

# Welcome



The Christian Community  
at the  
Shrine of Saint Joseph

Dear Fellow Worshipper,

**WELCOME** to the Christian Community at the Shrine of Saint Joseph. Whether you are a "by chance" visitor passing through, one who comes occasionally, or one who is considering joining our Community, we value your being with us.

The Christian Community was founded in 1970 by a few families and Fr. Peter Krebs, a Trinity Missionary, and has grown to approximately 175 family names. It is not a geographic parish but is composed of people from a fairly broad area. We come together to celebrate the Eucharist, to pray, to share, to work together, and to get to know each other better all as a means of gaining a closeness to our God. We have one liturgy every Sunday, and a dialogue Homily three Sundays a month. These dialogues stimulate insights, inspiration, challenges, tears, laughter ~ the full range of reactions you might expect from a careful listening to the Sacred Scriptures and the challenges they pose.

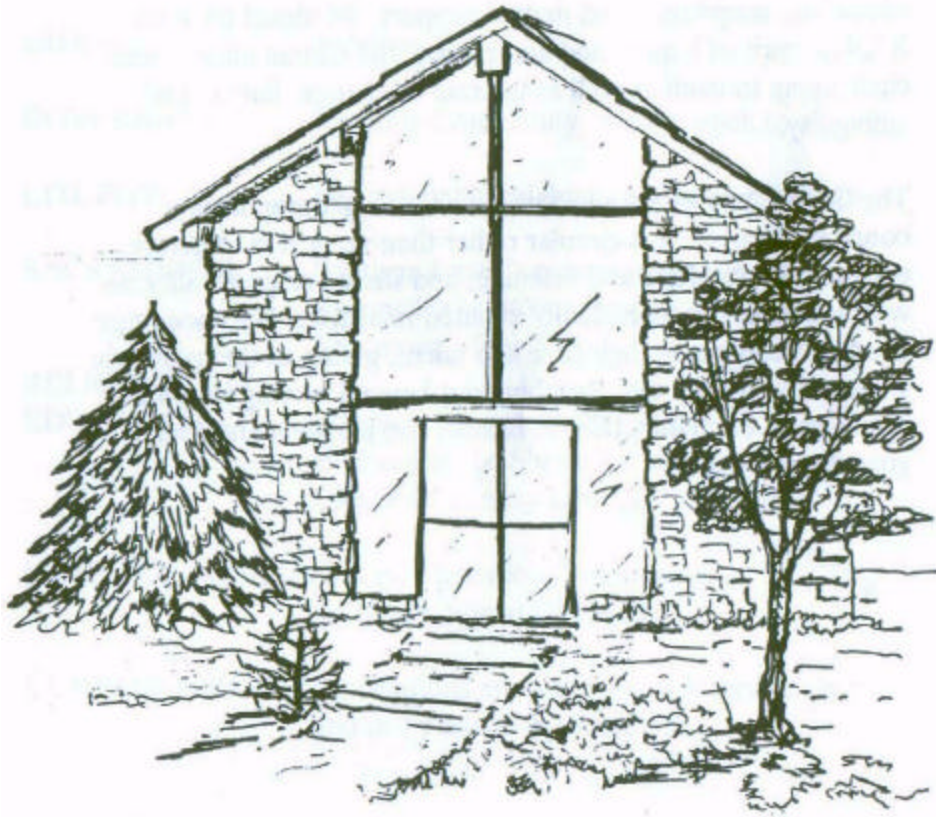
We are a lay-run Community. This means that our members share in carrying out the many different activities that define us and give our time together form and meaning. Whether it's the planning of our Sunday worship service, the managing of our finances, or the implementing of our social action agenda, we each try to do our part. We feel that working together on any of these ministries allows us to put into action our Christian faith. It also gives us the opportunity to form the bonds with each other that make our Community a place where genuine caring and concern between members flourishes.

Our activities are coordinated by a leadership team of seven: Father Peter and six community members selected annually by a combination of community nomination and a final lottery. The leadership team is responsible for calling and presiding at monthly Community meetings, which are the forum for Community decision making.

They follow through on decisions made and in general work at the smooth running of Community projects. All adult members of the Community are eligible to serve as facilitators.

