# AIN/ICHRIST THE KING PARISH MONTHLE MAGAZINE FEBRUARY 2022 | VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 8

A Love Store

Everett & Carmen Blaise share their story of love and faith

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**COME ALIVE** Are Catholics Called To Tithe?



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# Dear Friends,

This month, we celebrate World Marriage Day, February 13, and National Marriage Week, February 7-14. Our cover profile this month is a couple that has been married for over 50 years! Mr. & Mrs. Everett Blaise are a wonderful example of a couple living out the sacrificial love that makes marriage a sacrament. Marriage is meant to be a reflection of Christ's love for his bride, the Church. Just as he laid down his life for us, so spouses are meant to lay down their lives for each other.

As Saint Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband." (Ephesians 5:31-33)

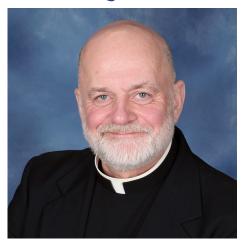
Saint Paul's description of marriage sounds and is beautiful. But living it out *is* not easy. Though I am not married myself, I am witness to many wonderful marriages as a priest. These couples are not perfect. In their humanity and weakness, they learn day by day what it means to lay down their life for the other. They strive towards an ideal. And just as we are never going to be perfect in this life, they will never be perfect in their love for each other. Nevertheless, the ideal is worthy as a goal and a guide. In their journey towards that ideal, they look to their model, Jesus, for strength and help.

We live in a world that is confused and broken. Sin has made it thus and we are all sinners. Somehow, we must learn to lift up the ideals we strive for, while also giving each other grace and mercy as we fail to uphold it. I say this because the sanctity of marriage is crucial for a just society, but we should not use it as a weapon to condemn others. We should accompany our brothers and sisters who struggle to embrace the ideal. It is never going to be easy. The answer to this challenge, as to all in our lives, is Jesus. Look to Jesus for your ideal, for your comfort, for your strength.

I would encourage you to lift up those around you who are married. Pray for them! Pray also for those who have lost their spouse through death, divorce, or separation. We also remember in our prayers those who are discerning their vocation to marriage. I pray this month, and always, for the married couples in our parish. May you continue to live sacrificial love for each other every day, while always keeping Jesus at the center of your marriage.

Yours in Christ,

Father Rich



Father Richard Roberge is the pastor at Christ the King Parish.



We've all heard the old adage "A picture is worth a thousand words." And it's so true, isn't it? Think about a photograph in your home. Perhaps it's your wedding day or a picture of your family on vacation. Maybe you're thinking of a photo of a favorite relative who has passed away. Whichever photo or photos you're thinking of, I'm willing to bet that it took you somewhere else. Photographs have this crazy way about them that stir up memories and emotions that take you back to another place in time.

Now, let's consider sacred art and images! The month of February is traditionally dedicated to the Holy Family. In a prominent space in our living room, an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the Chaste Heart of Joseph is on display (pictured above). Our boys share bedrooms and over each of their beds is a simple image of a saint of their choosing. Cooper and Jack chose their confirmation saints. Saint Dominic Savio and Saint Maximilian Kolbe. Charlie has always had an unexplained devotion to Saint Teresa of Calcutta, so he chose her to go above his bed, and Harry chose the Blessed Virgin Mary. Don't get the wrong idea, my boys' two rooms are not saintly sanctuaries. They've got their own art taped on the wall, posters of favorite book characters and pictures of family and friends (not to mention little dust bunnies and a thousand random Lego pieces that seem to permanently reside under their beds).

Having these visual reminders of these holy people throughout our home pulls our own hearts and minds outside of space and time toward our heavenly home. They inspire us to live our faith daily just as these extraordinary saints did. These images remind us that, outside of our nuclear family, we are part of a much greater family, our family of Christ the King Parish and our family in Holy Mother Church.

So, consider the photographs you have on display in your home and consider including an image (or two...or five) of your favorite saints. Get your whole family to participate. Invite these holy men and women to take up space in your home and in your heart! Your soul will thank you. ◆



Jen Albee is the Coordinator of Young Disciples at Christ the King Parish.

# Are Catholics Called To Tithe?

No one likes to talk about money. But the reality is many of us have questions regarding how we are called to handle our finances as Catholics. We hear Jesus' challenges in the Scriptures regarding wealth. We hear his calls to give freely, and yet we are unsure how to live this out in our world of abundance. I myself had searched for the answer to this month's question several years back. So, let me begin addressing this query by defining what it means to tithe.

