



**ST. FRANCIS
DE SALES**

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*Our Hearts & Doors
Are Always Open*

PARISH NEWSLETTER

MAY 2022

Happy Easter! Christ is Risen, Alleluia!

By Jayne Porcelli

Isn't it wonderful to recognize that Spring is finally here, flowers are blooming, the sun is shining, the days getting warmer and longer; we have much to be thankful for. Don't miss the glorious riot of color in our new Laudato Si Garden Spot on the east side of the church! As we celebrate our Easter Season we are so grateful for our 'new family members'-those women and children who were baptized at our Easter Vigil. Alice Boyne has written a lovely article introducing them all to you! Please make sure you welcome them personally when you pray with them at Sunday Mass.

Our co leaders of our Social Justice Ministry, Coleen and Goziem have shared with us some events that they spearheaded during our Lenten days. Their initiative on behalf of our parishioners is wonderful.

Social Justice Ministry also collaborated with Faith Formation as April began and we sponsored a Spring Fling for our parish families. Laudato Si, Pope Francis' letter on Care for our Common Home, was the theme for our Spring Party. Families learned together more of the benefits of recycling. Small groups discussed more ways to be thoughtful in how we dispose of our 'stuff' and together we planted seeds in recycled containers. As our Lenten days grew deeper and brought us closer to Holy Week, so did our seeds!

On a global level, doing our own small part, St. Francis held our Listening Session to discuss the questions Pope Francis has asked us to consider in preparation for the Synod on Synodality. Twenty five parishioners gathered on Tuesday, April 5th, to pray, reflect and dis-

cuss our hopes and dreams, our questions and concerns for our Catholic Church. The evening was truly inspiring and hope filled. We are blessed to call St. Francis de Sales our parish home. We will share our 'wish list' with the Synod Committee in the Archdiocese, the US Bishops, and at the Vatican.

As our spring days blos-

som into summer months, let us continue to look for ways that each of us will choose to LIVE JESUS in our families and in our city. We can work together to take care of our planet, our parish, our children, and not the least of all our own mental health! May the Risen Jesus bring joy to our spring days. Alleluia.

Stay tuned to the bulletin for all these wonderful upcoming events:

A Zoom Conversation on Mental Health in the time of Pandemic-Self Care:

English on Zoom. May 19
Spanish in Person May 22.

Catholic Anti Racist Parishes: Celebrating our Black Saints:

On Zoom: May 11 and May 18

First Communion: Sunday May 8

Hope Walks: May 14 and May 28





A highlight of this year's Easter Vigil saw five amazing women fully welcomed into the Catholic Church through the reception of Sacraments and the pledge of our parishioners at that Mass to walk with them and continue to support them in on their journey of faith. Three were baptized and all five were confirmed and received their first communion at the Mass. All had prepared for this blessed occasion through a process of faith sharing, prayer, rituals and discussion known as the Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA) headed by Pastoral Associate Jayne Porcelli. The process involved weekly sessions of prayer and reflection using the Sunday scriptures as the catalyst as well as participation in activities and ministries in the parish. Along the way, Rites celebrating completion of the steps en route to full communion with the Catholic Church were held during Mass so that the full parish community joins in praying for and with them.

We wanted you to get to know these newly minted

Getting to Know Them: Our Newest Catholics

By Alice Boyne

Catholics and to hear their thoughts on the faith they have embraced and on the process that led them this far.

Lucy Croft, a native of Texas, came to New York over ten years ago with her husband Phil, a doctor in his last year of residency at Mt. Sinai. She is a designer for Steven Alan, an apparel retailer featuring curated collections from independent labels. With what little free time she has she loves to read and explore New York City's cultural offerings. But the center of her life is the adorable Audrey, who was baptized alongside her mother at the Easter Vigil. With no grounding in any organized religion but prompted by the birth of her daughter and the support of Phil, a lifelong Catholic, Lucy began weekly RCIA sessions in 2019. While it has taken a long time — she says Jayne was very clear from the start that RCIA takes as long as it takes — the COVID pivot to remote sessions made it easier for this mother of an 8-month-old to commit to weekly attendance and she felt totally ready when the time for receiving the sacraments arrived.