We hope that looking through this booklet will give you a better idea of what we are about and how you might join us. Membership information is at the end of this booklet. If membership and any of the programs and activities interest you, please call 908-647-1715.

Also, we encourage you to introduce yourself to Community members and to talk with them. We try to be welcoming and to share ourselves with visitors because we expect to find Jesus in each other. That is our search and that is why we so gladly welcome you!



## THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AT THE SHRINE OF ST. JOSEPH MISSION STATEMENT

The Christian Community is a spiritual grounding place where experiencing and celebrating the mysteries of living and dying build and challenge our Catholic faith. Believing in the uniqueness of the individual, the Community is a people whose freedom flows from a sense of family and belonging, and whose relationships foster deeper spirituality. Community members seek God by discovering the Christ within and in others — through liturgy, sacramental life, education, hospitality, and mutual support. Modeled on John XXIII's spirit of inquiry and acceptance, the Community is both challenging to itself as well as tolerant of change, failure, and ambiguity.

The Community offers an alternative to the geographically bounded parish. It is circular rather than vertical in structure, encouraging dialogue and listening, and shared responsibility, as well as support of individually initiated ministries. We encourage people to contribute their time and talent, giving of themselves in whatever way they can. Reaching out beyond serving its own needs, the Community tries to balance the personal and social gospel messages.

**COMMUNITY:** The Christian Community at the Shrine of St. Joseph

**LOCATION:** 1050 Long Hill Road  
Stirling, New Jersey 07980  
(908) 647-0208 – Residence  
(908) 647-1715 - Religious Ed. Office

**CLERGY:** Rev. Peter J. Krebs, ST.

**SPONSORSHIP:** Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity

**DIOCESE:** Paterson

**GOVERNANCE:** Monthly Community meeting open to all

**LITURGY:** 10 am Sunday celebration,  
Summer 9:30 am

**SACRAMENTS:** Baptism, First Communion, Sacrament of Reconciliation, Confirmation, Marriage, Sacrament of the Sick

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:** Conducted in homes for elementary level and at the Shrine for high school Children's Sunday Liturgy at the Shrine.

**MINISTRY AREAS:** Liturgy, Education, Community Activities, Social Outreach

**CONTRIBUTIONS:** Contributions are made through service time and/or by monetary donations.

## WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

### *LITURGY*

#### **LITURGY PLANNING**

Recognizing that liturgy is the one experience of Community we all share, the Liturgy Committee works to make this time a meaningful spiritual expression. Members plan Sunday and special liturgies by choice of theme, optional prayers, altar decorations, and sometimes music, and involve other Community members as writers, readers, prayer leaders, Offertory-gift bearers.

Believing that liturgy is "the work of the people," members of the ministry plan ways to give as many Community members as possible an experience not only of participating in the liturgy but also of making it. When this is the case, Committee members act as mentors, providing help as needed.

Meetings are held on the third Monday of the month at 8pm in the residence. Your comments and participation are welcome.

#### **EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

The Eucharistic Ministers help gather the Community to Eucharist. They assist in making the Eucharist a personal commitment, as well as a Community commitment. The Ministers distribute the Body and Blood of Christ, prepare the altar for Liturgy and put the sacred vessels away afterwards. They also provide the Eucharist for the sick.

Training workshops for Eucharistic Ministers are held in early March each year.

#### **MUSIC MINISTRY**

The Music Ministry enhances the worship environment of the Community through music and song. Members play music and sing at Sunday liturgies and other Community events, such as weddings, baptisms, memorials and social gatherings.

Areas of interest within the Music Ministry include the folk group, the *a capella* group, and individual instrumentalists and vocalists of all levels of skill, training, experience, and musical tastes. A primary focus for the Ministry is to lead the Community in prayerful worship through song.

Practice sessions are held on a regular or irregular basis, depending upon the group or occasion. The folk group practices on a regular

weekly basis. Caritas, the *a capella* group, performs on special occasions throughout the year. Community members with the time, interest and enthusiasm to participate are encouraged to approach anyone in any group within the Music Ministry for more information. Knowledge or education in music is not required. New members are always welcome!

