

Cross Talk

Seniors enjoy education, fun and giving

St. Helena Seniors Group welcomes as members all people, 55 and over, parishioners and non-parishioners. We meet on the first Friday of each month from September through June at 10:00 AM in the Social and Recreation Center behind St. Helena School. The cost of membership is \$10.00 a year.

The broad range of our meetings and activities includes a nice balance of education, adventure, outreach, celebrations and fun. Many of our meetings feature subjects important to seniors such as health/safety



Seniors prepare for a day at the Casinos.

laws, legal matters benefiting seniors, community updates etc. Complimentary coffee,

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Farewell Father Redcay

In the last issue of *Cross Talk* there was a profile on Father Redcay and the article ended with a hope that he would be with us for a long while. Unfortunately for us he has been transferred. But, fortunately for Father, he has become Pastor of Our Lady of Ran-



som Parish in Northeast Philadelphia. As much as he enjoyed his work in academia (President of Kennedy-Kenrick High School), he always looked forward to someday returning to parish work. Well, that time has come and we all wish him well in this new endeavor.

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tea and dessert are served. Throughout the year we enjoy a variety of scheduled daytrips to the casinos, horse races, theatrical productions, luncheon cruises, dinner theatre and sightseeing excursions. Please refer to this year's itinerary listed below.

Some of our outreach projects include making Baptismal bibs for our parish newborns and clipping coupons for military personnel overseas. We have sent care packages to our troops in Iraq and contributions to hurricane victims in Louisiana, Operation Smile and the Amish in Lancaster.

Other fun activities include Bingo, craft demonstrations and fund raising with our Annual Spring Bake Sale and "Friendly Family Night" out. We also enjoy our two complimentary luncheons in December and June, fun celebrations complete with entertainment.

All of these activities reflect our most important objectives which are making new friends and reaching out to anyone who needs our friendship and our help. For more information

please contact Mary McKenna (610) 275-0121 or Marion Novelli (610) 277-1279.

ST. HELENA SENIOR CLUB

ITINERARY FOR 2007/2008 (Subject to changes)
Complimentary coffee/tea & desserts served

MEETING DATES - St. Helena Recreation Center (10:00 a.m.)

- | | | |
|----------|-----|--|
| DECEMBER | 7 - | Christmas Luncheon – Children's Band & Choir |
| JANUARY | 4 - | Social – Speaker from PECO |
| FEBRUARY | 1 - | Luncheon for Members |
| MARCH | 7 - | Social – Palm Craft demonstration (Deacon Don Kretsch) |
| APRIL | 4 - | Social – BINGO |
| MAY | 2 - | Social - Elections – Speaker from Morris Arboretum |
| JUNE | 6 - | Member's Luncheon – Entertainment |

TRIPS SCHEDULED 2007/2008

- | | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| DECEMBER 14 | - | American Theater Christmas show/lunch |
| FEBRUARY 15 | - | Keswick Theatre – 1964 Tribute to Beatles |
| MAY 7 | - | "Nunsense" – show & lunch at Penn's Peak (in Jim Thorpe, PA) |

COME JOIN US, PARISHIONERS OR NON-PARISHIONERS. ALL ARE WELCOME

Seniors await a Palm Craft Demonstration with Deacon Don Kretsch.



Seniors gather to learn, lunch and laugh.



Bea Maguire presents awards to Mary McKenna and Joe Welde.



A luncheon cruise on the Potomac.



Christmas carols with President Marion Novelli and Verna Trombetta, on the piano.



Raffle time with Anna and Ray Armellini.



Saint Helena Chorus celebrates Archdiocesan Bicentennial

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia presented "A Bicentennial Concert" at Verizon Hall in the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts on Wednesday, October 10, 2007. The concert



Principal Sr. Cathe Shoulberg, RSM, congratulates singers.

featured The Bicentennial Orchestra and Chorus of the Students of the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Cardinal Justin Rigali opened the Bicentennial with a Proclamation read at Masses on Easter Sunday 2007 with the theme "Serving the People of God in the Beginning, Now and Always." Throughout this Bicentennial Year, the Archdiocese has held events including a Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., the Amazing Race for Grace and the concert at the Kimmel Center. The bicentennial celebration will conclude in spring 2008.

