



A Farewell note

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am amazed at how far ACTS at St. Bernard's has come since I began to serve on Core three years ago. In 2014 we were just concluding our mission retreats to Christ the King. This was the first time St. Bernard's had been asked by ACTS Missions to conduct mission retreats. What an awesome responsibility and privilege. ACTS is thriving at Christ the King and I like to think that we had a part in that, but I know it is all the Holy Spirit's doing.

Since then we have missioned to Great Bend, Kan., and St. Benedict in Broken Arrow while simultaneously continuing our own retreats for parishioners of St. Bernard's. Sometimes it feels like the Holy Spirit is asking too much of us. But then I look back on the results and see the men and women who now have a more vibrant faith and are active in their parish communities, and I thank God for allowing us to cooperate with His plan.

The next step for ACTS in Oklahoma was the formation of a Chapter for our state, reporting directly to ACTS Missions. The new Oklahoma Chapter, directed by our own Kathy Sands, is responsible for spreading ACTS in our state and supporting each of the parishes with an ACTS program. Thanks, Kathy, for stepping up. The Chapter currently has members from St. Bernard's, St. Mary's, and St. Benedict in Shawnee. Christ the King and St. Benedict in Broken Arrow could provide representatives in the near future.

Jean Yaeger and I met with Bishop Konderla and Josemanuel Banales from ACTS Missions to obtain the

Bishop's permission and support for forming the Chapter. The Bishop not only is 100% behind ACTS in his Diocese, but he also appointed Jeremy Priest, Diocesan Family & Pro-Life Director, to be his liaison to the Chapter. The Bishop said he would like to see ACTS introduced in many of the rural parishes and also Spanish-language retreats in the Diocese. Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of your love.

My three-year term on Core is ending in September. I want to thank my fellow Core members for their dedication, service, and prayers for St. Bernard's ACTS. You made my job as Facilitator this past year so much easier. I also thank all of you who serve the ACTS program with your many hours of hard work and prayers that make the retreats possible. The fruits are seen as our new ACTS brothers and sisters integrate into parish life and thrive. Most of all, I want to thank our spiritual leader, Monsignor Gaalaas. Without Monsignor's active support of ACTS, none of this would have been possible. God bless you, Monsignor.

We always need new volunteers, including four new Core members each year to replace those completing their terms. So, if you feel the Holy Spirit is calling you to be involved, what other answer can you give but YES?

Your brother in Christ,
John Grace
Core Facilitator (Emeritus)

St. Bernard's ACTS Core meets on the second Monday of each month in room D14. Next meeting: Sept. 11 at 7pm. Meetings are open to all. Core is the committee that oversees our parish ACTS ministry.

ACTS Core Changes

Thank you to
**Mary Ellen Gordon,
John Grace,
Elaine McDaniel, and
Don Schendt**
for their generosity,
wisdom, faithfulness and
leadership during their
three-year terms serving
on ACTS Core.

Welcome aboard to our
new members
**Jim Flusche
Annie Jones
Damien Ochoa
Lisa Williams**
who were selected by the
Holy Spirit to fill the four
vacancies. They join
incumbent Core members
**Mickey Butler
Lesa Clark
Charles Harrison
Bob Niebergall
Rosemary Peek
Leith Watkins
Julian Urrea and
Jean Yaeger**

Please pray that God may
equip Core with right
judgement, openness and
zeal for the Gospel.



Recap of retreats

Back-to-back weekends of retreats meant a busy and blessed July for St. Bernard's ACTS. Thank you to directors Liz Huls and Manuel Calvin and their generous, dedicated team members. Thanks also goes to the music and home team crew, to Father Thomas and the other priests and deacons involved, to our Eucharistic adorers, and to the University of Tulsa and the Newman Center for their hospitality. May God continue to awaken our faith and renew our parish in service and honor to Him!

Women's weekend

Seventeen women plus team attended the women's retreat July 27-30.

Retreat patroness was Our Lady of Lourdes.

Retreat theme was Matthew 11:25: *"Blessed are you Father, Lord of heaven and earth; for you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom."*

Men's weekend

Nine men plus team attended the men's retreat July 20-23.

Retreat patron was St. John of the Cross.

Retreat theme was Matthew 13:43: *"Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear."*

*Coming soon:
dates for 2018
ACTS retreats
at St. Bernard's*



More than 450 people have now attended the 10 sets of ACTS retreats at St. Bernard's since 2011. Be watching for an announcement about the upcoming dates for the next retreats. Please consider joining the teams – it's a joyful opportunity to keep growing in faith and sharing Christ's love with others.

Adoration

We adore God through worship and prayer. Adoration opportunities at St. Bernard's include daily Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, and special programs for spiritual enrichment.

Consider these ways to adore our Lord: through [Creative Bible Journaling](#) at 1pm on Thursdays, through devotion to [Our Mother of Perpetual Help](#) after the 8:30am Mass on Tuesdays, or through [The Word Among Us](#) reflections on the daily Scripture readings.

Also, please note that our parish will honor the 100th anniversary of the Fatima Miracle of the Sun on Friday, Oct. 13, with a prayer service at 7pm in the Good Shepherd Chapel.



We pray in thanksgiving for the blessings God has shown our parish. We ask for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon St. Bernard's so that we as a community may grow in love and compassion for all, in holiness according to God's plan.

Community

One of the best ways to keep your spiritual momentum going after an

ACTS retreat is to join a faith-sharing group. These groups take various approaches: Bible study, prayer, movie or book programs, and service projects. No matter the format ... every faith-sharing group brings people together to worship God and support one another along our spiritual path. We learn from one another and create connections within a big parish.

