, Wisconsin.

On behalf of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's 175th anniversary, the history provided here of the NDC is to show the impact it had on many Deaf members in the USA, especially in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The feedback from our Catholic Deaf members found this "short course" as a much-needed introduction that helped them to better understand their Catholic faith, which is hard to find elsewhere due to a lack of interpreters, instructors who can sign, etc. Many of our Deaf community members, such as Francis Perry, had experienced profound conversions. An important result from the NDC is its inspiration for the Deaf community members in being more proactive, such as volunteering to be lectors, servers, and officers at our Catholic Deaf organizations. This is why we always encourage our Deaf members to attend the NDC.

There have been nine Ultreyas/reunions through the years, the most recent in San Francisco, California in October 2017. The 66th Cursillo was held in Columbia, Illinois, which is near St. Louis, Missouri, from June 13 to 16, 2019. It is



▲ The Milwaukee Catholic Deaf community hosted the 64th Deaf Cursillo in Benet Lake, WI on October 4-7, 2012.

being sponsored by the St. Louis, Missouri Catholic Deaf Community.

National Deaf Catholic Leaders, Inc. is doing business, as NDC was incorporated October 27, 2014. Federal tax exemption (501c3) was obtained in December 2014. The current national leadership team includes Louise "Lulu" Lee, Rectora, Kate Slosar, Secretary, Fr. Bill Key, Spiritual Director, Arvilla Rank, treasurer, and Ann Pudlowski. Through the years, Timo Owens and Ann Pudlowski have also served as Lay Directors. Today, NDC and local sponsors raise all of the needed funds for each Cursillo.

On June 26 to 28, 2020, NDC will celebrate its 50th anniversary in Chicago, Illinois. Watch for the publicity which will be ready soon.

Happy 175th Anniversary, Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

► **MAIN BUILDING AT ST. JOHN'S** - Continued from page 8.

to the design of Peter Brust however that was guided by Fr. Gerend based on fresh observations brought from his recent European journey. And then the creation of religious art made understandable for the deaf pupils by the talented Anton Spalthoff who was generous with work time that graced the chapel walls and windows. That kind of attention to detail obviously served very well and much beloved by the deaf residents. Indeed it was advertised as a jewel and thusly attracted some international visitors throughout the next 60 years until its demolition in summer of 1967.

The "need" of incorporating a high school program left us a most unfortunate loss of all the olden structures that was improved through the manual labor of deaf hands. I want to bet no other deaf institution across this country can boast the same kind of claim and yet we allowed this legacy to perish forever.



CATHOLIC DEAF HISTORY AT ST. ANDREW CHURCH, DELAVAN

By Patty Kostechka



Below is information I gleaned from what others had written about concerning Catholic religious education for students at Wisconsin School for the Deaf (WSD). Below is what I found from some research, from some written contributions of Peg Stachowiak, and from my poor memory.

My name is Patty Kostechka, and I have been in the Deaf Ministry, in one way or another, for more than 35 years, and with the Catholic Deaf Community, recently retiring as the Coordinator of Deaf Ministry at St. Andrew.

I have learned in discussions from Deaf sharing that they identify as a cultural and linguistic minority. This means that being Deaf is an “invisible disability,” and that at times the Deaf become “invisible” in their social surroundings. I thought of that when I was trying to find information about the history of the Catholic Deaf at St. Andrew Church in Delavan. There is no early recorded history of when the Deaf Community and the Deaf ministry became a part of St. Andrew or when St. Andrew became a part of the Catholic Deaf Community. Silent? Invisible? Sadly, it seems it will always be a mystery as to



▲ Peg Stachowiak

who the first Deaf parishioner at St. Andrew was or when the church began instructions in the Catholic faith to students. We do know St. Andrew Parish was founded in 1851. One year later, in 1852, the Wisconsin School for the Deaf was established. (This serves as a good future lesson for us to keep data and maintain a census in our archdiocese and churches as to who and where our Deaf Catholic members are.) For a time, there also was a chapel at Wisconsin School for the Deaf. Perhaps Catholic classes or services happened there, but there is nothing recorded specifically about that.



▲ St. Andrew Parish, Delevan, WI

Peg Stachowiak states, “We do know that St. Andrew has a long history of ministering to the Deaf students at WSD and to the Deaf community. In the “olden days” students lived at the school and only went home for the holidays. Since this is a state school for the Deaf, students may come from all over the state of Wisconsin. If their hometown was too far away (remember travel was much slower back then), they did not go home until summer. Staff members would take students home for the holidays.”



▲ Fr. William McDermott, former pastor of St. Andrew Parish

I was able to find this entry that mentions the Deaf from the annals of St. Andrew School in 1945. Fr. William McDermott was the pastor at St. Andrew at the time. Following is the entry. “The 9:00 Mass on Sundays was arranged to accommodate the children. There was also an instruction class opened to enable the children of the local Deaf School to participate in the Liturgy. Sister Mary Olivia took charge of the class, and also acted as interpreter during the Sunday sermons.”

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

Currently our oldest Deaf Catholic parishioner at St. Andrew is Len Peacock. He is a 92 years. old. Several years ago, during Deaf Awareness week, Len gave a short speech in church about the history he remembered during his time at WSD and being Catholic. Len said, “When my fellow Catholic and Protestants students and I were small at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, we were taught Sunday school by teachers there. During Father McDermott’s reign we, Catholic students, started to go to church at St. Andrew. We usually sat in several pews on the right side of this church. No interpreting services were provided. A nun from St. John’s School for the Deaf of Milwaukee taught Sunday school to us for an hour every Sunday morning. Subsequently, an interpreting service was started to be rendered by Ray Ducharme. It is believed that he is the first interpreter in the history of St. Andrew Church. When he was young, he interpreted for his deaf parents here while they sat together in a pew. We appreciated his service as we better understood what Mass was about. He taught basic American Sign Language to several ensuing pastors here.”



▲ Mr. Len Peacock proclaiming a reading at Sunday Mass



▲ Fr. Don Zerkel, former pastor of St. Andrew Parish.

Fr. Zerkel was ordained a priest in 1957, and his first assignment was St. Andrew parish. Fr. McDermott told Fr. Zerkel that he would work with the Deaf. Ray Ducharme was one of the people who helped teach him American Sign Language (ASL). At that time, WSD superintendent, Ken Huff, allowed the religion classes to occur on campus and he was able to teach there. When Fr. Zerkel left here, he took a job at St. John’s School for the Deaf and later became superintendent there. More than 25

► **ST. ANDREW CHURCH - Continued from page 16.**

years later, in 1983, Fr. Zerkel returned to St. Andrew as pastor. He is considered one of the giants in the Catholic Deaf Community of our parish

Another giant in our parish for teaching religious education was Peg Stachowiak. Peg shared, "When she came to Delavan in 1976 to teach, Ray and wife Bev DuCharme shared responsibility of interpreting the Sun. Masses and teaching religion classes.



▲ Peg Stachowiak, former Coordinator.

There was a large group of WSD students who would attend Sunday Mass as many of them did not go home on the weekends yet. There were no interpreted services in their hometowns so the parents figured it was a waste of time for their Deaf child. The task of educating Deaf students about our Catholic faith fell to many volunteers, most of whom were Catholic staff members at WSD. When Ray retired from this ministry, for many years Steve and Pat Werner along with Sue Drefs coordinated religion classes for the Deaf in the early 1980s. [Peg] then

coordinated religious education until 2000. (When she stepped out of that position she continued teaching for a time.) We had support from the Milwaukee Archdiocese for Deaf Ministry until Patty Kostechka took over Deaf Ministry in 2006."

WSD began bussing students home on weekends in 1978. The large group of students disappeared from our pews on Sundays as they were home. I remember the mixed feelings I had. It was a loss for our Sunday experience at St. Andrew, but it was wonderful for the kids to be with their families more often. They however were not having Sunday Mass accessible to them anymore in their home parishes.

By the 70s, classes were not taught at WSD, but instead, WSD would bus the students to St. Andrew. The elementary students had classes at St. Andrew after school in the late afternoons. In the evenings, the high school kids would come for classes. Sometimes the high school students were mainstreamed in classes with hearing students and classes were interpreted. Later, we realized that all the students learned better being taught in the native language rather than rely on getting information through



▲ The beautiful sanctuary of St. Andrew Parish with the famous colored glass window of St. Andrew himself.



