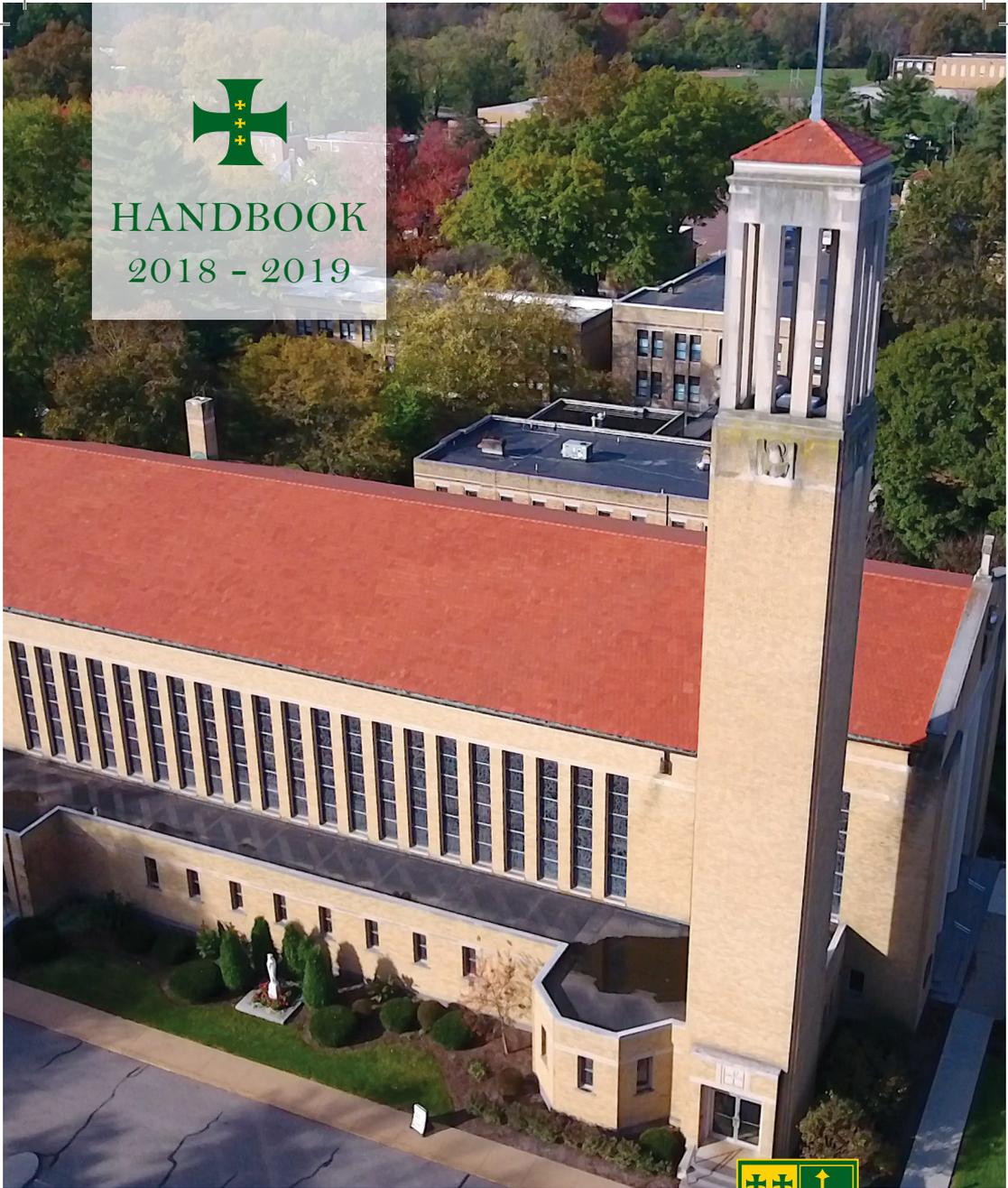




HANDBOOK
2018 - 2019



ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH



PARISH HANDBOOK AND DIRECTORY

476 MULL AVENUE AKRON, OHIO 44320
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PARISH VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parish Council

Parish Council is an advisory group for the pastor which seeks to foster parish unity, assess parish needs, develop parish programs, coordinate parish activities, encourage parish participation in spiritual and apostolic life, and provide a forum for parish dialogue.

