

ANNUNCIATION & CHURCH ASCENSION MISSION



Dresses Offering More Than Just Clothing for Girls Around the World

Imagine for a moment that a colorful piece of cloth could save your life. It seems like an impossible idea – but for some young women in our world, colorful clothing is all that stands between them and would-be sexual predators.

In places like Fiji, Thailand, Guatemala, and certain parts of Africa, young girls are being protected by colorful dresses made here on the Big Island through a program called Dress a Girl Around the World. Along with other area women, parishioner Cindy Kennedy helps sew and purchase fabric for dresses each Wednesday at the Waikoloa Village Community Room and says she hopes to bring the group to our parish soon.

“This may be the only dress that each girl will ever own,” Cindy says. “The whole principle is that if a girl is in a nice, colorful dress, it’s assumed that she’s well cared for and less susceptible to predators. It’s hard to believe that a piece of colorful fabric can change a girl’s life.”

Each month, the West Hawaii branch of Dress a Girl Around the World produces nearly 400 dresses for young girls in third world countries. Using a pattern that is easy to follow, Cindy says she and other volunteers cover each dress in prayer as they work, asking God to protect the little girl who will one day own it.



Schoolchildren in Haiti hold up dresses made for them as part of the Dress a Girl Around the World program. Local volunteer Cindy Kennedy says making dresses such as the ones pictured has helped her combine her love for children and sewing.

“Girls in some of the countries are considered less than human just because of their gender,” Cindy says. “A girl wearing a new dress presents an appearance that someone cares for her. We are very prayerful about each dress that we make. We trust in the Lord to get the right dresses to the right girl, and praying that they really will make a difference in their lives. I like to think of

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Dresses Offering More Than Just Clothing for Girls Around the World *continued from front cover*

“We are very prayerful about each dress that we make. We trust in the Lord to get the right dresses to the right girl, and praying that they really will make a difference in their lives. I like to think of it as a spiritual protection, as well as physical protection. This little girl is wearing a dress that’s been prayed over and made with loving care by someone in America. It’s not often that we get to do things that reach such a far distance.” – Cindy Kennedy

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Cindy says getting involved with the group has helped her combine her love for sewing with a passion for helping children. In bringing the group to our parish, she says she hopes those who are interested will realize that it’s an easy and fun way to spread Christ’s love.

“The dresses are very simple and easy to make,” she says. “Even someone who hasn’t sewn before could learn. We even have machines that we can lend for this purpose. We’d love to get a group started in the Waimea area, and if anyone is interested, they can email me.

“For people who want to exercise some of their creativity, it’s fun dealing with all these colored fabrics,” Cindy continues. “I’ve been saving the arm holes because it’s so fun to think about all these lives we’ve touched. It reminds me of the old-fashioned quilting bees, because it’s a neat time of fellowship. Sometimes, there are women sitting at home, doing nothing, feeling bored, and they could be coming out, sewing with us, and having some friend time.”



A young girl from Nepal with a dress she received from Dress A Girl Around the World. In Waikoloa, a branch of the organization has been making dresses just like this one to help protect girls in third world countries from predators.

Cindy Kennedy says she would love to hear from anyone interested in joining Dress a Girl Around the World. She can be reached via email at wheninwaikoloa@yahoo.com. Donations are also accepted to help cover the cost of fabric and international shipping.

A Letter from Our Pastor

Are We Prepared to Match Jesus' Gifts to Us?

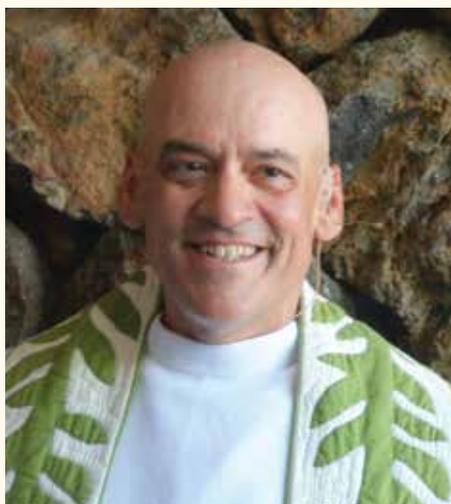
Dear Parishioners,

Another Christmas season has come to a close, and for most of us, it was another wonderful season filled with extraordinary gift giving. Now, with the New Year upon us, I would like to turn our focus to an extraordinary type of gift.

