

St. Robert's Guild Gazette

Spring / Summer 2016 - 2017 ~ Rose Cuka, Editor



2017 Outstanding Catholic Woman for St. Robert Bellarmine Parish

The Ladies Guild celebrated Debbie Marcil as our Outstanding Catholic Woman from St. Robert's on May 4th when she was recognized and honored at a luncheon held at Christ the King parish. Debbie, as well as the other recognized women display the epitome of service to their parishes and community.

She has followed in the footsteps of her parents, Pat and Susie Dugan who joined St. Robert's in 1971 and immediately became involved in parish service and activities.

She attended St. Robert's elementary school, Marian High School, and graduated from UNO in 1989 with a degree in Community and Health Education. She turned her sights to Religious Education and began her teaching career at St. Robert's in the 8th Grade classroom.

Debbie and husband Mike currently are parishioners as well as her two sons who completed their elementary education at St. Robert's and their secondary years at Creighton Prep and Skutt Catholic High Schools. While a School 'mom' Debbie was active in school activities, teaching soccer for 12 years.

She spearheaded our Youth Ministry program in 1996 and redesigned both Youth Ministry and the Religious Education programs in 2002. She has coordinated our Confirmation Retreats, Parent's Day Out, Middle School Youth Rally and annual mission trips to Winnebago Indian Reservation. During all this time she has been a wonderful role model and mentor for hundreds of youth that have been blessed to have her for a Youth Minister. She currently continues her role as the Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry at St. Robert's.

Her dedication and compassion for these programs led her to be honored as St. Robert's 2006 Leadership and Service Award winner and in 2008 she received the Youth Minister of the Year Award from the Archdiocese of Omaha. She also helped develop and currently is a Program Director for Catholic Leadership Institute and Youth Serve throughout the Archdiocese of Omaha.

Debbie is a member of the Ladies Guild, and as a community volunteer shares herself with Mater Filius and St. Augustine Indian Mission's Circle of Dreams. She and Mike also served as Co-Chairs for 'Shine' our parish annual fundraiser. Her dynamic and caring personality has truly been a gift for our parish.

She will don another hat on July 1 as she assumes the position of Director of Pastoral Services for St. Robert's.

Her servant heart, deep faith and willingness to share her talents with those in need are what makes Debbie so worthy of this award. She is a living example of Christ's love in our Parish and finds true joy in helping others.

Thank you Debbie for all you do, and a hearty and well deserved CONGRATULATIONS!

Celebrating 40 Years!!

How privileged we were to celebrate with Fr. Stillmunks the 40th anniversary of his priesthood. The ladies Guild provided a cake reception on May 21st following the celebration of an 11:00 AM Liturgy which began with great fanfare; thanks to members of the Omaha Symphony, choir members and coordination of all by Liturgist Veronica Fareri.

Fr. Stillmunks' "roots" extend far across the ocean to other lands. His ancestors migrated from Ireland and Germany to the United States in the late 1700's. As farmers, they were successful in acquiring farmland through the Homestead Act in Northeast Iowa and settled there in pursuit of the 'American Dream'. His relatives continue to farm the acreage today.

But closer to home, his parents, Arnold and Mary, began their married life in Omaha and added 6 children to their nest. Fr. Stillmunks was the fifth, born on April 24, 1951. He attended Our Lady of Lourdes elementary school and Ryan High School.

His first inkling of a vocation began as a 3rd grader, but was put aside for a number of years while traversing his teen years.

He engaged in serious thought about the priesthood while attending College at the University of Minnesota and then entered the Seminary of St. Thomas. He was ordained for the Archdiocese of Omaha on June 11, 1977, with his first assignment to St. Cecilia as an associate.. Other assignments that followed were St. Michael, St. Bernard, St. Wenceslaus, Holy Trinity, and then as a pastor to St. John in Deloit. Next was St. John in Petersburg, followed by St. Columbkillie, and Christ the King, where he celebrated his 30th ordination anniversary, and lastly St. Robert's.

He enjoys reading in his spare time, as evidenced by his very extensive library, using many stories and his quick Irish wit in succinct homilies. Solving Sudoku puzzles and playing golf are also on his 'to do' list.

His favorite Bible Verses are from Exodus, Chapter 14, highlighting Vs 13, "Do Not Be Afraid" as God call Moses and the Israelites to trust Him as they pass through the Red Sea. His daily living exemplifies these words.

Fr. Stillmunks will be with us for a few more years before he retires and moves to Florida to join other family members.

As we congratulate him for his 40 years of service to God and his people, we are grateful for his guidance and support of our parish family. We wish him many blessings and a most sincere blessing from his ancestral home...

*May the road rise up to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
The rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.*

From the President:

Thank you to the Ladies Guild Board and all Guild members for dedicating your time to such a wonderful organization. Even though this past year has gone by quickly, we have accomplished so much for our parish and community. All of our hard work could not have been done without the support from each and every one of you. Over the course of the year, friendships were formed, hours of service were devoted, and we grew as a group. A special thank you to the three Circles and twenty Committees for making an impact in the lives of others. Everything we achieved could not have been done without the support and love from our fantastic priests. Thank you Fr. Stillmunks, Fr. Hans and Fr. Alexander.