### **CHILDREN'S SUNDAY LITURGY PROGRAM**

The Children's Sunday Liturgy Program reflects our commitment to helping our children participate as fully as possible in the Liturgy of the Word each Sunday. While members of our adult community meet to share the Liturgy of the Word and dialogue in the Auditorium, our children from ages two through Grade 5 meet to hear and discuss the Word of God, bringing with them their unique insights and interpretations. For our two, three, four and five-year-old children who do not yet participate in the CCD Program, this is their opportunity to meet each other and begin to develop their first sense of "community." There is no Children's Liturgy Program on the last Sunday of each month, which is reserved as Community Sunday, a day in which our entire Community worships together. Participation in the Children's Sunday Liturgy Program is optional. Volunteer Community members teach monthly and are essential to our program. New volunteers are always welcome.

### **LITURGICAL SEATING**

This provides seating for participation in Liturgy. Pull up a chair (well, many chairs) in the auditorium about a half-hour before Liturgy begins. After Liturgy, all Community members join in to put the chairs away. Just show up and help. Your work will be "chair"-ishied" !!!!!

### **SUNDAY'S COFFEE**

The Community welcomes all to enjoy a cup of coffee, tea, or juice immediately following Sunday Liturgy. This is a great time to converse, to socialize, and to meet new people.

Beverages are provided by a Community member (one Sunday commitment) who prepares, serves, and cleans up afterwards.

Expenses are reimbursed.

New volunteers are always welcomed.

**NOTE: THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO MEET PEOPLE!!**

## ***EDUCATION***

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM (REMT)**

This team of volunteers and paid part-time coordinator, meet monthly to plan and coordinate the variety of religious education programs for families and their children. Members of this team serve for two or three years, planning Faith Formation, Children Liturgy classes and sacramental celebrations. Members include:

Faith Formation Coordinator: who coordinates our Faith Formation classes. Faith Formation classes provide students with opportunities to examine and experience the precepts of our faith at their own level as they grow and mature. These classes are not strictly sacramental preparation classes but try to provoke much questioning and support towards living as a Christian. Our classes are small and held in our catechists' homes during the months of September to April. The Coordinator works with the catechists in developing a two year rotating curriculum.

Sunday Children's Liturgy Coordinator: ensures that our Sunday Children Liturgy classes occur during 10:00 am Sunday Liturgies so that our children can experience the lectionary readings of the day at their own level from Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade while the Liturgy of the Word is being experienced by our adults in the Auditorium. These classes usually occur three Sundays of the month with one "Community Sunday" being set aside every month for us to gather together in Liturgy. The coordinator meets with the class coordinators to make sure the materials are given to our rotating teaching staff. New volunteers to teach monthly classes are always welcomed!

Sacramental Preparation Coordinator: communicates with those persons who organize Baptism, First Communion, Reconciliation, and Confirmation prep classes and liturgies. The coordinator offers support and communicates the sacramental events to the REMTeam and Community at monthly Community Meetings.

Youth Group Coordinators: work with our teenagers to provide community building activities for our youth. We have two youth groups. Jr. High seventh and eighth graders, and Senior High, our high school teens. One coordinator is usually present at REMTeam meetings to communicate the happenings of our youth groups.

Family Event Coordinator: plans community building events that are celebrated by entire families. Last year we celebrated an opening Pot Luck Dinner, Halloween Party, Walk to Bethlehem, and Seder Meal.

This coordinator is in need of volunteer help to plan, set-up, work and clean-up at each activity.

Religious Education Coordinator: schedules monthly team meetings, purchases supplies, provides catechist training and support, coordinates registration and class schedules, attends to office and library, and is a resource person and liaison with the Paterson Diocese Catechetical Leaders association. Library and office assistance is always welcomed!

## **RECONCILIATION**

In the Christian Community the sacrament of Reconciliation celebrates our human capacity for self-reflection and change while challenging us to continually nurture the Christ within ourselves and others.

Reconciliation is taught in faith formation classes to help foster development of loving, responsible attitudes and behavior. The forgiveness inherent in the sacrament is encouraged as a basic Christian orientation toward others.

