

ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC CHURCH & ASCENSION MISSION



A Pilgrimage of Faith and Friendship:

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019

For 18-year-old parishioner DeeAnn Bokuku, it was a pilgrimage that truly made her faith “stronger and better.”

“Before World Youth Day, I didn’t really embrace and show how proud I was to be Catholic,” DeeAnn says. “But now, I just want to hike the highest mountain and scream how happy, blessed, and proud I am to be Catholic and a servant of the Lord.”

This past January, DeeAnn was among a group of 13 pilgrims from Annunciation that joined hundreds of thousands of other pilgrims gathered in Panama to celebrate international World Youth Day.

“To be around so many Catholics was shocking,” DeeAnn says. “It brought a tingly, happy feeling to my heart.”

Each day, the group would walk to participate in various catechetical sessions, and the afternoons were filled with entertainment, music, prayer and Reconciliation opportunities, including a Fiat Festival, which was an opportunity for all the English speakers

continued on page 4



PRAYER AND THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD: OUR LENTEN STEWARDSHIP RETREAT WITH FR. JEFF MCGOWAN

As Lent begins, it is time to contemplate how we may best spend these 40 days of spiritual preparation and prayerfulness. We are blessed this Lent to have the opportunity to increase our spiritual awareness with a Lenten Retreat. By opening our hearts and minds during this important liturgical season, we answer the call to deepen our faith as we journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Our parish is fortunate to have the dynamic and inspiring Fr. Jeff McGowan traveling all the



In his many travels, Fr. Jeff McGowan has always come away from each parish feeling uplifted about the good work happening in the Church.

way from Florida to join us for a retreat this month! Fr. Jeff recently retired after spending 24 years as the pastor of a parish that grew from 300 to 2,000 families under his leadership. During those years, the parish also built a new church building and a school, which won the national Blue Ribbon Award. In his retirement, Fr. Jeff has enjoyed making use of his new “free” time to take the Good News out to more people by leading retreats around the country.

Our retreat, held on March 15-16, will feature four talks by Fr. Jeff. Each talk will be followed by quiet time for personal reflection, and then small-group discussion. The talks will focus on prayer and the Christian steward.

For Fr. Jeff, the importance of prayer in the lives of the Catholic faithful is clear.

“That’s what we do, that’s who we are — faithful people pray,” he says. “And with stewardship, the first and primary thing is giving God our time. It’s both the foundation and the crowning glory. We pray first in praise and gratitude, and then in the conversation we want to have with God, which often involves petitions or some reflection.”

In today’s fast-paced and busy world, people sometimes ask why we should stop and pray. For parishioners wondering if they have the time to come to our Lenten Retreat, Fr. Jeff encourages them to make spending time with God a priority.

“It’s our Catholic belief that God loves each of us individually and intimately, and you want to spend time with a person you love, so certainly God wants our intimate attention,” Fr. Jeff says. “Time spent with God is always to our advantage. With the busy schedule that we all have, it’s really incumbent on us to pause now and then — especially during Lent — and reflect on our good fortune.”

Fr. Jeff is thankful for the opportunities he has been given in his retirement to lead retreats that share his enthusiasm for stewardship. He reminds us that the importance of community was a big part of Christ’s message, and that parishes

continued on back cover

PARISH LENTEN ACTIVITIES

BRING PARISHIONERS TOGETHER IN PRAYER AND FELLOWSHIP

Throughout our everyday lives, we busily prepare for holiday gatherings, outings with family and friends, and even for sporting events — so it should naturally follow suit that we prepare for the important events of our spiritual lives, as well. Here at Annunciation, we offer some exciting opportunities during Lent to prepare for the most solemn time of our liturgical year — the death of Jesus on the cross and His triumphant resurrection.

Every Friday during Lent, parishioners may join in praying the Stations of the Cross.

“The Stations are important because we are reflecting on Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection in the Stations,” says Fr. Stephen Macedo. “It helps us to see that our pain and suffering is not meaningless if we tie them to Jesus’ pain and suffering on the cross.”

After Stations of the Cross, a simple meal of soup and bread is served in the parish hall. This fellowship opportunity, which will be hosted by a different ministry each week, allows parishioners to get to know each other better during this season.

During Lent, the parish also hosts morning prayer on Fridays, followed by Mass and Adoration in the daily Mass chapel. Adoration ends at noon with benediction. The parish also hosts a Lenten penance service each year.

The Lenten season also brings opportunities to share our faith with our brothers and sisters at St. James Episcopal Church next door. On Thursday evenings, we join the St. James congregation for Holden Evening Prayer, a vespers prayer service with music written at Holden Village in the North Cascade mountains of Washington.

