PROCLAIM

CHRIST THE KING PARISH MONTHLY MAGAZINE

MARCH 2023 | VOLUME 2 | ISSUE 9



The Lord is Close to the Broken Hearted

MINISTRY PROFILE

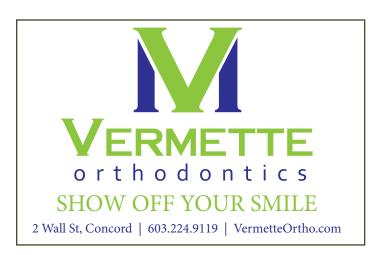
All Are Welcome!

COME ALIVE

Are Big Families More Holy?

Stenath

Sandy Adams reflects on the death of her husband Brent and birth of her grandson Arthur









PASTOR'S LETTER

Report of Annual Stewardship Renewal 2022

TIME & TALENT

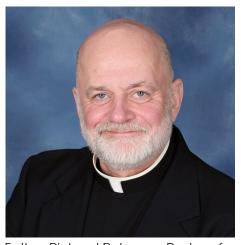
1,029	Volunteer Positions Being Served		
502	Ministry Volunteers as of January 1, 2023		
28	Parishioners Volunteer- ing for a New Ministry		
14	Parishioners Volunteer-		

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

\$1,005	Weekly Offertory Increase	
\$52,260	Annual Offertory Increase	
\$16,280	Contributions to Capital Projects	
121	Number of Responses	

The Stewardship Renewal was conducted in December 2022.

Thank you for your participation!



Father Richard Roberge, Pastor of Christ the King Parish

Breathe in Fesus

Dear Friends,

On Ash Wednesday, we begin the Season of Lent. How about being intentional this Lent?

In last month's issue, I spoke of our Lenten theme, "Breathe in Jesus." Breathing is automatic, but just as we may not regularly think about breathing, so we – myself included – do not regularly think about Jesus. We believe, we pray, but we don't always invite Jesus into the everyday moments of our lives.

We may be concerned about our "to do" list: concerns about our family and worries about our world. We have too much on our minds. We don't make room for Jesus. He is our help, our hope, and our strength. Many times we take burdens on our shoulders feeling like we are the ones in charge of it all. Just a reminder – we are not in charge.

So what if we did something different this Lent and became intentional in our thinking about Jesus: slowing down, breathing in, recognizing Jesus in our daily lives.

On Ash Wednesday, we received the sign of the cross on our foreheads with ashes. We hear the words "Repent, and believe in the gospel." Jesus is the good news, the gospel we proclaim.

In the above photograph, we see this man with his arms outstretched, much like that of Jesus on the cross. We want to imitate Jesus, and give ourselves totally to Him.

This Lent, let us be intentional. Breathe in Jesus. Let us ask for His help and all the good He has to bring into our lives.

Yours in Christ,

Father Rich



"The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." When I'm trudging through a particularly difficult day, or even season of my life, I often return to this first line in Psalm 34. I've ruminated and meditated on these words over and over again and have found some kind of solace in them, but I haven't been truly moved by them, per se. It's like, I understood them on a very superficial level, but not at the heart level. Something happened recently that made me really feel these words.

Our second son, Jack, is a spirited, sarcastic boy with a heart for sports and an inspiring love for Christ. Jack isn't a very emotional boy, so when he learned that his fifth grade teacher and mentor was moving to Ohio, I was a little surprised by how downtrodden he was. In the days leading up to and the days following his teacher's last day of school, I saw a side of Jack that I rarely see. He was, you could say, broken-hearted and crushed in spirit.

If you have children and you have witnessed your child experience a loss on any level, you know how hard it is to see them go through this pain. You probably also know the feeling of wanting to do anything to take their pain away, even if it meant taking it upon yourself. On Jack's teacher's last day of school, I dropped off our boys and did our usual morning routine where I hug and kiss them and make the sign of the cross their foreheads. Jack hugged me a little longer and a little tighter that morning.