▲ Wisconsin School for the Deaf.

an interpreter and we switched all classes for the Deaf students to be taught in American Sign Language.

Although the majority of the Deaf students served at our parish are not St. Andrew members, and many are not even in our diocese, our parish members have always accepted the responsibility of their ministry. It used to be even included in our Parish Mission statement. We have also had help from nuns who first taught at St. John's School for the Deaf, other Catholic staff members at WSD and Deaf adults from the Milwaukee Archdiocese.



▲ A page from the quarterly newsletter on Deaf Ministry in Delavan written by Patty Kostechka.

whole child: academically, physically, emotionally and spiritually. John always supported our classes and would not allow sporting events to be scheduled on Wednesdays. One year, we had 30 Catholic students graduating from WSD. In order to make it easier for the parents, who were from all over the state, we planned to have their Confirmation the same afternoon. When John learned this, he immediately asked Bishop Weakland to give the invocation at the graduation. John was so honored to have the Archbishop at the graduation, he in turn, attended Confirmation. What a great example for our students: to see this leader of their school also support their journey of faith!"



Where we are going? Looking Ahead.



I was looking at an entry from 2002, and at that time we had 18 elementary students attending

◀ WSD Students after their Confirmation at St. Andrew Parish.

► **ST. ANDREW CHURCH - Continued on Page 18.**

► **ST. ANDREW CHURCH - Continued from page 17.**

religious education classes on Wednesday afternoons, and 16 high school students attending in the evenings! Throughout the years, we have seen a decrease in enrollment at WSD, as more students are remaining at home in their own school district. Also, we are seeing throughout the country and the world, Catholic membership, participation and attendance has decreased. That is also reflected in the number of Deaf students now being served. Another part of the problem is that when the students leave WSD where are the Catholic churches, ministries, and other Deaf Catholic mentors that continue to support their faith development and spiritual needs? Access to worship with interpreters, signing priests or a Deaf priest is rare.

Evangelization is very much a priority. How to do we support our Deaf Community to continue to feel they *belong* in the Catholic Church? This is an issue that will need attention front and center in an Evangelization plan.

There have been many positive strides and huge growth as we continue our mission to go out and teach. One of ways we

bring and keep the Church in the Deaf community is to have more and more Deaf disciples producing Deaf disciples. PAH! Look how far we are moving forward! We have a new Coordinator of Deaf Ministry



◀ *Jennifer Paul, the current Coordinator Deaf Religious Education & Deaf Ministry at St. Andrew Parish.*

at St. Andrew this year, Jennifer Paul, our first Deaf Coordinator and a member of our staff. The archdiocese has a Deaf priest,



◀ *Fr. Christopher Klusman with the First Communicants after Mass.*

Fr. Christopher Klusman, who travels to Delavan to teach students in classes, the adults in Deaf Bible study, and celebrates Mass in American Sign Language, the heart language of our Deaf Community. Interpreted Sunday Masses continue to happen weekly. We have Deaf lectors who proclaim God's word at Mass. We remain the only program in the state, to

my knowledge, that offers religious education to Deaf students in their native language of ASL. This is a great reason to rejoice in the wonderful hope and anticipation of future growth with the Deaf ministry at St. Andrew and within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee!

Finally I hope you enjoy this photo of Watch, the dog that appeared in the Milwaukee Journal and Delavan's local Enterprise newspaper. This article appeared in March 1937. This is the earliest written reference I could find of a relationship between WSD and St. Andrew Parish. Evangelization was happening way back then as Watch seems to have converted, taking an interest in our beautiful Catholic Church of St. Andrew, Delavan.

Dog Gone . . . Nearly!

“WATCH,” the famous common blooded dog at the Wisconsin State School for the Deaf, who follows the children wherever they go, was struck by an automobile Sunday, March 7th. He is reported “to be doing as well as could be expected.” His pulse was normal, and it is believed that if some ailment from old age does not set in, he will recover and again tag the children to church.

“Watch,” has been “written up” by newspapers from coast to coast. He is famous for his almost human intelligence. He makes a practice of following the State school children to church each Sunday morning, waiting outside the church to escort them back to the institution.

For a time Watch was Lutheran, following the Lutheran children to church. Recently he has been going to the Catholic church.

Watch is now nearly fourteen years old. He has grown so fat and prosperous at the State school that the excess poundage afforded him protection when hit by the car. —Enterprise



Reprint From The Milwaukee Journal
“WATCH”

CATHOLIC DEAF HISTORY IN WAUKESHA



By Clark Christensen

My name is Clark Christensen. I was born in Menasha, Wisconsin. My parents are hearing and I have one Deaf brother. I was a student at St. John's School for the Deaf. I graduated in 1949 and attended St. Mary's School for the Deaf in Buffalo, NY for high school, since St. John's

School for the Deaf did not have a high school yet. I graduated in 1953. Then, I moved in with my parents in Rock Island, Illinois and lived with them for 5 years. I was involved with many activities with the Deaf community in the Quad Cities (in Illinois & Iowa). I worked for an ice cream production company until I moved to Waukesha, Wisconsin, where I found a job in ice cream production and freezer

operation. I married Bernice (Deaf) in 1957 and we have 5 hearing children. Waukesha is a huge part of my life. It became one of the former important areas of service for the Catholic Deaf community in this archdiocese, in which I'm happy to share its history.

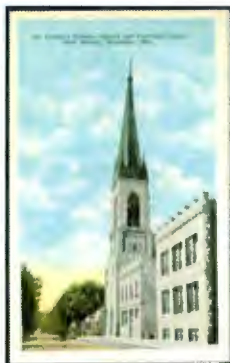


▲ *Bernice Christensen, the woman I married and the mother of my 5 children.*

Services for the Catholic Deaf in Waukesha began in 1976 when I met Vivian Carter, a CODA (Child of Deaf Adult) volunteer, who was willing to interpret for the Waukesha Deaf community wherever she was needed. She persuaded me to be involved in the Waukesha Deaf community. From 1976 to 2005, I have been involved with the Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist – ICDA #7, where I took on many roles as an officer. I was also involved with many organizations such as the St. John School for the Deaf Alumni, Waukesha Deaf Organization (WDO), Wisconsin Association for the Deaf (WAD), and other committees. I helped with the formation of the Deaf Senior Citizen apartment (Water Tower View (WTV) Apartments) building in Greenfield, WI. I had served as a representative on the Deaf Apostolate Advisory Committee.

Vivian, who herself is a Methodist, asked me if I had an interpreter at my

▲ *I received the ICDA Outstanding Member of the Year in 2009 at the ICDA-US National Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.*



▲ *St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Waukesha, WI*



▲ *Robert Jr. and Joan Horak.*

Church of St. Joseph in Waukesha. I said that we did not have anyone. She offered her time and services by interpreting at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. A parishioner saw the interpreter and brought up a suggestion to the Parish Council to approve and support the interpreter services. Two Catholic women, Nancy Wegner, and Pat Kruck, interpreters from Lowell school, were hired to interpret every Sunday and at various special events. There were about eight deaf adults and one deaf child (with her family) that attended weekend Mass regularly. Several of those deaf adults were Bernice Christensen, Robert, Jr., Joan Horak, and Jackie Teske. We all were involved and served in the Catholic Deaf organizations (International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA)), including the national, regional (Midwest), and local (Chapter 7) organizations.

Back then, the field of interpreting was not well known as their profession had only begun to develop. I was invited to go to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to learn how to use interpreting services with the ITP (Interpreting Training Program) students.

Over the years, when Fr. Bill Key was assigned at St. Joseph Parish, he would sign or provide an interpreter for our Masses. Eventually, I moved to Milwaukee at Water Tower View (WTV) Apartments and Fr. Bill Key was assigned to another parish in Milwaukee. Our Catholic Deaf community in Waukesha were already reaching retirement age, so our community began to decrease due to various reasons, such as moving to new homes and/or death by old age. Sadly, interpreting services at St. Joseph Catholic Church eventually ended.