This gift is not the traditional “present” we give to loved ones. No, this gift is ongoing and never-ending, bearing a value far beyond the realm of our comprehension.

This is the gift of the Eucharist. “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Those are words that we associate with the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. They are words that carry a meaning beyond our abilities to really appreciate them at times. Christ’s eternal gift to us calls us to share it with others. We need to strive in this New Year to receive the Lord with humility and love, and then to pass that on to our families, our friends, our faith community, and all those with whom we may come in contact.

It is through the Eucharist that we become one with the Lord. It is through Him that we receive the strength to be good stewards. We need to receive this incredible gift and share the Good News with all around us. When we approach the Eucharist, we must always keep



in mind the real presence of Jesus Christ – and that, in itself, is a humbling experience.

In addition to the Eucharist, we continually receive the gifts of time and talents. A new year reminds us of these gifts. Although each of us may receive different gifts, we all receive an equal gift of time. If you are making resolutions, a good one might be to find the time to pray and to reflect and to share our gifts with others. Each of us needs to set aside time each

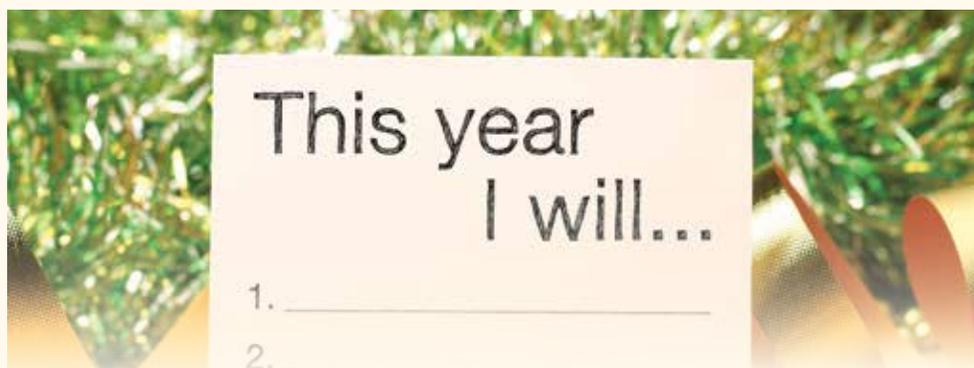
day for God. In fact, each of us should endeavor to set aside multiple times a day to pray to and to listen to God.

Are we prepared to take the risk in using our time, talents and resources to build the Kingdom of God? That is the true determination of stewardship – whether we accept this risk with the kind of trust in God to which we are called. Our faith is measured by the risks we are willing to take to live it out. Christ Himself risked it all by going to the Cross and models true sacrifice for all of us. Through that sacrifice, He continues to give us the greatest gift of all – the Eucharist. We need to accept that gift and use it to fulfill our own lives and the lives of those around us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen

Reverend Stephen Macedo
Pastor



Our Parish Financial Report

July 1, 2016 to Dec. 31, 2016

Income		
Saturday, 5:00pm Mass	\$	35,420.47
Sunday, 8:00am Mass	\$	45,407.45
Sunday, 10:00am Mass	\$	38,545.33
Waimea Christmas Collection	\$	8,460.63
Puako Christmas Collection	\$	7,001.00
Online Giving:		
Sunday Offering	\$	16,627.00
Faith Formation, Stewardship & Evangelization	\$	2,349.60
Building Repairs & Maintenance	\$	200.00
Outreach (Food Pantry)	\$	2,050.00
Outreach (Hunger Free Keiki)	\$	600.00
Building Maintenance Offerings	\$	5,656.50
Special Collections & Holy Days	\$	4,006.00
Second Collections (In and out)	\$	12,745.29
Food Pantry Donations & Grants	\$	15,654.11
Other Gifts & Bequests	\$	106,837.00
Candle Offerings	\$	2,613.39
Youth Ministry / Religious Ed Donations	\$	1,088.00
Interest Income (thru 11/30/16)	\$	13,990.24
Other Income	\$	7,967.00
Total Income	\$	314,473.72
Expenses		
Priest Expenses (Salary, medical, retirement, rectory food)	\$	21,869.24
Lay Expenses (Wages, Medical, EE taxes & Insurance)	\$	44,899.97
Office Expenses	\$	3,194.67
Insurance	\$	16,296.00
Automobile Expenses	\$	2,541.33
Puako Lease	\$	9,156.00
Waimea repairs, maintenance & improvements	\$	9,478.76
Puako repairs, maintenance & improvements	\$	10,060.12
Cemetery Maintenance	\$	-
Waimea Utilities	\$	4,637.61
Puako Utilities	\$	2,594.82
Diocese Assessment	\$	18,816.00
Stewardship Expenses	\$	22,033.30
Liturgy Expenses	\$	3,121.10
Candle Expenses (not altar)	\$	2,827.18
Youth Ministry / Religious Education Expenses	\$	4,126.62
Education Faith Formation (Parish Retreat, L.A. Congress, Stewardship Conference)	\$	8,453.32
Appreciation Expenses	\$	1,677.52
Evangelization (Christmas & Easter books, Newsletter printing & Mailing expenses)	\$	9,136.85
Food Pantry Expenses	\$	37,395.26
Hunger Free Keiki Expenses	\$	1,572.52
Parish Tithing (Donations to other groups, Medical Subsidy to Ka'u Pastor)	\$	2,991.92