As I left, my heart broke for him. I was drawn to tears to see him so sad. All I wanted to do was keep him wrapped in my arms, tell him everything would be alright, and beg him to give me some of the pain he was feeling. I pondered this for a bit as I walked across the parking lot to the church and prayed for Jack. Then it hit me! I bet this, on some very small, human level, is how Jesus feels about us when we're hurting. He sees His children's broken hearts

and our crushed spirits and moves in closer to us, wrapping His arms around us, wishing and willing us to give everything over to him.

Lent has just begun, and in this season that will walk us through our Lord's suffering and death, let us remember that Jesus walks with us in all our pain and suffering. Whatever cross you're bearing, draw closer to the one who takes away the sin and sorrow of the world and He will draw close to you.



Jen Albee, Coordinator of Young Disciples at Christ the King

Are big families more holy?

While I was attending my Protestant college, a mentor once teased me saying "I guess it's alright that you're Catholic, just don't go having a ton of kids, okay?" Time has passed and that remark has stayed with me. But it's a classic joke, right? "Those Catholics, multiplying like rabbits!" Even those in large Catholic families sometimes make these jokes, but typically, they reveal a lack of understanding. Outside the Church, in the secular world, larger Catholic families can feel condemned. In 2022, the average family had only 1-2 children. But also troubling to me is that inside the Church, many individuals and families can also feel judged based on their number of children.

So where do these comments and jokes come from? The world knows that the Catholic Church does not condone the use of contraception. Our Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, "The Church, which is 'on the side of life,' teaches that 'it is necessary that each and every marriage act remain ordered per se to the procreation of human life.' 'This particular doctrine, expounded on numerous occasions by the Magisterium, is based on the inseparable connection, established by God, which man on his own initiative may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act." (CCC 2366) The Church has long held that you cannot separate the unitive and procreative aspects of sexual intercourse. Therefore, the assumption is made that Catholics are forced to have tons and tons of babies!

But not utilizing contraceptive measures does not automatically equal having as many babies as you possibly can. The Church supports the use of Natural Family Planning. There are ways of monitoring and interpreting a woman's cycle so that pregnancy can be avoided with 98-99% accuracy. The Catechism tells us, "The methods of birth regulation based on self-observation and the use of infertile periods, [are morally acceptable.] These methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them, and favor the education of an authentic freedom." (CCC 2370) But our question this month actually goes deeper than the topic of contraception. Utilizing Natural Family Planning, you could intentionally avoid pregnancy throughout your entire life, but is that acceptable?

This is the most difficult topic I have ever written on. Fertility and parenthood is an unbelievably delicate and loaded topic. My life is full of people I love who are struggling in this area, whether it is discerning family size or struggling with infertility. More than perhaps any other area of life, we want to hold onto our fertility with clenched fists and say, "I get to decide whether and when and how many. Maybe I'll trust God with my career or my money, but no way am I giving Him this."

But our discussion this month is centered around holiness because "all are called to holiness." (CCC 2013) Holiness is based on an intimate union with God, a union where we do not keep things from Him. Holiness requires surrendering every part of our lives to God, seeking His will and not ours in all things, and trusting Him to provide for us.

This is the call on our lives and it extends from the littlest details to something as monumental as family planning. The Church does tell us that there are valid reasons to avoid pregnancy. The Catechism states, "For just reasons, spouses may wish to space the births of their children. It is their duty to make certain that their desire is not motivated by selfishness but is in conformity with the generosity appropriate to responsible parenthood." (CCC 2368) It is not within my ability to tell you what reasons are or are not valid, and as onlookers in the lives of others, we have no place judging our brothers and sisters on the size of their families. But each person must turn to God, surrendering the things that scare us most and trusting that He will guide us forward.

So, are big families more holy? Not intrinsically, because our call in this life is not simply to have a lot of babies. Our call is to follow Jesus. But sometimes that call might come with a few more fuzzy heads than we were expecting.



Haley Judd, Coordinator of Adult Discipleship at Christ the King

Have questions about another topic within Catholicism? Send them anytime to **parish@christthekingnh.org**.



Strength & Courage

Sandy Adams reflects on the death of her husband Brent and birth of her grandson Arthur

When couples stand at the altar and exchange vows, the words may seem like nice ideals – being true to each other for richer, for poorer, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. But what happens when those vows are put to the test? For Christ the King parishioner, Sandy Adams, to love, honor, and cherish through it all are certainly more than just words, but are a reality.