On behalf of all the Catholic Deaf in Waukesha, I wanted to thank all the CODAs for their initial interest in offering their services to St. Joseph Catholic Church in Waukesha. If it was not for them, I would have not have continued my Catholic faith.

Happy 175th Anniversary to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.



▲ *Jackie Teske.*

THE HISTORY OF CATHOLIC DEAF MINISTRY IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

By Linda Hillebrand



My name is Linda Hillebrand and I have been a part of the Catholic Deaf community for more than 35 years. How did it all begin? Back in February or March of 1985, there appeared in the Catholic Herald a request from St. Joseph Parish in Grafton for a sign language interpreter. I called St. Joe's and an evening meeting was set. At that meeting was

Fr. Bill Key, three other interpreters and myself. Fr. Key visited with us and then asked each of us to sign a prayer. After evaluating each of us, he assigned us an "order" of who would interpret the first Mass, then the second Mass and so on. I was assigned the fourth month since I needed to learn and practice the most. There was one deaf couple at St. Joe's. It was determined that the third Sunday of each month, the 10:30 A.M. Mass would be interpreted. I anxiously attended the first interpreted Mass on Sunday, April 21, 1985, to watch and learn. Unfortunately for this deaf couple, I was the only interpreter from that meeting to show up. The other three interpreters never returned. This couple stuck with me and my limited interpreting skills. The husband worked a rotating shift job, so later I was asked to sometimes interpret Saturday afternoon Masses. I don't remember what year that was, but that began the first Saturday of the month and the third Sunday of the month interpreted Masses.

In or around 2007, a friend, Beth Schaffner-Holz, joined me and added the last Saturday's 4:00 P.M. Mass as a regularly interpreted



▲ St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Grafton

the 35th year of interpreted Masses at St. Joseph Parish in Grafton.

In December of 1990, I received a phone call from St. Mary / Immaculate Conception Parish in West Bend. They had a deaf couple and were also looking for an interpreter. In January of 1991, I began interpreting their 10:00 A.M. Mass on the second Sunday of each month. The deaf couple moved away a couple of years later, maybe because of my interpreting skills (haha), but the parish wanted the interpreted Mass to continue. The time was changed



▲ Fr. William "Bill" Key

Mass at St. Joseph's. The congregation there is very welcoming to the interpreted Masses and will always sign along for the Alleluias at the proclamation of the Gospel. This year's Easter Sunday was the start of

to 9:30 A.M. a couple of years ago when the West Bend parishes merged, but the interpreted Mass continues, and we now have three deaf families who attend, even though they are members of other parishes. The congregation of St. Mary / Immaculate Conception Parish love our Deaf friends and always ask them to bring up the gifts at the Christmas Eve Mass, which I interpret each year. On January 13th of this year began the 29th year of interpreted Masses at St. Mary / Immaculate Conception Parish in West Bend.

Twelve of the years I interpreted at St. Mary / Immaculate Conception, the Pastor was Fr. Patrick Wendt. What a great guy! One of our Deaf friends there was a little girl, maybe 5 years old when her mother began bringing her to the interpreted Masses.



▲ Fr. Patrick Wendt

One Sunday, Fr. Pat was gone on vacation and a visiting priest came walking up the aisle. This young lady watched him walk by and then looked down the aisle, looking for Fr. Pat. She looked lost and confused. She signed to me, "Where my Fr. Pat?" I explained that he was on vacation and this priest was filling in for him. Again, she looked down the aisle, toward the back of the church and signed again, with much more emotion, "Where MY Fr. Pat?" Her Mom calmed her and the Mass went on.

In or around 2005, while reading the Catholic Herald, my husband, Tim, saw that Fr. Patrick Wendt was being transferred to St. Peter Parish in Port Washington. Since we live in Saukville, about 6 miles away, we thought we would surprise him and attend his Mass on the last weekend of the month, my "off" weekend. We arrived early and were sitting in the pew when all of a sudden there was this tap, tap, tap on my shoulder. I looked up and there he stood, smiling at us. He said, "What are you doing sitting down?" I laughed and said, "This is my weekend off." Then again there was this tap, tap, tap on my shoulder and the question, "So what are you doing sitting down?" I laughed and asked if he wanted an interpreted Mass at St. Peter



▲ St. Mary's / I.C. Catholic Parish, West Bend



▲ St. Peter's Catholic Parish, Port Washington

► CATHOLIC DEAF MINISTRY - Continued on Page 21

► **CATHOLIC DEAF MINISTRY - Continued from page 20.**

and said: "Well, yes." So now I sometimes interpret the last weekend of the month, sometimes Saturday afternoon's 4:30 P.M. Mass and sometimes Sunday's 10:30 A.M. Mass at what is now renamed St. John XXIII, on the St. Peter campus. A couple of years ago, this young lady from West Bend, then a college student, came to St. Peter to surprise Fr. Pat. The look on his face when he saw her, and the smiles exchanged, are something I will never forget. What a great day that was.

When the interpreted Masses began at St. Joseph, I would often call Fr. Key and trade him lunch for some tutoring. He was very accommodating, and that helped. He asked me, on my weekends off, to contact other parishes in Ozaukee County and go interpret a Mass there to bring attention that there was now an interpreted Mass offered in the county and announce when and where that could be found. It was very disappointing how many of the parishes would not allow a single interpreted Mass. There were several cold, rude responses to this request. One parish reluctantly agreed and after Mass, the priest approached me and said, "That's all it was? I thought it was that dancing around stuff. You are welcome to come here anytime." I ran into him a couple of times while shopping, he recognized me and would greet me with a smile and was very friendly. One parish I contacted had a response I'll never forget. The pastor said to me, "Well, we are in the process of renovating and painting. If you could wait until we're finished, that might be a good draw to get people to come see our new paint job." We, as hearing people, have so much to learn about sensitivity to our Deaf friends.

On an opposite note, Shepherd of the Hills Parish in Eden is another wonderful parish community that began to provide interpreted Masses. It all began in 2005 when I interpreted the Mass during then-Archbishop Dolan's church blessing and dedication. I interpreted the Mass, while Cathy Steffes interpreted some songs. Eventually, in 2007, Cathy Steffes started to officially become the interpreter for this parish. Cathy began interpreting on the first Sunday of the month at the 8:15 A.M. Mass for a number of years, with various Deaf people coming from time to time. After about seven years, a Deaf family moved into the area and decided to join after watching her interpret. Cathy then was able to interpret twice a month on the first and third Sundays of the month at the 8:15 A.M. Mass. Another Deaf family requested Cathy to interpret for their son's First Communion at a sister parish,

► *Shepherd of the Hills Catholic Parish, Eden*



St. Matthew Parish in Campbellsport. They now come to Shepherd of the Hills Parish. The Deaf community here truly loves their pastor, Fr. Mark Jones. His support and love meant so much to the Deaf community and the interpreters. People often told Cathy how she, with the Deaf community, helps the hearing community too, as it allows them to pay much closer attention to the Mass as they can see how concepts are made more visible through signed prayers and homilies. Now, we have a Deaf couple whose children attend school here.



▲ *Cathy Steffes*

During the past several years, Fr. Christopher Klusman and Deacon David Sommers came to celebrate Mass in sign language at St. Mary / Immaculate Conception, Shepherd of the Hills, and St. Joseph parishes. The hearing community has grown to love the experience and they asked for them to come again. The Deaf community was able to experience the Mass directly in their language. They also show their involvement



▲ *Fr. Christopher and Deacon David celebrating Mass at St. Joe's. You can see me standing at the far right.*

by proclaiming the Sunday readings in sign language, with voicing from the interpreter. The hearing community learned more about the beauty of sign language, as well as tidbits about the Deaf community through homilies. They realized more that sign language interpreters are not only for the Deaf but for everyone.

I am so thrilled that one of our Deaf members, Tricia Condon, is now a representative on the Deaf Apostolate Advisory Committee. Her presence helps to ensure that all the services here in the northern part of the archdiocese are open to the Catholic Deaf community and that they will continue to receive access to everything offered at our parishes. One of her amazing gifts that you will see from time to time is her proclamation of the Responsorial Psalm in sign language, which she at times does with Melissa Peters. It is truly an uplifting experience.