These groups are kicking off new programs in September:

- Men of the Upper Room meets at 5:30am Wednesdays in the gym. Begins Sept. 20 with Bishop David Konderla as special guest.
- The book "True Reformers: Saints of the Catholic Reformation" by Jerome Williams on the third Thursday of the month at 7pm in room E-4. Begins Sept. 21.
- "Who am I to Judge" moral relativism DVD series at 6:30pm Tuesdays in room G-8. Begins Sept. 12.
- "Follow Me" DVD series at 10am Thursdays in room D-12. Begins Sept. 7.

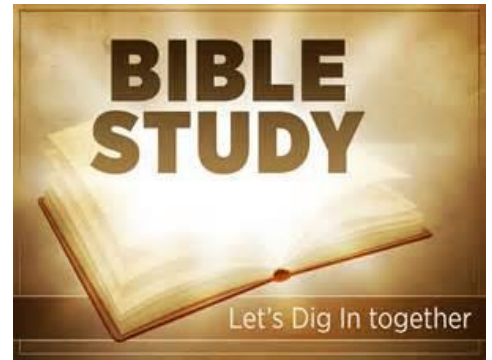
There are many groups that meet with morning or evening sessions on various days. Everyone is welcome to attend. Call Sharon Lechtenberg at 918-299-9406 for more information about bible studies and adult faith enrichment programs.



Theology

We love God more by knowing Him more intimately. That's theology!

One way to grow in theology is to learn what the Lord reveals in His Word. Join Deacon Alan Mikell's Scripture study class at 9:45 am Sundays, beginning Sept. 10, for more insights into the Mass readings.



Service

Where can you share your time, talent and treasure in ways that reflect generosity and gratitude?

The St. Bernard's ministry fair Aug. 12-13 highlighted many programs that could use volunteers. Our parish needs: choir members and musicians, cooks for the homeless, RCIA sponsors, religious education teachers, altar servers, Eucharistic ministers, lectors, ushers, linen launderers, cooks for the Meals of Mercy funeral ministry, caretakers for Calvary Chapel, and people to take meals to the sick and Communion to the sick. Volunteers are also needed on church committees that serve the poor (Justice & Peace), plan programs for spiritual enrichment (Spirituality) and greet newcomers (Welcome). Contact Mary Toerne in the parish office at 918-299-9406 if you'd like more information. We are made to serve one another. Let's bring Christ's light and love to those in need!

Meet the Dutkoskys: Praising God in song

Organist/pianist Brenda Dutkosky and guitarist Rob Dutkosky share their talents as part of the ACTS music ministry. Through singing and playing instruments at Mass, at Bernie's Bunch and at ACTS functions, the Dutkosky Duo embrace the joy and responsibility that comes with standing up front to lead the worship music.

Q: When and why did you sign up for the ACTS retreat? A: Rob was so inspired after hearing an ACTS pulpit talk that he dashed to the narthex after Mass – still wearing his choir robe – to sign up for the first St. Bernard's men's retreat. Rob's eagerness made him the very first registered retreatant at our parish! As a Christmas gift to Brenda that year (2010), he put a "paid up" certificate for the first women's retreat in her stocking.

Q: What influences you most in your faith journey?

A: We both carve out special time for prayer and scripture. On the rare occasions where something gets in the way and we let that special daily time get past us, it's as if something sucked the life out of us.

Q: How does music touch people in a spiritual way?

A: Music is one of those things that reaches down into one's being and touches the heart – sometimes gently and at other times with a wallop – but always "heartfelt." It is that "heartfelt-ness" that amplifies spiritual ideas and significances in song. Whether joy & praise-filled or searching & lamenting, music has the ability to elicit feelings that just can't be expressed in the spoken word.



"Through our music, we hope and pray that we can be Christ for others by encouraging and spreading joy and excitement in the manner in which our Lord is worshiped."

Q: Your favorite hymn or praise & worship song?

ROB: "I Send You Out" by John Angotti

BRENDA: No favorites ... "I love them all!"

Q: What about singing "Jesus, Jesus" at Candlelight? The timing is tricky ...

A: By the time the evening is over, Candlelight attendees and retreatants can easily have repeated the short four-line lyric more than 50 to 60 times as back-and-forth glow sticks create an aura of welcome and excitement. An outside observer might think "oh no, not again" as the short stanza is about to repeat. But to those with an understanding of the retreat dynamic, the song serves as a beautiful mantra and conversation with our Lord – "Jesus, Jesus, let us tell you how we feel. You have given us your Spirit. We love you so!" Even the shout of "We love you, Jesus!" after each canto echoes the spirit of our beloved song - - we, in fact, DO love you Jesus!

Brenda (professional background in oil and gas, and banking) and Rob (professional background in aerospace and defense electronics) cite their faith as the single most important element of their lives. They are the parents of four grown children. Hobbies include sailing, composing music, and managing two mischievous pet dogs.



Retreat training online

If you want to know more about ACTS, we encourage you to look into this informative course from ACTS Missions, which is geared for anyone who ever wants to serve on an ACTS team. The course is mandatory for those in leadership roles but can benefit everyone involved. The study's videos and material explain the goals of ACTS retreats and the intentions behind the weekend format. Cost is \$50. Please consider taking this course to better understand how ACTS reaches out to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Find it at to www.actsmissions.org.

St. Bernard's Church ACTS Core 2017-2018

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