Our Lady of Consolation Church

Parkesburg, Pennsylvania 19365
Rectory Phone: (610) 857-3510
www.olcchurch.org

March 9, 2014
Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

IN TRIBUTE

She wanted to take her leave as quietly as she came 23 years ago. So, this past Friday, February 28, 2014, with just her husband, Rich, and the Rectory staff in attendance at a small luncheon at Rocco and Anna's, Joan Halter retired as Secretary of Our Lady of Consolation Parish. It was so typically Joan, relishing the background, seeking to be virtually un-noticed in supporting the Church and the people whom she so passionately loves.

Joan began her work first as a volunteer for a number of years, assisting Fr. George Schneider with the administration of the parish. Then, 23 years ago, he asked her to become his secretary. She began organizing files and scheduling events. As age slowed Fr. Schneider, Joan's workload increased to include helping couples preparing for marriage, schedule baptisms, and comfort those who lost loved ones.

At the same time, her home life became even more active as she cared for her own Mother at home, as she lay dying, as well as having four twenty-something children--Cindy, Tim, Greg, and Mary Beth marrying, and, shortly thereafter, they were welcoming Danny, Chelsea, Greggie, and then somewhat later Taylor, Olivia, and Kate.

Joan happily managed all these family and Church-related activities for two years until Fr. Schneider's retirement in June, 1993. Then, the fun really began—a new pastor came on the scene.

Now, Fr. Schneider had warned her and many in the parish that the new pastor would be arriving in pain since the parish he had pastored for 14 years had just been closed. But, it was Joan who was first to sense the enormity of that pain. And, I'm sorry to say, the one who most often received the brunt of it, which she calmly sought to soothe and comfort every way she could.

For the first year or two Joan probably felt she was secretary to the Pastor of two different parishes, since as many of my old parishioners from Most Precious Blood in Philadelphia were calling for assistance, as were parishioners from Our Lady of Consolation. Joan graciously fielded every call, every request, every question with such genuine warmth and hospitality, while, at the same time, assisting and encouraging me in my attempt to minister to so many diverse needs.

Gradually, we fell into a happy rhythm and a trusting partnership to meet as many of the needs of the parishioners as we possibly could. I invited Fr. Schneider back into the parish in retirement in that first year, and two years later invited Fr. John to visit with us in his retirement.

With their arrival, and the visits of many other priests over the years, another of Joan's passions became evident—her unconditional love for priests. If she ever met a priest she didn't like, you would never know it and they would never know it either. Her respect for and her genuine warmth and cordial welcoming of priests is legendary among all the priests who have lived with us and visited among us. But, the love, care, and concern that she showered upon Fr. Schneider and continues to pour out upon Fr. John has been beyond that which the most loving daughter would provide for her own Father.

Literally thousands of lives have been touched by Joan Halter in her 23 years as our Parish Secretary. She has assisted hundreds of brides work out details for their weddings; welcomed other hundreds calling to have their babies baptized; comforted even more hundreds who have lost loved ones; and listened to truly thousands of complaints about virtually every illness, every mistake, misstep, and misstatement I made, and everything else people want to complain about. And somehow she has managed to calm most people's fears, angers, irritations, hurts, and frustrations.

Perhaps Joan's most shining moment came with the disastrous diagnosis she suffered when told she had breast cancer that had to be treated with surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. After the initial shock wore off, Joan placed her faith in God and soldiered through all the pain, nausea, sickness, and weakness caused by the treatment for months on end. Her faith never wavered.

I insisted on bringing in someone to help her and she relented when I told her that her daughter, Mary Beth Rohrer, agreed to come on part-time to ease her burdens at work. Gradually, Joan healed and her cancer is now in remission, but in the process she has become an apostle to every woman in the parish diagnosed with breast cancer. She takes time to listen to them and cry with them. She has calmed their fears, prayed with them, coached them, counseled them, and encouraged them. She hasn't cured breast cancer, but thanks to her it has become a much less loathsome, fearful reality for the women of Our Lady of Consolation Parish.