In all my years serving the Catholic Deaf community through interpreting, I do the best I can and pray that God will guide my hands and that my Deaf friends will always be patient with my limitations. I wish the Archdiocese of Milwaukee a happy 175th Anniversary!



▲ *Tricia and Melissa beautifully signing the Responsorial Psalm at St. Mary's / I.C. Parish.*

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC DEAF IN KENOSHA

By George Gontscharow



My name is George Gontscharow and I have been part of the Catholic Deaf community in Kenosha for many decades. Kenosha has had a long history of service with the Catholic Deaf community. Prior to 1976, St. Mark Catholic Church in Kenosha was the gathering place of the Deaf for Masses that were interpreted in

sign language.

Our transition to St. Peter Catholic Church in 1976 began with my involvement as being one of the original members of The Sign Singers. It is a group of Deaf and hearing performers who turned music into sign language. Before 1976, The Sign Singers outgrew practicing in my home. On the lookout for a new practice space, Alexis Land (a



▲ Front entrance of St. Mark's Catholic Church in Kenosha, WI.



▲ Alexis Land

hearing member of the group), talked to St. Peter Parish about using their space. Fr. Stanley Saplis, MIC, welcomed the group with open arms in 1978. Sr. Frances, OSF, has helped with this, as well as finding other Catholic Deaf in Kenosha for St. Peter's. Shortly after the warm welcome, the Deaf members of the Sign Singers began attending St. Peter's parish where Alexis Land willingly volunteered and signed the Mass for them. Jean Gontscharow, my wife, made a stole for Fr. Stanley that had the "I love you" sign sewn onto it. This began many years of Deaf ministry at St. Peter in Kenosha. Since we were included in the parish, we showed our support by volunteering at St. Peter festival by working in the corn booth and other duties, which we have continued to this present day.

During the year 1979, The Sign Singers hosted a performance, Godspell, as a fundraiser for St. Peter Parish.

My wife, Jean, Betty Perry, and Alexis Land provided sign language classes for our parishioners who were interested in learning about our language.

In the late 1990's, I and Leah Held attended the Ministry Formation Program (MFP) with the support of then pastor, Fr. Daniel Cambra, MIC, and St. Peter parish. The MFP is a 4-year training program for Catholic Deaf adults who wish to serve as active lay ministers. The instructors are professionals who understand Deaf Culture and possess skills in communication in American Sign Language



▲ Front entrance of St. Peter's Catholic Church in Kenosha, WI.



▲ The beautiful interior of St. Peter's in Kenosha, WI.

basis. Fr. Bill is also Hard of Hearing. Last year, he was called to serve in Vietnam, in which we continue to stay in contact today.

At St. Peter Parish, I served on the Parish Council for three years. My three children were married at St. Peter and most of our grandchildren were baptized here. My son, Mark, served on the Parish Council for several years. My daughter, Cathy, serves at St. Peter as a sign language interpreter at our Masses. Jill Otahal has served generously as a sign language interpreter as well. I am grateful for their support of the Deaf community here.



▲ From left to right with me in the back: Nicolina "Nickie" Richardson, Jean (my wife), and Leah Held.

(ASL). Leah and I began to serve as lectors and Eucharistic Ministers. I have taught CCD to students in Delavan and Kenosha for many years.

During the beginning of the 21st century until last year, our pastor, Fr. Bill Hayward, MIC, continued to learn sign language from me and Jean on a weekly



▲ Fr. Bill Hayward, MIC, Jean, and I at his anniversary celebration.

On April 18, 2015, St. Peter held their annual appreciation banquet. Jean and I were humbled by the honor of being recognized for the *St. Peter Parish Appreciation Award* for our services at the parish since the late 1970s.

Over the years, many of our faithful members have passed away. Currently, we still have several



▲ Jean and I receiving the St. Peter's Parish Appreciation Award alongside our pastor, Fr. Ireneusz Chodakowski, MIC.

regular attending Deaf members at St. Peter parish. We always enjoy socializing with other parishioners after our Masses with coffee and donuts in the cafeteria. We are so grateful that the church is committed to providing interpreting services to the Deaf community at

10:30 am on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation. Happy 175th Anniversary, Archdiocese of Milwaukee!

◀ Group Picture: (from left to right) Fr. Stanley Saplis, MIC, me (George Gontscharow), Carol Schweitzer (née Morrison), Jean Gontscharow, and Francis Perry with children at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Kenosha.



PASSING THE 10 YEAR MARK WITH THE WHAT'S UP NEWSLETTER



By Sue Koehn

Last year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of our "What's Up Newsletter." The "What's Up Newsletter" has been

an important resource for the Catholic Deaf community for more than a decade.

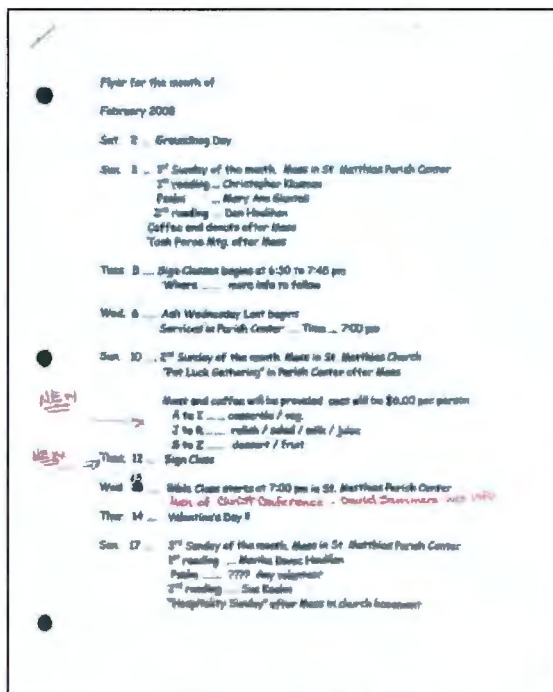
The "What's Up Newsletter" started with me, as I had the idea of having a resource that would help the Deaf community know what's happening every month. The first newsletter was sent out in February 2008. I am grateful that I had others who supported me in this work, such as Clark Christensen, Verna Farmer, Michael Hoffmann, and Gladys Piche. I liked the idea of calling it the "What's Up Newsletter," as it is to share the news of "what's up" inside the Catholic Deaf community. The "What's Up Newsletter" included Mass times & locations and whether the Mass will be interpreted or signed by a priest. For our Signed Masses, we listed who our readers/lectors were. We also shared any additional events, such as retreats, special gatherings such as Holy Hour/Adoration, Ultreyas, and Bible Study classes. We tried to include additional information on national and regional gatherings, such as the International Catholic Deaf Association-US (ICDA-US) Conferences, ICDA Midwest Conferences, National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD) Conferences, NCOD Great Lakes events, and National Deaf Cursillo (NDC). We also included World Youth Day (WYD) events. It was for this idea that I was awarded the 2016 International

Catholic Deaf Association Midwest Member of the Year Award, along with the other things I have done in my service over the past many decades with the Catholic Deaf community.

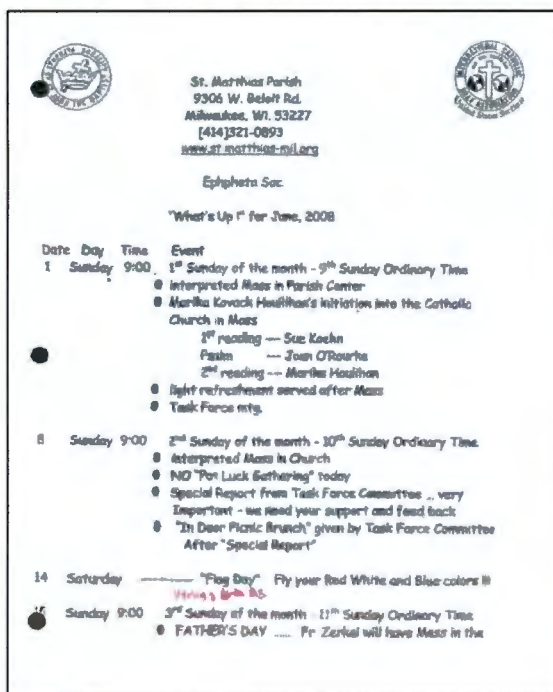
The "What's Up Newsletter" requires a lot of steps towards its publication. In the first years, it was a challenge as we had our share of its ups and downs. The steps usually included: meeting with the team to gather information for the month's schedule, type it out, make paper copies, and label envelopes with address labels and stamps in order to be mailed out to the Deaf community.