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Our Parish Financial Report *continued from page 4*

Other Expenses	\$	14,343.17	
Total Expenses	\$	251,223.28	
Income over Expenses	\$	63,250.44	
Savings with Diocese		July 1st	November 30th
Savings Account (Note: Withdrawal for Puako Repairs)	\$	947,530.33	\$ 936,559.69
Repairs & Maintenance (Note: Deposit from Grant)	\$	453,907.77	\$ 531,927.76
Building Fund Land Acquisition	\$	282,333.73	\$ 284,220.67
Total Savings	\$	1,683,771.83	\$ 1,752,708.12

Upcoming Repairs and Maintenance Projects:

- ❖ *Replace carpeting in Puako and Waimea Church*
- ❖ *Replace temporary Baptismal Font in Waimea*
- ❖ *Replace windows and new siding on old Church*

Highlights of Our 2016 Stewardship Renewal

In late 2016, our parish leadership at Annunciation conducted our Stewardship Renewal. We are happy to say that, with a return rate of 38 percent of active households, stewardship has continually been of utmost importance in our Annunciation parish family.

In this issue of our parish newsletter, we are happy to share with you some of the highlights of our 2016 Stewardship Renewal.

- ❖ We received 157 adult commitment cards, and 66 youth commitment cards.
- ❖ Commitments to prayer – Stewardship of Time – were 798 from adults, and 371 from youth.
- ❖ Ninety-one percent of participating households made prayer commitments, with each household making an average of five prayer commitments.
- ❖ Commitments to ministry – Stewardship of Talent – were 530 from adults, and 84 from youth.
- ❖ For adults, there were 204 new ministry commitments, and 326 re-commitments to ministries.

- ❖ Approximately 85 percent of participating households made a commitment to ministry.
- ❖ Relatively inactive families are becoming involved at Annunciation, with 37 families who were not previously active in any ministry signing up for ministry involvement.
- ❖ There were 106 offertory commitments – commitments to Stewardship of Treasure. The average pledge was \$1,386.
- ❖ Sixty-eight percent of participating households made a treasure commitment.

If you did not return a commitment card for the 2016 Stewardship Renewal, we encourage you to consider the ways you may become involved in parish life at Annunciation, and to give back the gifts of time, talent, and treasure. It is never too late to embrace the stewardship way of life!

We thank you for your participation in parish life at Annunciation, and we hope you have a very blessed 2017.

Looking at New Year's Resolutions Through the Lens of Stewardship

Every January, we all step forward into the New Year with new ideas, goals and resolutions. But after the initial sparkle of the New Year has faded, it can be easy to forget our once-fervent resolutions. However, we might find that it's a bit easier to keep our New Year's resolutions if we look a bit beyond our physical selves. By also involving our spiritual lives, as well as the lives of others, we can add a lot more meaning to our resolutions.

Renowned Catholic author Matthew Kelly says, "We're all trying to be better versions of ourselves," and that's basically what any resolution is about. Stewardship is essentially the same thing – if we embrace living a stewardship way of life, we become better versions of ourselves. We can use our time and talent to make improvements in our lives, in the lives of others, and in the life of the parish. It all comes down to one basic point – if we acknowledge that everything we have is a gift from God, then we are supposed to be good stewards of those gifts, use them for the benefit of others, and return our talents tenfold to the Lord.

One idea to help incorporate stewardship into your New Year's resolutions is to make two distinct resolutions each year – one at the beginning of the liturgical year, and one at the beginning of the calendar year.