Leah, Emily, Lucy, Leslie and Ellie

For her an unexpected aspect of the Catholic Church was its themes of Catholic Social Teaching that codify steps toward a just society and living lives of holiness in modern life. She's added a time of prayer and reflection to her morning routine and her participation in the St. Francis de Sales choir is yet another form of prayer that brings her a lot of joy. Becoming a Catholic gives her the help and grace to

re-center in chaotic times and to live more intentionally.

Emily Dulcey, originally from Illinois, participated in services in Protestant churches where she was baptized but moved away from organized religion as she grew up. She earned her degree from Indiana University Bloomington where she met her future husband, Nick. The two moved to Chicago upon graduation



to work in the financial field, then after 3 years moved to New York where Nick is pursuing an MBA at NYU and Emily works as a financial analyst. They share their home and walks with their lovable dog Norman and they enjoy sampling the finer examples of New York's 23,000 restaurants. Music was always a big part of Emily's life so she was happy to accept SFDS Music Director John Stanley's invitation to join the parish's new choir and the selections have not only added joy to her life but parallel the faith journey that she's been pursuing since 2021. Encouraged by Nick, a lifelong Catholic, Emily has been an integral part of the Monday night RCIA conversations. She says that she is grateful to have found a place that reflects her personal values and that nourishes the mind while paying attention to the mystical.

She has a special devotion to the Blessed Mother in all her roles and her prayer life tends to center on Her. One thing she found surprising in the Catholic Church was the contemporary practice of Lent. Throughout her life she had only heard of Catholics giving up food or drinking for Lent but she learned that the Church has reframed Lenten observance to proactively undertake positive behaviors and so this lent she has concentrated on identifying and performing small acts of kindness.

Danielle (Ellie) Greene came from England with her husband Danny and their two children Sean & Lyra in early 2021 as Danny had been invited by his UK boss to work on his research team at Mt. Sinai. A graduate of Cambridge University, Ellie worked in the UK charitable sector in fundraising and social media until she had her

children. In what little free time she has, she is an avid runner and is crocheting what she calls 'the world's largest Afghan'. She was baptized into the Church of England and as a teen attended Evangelical services but stopped once she was at university. She was introduced to the RCIA process by a caring nun named Sister Anne and began to pursue converting to the Catholic Church but COVID shut down the sessions. When the family moved to New York, she resumed RCIA at St. Francis. She loves the RCIA approach in the way it integrates its small communities of inquirers into the larger community resulting in a sense of welcome and belonging throughout the church. The surprising aspect of the Catholic Church was that the large, formidable churches give the impression that Catholics must be formal and stern but in fact the people are welcoming and the service while reverent has a tenderness to it. She enjoys the rosary, honing in on each of the mysteries. Ellie says that the Church provides a framework for living that helps her to act more intentionally and less reactionary.

Leah Malone lives in the St. Francis de Sales neighborhood with her husband Tom and their two children Jack and Kate. She grew up in Colorado and came East for college at George-

town. She stayed on in DC for three years working on political campaigns and for several nonprofits before coming to New York for law school at Columbia. She worked for several years for a large law firm and is currently employed at PwC advising public companies on governance issues. As an escape from her professional world of words, she enjoys creative activities like crochet and embroidery. Leah was not raised in a religious household but at Georgetown she met her future husband Tom and was exposed through him to a family that adhered strongly to a religion that he really loved. She finally made the decision to become a Catholic herself despite misgivings about synergy between her own beliefs and the public face of the Church. What she found at St. Francis de Sales especially, through Fr. Kelly and Jayne Porcelli, was an open and welcoming space and eventually in the RCIA process a kinship that she hadn't expected. Not surprisingly her highest priority is to be a better parent and she believes following the teachings that Christ set out



St. Francis de Sales choir

for His church are helping her to pursue that goal.