Over time, we continued to tweak to make improvements to the "What's Up Newsletter." We added the logos of our Ephpheta Sodality of St. John the Baptist and ICDA Chapter 7 on the upper corners of our newsletters. We also tried various things, such as including lists of names of various Deaf people who are ill. Sometimes, we were misinformed that the Deaf person(s) wasn't actually ill, so that was no longer included in the newsletters. But, our team always had a person who was responsible of sending out "Get Well a d Sympathy" cards to whoever was ill or had passed away. Verna Farmer was phenomenal in that area of ministry, to which she did until her passing.

Eventually, with the increased use of email, less paper copies were sent out as more "What's Up Newsletters" were sent out electronically. To this day, some people don't have computers and/or prefer the paper format, so we still make copies to be sent



▲ February 2008, the 1st What's Up Newsletter.



▲ June 2008

► 10 YEAR MARK - Continued from page 23.

out via mail. All of our "What's Up Newsletters" go to the Catholic Deaf Archives in the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, managed by another Deaf priest, Fr. Joe Bruce, SJ. At our Signed Masses at St. Matthias' Parish Chapel, we always leave a stack of the month's "What's Up Newsletter" next to the bulletins for people who still need these important newsletters.

Eventually, I handed over the layout responsibility to Margaret Calteaux, who continues to upgrade the front-page format and its contents. She also included a calendar for that month, which lists the events as well as what the holidays are and saint feast days. I still help out with address labels, stuffing of the envelopes, and mailings of the newsletters. The Deaf Apostolate (Fr. Christopher and Terri) help inform what the monthly services are and a team (including Arvilla Rank) help edit for accuracy before circulation.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee's Deaf Apostolate's "Hand in Hand Newsletter" is a different type of newsletter. Instead of it being monthly, it is published four times a year per season and includes mostly of articles, much like a magazine. Both newsletters serve a different purpose.

The "What's Up Newsletter" is supported through ICDA #7 funds. I still want to thank all the people who have donated money over this past decade to keep up with the costs for the "What's Up Newsletter" publications and mailings.

For the future of the "What's Up Newsletter," I leave it in God's Hands. Whatever that works for the Catholic Deaf community in its changing times, needs, and technological advances, as long as they are informed of what services are available on a monthly basis.

What's Up Newsletter

Catholic Deaf Ministry Office
January, 2018

**ASL Mass/
Interpreted Mass**

St. Matthias Parish Chapel
8208 West Bethel Road
Milwaukee, WI 53227
ASL Mass with Fr. CK & Don DG
Dec. 21-8:30am Rosary-7:00pm
Mass

Jan. 2-8:30am Rosary-9:00am Mass-
10:00am Ancestry
Jan. 16-9:30am Rosary-9:00am Mass
Jan. 18-4:00pm Mass
Jan. 17-8:30am Rosary-9:00am Mass
Jan. 24-8:30am Rosary-9:00am Mass
Jan. 27-8:30am Rosary-9:00am Mass

St. Andrew Parish
714 East Wabasha Avenue
Delacon, WI 53115
Interpreted Mass
Jan. 3-8:30am Mass-Maria W
Jan. 10-9:30am Mass-Poly K
Jan. 17-9:30am Mass-Poly G
Jan. 24-9:30am Mass-Maria W
Jan. 27-9:30am Mass-Poly S

Water Tower View (WTV)
8385 South Prairie Hill Lane
Greenfield, WI 53228
ASL Mass with Fr. CK & Don DG
Jan. 28-8:00pm Mass

Thanks you for joining us at Mass
Did You know that...

Happy New Year to you all!!!

As we ring into the New Year, we would like to try something new with this issue. Hope you like the new look.

On the first Sunday of each month, Fr. Christopher Klueman will have the **Sacrament of the Anointing** for those who want it after the 9:00am Mass at St. Matthias Parish Chapel.

Bible Study at the Community Bank Community Room located at 620 East Geneva Street in Delacon. Come and join Fr. Christopher Klueman on Wednesday, January 6th at 6:30pm.

Catholic That will be on Friday, January 8th from 7:00pm to 8:30pm at St. Matthias Steiger Hall. Mary Ellen Martens will explain about Don Pelayo. Come & find out who he is.

Bible Study at St. Matthias Parish Chapel 8206 W. Bethel Road in Milwaukee. Come and join Deacon David Sommers on Tuesday, January 19th at 7:00pm.

Greetings of the Month

From **Fran's Pearls of Wisdom**
What you are is God's gift to you,
what you make yourself is your gift to God.

From **Pope Francis' Tweets**
Lord, help us always to be more generous and closer to poor families.

Thank You

Gladys Piche and Mary Ellen Martens

Thank you very much for your support and donations of money, every little bit helps. Appreciated very much. Make checks out to: Ephphata/ICDA #7 and mail to Arvilla Rank, 4744 W. Maple Leaf Court, Greenfield, WI 53220

Save the Date!

(Sunday, February 27th-Ephphata News International's next issue.

► January 2016

Ephphata Sodality/ICDA#7 - "What's Up" Newsletter
May - 2012

Announcements

Another busy month with graduations, Baptisms, First Communions, Mother's Day, Memorial Day and more. Also please notice the special days of the church year for this month: the Ascension of the Lord (a holy day of obligation) and Pentecost Sunday (a time to sever your red in honor of our Lord).

Thank you to all those that came to the Open House for the Deaf's Land of Hearing. We had a nice number of people that came to see the office at the Cousins Center.

Missing a DVD about St. Maria Goretti ... it was borrowed to someone and has not been returned yet so if you have it, please return it to Fr. Christopher (one of his favorites)

Schedule

*Tues. May 1 - Crowning of our Dear Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God - gathering at 9:00 p.m. location - back yard of St. Roman Parish Office with statue of our Blessed Virgin Mary - bring your folding chair, also flower if you want - if pouring rain, this event will be canceled.

*Tues. May 1 & May 22 - WTV - Mass with Fr. Christopher and Deacon Dave

*Tues. May 6 & 15 - WTV - Communion Services with Deacon Dave

*Wed. May 2 - Six students from WSD will be confirmed at St. Andrew Church in Delacon, WI with Archbishop J. Listroki. If you plan to attend please let Terri Klueman know.

MOTHER'S DAY

*Sun. May 13 - Happy Mother's Day

*Mon. May 14 - Feast of St. Matthias watch bulletin for any announcements

*Thurs. May 17 - 7:00 p.m. - Holy Day of Obligation - the Ascension of our Lord will be celebrated on Sat. and Sun. of this weekend.

*Sat. May 27 - 9:00 a.m. Pentecost Sunday - Mass in church

Up Coming Events

*Fri. May 18 - 7:00 p.m. USNM Mixer (TP graduation ceremony in Union (Wisconsin Room) on Kenwood Ave. Light snacks and refreshments to follow - open to all)

*Mon. May 21 - 7:00 p.m. - Bible Study with Deacon Dave in Parish Center - last one

*Mon. May 21 - Today marks the 1 year anniversary of Fr. Christopher Klueman's ordination to the priesthood, may God be with you always and keep up the wonderful and good words you do. We will keep you in our prayers.

*Sun. May 20 - a "KODIA" fund raising breakfast after 8:00 a.m. Mass at Parish Center for Maria and Dana Houshler's children's camping trip. Let's help them out and enjoy a great breakfast, too, more info to follow.

► May 2012

Ephphata Sodality of St. John the Baptist/
International Catholic Deaf Association #7

WHAT'S UP NEWSLETTER

Utraya
March 2nd from 2 to 4 pm followed by ASL Mass at 4 pm. See the enclosed flyer for more information.

