

(Heart of Edmonds, continued from page 1)

Noah, who has been in the food-service industry for many years, reminded the cooks and helpers that the people who will be served may not have families and may be sleeping in doorways or under bridges. Everyone has a passion, he said, "today is a passion to serve."

He read a prayer and told the gathering not to be lulled into forgetting those less fortunate, and that Saturday was an opportunity to give to a lot of folks who would not be able to repay them.



The Thanksgiving dinner is a 30-year tradition started by a small group of Holy Rosary folks as a result of Renew discussion groups. Bill Lavin and Fred Chomos initiated the work.

"We talked about how we wanted to do something for somebody," said Fred's widow, Claudette.

Bill was an acquaintance of Gregg Alex, the executive director of the then-new Matt Talbot Center, Claudette said. The dinner started out with a group of eight Holy Rosary members taking the lead. Claudette has been a participant for 30 years.

The tradition grew and soon the whole parish was involved in acquiring the food and serving. The Knights took over the lead several years ago after both Fred and Bill both died.

Claudette recalls once spotting a homeless man just outside the center with his dog on a leash. He was stuffing some of his portion in a pocket, obviously for his dog. She said she got a baggie with extra turkey and gave it to the man for the pooch. "The way he just looked at me went straight to my heart," she said.

Bill Lavin owned an insulation business and frequently hired homeless people, said his brother, Timothy, who lives in the Bremerton area. "He was a very outgoing kind of guy," he said of Bill. The annual dinner was at first named after Bill Lavin. When Fred Chomos died five years ago,

the honor went to him.

Matt Talbot Center was founded in 1985 to help individuals overcome obstacles that keep them from being better contributors to society; demons such as addictions to drugs or alcohol and homelessness.

"(The clients are) used to being treated as a number. When they walk through the door today, they are treated with dignity."

Director Gregg Alex has been at the helm of the organization since its inception. He said the Thanksgiving dinner and a Christmas party are the two biggest events of the year.

"We do what we do as well as we do it because of what others do," Gregg said.

The Holy Rosary gift of service and food means a lot to the center's clients.

"It's an attitude adjustment. (The clients are) used to being treated as a number. When they walk through the door today, they are treated with dignity," Gregg said.

Some came through that door for the first time on that Saturday. And some will come back to take advantage of crisis intervention, treatment and other services offered.

"This is the door opening," Gregg said. "This is the crack in the door."

And that's a generous parish gift.



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Matt Talbot Center and Redwoods Christmas Mass
Holiday Fair
School Concert
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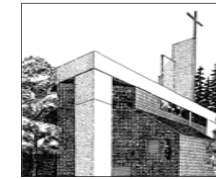
John Russell
Gifts & Blessings Editor



Holy Rosary Parish

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GIFTS & BLESSINGS

Thanksgiving at Matt Talbot

By Jim Haley

OUR
MISSION
*Led by the
Holy Spirit and
nourished by the
Eucharist,
Holy Rosary Roman
Catholic Parish
strives to be a
welcoming servant
community.*

*We celebrate the
goodness of God's
unconditional love
through worship,
education and
service.*

*The Pastoral Council
October 17, 2007*

Save the Date!
KofC Crab Feed
January 30
Heart of Edmonds
Auction Feb. 27
School Auction
March 5



It appeared to be organized chaos at first. Too many people seemed to be crowded into the room off the main hall at the Matt Talbot Center in downtown Seattle on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

Some were milling around, waiting for orders. Others were slicing pumpkin and other pies into generous portions. The pie plates covered a large table and were stacked on a cupboard. Dinner rolls were being sorted from large, plastic bags.

In the adjacent kitchen, folks were busy heating and cooking and slicing what was

to become fare for the annual Fred Chomos Memorial Thanksgiving Dinner that was served a bit later in the morning to 700 or 800 poor and homeless people.

In the main hall, there was a gospel choir from St. Therese Seattle and then a mass was said before chairs were taken down and tables assembled for the serving and eating.

Led by the Holy Rosary Knights of Columbus, most of those preparing the food and getting set to serve were parish members – men, women and children.

