



Good News from St. Pius V



Summer in Pilsen is lived outdoors and St. Pius V Parish is no exception. Our parish commitment to engage intentionally the community does not take a vacation and, in fact, we take advantage of the warm weather to increase our presence in the neighborhood and city.

May: House Visits in the Neighborhood

For the third consecutive year, St. Pius V parishioners knocked on area doors in a structured outreach to the neighborhood. Parish visitors received training to visit neighbors and share the good news of church as well as listen to residents' concerns. This year, 30 parishioners made contact with people in over 400 nearby homes.

La Kermes = Summer Street Festival

At St. Pius V, we begin and end every summer with a two-day street festival filled with food, games, music, dancing and friends gathering together. While a big party, the kermes is an opportunity for our parish to re-enforce our presence in the community and extend hospitality to our neighbors. Parish groups, including participants in our programs - victims of domestic violence, children of victims, youth center students, soup kitchen clients and others - work together as volunteers

in a communal undertaking. It is also an important fundraiser, with proceeds supporting parish outreach programs.

Street Masses and Reflection Nights

Our network of 12 Christian Base Communities (CBC's) has grown to 15 this year, thanks to last summer's outreach to families living outside our traditional parish "boundaries." In the summer, each CBC sponsors an evening Mass on the street in front of their homes.

Last summer we launched a series of reflection nights in homes of parish families living outside our neighborhood. Three of these reflection groups grew into CBC's, continuing to meet, pray, reflect and act as a group. This summer 20 reflection nights are planned in different homes where participants will pray, read scripture and reflect on their faith.

Leadership Development

St. Pius V has been reaching out to



other parishes to assist them in the development of lay leaders. St. Pius V's Alma Silva and Fr. Chuck offered a 9-week course on personal and social development at St. Agnes of Bohemia this past winter. In April, 28 students graduated from their course at Blessed Sacrament in McKinley Park and currently a second course has 25 adults. At Our Lady of Tepeyac, 23 students started a second course in May.

Congratulations to our June raffle winners!

- Ford Escape - Eileen Griffin
- \$1,000 - Alonso Angeles
- \$500 - Octavio Gallegos
- \$500 - J. Sebastian

Dates to Remember:

- September 3-4: Fall Kermes (Street Festival)
- October 15: Celebrating the Harvest Banquet



St. Pius V School Pride

As summer begins, St. Pius V School reflects on a year full of amazing accomplishments and wonderful memories. Year's end is always bittersweet as we congratulate but say goodbye to our 8th grade class. This year's 30 graduates are an incredible bunch and will be going on to St. Ignatius, Holy Trinity, Fenwick, De LaSalle, Trinity and Whitney Young, among others. Many won scholarships and enter Honors programs. We know that the future holds great things for these promising young people.

Joffery Ballet at St. Pius V

Amanda McDonald, a dance teacher with the Joffrey Ballet School, has been teaching our 1st graders the basics of dance. The children's performance for their parents and fellow students was one of the year's cutest moments! This opportunity was made possible by our friends at Big Shoulders Fund, who do so much to support our students throughout the year.

Drug Abuse Resistance Education

In June our 5th grade students completed the DARE program. Police officer Marybeth Godinez taught students not only how to resist drug abuse and violence, but also the importance of self-esteem. Our children learned that if they respect themselves and others, they will make a big difference in the world.

Innovations in Art, Math and Science

We were fortunate this year to be introduced to two special groups. The first was Art Resources in Teaching (ART) which taught our students and teachers how to use



We thank the 14 Junior Achievement members from Ernst & Young and DePaul who visited us on May 25 and offered lessons on such topics as money management and city planning.



Students took a hands-on tour of a local community garden.

art as an avenue to learn other critical skills. Math was a particular focus as students studied the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and recreated the geometric shapes and formulas he used. Students used geometry and art to create beautiful kites and architectural marvels.

The second group that graced us was the Service Club of Chicago, a charitable organization of women that has served people in Chicago and surrounding communities since 1890. These women generously granted us \$6,300 to purchase science materials for our children. The impact of this gift will be felt for years to come as our students learn science using top-notch lab equipment.

Noche Mexicana

On April 28 we celebrated our 5th annual Noche Mexicana and raised nearly \$30,000 for our Scholarship Fund. More than 200 guests joined us at Carnivale for a night of food, friends and fun capped off by our silent auction. This year's auction was loaded with sports memorabilia, event tickets, electronics and other exciting prizes donated by generous St. Pius V school supporters. Thank you so much to all who participated.

Prayers and Condolences

One of our beloved teachers, Barbara Mac-Williams, died on May 7 after a long battle with cancer. Barbara came to St. Pius V in 1986 and was a valued member of our school community and a good friend to many. We will all miss her. Please keep her in your prayers.

We thank God for blessing us with such wonderful students, families and friends. We pray the new school year will bring new students and their families to join our school family.