Holy Hour
Join us for prayer at St. Charles Borromeo on March 3rd from 1 pm to 2 pm. Bring Bible or book on saint to read/pray/meditate during Holy Hour

Ash Wednesday
March 6th: 3 pm Mass at WTV (see website).
6:30 pm Mass at St. Andrew by Fr. Christopher with Deacon David
7 pm Interpreted Mass at St. Matthias Big Church

Deaf Lenten Retreat
March 8-10 at Bishop Lema Retreat in Rockford, IL
For more information: www.rockforddiocese.org/deafcatholicretreats

Delacon Bible Study
Fr. Christopher will lead this study group at the Community Bank Community Center in Delacon on Wednesday, March 13th at 6:30 pm. Please read Gospel of John, Chapters 1-3.

Stations of the Cross
Prayer Services on March 15th at St. Matthias Parish Chapel at 7 pm.

St. Matthias Bible Study
Fr. Christopher will lead this study group at St. Matthias Parish Center Chapel on Sunday, March 15th after 9 am Mass. Please read Gospel of John, Chapters 4-6.

St. Matthias Saint Movie
Deacon David Sommers will lead this study group at St. Matthias Parish Center Chapel on Tuesday, March 19th at 7 pm.

Day of Reflection
Fr. Christopher will start the day with 9 am Mass on Sunday, March 24th followed by a "Day of Reflection" in St. Matthias Steiger Hall-Room 7. We will include an ASL movie, "Book of Job" by Deaf Mission. Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.

Men of Christ Conference
Conference on March 20th. Please see the enclosed flyer.

WTV Masses/Communion Services
Fr. Christopher & Deacon David Sommers will have Masses and Communion Services at WTV Community Room on Tuesdays at 11 am. Please see the notice on the right and also listed in the enclosed calendar.

SAVE THE DATE!

April 18th - General Membership Meeting, Palm Sunday Mass followed by meeting then will serve lunch.

June 28th - Tentative date for the Annual Summer Plans

November 8th - Women of Christ Conference

MASS SCHEDULE

St. Matthias Chapel
ASL w/ Fr. CK & Don DG
St. Matthias Church
with interpreters
8208 West Bethel Road
Milwaukee, WI 53227

9:45 3-9 am Mass
9:45 9-7 am Mass in the Big Church (R/D)

9:45 10-9 am Mass in the Big Church (R/D A)

9:45 17-8 am Mass in Steiger Hall - Room 7

9:45 24-9 am Mass in the Big Church (R/D A)

9 9 9 9 9

St. Andrew Parish
with interpreters
714 E. Wabasha Ave
Delacon, WI 53115

9:45 3-9 am Mass

9:45 10-8 am Mass

9:45 17-8 am Mass

9:45 24-9 am Mass

9:45 27-9 am Mass

9 9 9 9 9

Water Tower View (WTV)
Community Room
Signed w/ Fr. CK & Don DG
8385 S. Prairie Hill Ln
Greenfield, WI 53228

9 Mar 6-3 pm Mass for Ash Wednesday

9 Mar 12-11am Communion Service

9 Mar 19-11am Communion Service

9 Mar 27-11am Mass

► March 2019

REFLECTING ON CHANGES IN THE CATHOLIC DEAF YOUNG ADULT WORLD



By Edgar Vizcarra

My name is Edgar Vizcarra and I'm in my late 20s. I currently serve as a representative on the Deaf Apostolate Advisory Committee. I am aware that each age group plays an important role, and I will focus on the role of young adults in the Catholic Deaf Church.

In the year 2011, is when things began to change. It was then that I was dating my girlfriend, Marisol (who is now my wife), and she told me that she knew a Deaf priest, Fr. Christopher Klusman, who was on the front page of the Milwaukee newspaper. We both went to meet him at a Saturday evening Mass in ASL at St. Roman Parish. Since then, I have grown so much with Marisol in the Catholic faith than ever before.

First, I have to thank my parents who showed me the example of being faithful Catholics. Growing up, I came to realize how important it is to have opportunities to learn and grow in understanding God through the Catholic faith.

Growing up and meeting other young people, I noticed an interesting pattern. When I socialized with other Deaf young adults, I noticed that the ones who were comfortable and proud of their Christian identities were the ones who told me that they were Lutheran, Baptist, etc., but not Catholic. This puzzled me, as I wondered why they were not comfortable sharing that part of their identity of being Catholic with me and other people.

I also realized that there are many young adults that still do not go to church. Many of them still do not understand who God is. They also do not know much about faith. I wondered: How can young adults feel comfortable to come back to the church? How can they learn more about God and understand their own faith? Is Marisol the only Catholic Deaf person that I know other than my own self? If not, where are the other Catholic Deaf young adults? I even wonder: are there any Catholic Deaf

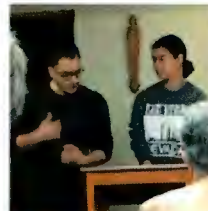
▶ *Serving at Mass was fun, especially with Deacon David behind Fr. Christopher!*



▲ *At my daughter's Presentation (3 years old) and son's baptism. (left to right) My wife Marisol, Ivan (son), Elisa (daughter), and me*

of any age?

Seeing how grateful we are to have a Deaf priest and deacon, I began to participate in Masses with the Deaf community. Marisol and I got married in a Catholic Church and we had both of our children baptized. I was



▲ *Here me doing the Responsorial Psalm at Sunday Mass with Caitlyn Buchman.*

Archdiocese of Milwaukee hosted a Synod, in which I was one of the few representatives for the Catholic Deaf community. You can see a photo of me with the 3 other Catholic Deaf young adult representatives being interviewed on our Synod

experiences. Later, in the Fall of 2014, Chicago and Milwaukee (through Stella Kim-Hill, Fr. Christopher Klusman, and a few others) collaborated to form the first Catholic Deaf young adult weekend retreat in Chicago, as there were no opportunities available for us at the time. It was a dream come true. Since 2014, I've been very thankful to have this retreat continue every year. I got to meet many other Catholic Deaf young adults from other states, and they increased my awareness that there are more Catholic Deaf young adults out there. We were able to learn more about God and our Catholic faith with and from each other.

Another important event occurred at the biennial International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA) – US Conference in Cleveland, Ohio in 2015. The ICDA restarted their young adult program (long ago called "ICDA Jr"), in which I was one of the first 10 young adults to join. It was an idea suggested by

▶ *Our Catholic Deaf Young Adult weekend retreats are so important as it gives us opportunities to grow and learn more about our Catholic faith*



▲ *Being Carlos' sponsor at Mass celebrating his becoming Catholic through his First Communion and Confirmation*

Mass, as well as being an acolyte. I also got to be a sponsor for a few other Catholic Deaf young adults during Confirmation.

Along the way, during June of 2014, the



▲ *It was an honor to represent the Catholic Deaf community for the 2014 Synod*



▶ **REFLECTING ON CHANGES - Continued on Page 26**

► RELECTING ON CHANGES - Continued from Page 25

then-Brother Joseph Thermadom and Fr. Christopher Klusman at the 2013 Conference at Gallaudet University, which was approved to meet the specific needs of the young adult community. The ten of us came from different states in the United States. We attended workshops, did a service project, served and did the readings and songs during Mass, and many other activities together that taught us more about our faith, ministerial leadership, and service in the Catholic Church and world.

Then, in 2016, I felt blessed to journey with more other Catholic Deaf young adults to Poland for World Youth Day (WYD). It was a powerful and life-changing experience for me to see thousands of Catholic young adults (Deaf and Hearing) from all over the world who love God and their Catholic faith. Meeting Deaf priests like Fr. Mike Depcik, OSFS, Fr. Paul Zirimenya, and Fr. Shawn Carey, as well as others, made me see that there is a Catholic Deaf community. I learned more about the saints and their amazing lives, especially the power of prayer in our lives.



▲ Fr. Paul Zirimenya came to Milwaukee to give a Lenten weekend retreat. We made him one of us: a cheesehead!



▲ Check out my rosary!

I also learned about my local ICDA organization (Chapter 7) and attended its meetings and events, such as our annual Christmas Mass and luncheon and summer picnics.

