

Spirit of Providence

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BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT – WITH A TOUCH OF HUMOR

If you attend 8:30 Sunday Mass every weekend and think you have seen all the “regulars”, there is still a good chance that you have failed to notice one sweet soul. That sweet soul is Lillian “Lil” Colombo. Lil is easy to “overlook” – her petite stature sets her a good head-height below the average person. And Lil’s persona is much the same: modest and unassuming, she doesn’t care for much attention. However, her character has a presence not to be overlooked. Lil has the energy of a person half her age – she is 91 years old – and she looks for ways to use that energy to help others. Currently she is helping to promote the “Walk to Jerusalem” mission, a parish-wide program highlighting spiritual and physical health. Lil is a good model for the program, with her years of excellent physical health and rich spiritual outlook.

Lil was born and raised in South City. As a child Lil had a great deal of household responsibility – more than most other children, including her two younger brothers. Her mother was often sick and her father lost his business during the Great Depression. When she graduated high school she was anxious to spread her wings a bit, so she enrolled in college at Saint Louis University for a year and went on to St. John’s Nursing School. Upon completion of the nursing program Lil stayed on as a Labor and Delivery nurse at St. John’s Hospital. Lil didn’t exactly escape household responsibilities, though. Nurses at that time not only cared for newborn babies and their mothers, they also cleaned the rooms, took out the trash, changed the bed linens, and prepared all the meals for their patients.

Rather than recounting any hard times in her family life, she instead emphasizes her strong belief that family values are the core foundation for a better society. Lil identifies the “best years of her life” to be the period when she met and married her husband, John. “He made me a better person,” she says with fondness. They married and started a family in a two bedroom flat near Tower Grove Park. When their daughters were 2 and 3 years old and their newborn son was just 3 months old, they decided to build a home in the county. In 1955 Lil, John and their children moved into their new home in Affton and into Our Lady of Providence parish.

Lil continued her nursing career throughout the years, working night shifts in Labor and Delivery at St. John’s and later at St. Mary’s, all while raising a family. Not until her husband fell seriously ill to brain cancer did she retire from working full time. After John passed away in 2000, Lil found herself with time on her hands, probably for the first time in her life. She quickly found ways to put her time to use serving others. Lil substituted as a school nurse in the Affton School District for about five years. She also became more active in the parish with personal faith enrichment and by volunteering her nursing skills. Lil participates in a weekly prayer group at OLP and is an active member of the Women’s League. She performs free blood pressure checks for parishioners on a regular basis; she helps with the annual Healing Mass and Luncheon; she assists with the school hearing and vision screening when possible and she works at the parish festival.

Still today, at 91, Lil has no plans of slowing down. She continues to seek out volunteer opportunities in the parish, she attends morning water aerobic classes, and she is considering getting back into a zumba class just because she loves to dance. Lil credits her longevity and excellent health to her active life style. “You have to keep moving!” Lil says without hesitation. And she credits her good spirit to a simple practice: “I take one day at a time, and I ‘delete’ a lot. If I can’t fix a problem, I let it go. I put it in God’s hands. I’ve found that many things in life that felt like mountains were really just small bumps in the road.”

Thank you, Lil Colombo, for your inspiration, your spirit and your continued work in our parish community!



Our Lady of Providence parish is grateful to Lil Colombo for her continuous spiritual and physical involvement in the parish.

Lent



Father Dave Rauch

Ash Wednesday ushers in the holy season of Lent. The word "Lent" has its origin in Old English word meaning "spring". It also is connected to the word "lengthen" and refers to the

increase in daylight as we move through the forty days. Ash Wednesday is February 10th. It is a day of both fasting and abstinence from meat. The practice of fasting is now only required on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday for those between the ages of 21 and 59. Good Friday and all the Fridays in Lent are also a days of abstinence from meat.

Lent is not just about mortification, giving up, fasting and abstaining. It is about growth in our relationship with God. It is about turning away from sin and receiving God's forgiveness. It is about mending our relationships with others and ridding ourselves from the faults that cause us to judge others and carry grudges and harbor revenge. It is about growth, new life and openness to God's plan for our life. In this special Holy Year of Mercy we are reminded that God forgives us and God forgives always. We too must learn to do the same for others.

There will be two masses on Ash Wednesday: 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Blessed ashes will be distributed during both Masses. The great Triduum (Latin for three days) of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Resurrection of the Lord are celebrated this year from Thursday evening, March 24th through Sunday evening March 27th. In a way they are all connected into one great remembrance of our redemption through Jesus. We begin with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Thursday evening, March 24th at 7:00 PM. The Good Friday Commemoration of the Lord's Passion begins on Friday afternoon, March 25th at 5:30 PM. The Easter Vigil begins on Holy Saturday, March 26th at 8:00 PM.

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Holy Year Of Mercy

Got Twenty Minutes??