Leslie McIntyre is a native of Minnesota who came to New York to visit a friend after college in North Dakota and wound up loving the City and relocating here. She met her Irish born and raised husband Donal eleven months later. They lived in Switzerland for 5 years and returned to the States where their three children Ashlin, Darragh and Áine were born. They currently live in Rockland County though they had lived in the St. Francis neighborhood when Leslie began

her RCIA journey. Her mother, a Baptist, and Father, a Presbyterian, wanted their children to choose whether or not to belong to a denomination and Leslie's dad even took her to various churches to explore options, but no choice was made. Leslie says that since she was 8 she wanted to be baptized but it never happened. The most surprising aspect of the Catholic Church was the immediate sense of community and how welcoming "each and every person was starting with Fr. Kelly". Thanks to the change to virtual Mon-

day night sessions, Leslie was able to continue to participate in the RCIA process culminating at the Vigil in her finally being baptized along with all three of her children and receiving the other sacraments of initiation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation. Now the McIntyres will choose a parish nearer to where they live and will bring some of the St. Francis de Sales spirit to a new community of believers. Leslie says though that she still expects to come back 'home' to worship at St. Francis once a month or so.



Leslie McIntyre and family



Laywomen in Ministry

By Coleen Halloran

On Tuesday, March 29th, we hosted a forum with three laywomen working for Catholic organizations across the country where they shared their experiences and hopes for the future of women working within the Catholic church. It was an engaging evening with some wonderful food for thought on the progress women have made and what still needs to be done.

Our panelists, Lisa Friedlander, Martha Malinski, and Anna Johnson, work in a variety of ministries yet common themes emerged throughout the conversation. One such theme was how women are able to navigate places in ministry that are still male-dominated. In speaking about her role as part of the Archdiocese of Chicago's Renew My Church Program, Lisa drew parallels to her earlier career experience as a lawyer, only instead of presenting to a group of all male-partners she now presents to groups of priests. To build on that, Anna shared how

along with some of her female colleagues, picked up a strategy from the Obama campaign staff of women repeating one another's comments in meetings to ensure they weren't overlooked. Martha highlighted the continual need to advocate for the voices of women of color in ministry.

All three of our panelists spoke about some of the challenges as being lay people with families, and in particular mothers, in their roles. Martha shared how she is the first layperson in her current role as the director for the Association of Colleges of the Sisters of

St. Joseph, and how that required working through what it meant for her work time vs. time off and for practical considerations such as benefits. Anna echoed a similar experience; she is currently expecting her first child and has helped define what a maternity policy will look like as it is uncharted territory.

In speaking about the future, all three women also ended the conversation in a hopeful tone. They spoke of the changes and progress they have seen in their time in ministry and the enthusiasm they see from the young people they work with in their roles.



Faith Formation in the 21st Century

By Lisa M. Kelly

How should a 21st century parish support the faith formation and spiritual lives of children and families? What sorts of initiatives, programs, and resources should a parish community provide to support young people's spiritual development?

A group of SFDS parishioners began meeting this year to discuss these questions in partnership with SFDS parish staff and the Archdiocese of New York's Office of Youth Faith Formation. Many parishioners recognize the need to reimagine and revitalize older models of religious education in order to meet the spiritual needs of the next

generation. Young people are coming of age in a world that is highly interconnected and deeply fragmented. As Pope Francis has reminded us, problems of climate change, racism, misogyny, economic inequality, war, and disease call out for spiritual as well as political and social responses.