Tithing has its roots in the Old Testament, but today it refers to the practice wherein one donates 10% of their gross income. Abraham was the first to exhibit the practice of giving 10%, but there are numerous examples throughout the Bible. To this day, many Christian churches encourage tithing. The Catholic Church, however, does not put forth a particular amount of money that individuals are called to give. So, the short answer to the question "Are Catholics called to tithe?" is no.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church lists the obligation to tithe as an Old Testament regulation that has shifted with the coming of Christ. However, the Catholic Church does dictate charitable giving. To explore this, we turn to the five Precepts of the Catholic Church. These precepts are the absolute minimum requirements an individual must follow to be living the Catholic faith. It wasn't until somewhat recently that I learned of these precepts and I'd encourage you to look deeper into them, while keeping in mind our goal certainly should not be the bare minimum!

In any case, in the words of the Catechism, "The fifth precept ('You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church') means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability." (2043) One of the basic requirements placed on Catholics today is to support the Church.

There are two pieces to this quote from our Catechism I'd like to break apart. The first is our call to give financially and materially to the Church specifically. This has been taught and practiced since the early Church as can be seen throughout the New Testament. However, not all of our charitable giving must be to the Church itself. The precept does require us to support the Church directly, but in today's world, there are also countless charitable organizations worthy of our support.

This brings us to the second piece: we are called to support the Church according to our own abilities, and our abilities shift and change. You most likely will not and should not give to the Church the same way throughout your life. Our finances go through changes – promotions, job loss, changing family situations, etc. On a regular basis, we should reassess our giving amount.

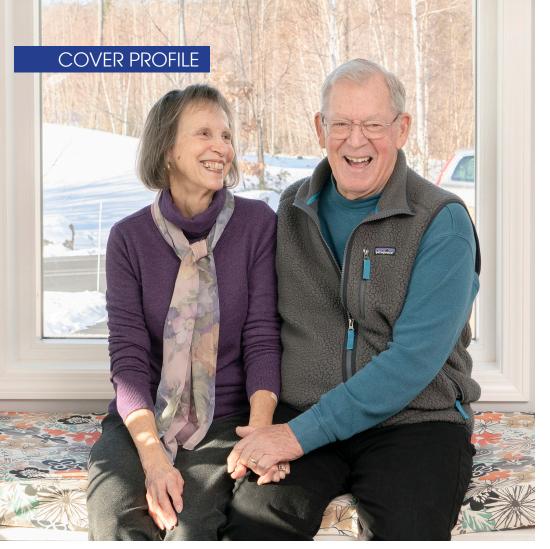
Knowing how much to give is a matter of personal discernment. As guidance, I've often heard it said that we are called to sacrificial giving. To truly be a sacrifice, it should be a little painful! Consider the following passage from the Gospel of Luke: "He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury; and he saw a poor widow put in two copper coins. And he said, 'Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all the living that she had." (Luke 21:1-4)

Only you know what sacrificial giving is for you. Only you know what type of giving God is calling you to. However, I'd invite you to consider the practice of tithing. There is a reason this ancient tradition lives on today. Ultimately, it is about surrendering our finances to God, even when it's challenging and downright scary.

We know that the life of the Christian is one of placing our trust in God and resting in His promises to care for us. As Jesus tells us in the Gospel of Matthew: "Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well." (Matthew 6:31-33) •



Haley Judd is the Coordinator of Adult Discipleship at Christ the King Parish.



A Love Stor

Everett & Carmen Blaise share their story of love and faith

#### by Emily Planchet | Photography by Charlene Graham

**Everett and Carmen Blaise** don't consider themselves, or their relationship, to be extraordinary. "We're kind of boring," laughs Carmen. However, despite what they think themselves, the fact remains that they have achieved something that many only dream of: a long and happy marriage. Looking at their almost 54 years together, one might be tempted to think something so long-lasting must have been perfect, or pretty close to it, from the start. But, like all things, relationships take work, and the Blaises know it.

Both Everett and Carmen were born and raised in rural Vermont towns about 35 miles from each other. They first met on a blind date through mutual friends when a friend of Carmen was dating a friend of Everett and they were looking to go on a double date. Though both agreed to go, it wasn't exactly love at first sight. While their friends knew each other very well, Everett and Carmen were trying to get to know each other. "We had just met and we were trying to make conversation," says Carmen. Though they liked each

other, after their less-than-perfect first date it was almost two years before they met again.