The concert was eagerly anticipated by the Saint Helena community, especially by the parents of children in the Elementary Chorus.

The children auditioned in October, 2006, and committed to a very demanding practice schedule. Practices were held on school nights at widespread locations such as John

Hallahan, Bishop Shanahan and Archbishop Carroll High Schools as well as at the Archdiocesan Building and the Cathedral Basilica of Ss. Peter and Paul. During the summer, our students had additional rehearsals and a voluntary camp at Bishop Shanahan High School in July. All of their hard work was rewarded with a magnificent performance.

Early arrivals were greeted by the sounds of the Archdiocesan Elementary All Star Jazz Band and the

All Catholic Secondary Jazz Band who performed in the Commonwealth Plaza on the ground floor. As people entered the building, I'm sure that many thought that the strains of a popular Chuck Mangione number were the compliments of a professional band when, in fact, it was the elementary school group. This proved to be a harbinger of things to come.

The Reverend Monsignor Louis A. D'Addazio, the tireless producer of the event, welcomed the concertgoers. After a stirring rendition of our National Anthem, Cardinal Rigali opened the program. The concert included the works of classical European and contemporary American composers and, in addition to the student performers, featured the talents of rising opera star Kiera Duffy as well

as of organ soloists Father Gerald Carey and conductor Mr. Robert Ridgell. The Elementary and High School Chorus and the student orchestra were in top form throughout, closing their program with Rutter's "Te Deum." The audience's applause was rewarded with a rousing encore, Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever." The evening proved to be truly an uplifting experience for all.

More than 300 elementary and secondary students from Catholic schools throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia performed at the concert. Participants received a personal letter of appreciation from Cardinal Rigali,



Saint Helena students

The Saint Helena School contingent of 19 singers was by far the largest of any elemen-

one of many memories that they'll cherish in the years to come.

tary school in the Archdiocese, and, as pointed out by an Archdiocesan official, one of the most well behaved. This group also had the honor of making a Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, April 28, 2007, to sing for the inaugural bicentennial Mass, presided over by Cardinal Rigali.

-John Maloney

**Saint Helena School Students,
Elementary Chorus**

Ashley Anderson, Meredith Behr,
 Olivia Celoni, Lauren Dempsey,
 Kelly Ann Dougherty, Charlie Harrison,
 Gabe Holder, Monica Huber,
 Julianne Kerwood, Maddie Kohler,
 Desiree Kuklinski, Ann Marie Maloney
 Maura McKenna, Molly Mulhern
 Colleen Osborne, Krista Osborne
 Abby Polsky, Jenna Soranno
 Lauren Stephens

SHS student Ben Britt and alumni Jeremy
 Fus and Jake Noon played for the Element-
 ary All Star Jazz Band. SHS alumna Chris-
 tina Giuffrida sang in the Secondary Chorus.

Father Redcay *(continued from page 1)*

Saint Helena parishioners wanted a chance to say goodbye to Father Redcay so Father Nicolo graciously made the beautiful new Empress Room available for all the good-byes. The event was held on June 17, 2007. Over 200 parishioners joined together to wish him success in his new parish and to pray with him as he gave the blessing on our new facility. They were full of excitement to

be in the new facility but so very sad to wish him farewell. He was a genuine friend to everyone he met and he will be truly missed.

I spoke with Father at Church a few weeks ago when he came back for a visit. He seemed very happy and excited about his new parish. He told me things were going well and asked me to say hello to the Saint Helena parishioners.

-Barbara Neff

Meet Antoinette Cannon

When you visit the Parish Business Office in the Rectory, the person who greets you with a smile as soon as you cross the door is our Parish Secretary, Antoinette Cannon. Antoinette is a native of the Germantown section of Philadelphia, and the child of the late Gertrude Mullen and Joseph Kennedy. She was brought into the Church in Immaculate Conception Parish where she received her primary education. She graduated from Little Flower High School and worked for the A & P and Junior Achievement before her marriage.