Over the past several years, we had other opportunities. I would go to visit Chicago and meet other Catholic Deaf there. In Milwaukee, we had a helpful marriage workshop for young married couples. We had a Young Catholic Deaf Men's group. Marisol, my wife, attended an interpreted archdiocesan Women of Christ conference with other Catholic Deaf women. I hope someday to attend the interpreted archdiocesan Men of Christ conference. We have gone to various retreats here. I feel it is so important to teach our young adults on how to live in a world that is not an easy place to live. God often talks about how we are to be in the world, but not follow the ways of the world. All that we, young adults, can do is to learn and grow in our Catholic faith so we know how to be like Jesus, instead of taking the bad habits and influences that makes us miserable. We can learn more about holiness by what we learn through our Catholic faith.

Last year, in 2018, I have noticed how much I grew in confidence as I was able to give back to the Deaf community for all they gave to us. I co-lead the Catholic Deaf young adult weekend retreat in Milwaukee last August 2018, as well as prepared and planned with Marisol at the ICDA #7's Christmas 2018 luncheon. I gave a presentation about St. Nicholas and the true meaning of Christmas.

Does that mean that everything is perfect? No, we still have more work to do on how to improve providing services for our young adults. We need to continue formation, so that the Catholic Deaf Young Adults know their identity and that they are not ashamed to tell others that they are Catholic, same as the other Christians. We hope to learn



▲ Group photo of our most recent Catholic Deaf Young Adult Weekend retreat in Milwaukee, WI. Can you find me in the picture?

more on how to explain and defend our faith whenever others ask us questions, such as "Why do you worship Mary?" We can respond by saying that we never worship Mary, but that she is loved by us, as well as that Jesus gave her to be our Mother, too. Other questions, such as the Eucharist, will be asked, in which we hope to answer clearly and with confidence. We also treat others respectfully and we hope others will respect us, too. This is my hope for our future.



▲ Robert and me at the Catholic Deaf Young Adult retreat

There continues to be other challenges in the young adult community. Many young adults have different work schedules, which makes it harder for them to come to Mass. Some live far away and do not have a car to drive to church.

Please pray for further growth in the Catholic Deaf young adult community. This means continued opportunities for retreats, workshops, services, sacraments, and more, so we can continue to grow and learn about God and our Catholic faith and Church.

Thanks to all who have prayed and/or supported us. My hope is that the Annual Catholic Deaf young adult weekend retreat can expand to move to different states each year to allow other Catholic Deaf young adults to experience it, as well as to meet more new Catholic Deaf young adults. I'm proud that we have a Catholic Deaf young adult, who joined us at our weekend retreats these past several years from Georgia, who is now a representative on the National Catholic Office for the Deaf (NCOD) Board. His name is Robert Stephen Eubanks. This continues to inspire us that the young adults can serve as leaders within the Catholic community.

Congratulations to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for its 175th Anniversary, and many thanks for allowing us to grow, to learn, and to build again so that we can share our God-given gifts and talents build a stronger faith community through, in, and with God. God bless you!



▲ Me helping out during a service project at a convent with other Catholic Deaf Young Adults.

MY LENTEN DAY REFLECTION

By Tricia Condon



Dear Friends,

I would like to share with you about what I thought about the movie, "The Book of Job" on the Lenten Day of Reflection in March.

At first, I thought it was awesome that all the characters were signing in the movie! I enjoyed the full signed movie and that it

was a true story from the Bible!

I was excited to find out who Job really was, because I don't recall learning about him or his life. As I was watching Job in the movie, I ached with him when he suffered later in his life. It brought me memories of the time when I suffered physically several years ago.



Job also reminded me of what Jesus went through, too.

I have thought about how Jesus suffered physically when I suffered physically several years ago. I am amazed that He was willing to suffer for all of us and how much He REALLY LOVES and CARES about us and wants to SAVE us so badly. Job was like me, he, too, suffered physically and emotionally.

I was diagnosed with a bulging disc on my lower left spine several years ago and am still struggling with it on and off. I'm sad I don't have a healthy left-side back and leg like I used to have.

I'm sad I'm not able to sit in any chair as long as I would like to, and as I am

typing this article, I was sitting and it was starting to hurt my left back and leg. My beloved husband moved the computer and keyboard from the desk onto a higher bookshelf so I could stand and type. I'm sad I get extreme pains when I travel, and I didn't understand why I had to suffer, but I kept on having faith in God, kept on reading His Words, kept on worshipping and praising Him during Masses because our Lord is SO GOOD! I felt like I was in Job's sandals.

Job 1:21...*The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord!*

Why do I think God is SO GREAT when I suffer? He is SO GREAT because of His UNCONDITIONAL LOVE for us! One day when I was reading, I was thinking, why was Jesus willing to suffer on the cross, because He loves us unconditionally, wants to save us, and wants us to be part of His family in His new kingdom forever. Just like why are expectant mothers willing to suffer the pains of childbirth, because she loves the child that is growing in her womb and wants to hold and care for her new child in her home with her family. I was one of the many mothers. I have two beautiful children and I love them unconditionally! Here is a paragraph that I read from *Rediscover Jesus* by Matthew Kelly:

Jesus counsels us...I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into JOY. When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. (LIKE...because Jesus' hour has come, I thought) But when her child is born, (LIKE...but when Jesus died, I thought) she no longer remembers the anguish because of the JOY of having brought a human being into the world. (LIKE...of the JOY of saving us with His blood into eternal life in His new Kingdom, I thought) So you have pain now; but I will see you again, (When I see Jesus, I would like to give Him a BIG THANK YOU HUG!, I thought!) and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your JOY from you. John 16:20-22.

I grew closer to Him during my time of suffering and am learning so much from Him when I spend time reflecting and communicating with Him through His Living Words, my best medicine!

I imagined what Jesus went through every time I suffered, like about the time when I had the unknown and scary feeling of extreme pressure on my head, pushing me down...(Several weeks later, I found out that I was undergoing withdrawal reactions from the pain medicine that I was weaning off of.) I thought about the time when people a long time ago pushed down the crown of thorns on our King's head and how extremely painful that must have felt. He was human like us and He was not given any medicine to relieve the pain, but was given some sour wine on a stick.

Our beloved priest, Fr. Christopher, sent me a reading from one of his books that he keeps in his library at home and texted me the picture of the page when I was undergoing scary times of withdrawal sufferings. I would like to share this saying with you. *"One of the most important themes of the Lenten season*



► REFLECTION - Continued on Page 28

► REFLECTION - Continued from page 27.

is suffering.” ...it is by St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta... she said, “Pain and suffering have come into your life, but remember pain, sorrow, suffering are but the kiss of Jesus - a sign that you have come so close to Him that He can kiss you.” Why do we suffer so? Because Jesus’ Crown of Thorns presses upon you. Embrace the cross for it does wonders to all!!! You are never alone for Jesus is right next to you in all you do!

I don’t remember how I felt when I read this text several years ago, but I saved it and read it again recently because I am suffering with my left back and leg again. I looked back at the text and I’m amazed with this saying, because the saying of “Jesus’ crown of thorns presses upon you” is just like the time when I felt that strange and scary pressure on my head several years ago! I was imagining Jesus’ crown of thorns putting pressure on my head. I love St. Mother Teresa’s quote! I love that Jesus is right here kissing me, now. I learn so much from God’s Living Words in *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young, *Rediscover Jesus* by Matthew Kelly and many more Bible based teachings. One of the teachings was about focusing on God and not the problem. Last Sunday on our one hour drive home from Mass at St. Joe’s in Grafton, I was in extreme pain, sitting in the vehicle and I was reminded by the Holy Spirit to focus on God and not the problem- my pain. I decided to focus on God’s creation and looked for them out the window from the vehicle. He’s all around us, here on earth and as I gazed out the window, I looked at God’s beautiful blue sky, God’s glorious white clouds, God’s green meadows... and gazed back on His glorious white clouds, and all of a sudden, I saw a faded rainbow coming out of that cloud and God made me SMILE! His creation reminded me of His Promise! The rainbow was so faded, you had to REALLY look for it, even my son, Nolan couldn’t find it at first and then he found it! God wants us to seek Him! He’s everywhere and waiting for us to come to Him!