Despite the fact that their first interactions were not altogether smooth, Carmen and Everett never forgot each other. It seemed likely that they were never going to meet again, but then an intervention by Carmen's sister changed everything. Everett, who was in the National Guard at the time, was in town for a meeting. Carmen's sister happened to be passing by the place where Everett was. "Her sister knew that she liked me," Everett explains, "and she recognized my car. She left a note on my windshield and invited me for dinner." The rest, as they say, is history. "He came over for dinner and we've been together ever since," says Carmen.

After dating for about two years, Everett knew that marriage was the next step. "I felt I was ready," he says, when making his decision. On the day he proposed they went out for a ride in his car – a car he still remembers to this day. "It was a white Buick Skylark convertible with a red interior," Everett recalls. When he popped the question, though, it wasn't exactly a movie moment. "I proposed and she basically gave me all the negatives," remembers Everett with a laugh. "I was Protestant, she was Catholic." Carmen, whose faith was important to her, knew that if they were to get married, their family would need to find their home in the Catholic Church. Everett, a Methodist at the time, wholeheartedly agreed to her terms. So, on August 31, 1968, Carmen and Everett became man and wife. After their honeymoon, they almost immediately moved to New Hampshire where they've been ever since.

In the time following their wedding, they were blessed with two children. Everett was good on his word to raise the family in the Catholic Church. Eventually, just as Everett knew when it was the time to propose, he felt the call to become a full member of the Church. After attending Mass every Sunday, journeying with their children as they went through sacramental preparation, and essentially living a Catholic life, "I just figured it was about time I became a Catholic," Everett explains. First attending **Immaculate Conception Parish** in Penacook, the family would eventually start attending Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Concord. With two children and many commitments, it was difficult at times to keep their family centered on prayer, but the Blaises always made a concerted effort to attend Mass on Sundays.

Through all the different joys and trials, sufferings and triumphs that their family passed through over the years, Carmen and Everett's relationship has remained strong. Hearing this, many people might ask them the secret of a happy marriage. Everett takes the humorous view, "Don't get a divorce," he jokes. Carmen is a little more pragmatic, "It's a 50/50 deal, I can tell you that." She adds, "We dealt with all the problems together." Their complementary personalities also help them through problems. "She's great with numbers, but I know dates and directions," explains Everett. "What he can't do, I can and what I can't do he can – it really helps," savs Carmen.

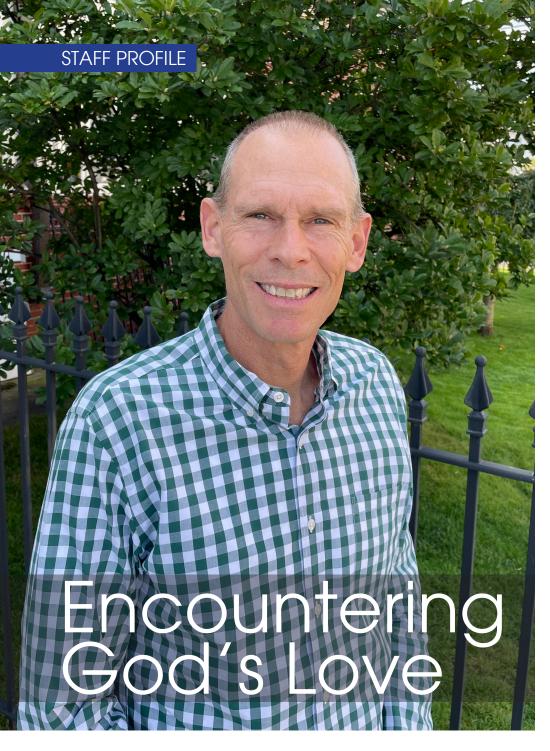
While some might think that it's the grand romantic gestures that keep their love alive, it actually turns out to be the opposite. When asked about their favorite things about each other, Carmen is quick to respond. "He's very conscientious," she says. "He just does little things that he doesn't realize, to me, mean a lot." She explains further, "He knows I don't like my coffee cold, so he'll put something on top of it to keep it warm in the mornings." Everett says of his wife, "She's a great mother, grandmother, but an even better wife. It's difficult to put into words, but it's who she is."

Another reason their marriage has been so happy is just how much they like being around each other. "Very seldom have we been apart," says Everett. Whether it was going to their children's games or traveling, everything they did, they always did together. They even retired one day apart to ensure they'd be able to start the next phase of their lives together.