New Developments in Ministering to Families

Strengthening families has evolved as a prominent and effective focus for ministry at St. Pius V. Stronger families produce healthier children who reject gang involvement and school dropout and perform better in school.

To better serve families, St. Pius V hired a pastoral counselor in 1996. Within a week her schedule was full. Most cases involved domestic violence, prompting the parish to establish the H.O.P.E. program, which now has six full-time, bilingual counselors and is the largest parish-based domestic violence program in the country.

Services soon were added for children of victims (see story below) and, in response to requests from women victims themselves, staff formed a group for male abusers who showed a commitment to turning away from violence.

At the same time, parents in the community worked with parish staff to offer parenting courses. Then, five years ago staff began offering classes for married couples to help strengthen and enrich their relationship. Meanwhile, the parish's children and youth after-school program, Social Action Committee and Christian Base Communities developed a family-focused approach to addressing personal development and community issues.

Sharing the Model for Ministry

St. Pius V Parish has helped establish domestic violence ministries in ten parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago and two in the Diocese of Rockford. Fr. Chuck, at the invitation of Cardinal George, is helping lead the building



of a network of parishes to serve as anchors of domestic violence services throughout the Archdiocese. Fr. Chuck has eight more parishes interested in starting a ministry to victims of domestic violence in the fall.

Building for the Future

As these services grow, parish staff are working to combine these various strands into one, comprehensive family services program that will include the following:

- Continued outreach to the most vulnerable, especially victims of domestic violence and their children;
- Implementation of a new curriculum and evaluation tool for the male abusers' group;
- Additional training of parish staffs and leaders in ministry to victims of domestic violence;
- Creation of a network of parishes providing domestic violence services in the archdiocese;
- Expansion of lay leadership classes both within and outside the parish;
- Securing the resources, financial and otherwise, to support this expansion of the parish's mission.

To discuss how you can support this project, please call Fr. Brendan or Fr. Chuck at (312) 226-6161.

Children of Domestic Violence Victims

Most of us can only imagine the feelings of children who have witnessed the abuse of their mother at the hands of her partner or other family members. The H.O.P.E. domestic violence program at St. Pius V provides special care for children of victims who have experienced this trauma and who are



at risk of becoming abusers or victims themselves someday. We provide these young people with counseling, support groups and integration into a nurturing community. Our staff find ways for them to express their emotions, including through artwork. These images give us a glimpse into the painful world of these young people, who find safety and hope at St. Pius V.



Q&A with the Program Director of Casa Juan Diego

Since coming to the parish's youth center, Casa Juan Diego, in September 2010, program director Jenny O'Neil has worked with students, parents and staff to refocus the program on academic improvement, cultural enrichment and non violence (see logo above). Jenny recently sat down for some Q&A on the new academic direction:

Q: *What is happening at Casa Juan Diego this year?*

A: Our new project focuses on three things: literacy, culture and peace. Literacy is the newest part. Since 100 percent of our students are English language learners, we need to focus on vocabulary and fluency, the two most difficult areas for them. You can see the problem in the graduation rates: less than 60 percent of English language learners are graduating from high school. We did the research and designed a program we can do during the after school and summer programs. We will use the creative elements we have always used, such as theater, to work on fluency. And we are getting the whole family involved.



Q: *The whole family?*

A: Research shows we need to respect the home culture if you want children to do well, and our experience proves this true again and again. If we do a family workshop on math, no one shows up. But last fall we did a Day of the Dead cultural celebration and 200 parents filled our space. Included in that evening was a math lesson for the family.

Q: *How do English language learners struggle?*

A: They need vocabulary involving certain genres, such as poetry, biology, science, etc. Words like stanza, meter,

rhyme, and alliteration, all help them understand poetry. But an English language learner is unlikely to ever come across these words. Without them, it's impossible to talk about poetry in school. Fifty-one percent of our current students are failing in English language arts. They are failing in their writing and their ability to listen to and read English. So we have 6th graders currently reading at a 2nd grade level.

Q: *What do parents think of the changes?*

A: This year we have doubled the enrollment for the summer program. That shows you what parents think of it. We spent all year designing this program in conjunction with parents. They support it completely.

Q: *You've worked in Boston and the South Bronx of New York City. What's different about Pilsen?*

A: Casa Juan Diego is unique. Because of our connection to other programs in the parish and the school, we are related to children's lives in many different ways. It is an ideal situation, making our program much more effective in helping children within their families, in school and among their peers.

Online Donations

More and more of our generous donors choose to support the mission of St. Pius V Parish through **online donations**. This method is convenient, secure and makes a positive impact on the lives of those in need. To donate online please visit: stpiusvparish.org/donate

Thank you!

May you and all of the friends of St. Pius V Parish find these summer months to be a time of rest, relaxation and rejuvenation. On behalf of all who are served by your kind prayers and gifts, we thank you for supporting the mission of our parish and making a positive difference in the lives of people in need. You continue to have a special place in our prayers and in our hearts!

Brendan Curran, O.P.

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