

God's Abundant Garden

One of the things those of us in the Religious Education office have often marveled at is how, after we pick a theme for our learning year, we begin seeing that theme all around us in symbols, print, songs, and more. In keeping with that phenomenon we came across the article below which was too similar to our theme of "Growing God's Garden" to ignore. Below we have included excerpts from that article to share with you and invite you to consider the similarities between parenting and gardening. ENJOY!
The full article can be found in the September 2011 issue of U.S. Catholic.

Veggie tales: The spiritual lessons of tending a garden

By Bryan Cones, managing editor of U.S. Catholic

Genesis' second chapter tells a story of how God planted a garden, then created human beings to till it. The reason is obvious: Gardens are a lot of work, so Yahweh needed help to keep Eden weeded.

I realized that this summer, the first season I've had my own backyard garden. A garden, as God discovered, is not something you can create and just leave alone. It takes work.

I shouldn't have been surprised to learn that a garden is not something one inflicts upon a plot of land but more like a bargain struck with the earth. In exchange for attention and care, these plants may (or may not) yield food, and the extent to which they do depends a great deal on how quickly one learns their language. As with any relationship, things can go downhill if you stop listening. Still, most vegetables are gentle teachers (except maybe asparagus). They will respond to the slightest attention, and with enough (but not too much) water and sunlight, they will put food on your plate.

But I have found that they feed me in more intangible ways as well: in the pleasure of watching something grow from seed to harvest, the surprise of discovering the first cucumber or green tomato on the vine, the sense of gratitude when you eat from your own garden. Those vines and bushes helped me find a hunger to grow things that I didn't even know was there, one echoed in urban dweller after urban dweller who spoke enviously of the garden they wished they had.

Gardening is also a reminder that it is impossible to go it alone. Even my small garden takes two people to maintain—no wonder God provided the first human being a helpmate—and even at our most productive, my yard and I could not produce enough food to take me through October, much less an entire winter. My dependence on the farmers and fields of the world has only become more obvious, and ... called to mind those for whom wasted seed is a catastrophe.

At the other end of the Bible, in Revelation, the seer John has a vision of another garden, this one in a city, the fulfillment of the cultivation God began in Genesis, the completion of the partnership God struck with humankind. Until now I had not realized that there was a third—though often forgotten—partner in that bargain: the earth itself, not just a blank slate or an empty stage but an equal, with integrity and wisdom of its own.

REACH OUT

Sponsored by LIFT

(Jr. High Ministry)

Winter Clothing, Linens, and Christmas Stocking Stuffer Items Needed



Donations of winter clothing (clean coats, sweaters, boots, hats, gloves, scarfs, sweatshirts), blankets, sheets and new Stocking Stuffer items are needed for boys ages 6-11, 15-18, and girls 15-18. Items will be accepted at the Foyer located in St. Joseph's School (Park Street Entrance) on **Sunday, November 13th from 8:30am-1:30pm.**



Thank You -

We would like to thank all the faithful bakers and buyers who provide cookies and treats for welcome coffees, meetings, retreats, LIFT events, and bake sales. You save us so much time, effort and money. We all truly enjoy the fruits of your labor.



LIVING IN FAITH TODAY

A social/service organization for all parish 6th, 7th, & 8th graders.

What is LIFT?

LIFT is St. Joe’s social/service program for all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and their friends (in other words, any 6th, 7th, or 8th grader is welcome, St. Joe’s member or not.) For more information including forms and event details go to www.stjoseph-libertyville.org (click on youth/LIFT) or contact Linda Popeck at 847.362.5797 or Lpopeck@stjoseph-libertyville.org.

What Happened?

Independence Grove Back to School Event!

This event was cancelled due to rain. The registration fees will be used to purchase items for Christmas stockings which will be given to Catholic Charities to distribute.



Have a Ball - Dodge Ball, Other “Ball” games, Ice cream sundaes

Entrance fee was a new item for a boy ages 6-11, 15-18, or girl 15-18 which will be used at the November LIFT event to fill Christmas stockings that will be distributed by Catholic Charities.

What’s Next?

Sun., Nov. 13 – **Reach Out** – Winter Clothing Drive and collection of items for the Christmas stockings which will be given to Catholic Charities. **Register now. This event fills up quickly.**

Sat., Jan.28th /Sun., Jan 29th – **LIFT Bake Sale Fundraiser**
Bake at Home, Bake with friends in the Koenig Center, Sell after Sunday masses

We encourage interested adult parishioners and H.S. students (for the fun of it and/or service hours) to help plan and run LIFT events. Chair persons are already in place, so you can rest assured you will have a strong support team.

WELCOMING PARENTS

The Welcoming Coffees on September 18th and September 20th were a big success! These coffees were for parents of Kindergarten through 2nd grade students, and gave the parents and catechists a chance to meet each other in an informal setting. It was a great way to begin the year and a fun way to get to know each other. The Welcoming Coffees were successful thanks to the enthusiasm and support of it’s volunteers: *Kasia Domenech, Patrice Donofrio, Christine Frega, Halina Gilson, Julie Jermakowicz, Erinn Kearns, Nancy Kozlowski, Maureen McLaughlin, Kathleen Salemi, Dorie Sanderson and Sara VanderBloomer.* Thanks to our youth helper *Emily Sanderson*, as well. A hearty thanks to all of the Make and Bake Committee members, too, who generously baked over 2,000 cookies for us! The students really enjoyed the delicious treats, and we hope the parents felt truly welcomed!
Sharon Mullins, Welcome Coffee Chairperson



Safety First!