We can think of the first Sunday of Advent as the Church New Year, and we can make our own spiritual resolutions at this special time each year. Then, for the new calendar year, we can make resolutions for our health and well-being. In both cases, we can commit to these promises much in the same way we make our commitments during our annual Stewardship Renewal. We can make these resolutions, write them down, and share them with someone. Once you've written it down and shared it, you are now holding yourself accountable.

We are both physical and spiritual beings. Taking care of the physical side of things is a good start, but if we ignore the spiritual side, what kind of progress are we truly making? Even if you already regularly

pray, you can add five more minutes to your prayer time each day to take a step forward in your faith. Even if you read the Bible once a week, you can take a spiritual leap and make it twice a week. One way to make a good resolution is to consider joining or increasing your involvement in one of the parish's prayer, faith formation or outreach ministries.

Making resolutions requires us to truly reflect on the areas in our lives that we'd like to improve, while also ensuring that our priorities are in order. Remember, there is no need to take a giant leap all at once. So, as we begin a new calendar year, remember that even the smallest steps forward in faith can go a long, long way as you continuously renew your relationship with Christ.

Discipleship in Action: *The Hoffmanns and Their Stewardship Calling*

After nearly 30 years of service all over the country and world, Pete Hoffmann was ready to retire from the military toward the end of 1996. Having fallen in love with Hawaii during his posting here in the 1970s, Pete was eager to return, this time as a permanent resident. His wife, Joan, on the other hand, was a bit hesitant at first due to its distance from their children and grandchildren. So the couple agreed to move out to the Big Island for a trial period. Now, 20 years later, they could not imagine living anywhere else.

“We had a five-year plan that we would stay here to see if we really enjoyed this place,” Pete says. “It only took five weeks before we said to ourselves that we weren’t ever going back to the Mainland.”

Captured by the beauty of the terrain, culture and people, the Hoffmanns eagerly laid down roots and immersed themselves in parish life. Together, they have provided music for Sunday liturgies at Ascension Mission for the past 20 years – Joan playing the organ with Pete singing beside her. They have also enjoyed the opportunity to teach religious education to the parish children, working to spread the love of Christ to our future leaders. Additionally, Joan continues to lector

regularly, serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion – both at Mass and during visits to the sick and homebound – and volunteers with the Money Counters. Pete, meanwhile, has served for a number of years on the Diocesan Stewardship Commission, helping to foster stewardship in parishes all around the island.

Yet, though their list of services is quite extensive, for the Hoffmanns it all comes back to the concept of discipleship. Stewardship, for them, is an active way to live out their faith and to become a light to the world (Matthew 5:14).

“It’s all about being a disciple of Christ – what we are supposed to do as I understand it,” Pete says. “To me it goes beyond sharing my time, talent and treasure. It also means taking an active role in explaining our relationship with Christ to others and working to ensure that the Gospel message is firmly rooted and understood by all.”

“It is our responsibility to spread the word regarding our Catholic faith,” Joan adds. “One of the ways we do this is by sharing our time, talent, and treasure with Christ’s Church.”

By embracing this concept, the Hoffmanns feel that they have gained a new perspective on their relationship with Christ, each other, and

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For parishioners Pete and Joan Hoffmann, stewardship is all about living out their discipleship calling.

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– Pete Hoffmann

Annunciation / Ascension Parish
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Discipleship in Action *continued from page 7*

the Church. They have become increasingly aware of their own blessings – their good health, family, and situation in life. They’ve also witnessed their relationships with the parish family flourish, making them feel more connected to Christ in the process.

“It makes me feel so much more united with Christ,” Joan says. “I feel like I am doing something that he would want me to do.”

Perhaps most importantly of all, stewardship has helped keep the Hoffmanns focused on the true purpose of life, heaven. Remembering

Christ’s parable of the talents, Pete and Joan are working hard so that one day they can hear those words: “Well done, my good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:21).

“We are each given those talents, which oftentimes we don’t ever recognize as a talent, and we are given opportunities to use them for Him,” Pete says. “One day, we are going to have to account for those things and I know I have some work to do. There are number of things that I could have done better along the way, and I’m doing my best now to make amends and to do His will.”

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m. (Waimea) | **Sunday:** 8 a.m. (Waimea) & 10 a.m. (Puako) | **Confession:** Saturday 4 p.m. (Waimea)