Retiring, too, has allowed them to focus, not just on their own relationship, but on their relationship with God, which has grown considerably. "I can't get enough of it," says Carmen about their praver life. Every morning they read their daily devotionals, pray the rosary, and read the Bible. In fact, they've read the Bible cover-to-cover multiple times. Their love of God has spilled over into their participation in parish life. They both volunteer to clean the church, are very active in Alpha, and are in a Connect Group. "We've been more than blessed with our family, children, and friends. Since we've joined Alpha and Connect, we have even more friends," says Everett. "Our friends in Connect are like our family," adds Carmen. "Before we joined Alpha and Connect, we would come to church, sing the final hymn shake hands with the priest, and be on our way. Now, after the final hymn, we try to get out the door, but there are so many people to talk to!" Everett says.

When asked what's next for them. Carmen and Everett have very practical wishes. "We still like to be able to ride our trike," Carmen says. Always fans of traveling, their motorized tricycle is their preferred method of getting around. They are also looking forward to attending the Marriage Course, a course offered currently at the parish which allows couples in all stages of their marriage to grow closer to other. In the end, no matter what they do they do it together. Carmen says, "We've had a wonderful marriage. We've been very happy." Everett agrees, "The first 53 years haven't been bad, let's shoot for the next 53!"





#### By Michael Clark | Photography by Sarah Jane Roth

The work of sharing the gospel with others and inviting them to a closer relationship with God is not easy, and often requires the encouragement of those who are close to us. Jeff Litchfield knows this very well.

For much of Jeff's life, he did not have specific religious beliefs, but he did always have an awareness of God's presence. "I've always felt like I was being watched," he says. "I always felt like everything was going to be okay. I was taken care of." Eventually, Jeff would come to have faith in Catholicism specifically, but this was going to take time. "I did not have an epiphany," he says, stressing the gradual nature of his drawing nearer to the Church.

A major influence in Jeff's faith journey is his wife, Brenda. "As she was practicing the faith," Jeff says, "I went alongside her, at first just to support her. However, she really

did not want that unless I was committed. It was because of this that I began to take the practice of the faith more seriously." A major development along this path was his participation in a Cursillo weekend, which he attended at the invitation of a deacon at Saint Theresa Parish in Henniker. "This weekend was my first Holy Spirit moment," Jeff says. "It was the most amazing thing I went through. Brenda knew that something had changed in me because I was walking six inches off the ground. From that moment I made my commitment."

Along with his growing faith, came a closer engagement with and service to the community. At Christ the King Parish, Jeff has been involved in a number of ministries, including Youth Alpha. Among his inspirations to get more involved has been Father Rich's homilies and his message of being invitational. "The thing that really got my attention was when Father Rich talked about how we need to be invitational disciples. This fueled my desire to do everything we could to help out in the parish because I really believed in that message he was sending."

It is appropriate, then, that Jeff's current position as Facilitator of Community Engagement is all about being invitational. "In order to raise awareness in the wider community of the welcome that Christ the King Parish extends to all, my goal is to get the parish recognized as a partner in the community. In raising such awareness, I hope that people might gravitate towards something they see as a positive in our community. And in coming to our community, I hope people will encounter God's love through our parishioners."

# FEBUARY 2022

#### **February 2: Adoration**

Men's Ministry hosts monthly adoration on the first Wednesday of the month from 7:00-8:00 pm. Come join us on Wednesday, February 2. All are welcome!

#### February 5: Epilogos Dinner

We'll be hosting a Pupusa Night, serving a basic meal of traditional Salvadoran foods, in the Parish Activity Center at 6:00 pm. Cost \$10/adult, \$5 child/senior, \$25 max per family. All proceeds will go to support the upcoming missionary trip to San Jose Villaneuva, our sister parish in El Salvador.

#### February 11 & 13: Emmaus

The theme for the year is "We Believe: Understanding the Nicene Creed." This month, we will be discussing "Giver of Life: Understanding the Holy Spirit." For more information, visit christthekingnh.org/emmaus.

#### February 13: Marriage Course

The Marriage Course is for any married couple who wants to work together on their relationship, whether it is strong, or going through difficulties. It is a sevenweek course, held on Sunday evenings from 5:25-8:00 pm, in the Parish Activity Center. The cost per couple is \$130. Scholarships are available. For more information, contact Kathy Planchet at 603.224.2328 or kathy@christthekingnh.org.

#### February 21: President's Day

The parish office will be closed in observance of President's Day.