As I was standing and typing this article, my son, Nolan, came up to me and said, “Did you type all of that?” I said, “Yes, I



typed all of that!” He told me, he wants to read it and I told him, he has to wait until I’m done with it. God made all of us unique and He also made all of our life stories unique. Job’s life story in the movie was UNIQUE. Jesus’ life story was UNIQUE! The Holy Spirit helped me type this article, God is the author of my life story and yours!

After the movie, I thought to myself, Job loved God and was faithful to Him and he suffered. Jesus loves His Father and did His Will and He suffered for us so we could live forever with Him in His Kingdom, someday.

I love our Lord, I try my best to follow Jesus’ footsteps and I suffer. My family and my friends suffer.

We’re all in this together until Jesus comes back in His GLORY on the glorious cloud, someday!



“Somewhere over the rainbow”... is my favorite part of the song from the movie, *Wizard of Oz*... and I thought of this song quote ... “Somewhere over God’s rainbow, His

promise will happen.”

I would like to share some quotes that I liked from *Rediscover Jesus* by Matthew Kelly on page 74-75.

“*The Old Testament Scriptures tell us that suffering is the consequence of sin.*” Like in the movie, Job, his friends thought he suffered from the sins he or his loved ones did and he was innocent.

“*In the New Testament, Jesus boldly announced with his words and actions that suffering has value. It is a tool that can transform us into more loving people.*”

“*Salvation and the suffering of Jesus are inseparable.*”

“*We can try to run from it, or we can accept it and allow it to transform us in unimaginable ways. We can allow it to make us angry, or we can let it teach us how to love more fully.*”

“*Jesus promised us suffering.*”

“*The world changed at three o’clock on that Friday afternoon when Jesus laid down his life for us. That was how he changed the world.*”

“*If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.*” Luke 9:23

I suffer almost daily, but I let Jesus help me carry my cross daily.

Rediscover Jesus-Verse To Live: “We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” ROMANS 5:3-4.

Shiloh, my dearest friend, who supported me with

► REFLECTION - Continued from page 28.



unconditional love during my suffering the past few years, turned the lights on for me about why Friday is called “Good Friday” this past April. On Good Friday long ago, God’s only son suffered GREATLY on the wooden cross and why is it good, because the Son of Man

defeated death and SAVED our sinful flesh that leads to death and gave us eternal life with His precious and HOLY blood. Our Father is SO GOOD to us! Praise His name! It’s GOOD NEWS, our REDEEMER SAVED us, on that afternoon two thousand years ago.

Job signed the word, “The Redeemer” often in the movie, he was talking about Jesus, our Redeemer!

To add to Job’s movie, when his three “wise” friends didn’t believe in him that he was innocent, I felt like I was in Job’s sandals again. When my withdrawal reactions changed my body, several “wise” doctors didn’t believe in me that it could be possible that I was having body reactions from trying to go off the pain medicine that I was taking for my back and leg. They kept telling me it was not that and that the medicine was safe when I repeatedly went to the ER in one week, trying to find out what was happening to my body.

However, one day, at home, the Holy Spirit led me to my husband and I told him my thoughts and concerns and he

believed in me and looked up on-line about my reactions and the medicine I was taking and true enough that was the answer! I learned to trust God, and not the wise people. God is the Way, the TRUTH, the Life!

I was going to close with some Psalm verses because Psalms is one of my favorite Books in the Bible.

I just found out that the Book of Job comes before the Book of Psalms!

Job and Psalms talked about the Redeemer and Jesus wasn’t born yet.

Psalm 34:8

Taste and see that the Lord is Good!

“Taste what it is like to suffer and see what He went through when He died on the wooden cross and saved us with His precious and innocent blood on that Good Friday long ago!”, my song quote.

Psalm 89 sings about the time when Jesus suffered...

Psalm 89:52

Blessed be the Lord Forever! Amen and Amen!

Let God shine in your lives!



OUR DEAF NUNS

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

What many people don’t realize from our storied Catholic Deaf history in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee is that we even had Deaf Nuns! Imagine that?! Who were their names and where did they serve? The names of our Deaf Nuns are Sr. M. Lucina, Sr. M. Floretta, and Sr. Carissima. They belonged to the Order of St. Francis of Assisi (OSF) and served at St. John’s School for the Deaf.

In the next Autumn 2019 *Hand in Hand* newsletter, we will share details of the lives of each of the three Deaf nuns. We hope and know that you will enjoy learning about these important nuns who continue to be a part of our important history!



▲ Sr. Carissima



▲ Sr. M. Lucina



▲ Sr. M. Floretta

INTERPRETED AND ASL MASSES THROUGHOUT THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

- ASL SUNDAY MASS -

St. Matthias Parish

9306 W. Beloit Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53227

Time: 9:00 a.m.

E-Mail: info@stmatthias-milw.org

Website: stmatthias-milw.org

Note: If no ASL Mass, then will have an interpreted Mass in the main church.

Shepherd of the Hills Parish

W1562 County Road B, Eden, WI 53019

1st & 3rd Sundays at 8:15 a.m.

E-Mail: sgitter@sothparish.org

Website: sothparish.org

- CLOSED CAPTIONED MASS -

- INTERPRETED SUNDAY MASS -

St. Andrew Parish

714 E. Walworth Ave, Delavan, WI 53115

Time: 9:00 a.m.

E-Mail: deafministry@saspcatholics.org

Website: standrews-delavan.org

St. Clare Parish

7616 Fritz St, Wind Lake, WI 53185

2nd Saturdays at 4:00 p.m.

E-Mail: bulletins@tds.net

Website: stclarewindlake.org

Times Listed Are Subject to Change

As of March 1, 2019

St. Joseph Parish

1619 Washington St, Grafton, WI 53024

1st & 4th Saturdays at 4:00 p.m. / and 3rd Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

E-Mail: parish@stjosephgrifton.org

Website: stjosephgrifton.org

St. Mary's Immaculate Conception

1610 Monroe St, West Bend, WI 53090

2nd Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Email: rprim@wbparishes.org

Website: stmaryparishwb.org

St. Paul the Apostle Parish

6400 Spring St, Racine, WI 53406

Time: 10:00 a.m.

E-Mail: svrana@stpaulracine.org

Website: stpaulracine.org

St. Peter Parish

2224 30th Ave, Kenosha, WI 53144

Time: 10:30 a.m.

E-Mail: stpeterskenosha@gmail.com

Website: stpeterskenosha.com



▲ St. Francis de Sales, patron saint of the Deaf, signs "Church" with Martin, a deaf person.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Hours: Thursdays 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Fr. Christopher Klusman

Director

klusmanc@archmil.org

Office: 414-501-2022 (Videophone/Voice)

Terri Matenaer

Coordinator

matenaert@archmil.org

Office: 414-203-0552 (Videophone/Voice)

Home: 262-672-6823 (Videophone/Voice)

IMPORTANT: Fr. Christopher Klusman's text number for EMERGENCY ONLY: 414-793-1369.

Remember, an emergency is:

- A death in the family & make plans for funeral.
- Request for anointing and/or visit because of serious car accident, heart attack, life-threatening health issue, or sudden surgery. Tell me where to meet (hospital, hospice, home, etc.).
- Crisis: Abuse, domestic violence, alcohol/drug abuse, or thoughts of abortion or suicide.

If you have any questions about what is an emergency, please email me at: klusmanc@archmil.org

NOTE: Fr. Christopher Klusman is off on Mondays. If you need immediate assistance, please contact Terri Matenaer (see contact information above).

HAND IN HAND SUBSCRIPTION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City and Zip Code: _____

Email address: _____

Birthdays: Husband _____ Wife _____ Anniversary: _____

Hand in Hand Newsletter will be emailed to you. If you don't have a computer, check here: .

Hand in Hand subscriptions can be mailed to your home. Please help us off-set the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter by making a \$8 donation for a one-year subscription.

Deaf Apostolate

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

3501 S. Lake Drive Milwaukee WI 53235

Email requests are welcomed: matenaert@archmil.org