On Palm Sunday, Mass begins a half-hour early at 7:30 a.m. We do the blessing of the palms and the “triumphant entry” Scripture reading together with the St. James congregation. Afterwards, each congregation proceeds to their respective worship spaces.

Finally, on Good Friday we join again with St. James for Stations of the Cross at noon. Rain or shine, each year we gather to pray seven stations in our yard, and seven in theirs.



Please consider joining us this Lent for any or all of these opportunities to grow in faith and fellowship! For more information, please contact the parish office at 808-887-1220.

A Pilgrimage of Faith and Friendship

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019



to gather. “The music and speakers were very dynamic and it was so full of energy and enthusiasm for our Catholic faith,” says Larry Denis III, who organized and chaperoned the trip.

Pope Francis’ attendance and participation in the event was certainly a highlight.

“My favorite part of World Youth Day was being able to see the pope up close and witness the community that came for him,” says Jaydon Tripp, 16. “Just standing in the crowd among the hundreds of thousands of people made me realize who my community is.”

For many, getting to experience the universality of Catholicism as they met pilgrims from all around the world was one of the most impactful things about the trip.

“My favorite part of the trip was seeing youths from all around the world, join as one,” says Helena Goto, 16.

“It was amazing because every single student, adult, priest or volunteer everyone was so friendly,” adds Josiah DeLuz, 16. “It was a beautiful experience.”

In addition to meeting many from around the world, the pilgrimage also gave our young people a chance to develop strong friendships with each other.

“The youth really bonded with each other,”

continued on page 5



p:
019

continued from front cover

Larry says. “They have created lifelong friendships because of this pilgrimage.”

“This has strengthened my relationship with the other people from our parish,” DeeAnn adds. “Ten days with them has made me feel that blood doesn’t make *ohana*, but instead laughter and love.”

Above all, the pilgrimage was an opportunity to be strengthened in faith and renewed in one’s love for Christ and His Church.

“I definitely encountered Christ while at World Youth Day and am very thankful for this opportunity,” Larry says.

“World Youth Day connected me closer to God because I was able to see a large amount of people who believed the same thing I did,” Jaydon adds. “One thing that surprised me about this experience was how everyone openly celebrated their beliefs. I saw kids my age closing their eyes and truly embracing God and showing their joy and devotion. This made me closer to God because

it allowed me to feel comfortable expressing my faith around others.”

“This trip has impacted my faith and my relationship with God by calling us to action,” says Trisha Tripp, who served as a chaperone. “Pope Francis said, ‘You, young people, are not the future but the “now” of God,’ Our talents and treasures are not meant to be saved for the future, but are meant to be shared with joy and gratitude. Upon returning home, my life and the way I practice my faith will change by my willingness to say ‘yes’ to the Lord and His plan for me.”

The group thanks those in the parish who generously contributed, making this pilgrimage opportunity possible.

“To the people that supported me, I’d say ‘thank you’ for getting me excited and prepared for the adventure,” Helena says.

“World Youth Day was an amazing experience and I highly recommend it,” Josiah adds.

If you would like more information on upcoming events for young Catholics, please contact Larry Denis III at Lbd3emails@gmail.com or text/call 808-345-5561. The Hawaiian flag bearing signatures gathered by our group, from people all around the world, will be displayed in the Old Church/RE Classrooms in Waimea for all to enjoy.



Meet Jessica Pavao:

“I’ve learned to count my blessings when I am anxious or upset — it calms me. Whenever I am outside, I thank Him for the most beautiful and simple things like how the raindrops on leaves shine like diamonds in the sun. Being at church has also brought me new friends, many people that I’ve come to know and care deeply for.” — Jessica Pavao

Parishioner Jessica Pavao first discovered stewardship at Annunciation by working “behind the scenes.” However, her involvement helped her to gain the courage to step forward and continue to get involved in more visible ministries. Throughout the years, she has been able to grow in her relationship with God and increase her faith and trust in Him.

Born and raised Catholic in Honokaa, Jessica says she has always felt a close relationship to God, even though she didn’t attend church faithfully in the past.

“I remember my mom telling me that God is always listening, so always talk to Him about everything, and I did,” Jessica says. “The saying ‘unanswered prayers,’ to me, is not true. I believe He answers them in His time when He knows you need it most.”

As an adult in Honokaa, Jessica raised three children — daughter Jonelle, who is married with two children and living in Texas; daughter Shanelle, who lives in Kona; and son Stacy, who lives in San Diego with his wife.