Each St. Sebastian Parish Ministry is assigned a representative on Parish Council. If you have any suggestions, proposals or concerns about the parish, please contact Parish Council Chairperson at parishcouncil@stsebastian.org

ADMINISTRATIVE MINISTRIES

For all Administrative Ministries please contact
Jennifer Jones, (330) 836-2233 Ext. 101 or jonesj@stsebastian.org

Bakers Hospitality Group

This group provides baked goods for diverse church functions. Anyone who loves to bake please join our group.

Collection Counters

Our weekend collection is counted on Sunday morning with a rotating team on a once a month schedule. Members gather at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday to count all three weekend Masses usually ending by 12 noon. Volunteers are needed in both routine and substitute capacities.

Finance Council

It is the responsibility of the Parish Finance Council to advise and aid the pastor in the administration of the parish finances in order to carry out the mission of the Parish.

Grounds Crew

St. Sebastian takes tremendous pride in its campus. Volunteers work Thursday mornings and one Saturday morning a month from April to October to plan, plant, and mulch flower beds. A small group works weekly to maintain the beds by weeding, watering, etc. All parishioners are invited to help keep our grounds in tip-top shape.

Parish Council

Parish Council is an advisory group for the pastor. It seeks to foster parish unity, assesses parish needs, develop parish programs, coordinate parish activities, encourage parish participation in spiritual and apostolic life and provide a forum for parish dialogue.

Rectory Cooks

Cooks are needed to prepare dinners for our priests. Volunteer to help out once a month or more to fit your schedule. This is a great opportunity to serve those who selflessly serve this parish.

Rectory Office Volunteers

Volunteers are periodically needed in the parish rectory to perform a variety of tasks, including stuffing bulletins, clerical work, help with mailings and answering the phone.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRIES

For all Community Outreach Ministries please contact
Jennifer Jones, (330) 836-2233 x101 or jonesj@stsebastian.org

Giving Tree

Many of our neighbors have little, often lacking even life's bare necessities. The Giving Tree offers parishioners the opportunity to meet those needs during the Christmas Season. The work of this seasonal ministry (Advent), which requires some coordination with local charities and parish organizations, entails setting up, maintenance and clean-up of three trees, construction of ornaments, gathering of gifts and, finally, delivery to these charities on two weekends in December.

Good Samaritan Hunger Center

The Good Samaritan Hunger Center provides food to Akron area residents faced with hunger; low-income individuals and families, the homeless, the unemployed, the elderly, the mentally and physically disabled. GSHC is unusual because it is mobile: Hot meals are served and bags of food are handed out at at-risk locations in the Summit County area. Volunteers are needed to serve hot meals and distribute bags of food Monday through Friday from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the various sites.

Medical Transportation Ministry

Volunteers are needed during the week to take parishioners, who cannot drive due to health or other reasons, to their doctor and/or other medical appointments.

Nazareth Housing

Nazareth Housing Development Corp. is a faith-based non-profit organization that provides affordable housing assistance to low and moderate income families in our community. Nazareth provides new home construction, home rehabilitation and down-payment assistance for first time home buyers. Volunteers are needed for office support, grant writing, fundraising, and "work sessions" on various projects. Help us make a house a Home.

Open M

Feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, nurturing children, supporting families and strengthening neighborhoods for 40 years. You can help!

Operation Rice Bowl

Operation Rice Bowl benefits Catholic Relief Services (CRS). CRS is the right arm of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in giving financial assistance to foreign countries in need and promoting true development in poorer countries. Operation Rice Bowl is a major fundraiser for them and St. Sebastian Parish participates by praying, collecting loose change to give, fasting to be in solidarity with those less fortunate and by learning more about the plight of other countries to be aware of the bigger issues in our world. The children enthusiastically give every year and learn what it means to give generously. In so doing, they themselves receive even more by learning to serve others.

The Peter Maurin Center

Located in the Summit Lake neighborhood of south Akron, where 37% of the people live below the poverty line and the population is the youngest in Akron, this center tries to provide basic needs to these residents. St. Sebastian parishioners prepare dinner once a month for the center.

Rockynol Communion Service Ministry

St. Sebastian volunteers along with Deacon Terry conduct a Communion Service at 4 p.m. every Monday, except the first Monday, in the Rockynol Chapel. On the first Monday, a priest from St. Sebastian's says Mass at 4 p.m. Volunteers who don't conduct the Service are needed to help transport the residents to and from the various living areas at Rockynol to the Communion Service. The time commitment is from about 3:15 p.m. until about 4:45 p.m. on alternating Mondays.

