



St. Pius Calling...

January-February 2018

Love Saves Lives

By Joyce Seno

Love Save Lives

That was the slogan of the 45th Annual March for Life held in Washington DC on Friday January 19th. It was a beautiful day filled with sunshine and the love of Christ. The inspiration of seeing so many young people joining in the crusade against abortion was awe-inspiring.



A group of 38 young (and not so young) gathered for morning Mass at St. Pius to prepare for the pilgrimage. I say pilgrimage because this year it was more than just a demonstration. This year, the Archbishop of the Diocese of Washington DC granted a plenary indulgence for those participating in the event. A plenary indulgence removes all temporal punishments for sins. This was a great blessing to not only March for Life, but to receive one of the greatest blessings from God.

After a short stop for breakfast, we continued our journey to DC with great anticipation. This year we had many new first time marchers joining the day. On arrival, we were greeted with a warm and sun-filled day. No snow. No freezing temperatures. Praise God. We left the bus and made our way to the stage area where various speakers were presenting their stories of abortion survival and trusting in God. The speeches were quite inspiring.



As we stood in awe, we looked up and watched two bald eagles gracefully circling the mall. What an awesome sight. Not long ago, the eagle was on the

brink of extinction but hard work turned that around. Perhaps this was a symbol that the hard work of so many protesters would also be a turning point in the fight against abortion.

Next was a test of patience. It was time for the March to start, but what we could not see was the multitude of marchers ahead of us also waiting for their turn to fall in line and begin the journey to Constitution Ave and the Supreme Court Building. It seemed like forever until we finally began to make progress and joined in with our fellow marchers. We marched with young and old alike and watched the groups of students with yellow hats shouting out chants for life. Their fortitude and number was inspiring.

The good news was that the number of people marching

Pious Thoughts

from our Pastor, Fr. Pius O.P.

As we begin the holy season of Lent, *prayer, fasting and charity* are the pillars of our life.

This edition highlights our testimony at the "March for Life." Also, *Congratulations to the Prayer Shawl Ministry* on your tenth anniversary.

May we continue to be the difference this Lent. Happy reading and God bless you



was so large that it took literally hours to get them moving. The problem it created for us was that the delay in getting started meant that we had to cut short our personal march to the Supreme Court because we had to meet the bus for our return. Still, the impact of the day was not lost and everyone had the opportunity to stand with fellow pro-life individuals to combine our voices to speak for those who cannot speak.



Fifty and Fabulous!!!

Happy Birthday Fr. Pius 😊



Our Prayer Shawl Ministry Celebrates 10 Years!

By Kathy Dalius

*"Shawls ... made for centuries universal and embracing,
symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving, God.*

*They wrap, enfold, comfort, cover, give solace,
mother, hug, shelter and beautify.*

*Those who have received these shawls have been
uplifted and affirmed, as if given wings to
fly above their troubles ..."*

Written in 1998 by: Janet Severi Bristow Copyright ©2018

In Nov. 2007, inspired by the Holy Spirit, no doubt, the thought of starting a shawl ministry at St. Pius X interested me & I began to pursue the idea.

During my recovery from cancer in 2006, a neighbor gave me a lap cover that was made by her church and told me that people were praying for me. It comforted me and I especially appreciated the prayers as well. Then, about a year later, a co-worker told me about a ministry at her church in Sunbury. They were crocheting and knitting hand-made shawls and giving them away free of charge to anyone who needed one due to an illness or for some other reason.

With the support of our pastor, Fr. Ted Keating, and the prayers of family and friends, the Prayer Shawl Ministry officially began on Feb. 3, 2008 with a dozen or so women actively involved.

Our mission then and now continues to be: to bring **prayers & comfort** to the sick of our parish & our community & to those with special needs **through the work of our hands.**

We decided to model our group on the shawl ministry that was created by Janet Bristow & Victoria Galo in 1998. (www.shawlministry.com) I had the privilege of meeting these two women several years ago when I attended one of their workshops. We adapted our program here to include lap covers, baby blankets, baby caps, and hats & scarves as well.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry has also been promoting devotion to the rosary for the past 10 years. We make mission rosaries to match the shawls & other items that we give away.

Prayer is the heart & soul of this ministry. This is what binds us all together and is what lifts the spirits of our recipients "above their troubles." We pray at home or wherever we happen to be as we make the items. We pray as a group when we have our meetings for all our recipients, and our pastor, Fr. Pius, prays over the shawls and blesses them before we give them away. While the shawls bring warmth & comfort & remind us of the love that God has for each of us, the prayers, I believe, are really what helps the most.

We have received many 'thank you notes' over the years that testify to the peace & comfort that folks have experienced when they received a shawl or lap cover from us along with our prayers. One family thanked us for sending her baby daughter her first rosary. Another said the shawl was very uplifting and thanked us for taking so much time creating a beautiful shawl. Another said we touched her very soul with our gift & never realized fully the true gift of spiritual & physical comfort that comes from our efforts. And another thanked us for the hard work, support & prayer that help make trying times more bearable ... and I could go on & on. We have a book filled with notes of appreciation. Over the past 10 years, we've given away more than 1000 items across the United States including 11 states and even as far away as Italy.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets two times per month, on the 1st Sunday (noon - 2 pm) and on the 3rd Thursday (6 - 8 pm). Our meetings are open to men & women of all ages. We welcome beginners & will teach you the basics. We also accept donations of yarn & other supplies.

To request a shawl or other item or to learn more about the Prayer Shawl Ministry & Rosary Making, please contact Kathy Dalius by phone (570-374-9883) or by email: kathydal@ptd.net

*"As each one has received a gift,
use it to serve one another as
good stewards of God's varied
grace." -- 1 Peter 4:10*



Why Catholic?

~ Ellen J. Ruby

My path to Jesus came through my best friend's family when I was a child growing up in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. They took me to church with them, and it was there that the stories from the Bible came alive for me. In 1997, when I was going through RCIA, with Robin as my sponsor, I remember talking to Father Mazotta at our church in Warrington, PA. He told me that many people with a family history in the Catholic Church find themselves drawn to the faith, even if they have not themselves been exposed previously. That is how I felt. I had early

memories of going to Mass with my grandparent, but not understanding what was going on. I also have memories of my grandfather sprinkling holy water on me when I stayed overnight at my grandparents' house.

As Robin and I discussed "why we are Catholic" this week, we agreed that one of the things that we love and find comfort from is the commonality of the Mass. We can walk into a Catholic church anywhere in the country - and probably anywhere in the world - and participate in the Mass, receive the Eucharist and know that it is the same Jesus present at each one.

We also talked about how learning about being Catholic, about our faith and growing in our relationship with Christ is an ongoing process. There are many ways to gain this knowledge, and we have found several within the St. Pius X community. We have both attended various GIFT programs and read books that are given or recommended to us. We both, however, have found that our time volunteering as teachers in the Religious Education program, working with Confirmation students and as Team Leaders in the LifeTeen Youth Ministry program have provided the most opportunities. As we prepared to teach or lead a discussion, we would look to the Bible, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Vatican web site and various other sources on the internet. I learned more preparing myself for these volunteer opportunities than in any other way. Not only would I gain knowledge, but through the opportunity to work with the youth of our parish my eyes were opened to more ways to live my faith. We both highly recommend considering a position as a volunteer in the church religious education programs.

Finally, we have found that discussions with others, both Catholic and non-Catholic, have provided us with opportunities. Opportunities to understand; opportunities to teach; opportunities to show Christ's love and forgiveness, and opportunities to see how much we all have in common as we struggle to put God's will ahead of our own and to love everyone, following the commandment given to us by Jesus.