When Sandy met her husband, Brent, she knew she had met someone special. "He was the most humble person," she says. "He wasn't boastful, he wasn't bragging, he wasn't out to get the best of everything – except me," she adds with a laugh. Both had grown up in neighboring towns in Massachusetts and met through a mutual acquaintance, but there were differences between them. Sandy came from a family of faithful

Catholics, while Brent came from a family of very involved Baptists – though he himself had not been baptized. Despite that fact, Brent agreed to raise their children Catholic and so after three years of dating, they married in 1978.

After their marriage, they moved to New Hampshire and first settled in Derry, eventually having two daughters, Brin and Shela. "Brent was an amazing father," Sandy says. After a while, finding they had no ties to the community, they moved to Concord and started attending Christ the King Parish. Every Sunday, as promised, Brent would attend Mass with his family, though never showed an inclination to join the Church. That was, until the introduction of Alpha.

In 2016, when Father Rich first put out the call for parishioners to attend the first Alpha session, Sandy knew they should participate. Their experience with Alpha, the 12-week program that introduces the fundamentals of the Christian faith in an open and non-judgmental way, was incredible – especially for Brent. "Brent loved it. He was like a shining star," Sandy remembers. By the end of Alpha, Brent decided that it was time for him to join the RCIA program and become a full Catholic. And, so, in 2017, Brent was baptized and fully initiated into the Church. After having spent nearly 40 years attending Mass with his family, he could finally fully participate.

The story might have ended here, with a close family united in faith and the future bright, but sometimes, God has other plans. Suddenly, things seemed to be physically going wrong with Brent. "He kept tripping and falling," Sandy says. "We didn't know what was wrong with him." Physical therapy seemed to yield little improvement. Then the doctors began to suspect that it might be something a little more serious and referred Brent to the neurologist. "When you hear that, you know it isn't good," Sandy says. And, so, the testing continned.

At this point, to get out of the house during the pandemic, Sandy would go on daily walks by herself, since Brent was not well enough to accompany her. As she walked, she would beg God to help Brent. "I would pray the rosary. I would pray every prayer I could think of and I would say, 'Make him better, make this not something serious," Sandy recalls. "But it was just getting worse and worse." Yet all through her prayers, she had the nagging sensation she knew what it was, "I had the feeling he had ALS," she says. Then, after the eighth month of testing, the doctors broke the news over a Zoom call and her feeling was confirmed.

ALS (also known as "Lou Gehrig's Disease") is an illness that attacks the body's motor neurons, result-

ing in gradual paralysis. There is no known cure. It was the worst possible diagnosis they could imagine. "All of a sudden, life changes," Sandy says. "When you get that diagnosis, you know it's only 2-5 years on average that you'll live." The dreams of their retirement adventures were gone and replaced with the ever-present knowledge that time was limited.

While others may have given up on their faith at this point, Sandy found herself drawing closer to, rather than away from, God. She began to reflect on why her prayers for Brent's healing were going seemingly unanswered. "I realized that I wasn't listening to what God had to tell me," she explains. Sandy understood that she needed to adjust, not God. "My prayers changed from 'Give him a miracle' to 'God, you have to give me strength and courage to get through this," she says. "Not only to get through his illness and be his caregiver, but also to recognize that I'm going to have to live a life that I never dreamed I'd have - without him."

With that prayer in her heart, she and her daughters went through the struggles of caring for a loved one who was slowly losing the ability to walk, to swallow, and even to breathe unassisted. It was hard on all of them emotionally, but they leaned on God. "Without faith, I don't know what I would have done," says Sandy. "I prayed for strength and courage, and it came."

The support came not only from her own family, but from the parish as well. After completing Alpha, Sandy and Brent had joined the first Connect Group, made up of post-Alpha participants who continue to meet in fellowship. When Brent first got his diagnosis, everyone rose to the occasion. "The outpouring – it was incredible," Sandy says. "Everybody was so good and came over to help." Bringing books and visiting with him, their Connect group was there for them.