As my year as President comes to an end, I am extremely grateful to have been given this opportunity. I would like to especially thank Veronica Wright (Vice President), Cheryl Erker (Secretary), Marcia Holbrook (Treasurer) and Joan Shields (Membership Chair) for their continued support.

God Bless – Diane Mohatt

Circle #1

Mother Nature provided this group with beautiful weather on April 9th for their annual Easter Egg hunt. Dozens of eggs were found by dozens of kids, and a good time was had by all. They wrapped up the year on May 9th with a fun meeting at Tanners, celebrating success and 'anticipation of the end of the school year'. They continue to provide 6 hot meals to new mothers and families.

Circle #2

Easter egg treats for children at St. Monica House were assembled at their March meeting. On April 26th they prepared chicken casseroles, salads and desserts and served the staff and residents at Josie Harper house. Their May meeting was a relaxing event and time to enjoy their efforts of this past year.

Circle #3...Once again, Rose and Bernie Wilson provided a delicious luncheon for around 120 guests on March 16th in support of EPS. The beautiful voices of the Skutt choir gave a most enjoyable performance. A record \$10,491 was collected and donated to EPS. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

The humor of Mary Maxwell entertained us on April 13th. Her anecdotes provided an appropriate conclusion to our "Been There, Done That" year. Toiletries are collected at each meeting for the needy.

Lenten Morning of Reflection was coordinated by Laura Kwong and held on March 22. Fr. Hans provided a very inspirational morning. He challenged our spirits to "*Living our Church's Mission*" through 'Encountering Jesus, Forming Disciples and Showing Mercy'.

Mother Daughter Breakfast followed the 9:30 Liturgy on March 26. Thanks to Tricia Graves who organized this event. Around 100 Mothers, Grandmothers and Daughters enjoyed a delicious breakfast. A photo booth was available to capture precious memories.

Our **Outreach Meals Committee** prepares and delivers dinner meals to parishioners in need of temporary meal assistance usually due to illness. Our 35 faithful members provided a total of 90 meals to 4 families this past year. We are always looking for additional members to help with this very rewarding ministry; please consider joining us! Place request for these services to the parish office.

Seder Service

We began the Easter Triduum with our Holy Thursday Seder Service on April 13th. Thanks to Susie Stolinski and her committee for preparing this event. Fr. Hans conducted this very prayerful and meaningful service attended by around 130 parishioners.

Past Presidents Committee

In Honor of our First President, Regina Minton, Scholarships were awarded to two sixth grade girls at the Guild Spring Luncheon, April 28.

Qualities of the applicants include, friendliness, courageous, caring and kind, have leadership ability, active in volunteerism, at school and in the community, and a deep sense of our Catholic Faith.

Recipients were Lauren Patterson, daughter of David & Angela Patterson, from the 5 day school and Meg Parsonage, daughter of Doug & Janet from the Religious Education program. The awards will offset the cost of the tuition for their 7th grade year. Congratulations to these students and their families.

A special thank you to all the 6th grade girls who wrote essays and obtained recommendations as part of their application. Our future is bright with these young ladies!

Prayer Shawl Ministry continues to meet throughout the summer. All levels of knitting/crocheting are welcome on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. in Room #3. In the past 3 years, they have given 775 prayer shawls to those in need, with 250 going to American soldiers along with a guardian angel pin and rosary. Shawls are blessed by Deacons Larry Sampler and Michael Fletcher. Recipients are prayed for during the course of work and as the handiwork is completed. Yarn and monetary donations are greatly appreciated.

Pro-Life spring Update:

St. Roberts participated in 40 Days for Life Campaign in April. We collected donations for an EPS diaper drive and funds to support Mater Filius.

St. Margaret of Cortona ladies are grateful for all the parish donations received this year. Cindy Simpson and Maureen Johnson have stepped in to assist in the distribution of basic household items to families in transition as well as organizing our storage space. We have been called upon by Open Door Mission and Catholic Charities, although our primary focus remains to continue to assist VNA through Project Next Step. In 2016 – 2017 We had over 20 requests and served over 50 individuals, primarily children. Sara Weidner, a two year volunteer continues to be an amazing blessing to children and families in need. Although the Ladies Guild will close the chapter on another successful year, St. Margaret of Cortona continues to assist families throughout the summer. We appreciate any donations of new or gently used items for kitchen (no cords), bath, and bedding (no used pillows).

Many Blessings to all!

Farewell Fr. Hans!

Reluctantly we bid farewell to Fr. Jeremy Hans as he moves on to his new assignment. He will be serving the parishes of St. Ludger in Creighton and St. Ignatius in Brunswick as pastor. We have been blessed by his presence for two years and thank him for being a part of our parish family.

We send our Prayers and Blessings with him.