After Joan's recovery, we considered ending Mary Beth's part-time position as administrative assistant. However, we realized that she had not only eased Joan's workload, but Mary Wishneski's, our Business Manager, and my own as well. Thankfully, we kept her on. Now she will now become full-time and transition easily into the role of Parish Secretary.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that Joan's positive attitude and caring nature has been nurtured in her relationship with her soul-mate and husband of 51 years, Rich Halter. Rich is, in my experience, the most positive man on the face of the earth. Not a starry-eyed idealist, Rich is the consummate realist who simply sees problems as challenges that can be overcome by maintaining your equilibrium, keeping the faith, and seeking appropriate solutions.

I believe the role of the Pastor is to be the Father of the Church Family. Since we call God FATHER, it is indeed an awesome title that has to be earned by love and commitment. And I try every day to live up to that title.

Likewise, a Mother must be the heart and the soul of the family. Joan Halter, by virtue of her love and commitment to all of us has truly earned the title of Church Mother. For all these years, whenever a quiet moment has come in her busy day, Joan reached into her left side drawer in which she kept a variety of prayer books, and if you peeked into her office in those moments, you would find her quietly praying for all of us. Indeed to all those to whom she has ministered these many years; to all those whom she has comforted, she has become Our Lady of Consolation.

Why now? You may ask. Well, truth be told last year Joan came to be of an age that makes retirement, if not mandatory, at least desirable. However, I asked her to stay on for another year to help us through all the considerable work that would be involved in putting on our various Anniversary celebrations. And I am so grateful that she agreed. "Now!" she says, "it's time".

While Joan is retiring as Parish Secretary, she is not leaving us. When asked what she would like to do in retirement, she said she would like to just go around and visit a lot of our members who she thinks need a visit. Many of them are elderly now and unable to come to us. Therefore, in her role as Church Mother and that she might become truly Our Lady of Consolation to them, I am giving her as a retirement gift a pyx in which she may carry our Blessed Lord in the Eucharist to them and I am commissioning her as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist so that she can carry on the great work of discipleship to which she has been called by Christ Jesus.

Finally, I only dare write this now because this is the first edition of the parish bulletin in 23 years that Joan is not editing and over which she has no control.

Joanie, this one's for you! Thank You! I love you! And your parish is forever grateful to you.

Fr. Eschbach

P.S. If you would like to personally drop Joan a note or a card, please send it c/o Our Lady of Consolation Church, 603 W. 2nd Ave., Parkesburg, Pa., 19365. I am sure she would love to hear from you.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next.
Amen.

-Reinhold Niebuhr

CLERGY

Rev. Victor J. Eschbach, Pastor

Rev. John Van de Paer, C.I.C.M.

Rev. Thomas J. Rossi, O.Praem.

Rev. Peter Welsh (Spanish Mass)

Rev. Mr. Eugene Favinger, Deacon

Mass Schedule

Our Lady of Consolation

Saturday evening: 5:00 pm

7:00 pm (Spanish Mass)

Sunday: 7:30 am & 12:00 noon

St. Malachy

Sunday: 10:30 am

Schneider Parish Center

9:00 am

Holy Days

Our Lady of Consolation

Vigil: 5:00 pm

8:30 am & 7:00 pm

DAY OF RECOLLECTION ON SATURDAY MARCH 15TH

Take a few hours on a Saturday afternoon to spend some time with our Lord.

Father Tom Rossi from the Daylesford Abbey will present an afternoon of reflection, with a focus on Lent.

The afternoon will consist of Adoration, Confession, and two presentations by Father Rossi.