In order to ensure the safety of everyone in the Religious Education program, we have formalized drop off and pick up procedures. Thank you for your help. There are only two rules to remember:

- Crosswalks should be used every time you or your children cross a street.
- Only cars traveling west (toward Milwaukee) on Hurlburt Court may pull up to the curb to drop children off.

We are also looking for volunteers to act as crossing guards before and after Sunday/Tuesday sessions. Please call the Rel. Ed. Office if you can help (847-362-5797).

Going Green

Did you know St. Joseph Church has an environmental committee?



This group meets monthly to discuss and implement ways to make our parish as environmentally responsible as possible. They would like to encourage all parishioners to bring their own reusable coffee cups or water bottles to all parish meetings. There will be less cost for the parish and less impact on the environment than using disposable cups. When everyone does their small part the end result is huge!
Thank you for your cooperation.

Program Highlights



Sing to the LORD! These children crafted tambourines out of paper plates, dried beans and colorful streamers during a lesson on thanking and praising God. Their exuberance was contagious.



This catechist has captured these children's attention while reading a Bible story about Creation.



This is a beautiful example of one of the many different prayer tables set up by the catechists for their sessions. Another example is displayed in the photo above. Often the children gather around the prayer table once or twice during each session to recite memorized prayers, spontaneous prayers, petitions, naming things they are thankful for, praise, or simply to say goodbye and have a great week.



The tables and floor here are laden with the supplies provided to our 8th grade catechists for 9 weeks of lessons. Our office staff and loyal volunteers spend hours copying, counting, assembling, bagging and labeling these supplies. Similar amounts are prepared for the other 110+ catechists and all these supplies are distributed four times a year at All Catechist Meetings.

Upcoming Events



7TH GRADE COMMITMENT MASS

During Saturday, November 5, 5:00PM,
Sunday, November 6, 9:00AM and 10:45AM Masses
in St. Joseph Church

All parents and families of 7th graders are invited to attend one of the above Mass celebrations during which the 7th graders will commit to the preparation process for the sacrament of Confirmation and the community will bless them and their journey.



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Parent Meeting

Monday, November 7, 7:00PM, Koenig Center

This meeting is designed for parents only of children who have not yet celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Reconciliation Service

Saturday, November 12, 1:00PM, St. Joseph Church

A family prayer service designed for 4th, 5th and 6th graders. All ages may attend and will have an opportunity to individually receive the sacrament of Reconciliation following the prayer service.



ADVENT WREATH MAKING EVENT

Saturday, November 19

3:30 PM – Koenig Center

Join us for a fun afternoon for the whole family. Play bingo, make crafts and enjoy refreshments while learning about the season of Advent. Use the flyer on page 5 to reserve your space and order wreath making kits to assemble with live greens that afternoon. The event will end with a wreath blessing service in the Koenig Center in time to attend 5:00PM Mass in the Church.



CONFIRMATION RETREATS

Sundays, November 20, December 4, January 8
1:00 - 5:00 PM – Koenig Center

All Teens in their 2nd year of Confirmation preparation are assigned to attend one of these 3 retreats. The dates were assigned so that home groups would attend together. If there is a conflict with the date assigned please contact the Religious Ed office to arrange to attend on a different date.

Advent—Waiting for Jesus Christ

A presentation, a prayer service, and wreath making
for adults and children of all ages

When: Saturday, November 19th

Where: St. Joseph's Koenig Center

Time: 3:30pm -4:45pm

- ◆ Bring your children or grandchildren and join your parish family for activities centered on Advent as a season of waiting, preparation, and joy.
- ◆ Your family will not only learn the history and significance of Advent wreaths, but will also have fun making one for your own home. Your wreaths will be blessed at the Koenig Center prior to going to 5pm mass
 - ◆ Light refreshments will be served



The _____ family will be attending (fill out Family name)

Number of people attending _____

Number of Wreaths being made _____

Please enclose \$15.00 (per wreath) cash or check (Payable to St. Joseph)

Please RSVP by Tuesday, November 15th. Return forms to: St. Joseph's Religious Ed Office

Hope to see you there!

130 E. Hurlburt Court

Libertyville, IL 60048



Confirmation 2012

The date for Confirmation is:
Saturday, February 11th, 2012
10am and 2pm

An Invitation To 7th & 8th Graders

In February, 8th graders will receive the sacrament of Confirmation. It would be terrific if some of them, with the help of some 7th graders, would prepare and lead the music for this important celebration!

I am looking for participants to form a group of singers who would prepare all of the music (most of which is very contemporary in nature). This would include opportunities for both group and solo singing. The preparation (rehearsals with the group and/or individuals) would begin in November. The schedule would be determined based on the availability of those participating. I am hoping that some of the learning can take place with recordings.

Regarding the Confirmation liturgy itself, careful planning will allow the 8th grade participants to ease comfortably back to their families or classmates at appropriate times during the liturgy. Including the 7th graders in this endeavor prepares them for their own celebration next year!

If you and your child are interested or have any ideas to share please contact me as soon as possible.

Clare Marvin, Director of Music Ministry
847.990.1224 or CMarvin@StJoseph-libertyville.org.