She met her husband, Chuck Cannon, at a Holy Cross dance in 1954. They later married and raised three girls and two boys. Now they also have six grandchildren. Antoinette and Chuck moved into the parish in 1970 to what Father Coates calls the "Spanish Section," on Cortez Road. Later, they moved to a house on a larger lot on the western edge of the Parish. During the years when her children were young, Antoinette was a full time mother, and with five children, she was quite busy.

School mom

Antoinette's children attended St. Helena School, and Antoinette was a volunteer at the school from the time she moved into the Parish. She was a luncheon mom and was

changed to Stationary because of the amount of IOU's she accumulated from the children in such a short time.

In March of 1977, our then Pastor, Father John T. Coates, asked her to be his secretary. This proved to be a big challenge, since at that time, she was the entire office staff. There were no computers and all records were kept on paper. Being the only support person in a growing parish was quite a challenge, and in those early years, Antoinette was extremely busy. In time, however, staff was added, computers were introduced and the hectic pace of the Business Office settled down.

We now have a skilled Business Manager, Nicholas Semchuck, and Antoinette shares responsibility with Administrative Assistants Ms. Gina Malony and Mrs. Audi Wales. Mrs. Martha Flannery was part of this team as well and retired just recently. The atmosphere in the Business Office is quite cordial, and everyone pitches in to help the team out.

Many of the questions fielded by the Parish Business Office pass by Antoinette first, such as Mass Cards, parish registration and certifications required to be sacramental sponsors. Antoinette handles these inquiries cheerfully and efficiently. The real tough questions and questions about religious matters go to her boss and our Pastor, Father

Joseph Nicolo. Any of our ministry leaders who deal with the Business Office will attest to the efficiency of the staff and their helpful attitudes.

Antoinette is more than the Secretary; she has been the heart of St. Helena Parish for the past thirty years. She is truly living the faith by putting others first,

serving the sick as a Eucharistic Minister and consoling the bereaved. Antoinette was Chair of the Montgomery County Horse Show here at St. Helena for 17 years, then continued helping out where needed until we had our last Horse Show.

Joining the Ladies Guild, Antoinette was elected as Treasurer the first year and elected to a different chair position each year. Today we have a ladies club called the



Ladies of Helena and Antoinette is one of the valued members. She is the Sun Shine person who makes and sends greeting cards as needed.

Antoinette is still quite close to her first boss, Father Coates. Whenever you see him at St. Mary's Manor, he tells you right out that he doesn't need to hear any news about the Parish. When you ask him why, he answers with one word, Antoinette.

She visits Father Coates at least twice a week, and she takes care of some of his needs, such as laundry.

Chuck, Antoinette's husband, is a retired steamfitter. In February of 2008, they will celebrate 50 years of matrimony. St. Helena Parish has been blessed to have Antoinette serve us for such a long time. May God bless her for all she has done and continues to do for the Parishioners of St. Helena.

Matthew Rieder

Community through casseroles and cakes

Would you like to include your tried and true, loved and family-traditional recipes in a cookbook that your parish will produce in honor of our priests and deacons to thank them for their constant care of us and our families? Saint Helena parishioners are coming together to create an exciting treasury of spiritual and gustatory celebrations. We will feed our bodies and nourish our souls. We of Saint Helena will bring together our fervor

and holy love to make the most of our seemingly modest ideas and insignificant spices and flavors.

It is my hope that by sharing our casseroles and cakes, we will better know each other and grow closer as a parish. If you are interested in participating, please contact Stephanie Schultz, (610) 277-2010; steffi766@hotmail.com.

Saint Helena School shines for Middle States team

Saint Helena School was abuzz with activity at the end of October as the staff, students and parish welcomed a team from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools to evaluate the school for re-accreditation.

A Eucharistic Liturgy commenced the re-accreditation proceedings and Saint Helena Church glowed with candlelight, song and the shining faces of the school children who performed music, danced, read and served at the altar as our Pastor, Father Nicolo, celebrated Mass.

Led by our Principal, Sr. Cathe Shoulberg, RSM, the school community welcomed the re-accreditation team, which included chair-



Team observing students

principal Rosemary Batzel, of Cathedral Catholic Academy.

This team thoroughly studied the school, meeting with staff, students and parents as well as attending a more formal colloquium presenting a school-wide project demonstrating Integrated Language Arts, making students aware of different cultures through good literature, complemented by study of environmental stewardship.