At scheduled times during the year, family Reconciliation Liturgies, with optional individual absolution, provide an opportunity for deeper reflection on our actions and lives in the Christian context. The schedule of individual Reconciliation can be obtained from the Shrine Residence.

## **ADULT EDUCATION**

Adult Education provides an opportunity for adult education and growth. Its aim is to offer input and stimulation to further the realization of spirituality and to deepen the experience of faith in the Community. It is our belief that social outreach, whether individual or communal, will flow from such experiences. The Adult Education committee recognizes that it is the Sunday Liturgy that is the primary occasion for adult education in the Community.

The committee seeks to supplement that education by offering two series a year. These typically meet on four Friday nights in the Spring and Fall. Our present format is hospitality, presentation, followed by large and or small group discussion. Presentations are offered by Community members and by qualified people from outside the Community.

## **COMMUNITY RETREAT**

Community members come together once a year, usually in January, for spiritual renewal. The retreat begins on Friday evening and culminates on Saturday evening with Liturgy, followed by dinner. Community members volunteer their time to select a theme for the retreat and organize and plan the retreat activities around the theme. Meetings are held as needed in the weeks leading up to the retreat.

## **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

### **FINANCE**

The Finance Committee exercises a "stewardship role" regarding the Community's financial affairs. Specifically, the committee serves the other Ministries by providing guidance and support to their projects and outreach programs. The Committee is also responsive to the needs of the Shrine of St. Joseph, which is home to the Community.

Quarterly and annual reports are published and reviewed with the Community. Meetings are held as required.

### **SOCIAL LIFE OF COMMUNITY**

The Social Life Committee was founded on the belief that having fun and celebrating life together are essential for the health and well-being of our Christian Community.

Members plan, publicize, set up, etc. various activities held throughout the year, such as parties and dances.

Meetings are held approximately once a month during the fall, winter and spring.

### **COMMUNITY BULLETIN**

The Bulletin is published weekly to inform community members about what's happening in the various ministries within the Community. The Bulletin also includes a report on the monthly Community meeting, requests for prayers, birthday and anniversary announcements.

Volunteers gather information, take turns typing it into the computer and making copies of the bulletin for one month at a time.

## **SERVICE AND WELCOMING**

The aim is to provide vehicles through which all members of the Community can take part in helping and supporting each other, as well as in welcoming newcomers.

Members coordinate a list of Greeters for Liturgy, provide name tags for Community Sunday (the last Sunday of the month), host welcoming coffees, distribute the Welcoming Booklet, send cards, visit in hospitals, make meals and drive for the sick and disabled. Meetings are held as needed.

## **BOOKCLUB**

The Book Club provides an informal setting for book discussion. Meetings are loosely structured. The person who suggested the book leads the discussion and provides critical commentary about the book and its author.

This Club is mainly social. The focus of the discussion is often on personal reactions and feelings about the book. As a result, it is a bonding group, with members getting to know each other. New members are always welcome.

Meetings are held once a month in member's homes. A yearly weekend away is also held.

## **BOUTIQUE**

"A Country Christmas" is the theme for the annual Gift and Craft Boutique sponsored by the Christian Community. The Boutique is held for two days in November. Over 75 crafters participate. The highlight of the Boutique is the raffle of a quilt, handcrafted by members of the Christian Community. Luncheon and dinner are served on Friday; luncheon is served on Saturday. Volunteers are needed to do publicity and beginning on Wednesday and each day through Saturday to help decorate, set-up, inventory crafters in and out, work in the kitchen, wait on tables, be cashiers, bake desserts, etc.

Coordinating a successful boutique requires 11 months preparation, with meetings at the coordinator's home four to five times throughout the year.

## **MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE**

Volunteers are recruited periodically to work on maintenance projects at the Shrine. Painting, electrical work, plumbing, carpentry and gardening

are some of the activities that are undertaken by young and old. Skill is not always required but willing hands are.

## **SOCIAL ACTION**

### **MORRIS COUNTY FOOD CLOSET**

Individuals and families from the Community donate non-perishable food items on each Sunday. It is then delivered to the Morris County Food Closet, which distributes the food to families in emergency situations whose only alternative is hunger.