As the months progressed, Sandy could see that things would be ending soon, but she put her trust in knowing that Brent would be going to a place where there was no more suffering. "I would tell him, 'If you see the light of Jesus, follow it. Don't run away from it. Don't fight it," Sandy says. "About two hours before he died I said to Brent, 'Find Jesus." Finally, on November 29, about 11 months after he was first diagnosed, Brent passed away in his home. He was only 67.

Even after Brent's death, God



continued to fill Sandy and her family with strength, even giving them the courage to speak at his funeral and to live a completely new life. "You have to learn to adjust," Sandy says. "I had to rethink my purpose." Not long after Brent's death came the announcement that Brin and her husband, Devin, were expecting their first child. And so little Arthur (named after Brent, whose full name was Arthur Brent) was born in September 2022. "It was amazing," says Sandy. "We didn't know that as Brent's life was ending, we were preparing for a new life: Arthur. It really helped us all because otherwise we'd be overwhelmed with the emptiness," Sandy says. "But Arthur is the little spark that says, 'Life goes on."

Even though they have been parted for more than a year, Brent is still very much with Sandy. "He taught me two very important things: one was to be patient and the other one was to not worry," she says. "Anytime I start to worry, I always hear Brent's voice, 'Sandy, don't worry. It'll all work out." Through her experiences, she knows that no matter what happens God will give her the strength and courage to meet life's trials with grace. •





Christian fellowship has always been built around food, even in the early church. From the very beginning, God's people have been getting together to strengthen their relationships, to share the love of Christ, and to enjoy one another around a meal.

Sunday Coffee Hour and Thursday Potluck Dinners are just two of the ways we enjoy fellowship through food at our parish. Caroline Judd, along with other dedicated volunteers, helps make these opportunities happen every week. The Coffee Hour is held every Sunday after the 9:00 am Mass in the Parish Activity Center. All the food is either homemade or donated. Potluck Dinners are held every Thursday after the 5:30 pm Mass in Barry Hall. All are welcome to these events. Caroline says, "You never have to eat alone!"

Caroline's sense of hospitality and fellowship have deep roots. She grew up in a tiny village in England and attended a small Anglican Church where she says, "All ages were mixed together, and everybody had a part and a role to play." She knew her neighbors and the people in the church and always felt that, even as a child, her contribution was valuable. She met her husband, Bill, in Israel while on pilgrimage. They got married in England and settled in New Hampshire where Bill was working.

When Caroline moved, she did not know anyone. "Coming from England, it was hard because I felt that everyone else knew each other," she says. "People in Concord welcomed me and that was such a blessing. Volunteering in these ministries is like giving back to the people who welcomed me when they didn't know me at all."

Because this is a big parish, Caroline feels that it is even more important to foster close relationships between people. "Like the hymn *They Will Know* We Are Christians by Our Love says: If you don't know the people who you are worshiping with, then that part of the love can't come through," she says. "We try to be aware of someone who is new and needs to be welcomed. We watch for people who are sitting alone, and we introduce them to other parishioners or inform them of parish activities."

Besides being active in the Sunday Coffee Hour and Thursday Potluck Dinners, Caroline, along with Denise Kwasnik, serves as Fellowship Coordinator for the parish. As such, she and Denise support the Fellowship Ministries: Coffee Hour, Forever Young, New Parishioner Dinner, Thursday Night Potluck, Women's Ministry, Men's Ministry, and Young Adult Ministry. "We support these groups by helping them if they need anything," Caroline says.

Caroline invites all of us to come, share a meal, and relax with friends in Christ! ◆

MARCH 2023

March 1: Adoration

Come for an hour of adoration every Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 pm in the church. All are welcome!

March 2: Potluck Supper

Thursdays after the 5:30 pm Mass, there is a potluck in Barry Hall (the building behind the church) to get to know other parishioners.

March 2: Children's Choir

This choir is open to children in grades three and above. The Children's Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 5:15-6:15 pm, throughout the school year, in Barry Hall. For more information, please contact Michelle Dokka, Director of Music Ministry, at michelled@christthekingnh.org.

March 3: 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 3 & 5: Emmaus

This month, we will discuss "In the Age of the Church: The Tradition of Prayer." For more information, visit **christthekingnh.org/ emmaus**.

March 11: Men's Ministry

All men are welcome to come together for coffee and conversation! We meet in the IHM room on the 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month at 8:00 am. For more information, email menofctk@gmail.com.