The SFDS Faith Formation group has worked this year to identify areas where our parish is flourishing in youth faith formation as well

as areas where we could do better. Perhaps highest on the list of what parishioners believe we are doing well is our focus on Catholic social justice teaching and works in youth programming. Children and young people at SFDS are encouraged to live their faith. Whether through actions for climate change, food drives, or holiday initiatives for children in East Harlem, we encourage young people to view service to others as a core part

of our faith teaching. Areas for further improvement will include supporting families with younger children not yet enrolled in religious education, providing opportunities for young people to question and discuss their faith openly, and promoting inter-faith dialogue and learning amongst young people.

We want to reach families, children, and young people in ways that make sense for them as integral members of our Parish community.



DISCOVER ON
Adventure ISLAND
QUEST FOR GOD'S GREAT LIGHT

SAVE THE DATE
SFDS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2022

MONDAY, JULY 18 – FRIDAY, JULY 22
FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS AGES 4 TO 11 • REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 24!

FILL OUT THE INTEREST FORM AND GET NOTIFIED WHEN IT'S TIME TO REGISTER!

ADVENTURE GUIDES NEEDED!

Calling all volunteers ages 13 and up, SFDS VBS 2022 is looking for Adventure Guides! A great opportunity for service hours, help plan and lead a week of songs, crafts, games, Bible stories, and fun for the youth of our parish!

Questions? Email Danielle (danielle.villhard@gmail.com) or Christina (cschuler307@gmail.com).

SAVE THE DATE
SFDS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2022

LOOKING TO JOIN THE CREW? SCAN HERE!

JULY 18 – 22



Looking For Young Catholics? They're Here at St. Francis de Sales!

By Goziem Ononye

At St. Francis de Sales, we have now had two very successful Young Adult Gatherings. We met both in March and April, celebrating the upcoming Spring. The young adults from our parish and their friends turned up at Frank's Cafe (aka the Parish Hall) to enjoy really good conversations, play ping pong and make connections with one another.



We had a great turn out for our first Young Adult Gathering.

I was invigorated by both gatherings and enjoyed some friendly competition at the above mentioned ping pong tables! I discovered that while some of us preferred the early 9am Sunday Mass, a few preferred Spanish Mass and a majority went to the 11am choir Mass. We Young Adults as a group are not all alike, and we enjoy praying at St. Francis in many different ways.

For example: I met three fellow Nigerian young professionals at our get together. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that our respective parents speak the same native language. How great it is that because of my parish community I have the chance to meet new friends from my home country!

Overall, the feedback has been overwhelmingly



Danielle, Christina and Patrick

positive for our Young Adult Get Togethers. Several of the attendees; Joe, Ochuko, Ivana, Michael, Francisco and Christina all spoke of their appreciation and joy for the opportunity to come together.

I believe events like these help to build community; not just in our Parish but the neighborhood in general. We all begin to discover there's much in common that unifies us all. Isn't this

one of the gifts of St. Francis de Sales — we come together as unique individuals, we discover the gifts we share, and together we move out into our world to Live Jesus and share his message in our neighborhood and our circles of life.

If you are a young adult (20-30ish year old) please come and join us the next time we come together at Frank's Cafe. We'd love to meet you!

Stewardship Update

Thank you to all who have pledged their support for the Archdiocesan (Cardinal's) Campaign. At the present time we are at 32% of our goal, having pledged \$24,015 of our \$74,000 goal. We have had more people participate in this event this year, than in the past few years. More people have given a bit more and more folks have given something. We would love to reach our goal, even more to go over our target. When (not if!) we surpass \$74,000, then 60% of the overage comes back to us in the parish. That's something to look forward to! If you want



to make your gift now, simply use the QR code here or go to <https://cardinalsappeal.org/donate>. **Make sure you choose St. Francis de Sales as your parish!**

In other stewardship news: we are happy to say we feel it's finally safe to invite our ministers back on the altar. If you have been, or would like to serve in ministry: acolyte, choir, lector, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, or hospitality, contact Fr Kelly or myself and we'll be happy to get you started in the ministry God is inviting you to.

Thank you so much. Jayne