Appreciatively, Sr. Cathe recognized the efforts of the staff in her speech at the colloquium, "Our faculty and staff, each and every one of them, have truly extended themselves to produce an amalgamated program that not only impacts education today, but will leave a lasting effect on the children of St. Helena, not just to fulfill the requirement of Middle States re-accreditation, but to create leaders for the future who will have a magnificent, enduring impact on society as a whole."



Eucharistic Liturgy

person and education consultant Mary Anne Kase; Principal Dr. Christopher Lake, St. Vincent School; Corliss Reed, a teacher from St. Joseph the Worker School and Prin-

Learning faith through P.R.E.P.

In this hectic and sometimes confusing world our children need more than ever to see faith lived in our lives. The goal of the St. Helena Parish Religious Education Program, P.R.E.P., is to teach our children a living, conscious and active faith. A living faith encompasses more than weekly religious education classes. Faith is a belief in a person, the Person of Jesus. If we say we are a believer in Jesus, we are saying we place our trust in Him, we rely on Him. Before we can live out our faith in this way, we must first get to know Jesus, learn to deeply love Him and be willing to serve Him.

The St. Helena Parish Religious Education Program is blessed with dedicated catechists whose own vibrant faith life and love for the Lord and "His little ones" inspires them to give of themselves each week as

they share their own faith with the children. These professional men and women come from many walks of life but all have the same message. We are grateful to Madeleine Fitzgerald, the Program Director, and to all of our catechists, Donna Matoney, Maria Mitchell, Sarah Finnegan, Helen Winterbottom, Jackie Mullock, Jill Martin, Theresa Reigle, Bill Bogle, George McCool, Karen Whitaker, Jim Dougherty, Joanne Palmer, Susan Hammond and Wit Hammond for all that they do and we ask God to continue to bless all of their efforts on behalf of our children.

May each one of us, parents, catechists and people of God, strive each day to become the key which opens the door for our children to meet Christ in a personal, loving and intimate way. For more information, contact Madeleine Fitzgerald, (610) 277-3537.

What is fund-raising?

When Father Nicolo began his Time and Talent Campaign, I was truly interested in getting involved. After studying all the ministries that were looking for help, I decided Fund Raising was an area that interested me. Mike and Maryann Brophy had pretty much been doing all the work for several years and they really needed help.

At the first meeting last year there were approximately five new members so Mike and Maryann were ecstatic. After the first year, the new members dwindled down to three. That is unfortunate because there is so much more to 'fund raising' than raising money.

For me, I like to refer to a phrase that Father Nicolo used - "Friend-Raising".

These are all events where you can get together, make new friends and enjoy old ones – you will be "Friend-Raising". You will also be helping Saint Helena to continue its work to maintain the strength of the parish and grow its community.

With this idea of "Friend-Raising" in mind, maybe some of you would be interested in helping the committee with various events. Contact Maryann and Mike Brophy for more information (610) 272-4936. *-Barbara Neff*

Christmas at Saint Helena Parish

This issue of Cross Talk has most likely reached your home midway through the season of Advent, a time of anticipation and of preparation for the celebration of the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Saint Helena Church provides a wealth of opportunities to get into the real spirit of the season. On each Sunday of Advent Vespers and Benediction are offered at 7 P.M. On December 18, PREP will present its Christmas Tableau, a moving presentation that all should see. Christmas Eve Masses will be at 4, 6 and 8 P.M., and on Christmas Day, Masses will be celebrated at 7:30 A.M., 9 A.M. and 11 A.M.

Our church will be beautifully decorated as always, thanks to our Art and Environment ministry. If you have young children, please be sure to visit the manger scene. It always seems to hold them in a reverent fascination.

Traditional events also held in early December include the annual Parish Christmas Concert (Dec. 9), hosted by our Music Ministry under the direction of Cheryl Moser; afternoon and evening Penance services (Dec. 12) and the Saint Helena School Christmas Play (Dec. 12 & 13). Additionally, Father Duffy's Advent series began in November and will be continued on December 6, 13 and 20 in the Parish Meeting Room from 10-

11:30 A.M. These events provide excellent opportunities to take a step back from the commercialism that pervades the secular celebration of the season.