March 12: Encounter

All high school-aged teens are welcome to Encounter! Encounter is a teen-led discussion group where we can learn about the Catholic faith. We meet every Sunday from 12:30-2:00 pm in Barry Hall. Email encounter@christthekingnh.org.

March 17: Rediscover the Mass

Join us to watch Bishop Robert Barron's life-changing course, *The Mass*, in the church. The presentation will be followed by a live talk from clergy throughout our diocese followed by a reception in the Parish Activity Center. Join us, on Friday, March 17, from 6:30-8:00 pm, and rediscover the Mass. The series runs through June.

March 31 & April 2: Emmaus

This month, we will discuss "The Battle: Guidance in Prayer." For more information, visit **christthekingnh.org/emmaus**.

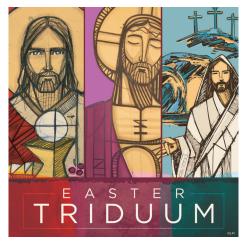
APRIL 2023

April 3: Day of Reconciliation

On the Monday of Holy Week, 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 5: 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 6: 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 7: 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 8: Easter Vigil

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

April 9: Easter Sunday

Today, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Mass will be available in the church at 7:00 am, 9:00 am, and 11:00 am.

April 10-16: Easter Octave

The celebration of Our Lord's Resurrection continues for eight days and is called the Octave of Easter. Each day of the octave is ranked as a solemnity. So keep the celebration going!

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

March 4 & 5:

Food Pantry (Parish)

March 11 & 12:

Fuel & Utilities (Parish) Easter Flowers (Parish)

March 18 & 19:

Maintenance (Parish) Catholic Relief Services/Catholic Home Mission (National)

March 25 & 26:

no special collection

CONTACT INFO







Christ the King Parish

72 South Main Street, Concord, NH 03301 603.224.2328 | www.christthekingnh.org

Weekend Masses

Sat: 4:00 pm | Sun: 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am

Weekday Masses

Mon, Wed, Fri: 12:10 pm | Thurs: 5:30 pm

Confession/Reconciliation

Thurs: 4:45-5:15 pm | Sat: 2:30-3:30 pm

Pastor:

Father Rich Roberge, frrich@christthekingnh.org

Winton DeRosia, deaconwinton@christthekingnh.org

Director of Parish Life:

Cynthia Tokos, cynthia@christthekingnh.org

Bookkeeper:

Liz Geary, liz@christthekingnh.org

Business Manager:

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Michelle Dokka, michelled@christthekingnh.org

Facilitator of Community Engagement:

Jeff Litchfield, jeff@christthekingnh.org

Parish Secretary:

Kathy Planchet, kathy@christthekingnh.org







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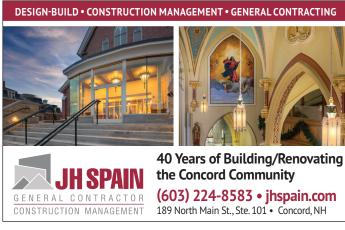
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MONTHLY OFFERTORY REPORT

	1/15/23	1/22/23	1/29/23	2/5/23
Offertory	\$15,689.00	\$10,389.78	\$11,923.00	\$10,430.00
Online	\$10,730.21	\$5,814.08	\$8,206.21	\$6,048.71
Total	\$25,419.21	\$16,203.86	\$20,129.21	\$16,478.71

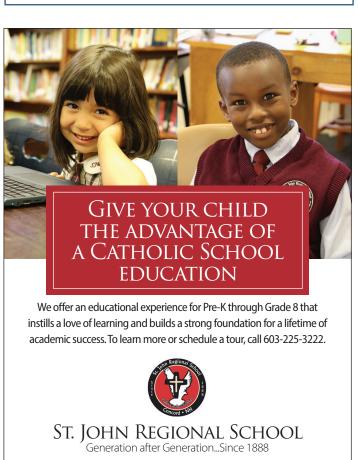
For more information on the parish's online giving program, visit **christthekingnh.org/give**. To request monthly parish envelopes in the mail, call Kathy Planchet, Parish Secretary, in the parish office at 603.224.2328.











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