### **ST. COLUMBA'S PARISH CHRISTMAS - NEWARK**

Families from the Community volunteer to "sponsor" a St. Columba family by purchasing food for their Christmas Day meal and a gift for each member of the family. Due to the size of some of St. Columba's families, Community members often share in sponsoring them. The list of families is available in the late Fall.

### **SERVICE AUCTION**

The Annual Service Auction is a Community fundraiser, held the second Saturday of March, that provides scholarship money for education. Graduating students of St. Columba's Grammar School in Newark, New Jersey are supported so that they can go on to Catholic high schools. Additional money is used to support grade school tuition at St. Columba's and other educational projects approved by the Community. This auction is also one of the main social events of the year. Community members get to know one another better through the selling and buying of services from one another.

Members of this Committee choose a theme, publicize the auction, solicit services to be donated, publish a services booklet, advertise within the Community, provide decorations, and prepare and serve food at the auction. The Committee's first meeting is held in January.

### **CLOTHING DRIVE**

The Community conducts a drive in the spring and fall of every year to collect clothing in good condition from Community members for families in the neighborhood of St. Columba's Church in Newark, Christ the King in Jersey City and Harbor House in Paterson.

## **HOSPITALITY NETWORK**

The objective is to share hospitality with families who are homeless and to provide shelter and food for them for one week four times a year.

Community members convert the auditorium into living quarters, setting up bedrooms and living space, making beds, cooking meals and interacting with our guests from five PM to seven AM during the week. On the weekend, our guests spend the day with us. At the close of the week, we take down the temporary rooms, wash bedding, and restore the auditorium to its original state. The Community shares this ministry with St. Vincent de Paul and First Presbyterian of Stirling.

Adopt-a-Family is an adjunct ministry in which some community members volunteer to contribute money and/or time to help individuals from the Network establish themselves in a home and job.

## **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

Community Members volunteer their time to work, usually on Saturdays, on building homes in NJ for HABITAT, an ecumenical organization dedicated to eliminating poverty housing. Construction skills are helpful, but not necessary; a desire to help others make a home for themselves is the only requirement. Work along with the family who will occupy the home and put your faith into action with HABITAT. See the HABITAT coordinator for further details.

## **MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF THE SHRINE OF ST. JOSEPH**

The Christian Community is an "intentional" community, which means people come here because they choose to do so, rather than because they live nearby. It is also lay -run, with members assuming responsibilities for many functions — including liturgy, education, community life, social justice and fund raising — necessary for the survival and well-being of the Community.

Membership in the Christian Community reflects its unique character. People chose to be members, are free to be members, and are welcomed as members, with individuals themselves determining their own membership in the group.

Thus, membership in the Christian Community results from a self-discernment process in which one reflects on the character and mission of the Christian Community which gives rise to various implications, including:

- Worshipping together, since participation in liturgy is at the heart of the Community's shared vision.
- Being open to others and building relationships with them, revealing who I am and learning about them with an attitude of mutual respect - thus allowing our faith journey to be a communal one.
- Accepting responsibility for the Community, having a sense of stewardship, and recognizing that "what happens" is the result of individual member decision, action and participation, and that the involvement of as many as possible is what enables the Community to function.
- Supporting in word and action the educational aims of the Community - to nurture children's faith lives and to provide opportunities for adult intellectual and spiritual growth.
- Involving myself in the direction setting of the Community, so that it continues to be vital and alive, and true to its foundation as an intentional community -- defining and serving its own needs.
- Making financial contributions to the support of the Community.
- Supporting the charitable and social justice efforts of the Community, moving words to action through hands-on involvement.

These represent the needs of the Community as a whole. Does membership necessitate my committing to all the areas identified above? That is a question that each member alone must answer. Through this would be ideal and reap the fullest benefit for the individual and the Community, this is not always possible for everyone at all times. Some may not have the gifts, interest or energy to participate fully, while others may be at a life stage where it is not feasible. But whatever the level of involvement, accepting the overall philosophy of the Community - as stated in the mission statement — is important to one's feeling a part of it.

Ultimately, the questions I reflect on in considering my membership status are:

- Is the Community my "spiritual grounding place" where the communal journey occurs?
- Is the Community stronger because of my involvement? Does the Community serve others because of me?
- Does the Community swerve others because of me?