“When my children were young, I participated by becoming a religious education teacher for sixth-graders and a Girl Scout leader for our parish girls,” she says. “My fondest memories of this era in my life were having my three children and going to church every Christmas and Easter with four generations of our family in tow. From 1975 to 1989, I worked at four different hotels in the food and beverage department, and at 34 years old I finally had my



Jessica Pavao’s involvement helped her to gain the courage to step forward and continue to get involved in more visible ministries. Throughout the years, she has been able to grow in her relationship with God and increase her faith and trust in Him.

girlish dream of modeling resort wear and jewelry come true, after having three children!”

In 1989, Jessica moved to Waimea and remarried. Her family expanded, and now includes four children from her second husband, as well as numerous grandchildren and a great-grandson. When she got married, she also realized that she had a prior connection to her new husband’s family.

“I found out that my new husband’s family

PARISHIONER GROWING IN FAITH AND TRUST THROUGH SERVICE AND COMMUNITY

members were also strong Catholics,” she says. “My new sister-in-law was a Maryknoll nun, Sr. Anna Marian Pavao. I remembered her from when I was teaching religious education in Honokaa, and she resided at the convent there. She was just as surprised as I was to learn that I was marrying her baby brother!”

Many years later, Jessica’s faith was tested when her husband was diagnosed with cancer.

“We had hospice help us, and through them I met Sharon Azevedo, a longtime parishioner, who was a volunteer,” she says. “We hit it off very well. After my husband’s passing in 2004, I couldn’t bring myself to go to church, but Sharon kept at it with me, so I finally went.”

About five years ago, Jessica once again felt called to serve her parish.

“The first call was for bathroom cleaners,” she says. “The announcement for volunteers went around for about three weeks, so I thought to myself, ‘Why not? I don’t mind cleaning toilets!’”

“The second ministry calling I felt was a few months later, for lectors,” she adds. “I sat each week in church and thought about it. My biggest hurdle was being in front of everyone — I like working ‘behind the scenes.’ I decided to overcome my fear and prayed for strength. I stepped up to the call and never looked back. God gave me the strength and confidence to do this.”

Jessica also recently began serving with the Bereavement Ministry. She recalls feeling a strong message from the Virgin Mary telling her that “Dean Fujitani would show me what to do.”

“Then last year, Dean asked me to help him with a funeral, to park cars and for traffic control,” she says. “That began my involvement with the Bereavement Ministry.”

Through her parish involvement, Jessica has been able to grow in faith and to see God in the world and the people around her. This has helped her to get through difficult times in her life.

“I’ve learned to count my blessings when I am anxious or upset — it calms me,” Jessica says. “Whenever I am outside, I thank Him for the most beautiful and simple things like how the raindrops on leaves shine like diamonds in the sun. Being at church has also brought me new friends, many people that I’ve come to know and care deeply for.”

“Most of my life, I have believed that God doesn’t give you more than you can handle, and that He places people in your life when you are ready for them,” she adds. “When I lost my husband to cancer, I thought I couldn’t carry on anymore. I’ve always talked to God, and I found church again to fill the void. I still feel that way more so now than ever, looking back on my life. I’ve realized that God actually calls the shots, I’m just here saying, ‘Ready when You are!’”





Annunciation / Ascension Parish
PO Box 301 Kamuela, HI 96743



PRAYER AND THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD: OUR PARISH LENTEN RETREAT WITH FR. JEFF MCGOWAN *continued from page 2*

are called to provide as many ways as possible for parishioners to come together, through both social activities and ministries that serve the Church and the most vulnerable of God's people.

In his many travels, Fr. Jeff has always come away from each parish feeling uplifted about the good work happening in the Church.

"I have felt so reassured about our Catholic faith in meeting the pastors, priests, religious sisters and brothers, and lay leadership in parishes all over," he says. "I've discovered that nobody has been able to take away our spirit or our love for Jesus Christ. It's been such a positive experience leading these retreats — stewardship parishes are among the best. They are very affirming of the community and of the people of God."

Fr. Jeff prays that parishioners will come to the Lenten Retreat with open hearts to see where

God might lead them. For as Fr. Jeff shares as his prayer, "Bring the Holy Spirit into this retreat. Bring in the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit that inspires us and enlivens us and promises us that he will never leave the Catholic Church."

STEWARDSHIP RETREAT

March 15 — 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
March 16 — 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
at Annunciation Catholic Church

TO RSVP, GO TO
[HTTP://BIT.LY/2019WAIMEARETREAT](http://bit.ly/2019waimearetreat)
OR VISIT THE KIOSK AT CHURCH.

MASS SCHEDULE

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