Just after the mass ended, Knight Noah Noaker took charge. Food came out of the kitchen to a line of folks who piled it on plates. Dozens passed through the serving line and down a hallway to distribute a traditional holiday meal to people who would otherwise not get one. Then they returned to make subsequent trips. "Have a good time. Keep smiling," Noah told folks.

The dozens who participated in preparing and serving weren't the only ones who were generous. The parish as a whole needs a pat on the back for contributions of food and money to make the event possible. More than \$2,000 was contributed, as were green bean casseroles, more than 100 pies, ample sweet potato dishes, gravy, mashed potatoes and 45 huge bags of dinner rolls. Of course, there were 58 cooked turkeys contributed by parish members.

At about 8 a.m. that morning, the Knights and others started loading and shuttling the food from the parish, getting ready for the feast that started a little more than three hours later.

In the crowded room, Noah asked whoever didn't already have an assigned job to raise their hands. They would serve the food.

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(Continued on page 4)

Advent and Christmas at Holy Rosary



From left
 Top row: Holiday Fair, and Christmas mass
 Center row: Sixth graders delivering food to the St. Vincent Food Room, angel visitation at the school concert, poinsettia deliveries to those who cannot get out, and an ornament with gift request on the Giving Tree. Bottom row: Happy 2nd grade Christmas trees at the school concert, and drummers and sheep at the Religious Education Christmas program

On Care for Our Common Home

by Jim Haley

In his second encyclical, issued in May, Pope Francis told the world that it must heed the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

The novella-length message, “Laudato Si’, On Care for Our Common Home”, has grist for everyone to contemplate such things as the environment, global inequality, politics, the breakdown of society and other issues. And his words are being examined worldwide, even here at Holy Rosary.

Every other Wednesday, Robert King leads a study group delving into the pontiff’s message and thinking about ways to react to issues raised by Pope Francis.

“In a parish, I think it’s important to have a place for people who God is calling to study and to learn,” said King, Pastoral Associate for Adult Faith Formation.

The group meets from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Pastoral Center.

Around 20 people, mostly parish members, typically attend. Members of other churches and even some not associated with a religious group are regularly present.

It’s an opportunity to learn what the Pope is talking about, hear other people’s views and form opinions. In the case of the ongoing group, most want to form ways to act on the Pope’s words.

That could mean interacting with legislators, or businesses, or maybe just thinking about personal consumption options.

The study group on “Laudato Si’” was formed at the behest of our pastor, Fr. Kenneth Haydock. King said that’s fine with him because he wanted to start a study group to kindle people’s interest in topics of a variety of sorts.

“These are very complex issues. It’s not absolutely clear the right thing to do.”
Robert King

He has a two-fold goal: Create an ongoing study group, and to cultivate people specifically interested in topics included in the encyclical.

There’s a chance that he may conduct multiple groups after he’s exhausted issues in the pontiff’s message.

“Both are important because study is good for its own sake. It’s a form of prayer,” King said.

Why?

“Because God gave us brains so we could use them,” King said. “God didn’t create us simply to oil the machine of creation. It’s a good thing for everybody to spend some time learning new stuff.”

In the encyclical, Pope Francis said he wants to address every person on this planet.



Redwoods on Trillium Falls Trail by John Peters on blueskiesphotos.smugmug.com

“He’s a very clear writer and he’s very clear about his goals,” King said. Everything in the world is connected, and the human race through greed and unequal and unhealthy distribution of resources is wrecking this planet, the Pope wrote.

The study group has a lot of folks who think something positive should come out of their inquiry, King said.

“They tend to be interested in study for the sake of action. They talk a lot about the Church’s understanding of property rights and common good versus our culture’s understanding of the same,” he said.

There is the individual’s right to use and own compared with the role of the steward to care for and cultivate and work with nature “rather than stealing from nature for one’s own personal gain,” he added.

The group keeps “coming back to how to change culture and structures of our society to better reflect the reality Pope Francis is describing,” King said. “That’s what he’s asking for. Some deep thinking and deep conversation about that.”

But it’s not easy.

“These are very complex issues,” King said. “It’s not absolutely clear the right thing to do.”