Inspired by Pope Francis in this crucial Holy Year of Mercy, a small band of friendly, caring prayer warriors invite you to join us in our church ANY time you have twenty minutes to spare on ANY Monday evening at 7:00 p.m. We share intentions and are guided through the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Such a peaceful, hopeful experience!

If the Chaplet is not your style, wonderful men of our parish lead us (men, women, and sometimes children) in the rosary at 7:30 p.m. Again...only twenty minutes.

We contemplate our banner message: "God forgives all! God forgives always!" God's mercy falls on all of us in this marvelous, giving parish family. As Harry Connick, Jr. reminds us, "Of course, I'm a practicing Catholic. I have to keep practicing until I get it right!" Come once, come occasionally, come often! You will not be disappointed.



Thank you to Kyle Horstmann, owner of KLH Lawn & Landscaping, for volunteering his services (and his truck!) to remove the leaves from the church and school grounds. On a Saturday morning in December a group of parish volunteers raked all of the leaves on the property to the curb, and Kyle picked the leaves up with the KLH Landscaping truck. This saved a great deal of time usually spent bagging the leaves and hauling them to the yard waste dumpster.

Thank You!





Holy Cross Academy
welcomes another parish!

We are thrilled to announce that St. Dominic Savio will join Holy Cross Academy at the beginning of the 2016-2017 academic year. St. Dominic Savio will become the third elementary campus in Holy Cross Academy, operating a Pre-K through 5th Grade program.

Please give a warm welcome to all St. Dominic Savio families!!

Daily Life in Guanacaste

By Marilyn Price, Parish Nurse

The last time we were in Guanacaste we asked to do some home visits. We wanted to see what daily life is like there. Our guide, Miguel Bautista, took us by truck as far as the narrow, rocky roads would take us. When we got out of the truck, we stood on the narrow edge of the mountain as Miguel pointed out a few scattered houses in the valley below. He told us it would take an hour for us to get to the closest house. The path there was steep, rocky and very narrow.

Miguel is the principle of the school in Guanacaste. He walks this rugged terrain every day. It takes him an hour each way. We knew we were no match for him and that his hour walk would probably take us at least twice as long. And so we asked him to visit the homes and send us some photos.

Our mission work in Guanacaste is in what might be called the village square. It consists of two school buildings, a church, and food preparation building. Since the people come to us, we do not see how they live on a daily basis. So, here is daily life in Guanacaste as provided by Miguel.



A steep, narrow pathway leading down the mountain is the only access to and from the homes.

A typical home in the village of Guanacaste. Guanacaste is located in Intibucá, Honduras.



A mother cooks rice for her family. All of the cooking is done outdoors.



A child plays inside her home. Homes here all have dirt floors.



Shoes for the Children of Guanacaste

By Marilyn Price, Parish Nurse

I am already beginning to receive checks for the shoes for the children in Guanacaste. Many thanks. There are 120 schoolchildren and the shoes are \$10 a pair. There are 120 children in the school. If you are able to help, please make out a check to Washington Overseas Mission and send it to the Rectory. God bless you for your generosity.



OUR LADY of PROVIDENCE

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The Easter Sunday Masses on Sunday, March 27th are at 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM. There will be no 5:30 PM Mass.

During Lent we will have our normal weekday schedule of the 7:30 AM Mass on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday; and 8:00 AM Mass with the school children on Wednesday. You are encouraged to come to daily Mass at least once each week during Lent. Consult the web-sites of neighboring parishes for Masses at other times if ours do not fit your schedule.

Stations of the Cross can be prayed privately during the day when church is open. A variety of booklets for making the Stations will be available on the table by the first station, which is near the statue of Our Lady of Providence.

All parish households will be receiving a copy of the Little Black Book offering reflections on the daily gospel readings during Lent. Other Lenten materials will be available in church.

Lent is the Church's annual time of reflection and renewal. Plan now to use this time to grow in your faith, deepen your spirituality and become reconciled with God and others. Don't try to do everything but just one thing you can realistically accomplish. Get up a half-hour earlier to find time for morning prayer. Give up something and show mercy and generosity to those in need. Allow space in your heart for God to enter in and expand your heart and soul.



The OLP Men's Club will again sponsor a Fish Fry on each Friday throughout Lent, beginning February 12th. Carry out and dine-in meals are served between 4:00 and 7:00 PM. (There is no Fish Fry on Good Friday.)



Save the Date:
**OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE
TRIVIA NIGHT**

Saturday March 12th, 2016

Doors open at 6:15 PM;
Trivia begins at 7:00 PM

\$200 per table of 8 players

Contact Dan Simpson at danielsimpson@hotmail.com

The Spirit of Providence is published bi-monthly to celebrate the many ways in which generous gifts of time, talent and treasure enrich our faith community. Suggestions, articles and photographs can be submitted to Collette Koscielski at collette.hermann@gmail.com or 314-540-5210.