Father Duffy was kind enough to relate a favorite Christmas memory to me: "*Can you remember back to Christmas Eve 1966?*"

I was looking forward to celebrating my first Midnight Mass. While preparing for this I was also shoveling the sidewalk and steps ...
-Father Duffy

"I will jog your memory (if you are that old). It began to snow around dinnertime, and it became a blizzard by 9:00 P.M. This was my first Christmas as a Priest and I was looking forward to celebrating my first Midnight Mass. While preparing for this I was also shoveling the sidewalk and steps with only one or two helpers."

"The radio began announcing the cancellation of most Midnight Masses throughout the Diocese but we decided to keep the schedule. The area of the parish was relatively small and many people could walk to Church. Well, -- did they walk! The streets were cleared and they came from all directions, many more than we originally expected."

"The atmosphere, the Singing and Participation were electric. It was a wonderful celebration -- my first and most memorable Christmas as a Priest."

Let's put aside some time from our busy schedules to make our own Christmas memories this year.

-John Maloney

CYO Wrap-Up

The Saint Helena CYO 2007-2008 sports program got off to a banner start with the recently concluded fall season. The level of participation was outstanding. Our parish was well represented by a total of 102 scholar-athletes on the junior varsity and varsity Field Hockey, Soccer and Volleyball teams. A number of parish boys played for regional JV and varsity football teams. The turnout for volleyball enabled us to field separate seventh and eighth grade varsity teams.

Students from the PREP program, private schools and Saint Helena School graced local athletic fields and gymnasiums with their spirit and abilities. Our own Social and Recreation Center and athletic fields have hosted numerous games and practices, much to the convenience of the Saint Helena community.

Sunday, October 21 featured a CYO Mass sponsored by the Community Service Corps (CSC), an arm of the CYO. Athletes sporting their team uniforms fully participated in the liturgy acting as greeters, lectors and altar servers. The ushers at the 9:00 A.M. Mass were given a "day off," as the students took the collection and distributed church bulletins. Rumor has it that the youthful ushers may be a bit more persuasive than their adult counterparts.

By the time you read this article, our boys and girls varsity, JV and parish basketball teams will have practiced for over a month and have played a few games. Also, in what is quickly becoming a much anticipated local

tradition, the Saint Helena 2008 CYO Memorial Invitational Tournament will be held during the long January weekend of the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday and will culminate with championship games that Monday. All are welcome to stop by and take in a game or two. Some of the top teams in the Archdiocese typically compete, and the excitement and enthusiasm of the participants and spectators are almost tangible.

CYO Programs are open to all children in Saint Helena Parish. Eight sports are offered spanning the fall, winter and spring seasons. Junior varsity teams consist of fifth and sixth grade students, and varsity teams are open to seventh and eighth grade students. Track is the exception. Second and third grade students participate in Pee Wee track; the varsity comprises the fourth through eighth grades. High school students can play in a spring co-ed volleyball league, and, as of this writing, our high school boys were invited to play in the CYO Region 18 league.

One hundred sixty five (165) students participated in CYO sports during the 2006-2007 academic year. An affiliate of the CYO sports program is the CSC, which provides opportunities for our children to give back to the community. Leaf raking for seniors, letters to troops and Christmas cookies and gifts for the underprivileged are a few of its activities. The CYO Board supports the activities of the Saint Helena EDGE program, which fosters the spiritual growth of our young parishioners ranging from sixth grade through high school. —*John Maloney*

Christmas Schedule 2007

MASSES

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 22, 2007: Vigil – 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, December 23, 2007
7:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Monday, December 24, 2007
4:00 P.M., 6:00 P.M. Children's Mass, 8:00 P.M.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Tuesday, December 25, 2007
7:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

HOLY FAMILY SUNDAY

Saturday, December 29, 2007: Vigil – 5:00 P.M.
Sunday, December 30, 2007
7:30 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Monday, December 31, 2007
5 P.M.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Tuesday, January 1, 2008:
9:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M.

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Writers, photographers and proofreaders are welcome to join us. Please contact Dorothy Barry 610.275.3689.

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