## **MARCH 2022**

March 2: Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is a day of fast and abstinence, meaning a person should eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. This is not a holy day of obligation. Mass and distribution of ashes will be available at 9:00 am, 12:10 pm, and 7:00 pm. (There will be no monthly adoration tonight.)

#### **March 4: Fridays During Lent**

On Fridays in Lent, we are asked to abstain from meat. Also, Stations of the Cross will be prayed in the church at 5:30 pm.

#### March 11 & 13: Emmaus

The theme for the year is "We Believe: Understanding the Nicene Creed." This month, we will be discussing "One Baptism: The Role of the Church." For more information and to register, visit christthekingnh.org/emmaus.

#### March 31: Discipleship Course

Mercy Retreats presents: Going Into The Deep. This is a 9-week, indepth study of the Catholic Faith. Meetings will be held on Thursdays at 6:30 pm. For more information, email haley@christthekingnh.org.

# **APRIL 2022**

**April 11: Day of Reconciliation** On the Monday of Holy Week, Father Rich will offer additional confession times. Confessions will be heard in the church confessional at 11:00 am-12:00 pm, 1:00-2:00 pm, and 5:00-7:00 pm.

#### April 13: Tenebrae Service

Tenebrae means "darkness" and refers to the singing of the Divine Office in the days leading up to Easter Sunday. We will hold our Tenebrae Service at 7:30 pm in the church. Reading and psalms, along with music pieces, will help you to prayerfully prepare for the Triduum.

#### April 14: Holy Thursday

Today, we commemorate the Last Supper of Jesus Christ. Mass is available at 7:00 pm in the church. After Mass, adoration will be available until 10:00 pm in the Parish Activity Center.

#### **April 15: Good Friday**

On Good Friday, we gather to commemorate the Crucifixion and Death of Jesus Christ. At 12:10 pm, Stations of the Cross will be prayed in the church. Services will be offered at 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm in the church. Good Friday is a day of fast and abstinence, meaning a person should eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.

#### April 16: Easter Vigil

Tonight, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Easter Vigil will be at 8:00 pm in the church.

#### April 17: Easter Sunday

Today, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Mass will be available in the church at 7:00 am. Mass will also be available at the Capitol Center for the Arts at 10:00 am.

#### April 24-26: Parish Retreat

All parishioners and friends are welcome to this year's Parish Retreat which will be on the topic of the Eucharist. The retreat with the Franciscan Sisters will be held in three evening sessions.

# SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

**February 5 & 6:** Food Pantry (Parish) Catholic School Education (Diocesan)

**February 12 & 13:** Fuel & Utilities (Parish)

**February 19 & 20:** Maintenance (Parish)

February 26 & 27: no special collection

# CONTACT INFO

**Christ the King Parish** 72 South Main Street Concord, NH 03301 603.224.2328 www.christthekingnh.org



Weekend Masses Saturday: 4:00 pm Sunday: 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am

Weekday Masses Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 12:10 pm Thursday: 5:30 pm

**Reconciliation Times** Thursday: 4:45-5:15 pm Saturday: 2:30-3:30 pm **Pastor** Father Rich Roberge frrich@christthekingnh.org

Deacon Deacon Winton DeRosia deaconwinton@christthekingnh.org

> Bookkeeper Liz Geary liz@christthekingnh.org

Business Manager Charlie Burr charlie@christthekingnh.org

Parish Secretary Kathy Planchet kathy@christthekingnh.org

Director of Music Ministry Michelle Dokka michelled@christthekingnh.org Communications Coordinator Sarah Jane Roth sarahjane@christthekingnh.org

**Coordinator of Adult Discipleship** Haley Judd haley@christthekingnh.org

Coordinator of Young Disciples Jen Albee jen@christthekingnh.org

Facilitator of Community Engagement

Jeff Litchfield jeff@christthekingnh.org

# MONTHLY OFFERTORY REPORT

	12/19/21	12/26/21	1/2/22	1/9/22
Offertory	\$10,893.00	\$10,672.26	\$20,474.00	\$11,060.00
Online	\$8,624.07	\$8,534.73	\$5,662.95	\$9,618.98
Total	\$19,517.07	\$19,206.99	\$26,136.95	\$20,678.98

## SACRIFICIAL GIVING

For more information on the parish's online giving program, visit **christthekingnh.org/ give** or call Liz Geary at the parish office, **603.224.2328.** To request monthly parish envelopes in the mail, call Kathy Planchet at **603.224.2328**.



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