2:00 PM Talk

2:30 PM Stations of The Cross

2:45 PM Adoration/Confessions

3:45 PM Talk

4:15 PM Benediction

When: March 15 from 2:00 – 4:30

Where: Schneider Parish center

PASTORAL COUNCIL

Bill Mann – Chairman

Bmann3@earthlink.net

Monk Angelo

Brian Appolloni

Dee Cain

Joe Dagney

Carol Egan

Paul Harkins

Darren Hodorovich

Maureen McCormick

Jack Reece

Kathy Rick

Marty Sannino

Mary Wishneski

Mwishneski@comcast.net

Larry Woolley

CCD Office

610-857-0511

Dee Cain

484-678-7069

Early Learning Center

Janice Dagney

610-857-1163

Baptism Meetings

Dee Cain

484-678-7069

1st Sunday of the month.

Register by calling the rectory.

Baptisms

To make arrangements, please call the rectory.

Confessions

Saturday after Mass

Marriages

Couples planning to be married are required to notify the pastor no less than six months prior to the marriage.

Mass Intentions

SATURDAY, March 8

5:00 pm	Jack McClay req. by Andy, Connie & Madeline
7:00 pm	Spanish Mass

SUNDAY, March 9

7:30 am	Frank Seyman req. by Peg & George Evans
9:00 am	Frances Raysor req. by Fred & Mary Caridi
10:30 am	Arthur White req. by family
12:00 pm	Judy Melly & family req. by Brown family

DAILY MASS 8:30 AM

Monday	Jeffrey Hinds req. by Norman & Jean Moulder
Tuesday	Patricia Carr req. by Thiers family
Wednesday	Happy Birthday Anna Patricia Eyre req. by Mommy, Daddy, & Conner family
Thursday	Edward Griffith Dobson,3rd req. by Kyle & Megan Montgomery
Friday	Frank Seyman req. by Mary Evans Snyder

SATURDAY, March 15

5:00 pm	James K. Wilde req. Joan & Rich Halter
7:00 pm	Spanish Mass

SUNDAY, March 16

7:30 am	Rocco & Mary Di Nenna req. by Ken & Donna Martin
9:00 am	Francis Seyman req. by Norman & Jean Moulder
10:30am	Rudy Caponetto req. by Ella Sestrich
12:00 pm	Frances Raysor req. by Jimmy & Tina Di Antonio

REMEMBER OUR SICK

Jane Roper, Robert P, Donna DiFerdinando, John Di Berardinis, Dolores McLaughlin, Anne Debiak, Eileen Mariano, Jimmy Bruni, Nina Bruni, Ray Mummert, Margareta Apgar, Georgiann Gustis, Ray Gentile Sherri Anderson, Curtis Soldano, Traci Harding, Bob Reece, Bernadette Chupein, Nick Scher, Anna Thomas, Raquel Barriga, Kaylen Jackson, Adrienne Casagrande, Charlene McCaw, Jenny Reece, Jill Aldridge, Shirley Rigoroso, Paddy McGroarty, Sue Wilde, Cassidy Martorana, Nick Mancini, Tracy Shaubach, Jim Sannino, Judi Mac Intyre, Mary Dormer, Bonnie Murdock, Nancy McClay, Ken Martin, Annette Whitney, Syd Nunn, Mike Vaccaro, Katie Smith, Jared Dagney, Jackson Chiara, Meredith Cook, Jennifer Salmon Elliott, Sherri Findley, Becky Becker, Patricia Carr, Catherine Carr, Dottie Wiley, Pat Vahey

WEEKLY OFFERTORY

Offertory	*$8,380*

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Our Prayer Group will host Stations of the Cross On Fridays during Lent at 7:00 pm in the church.

All families are invited to attend and participate. Please come pray this devotion with us even if you can attend only one service during Lent.

It will bring many blessings to you, your family and church community. We look forward to having you with us.

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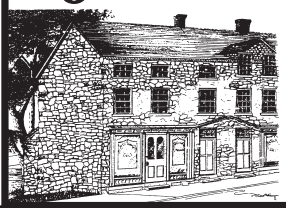

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