FAITH FORMATION MINISTRIES

For all Faith Formation Ministries please contact
Cathy Sivec (330) 836-2233 Ext. 134 or sivecc@stsebastian.org

Baptism Preparation Team

A dedicated group of lay leaders prepare parents and godparents to understand and appreciate the responsibilities that come with the Sacrament of Baptism. Members prepare the sacramental to be used during the baptism and assist the families that day.

Bible Study

St. Jerome said, "To be ignorant of Scripture is to be ignorant of Christ." Studying the Bible is very much a part of being Catholic. St. Sebastian Parish Church offers different bible study series throughout the year. Delve into Scripture and draw closer to Christ.

Catechist Formation

Christ commanded His disciple to go out and teach all nations. Having received the gift of faith in baptism, we need to delve deeper into knowing the truth of Christ. We have great catechists in our PSR program teaching preschool - grade 8. They are indispensable in helping parents pass on the Faith to their children. A great way to learn the Faith well, is by teaching it to others. There is required training involved for one interested in being a catechist.

Children's Liturgy of the Word (CLOW)

During the Scripture readings and homily at the 11:00 a.m. Sunday Mass, children in kindergarten through 2nd grade go and hear the Word of God at an age-appropriate level. Adults are needed to lead and assist in proclaiming the Word and engage children in faith-filled activities. No registration is necessary. The children will be called up before the first reading to go with their teachers.

Confirmation

The sacrament of Confirmation allows the students to become fully initiated members of the Catholic Church and occurs during the student's 8th grade year. The program consists of four meetings in the church, an overnight retreat and the Confirmation Mass in February or March with a Bishop presiding. The students will also have to select a sponsor, a confirmation name, do 20 hours of service and write a letter to the Bishop.

First Communion

St. Sebastian Parish School students and PSR students work together to prepare for the sacrament of First Communion which is celebrated during the Second Grade school year. Preparation for this sacrament includes home instruction, religion and PSR classes at school, and special catechetical meetings on several evenings with parents, students, teachers, and priests. Students are then prepared to receive the sacrament towards the end of the school year during a special parish Mass in May.

Junior High Youth Ministry

Jr. High Youth Ministry programs provide a safe, caring and accepting environment for 7th & 8th graders in the parish and offer a wide range of activities designed to promote the spiritual, social, and service components integral for effective Catholic youth ministry. Activities include monthly faith-based meetings, social and service activities, as well as one annual retreat. Volunteers are needed to help chaperone, drive, and assist at meetings.

Mentor Couple

When a couple prepares for marriage, we request that they meet with a "mentor couple" to journey with the engaged couple and help them get ready to receive God's graces on their wedding day and to live married life in a healthy holy way. If a married couple is interested in mentoring others, please call the parish. There is some training involved.

Parish School of Religion (PSR)

Public school students from 4 years of age to 8th grade receive religious instruction every Sunday from 9:30-10:45 a.m. in the parish school.

Peer Music Ministry Group

This music group practices during Senior High Youth Ministry meetings. They play music for Confirmation, meetings and retreats.

Pre-Cana

An important part of wedding preparation is the Pre-Cana session. The program helps couples entering marriage for the first time to better understand each other and the importance and dignity of married life. Pre-Cana is usually in February each year.

Reconciliation

St. Sebastian Parish School students and PSR students work together to prepare for the sacrament of Reconciliation, which is celebrated during the Second Grade school year. Preparation for this sacrament includes home instruction, religion and PSR classes at school, and special catechetical meetings on several evenings with parents, students, teachers, and priests. Reconciliation is celebrated with a communal penance service in February and includes students and their families. Later in the year, the students participate in another penance service with the school during the Lenten season.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA)

The RCIA team always appreciates people who want to help with hospitality and welcoming potential new members of the Catholic Church. The sessions are times of learning, discussion, and faith sharing. There are also volunteers who facilitate the reflection period for the catechumens every Sunday from 10:15-10:45 in the church basement..

Senior High Youth Ministry

Sr. High Youth Ministry programs provide a safe, caring and accepting environment for high school students of the parish and offer a wide range of activities designed to promote the spiritual, social, and service components integral for effective Catholic youth ministry. Activities include monthly faith-based meetings, social and service activities, as well as several annual retreats.

Vacation Bible School

VBS is offered in the summer for any child in grades K-5. Adult and teen volunteers lead activities which encourage children to grow in their relationship with Christ while having fun. This ministry is offered every year.

Young Adults Group (Ages 20s - 30s)

You don't need to be single or married to participate; you don't even need to be a member of the parish. All you need is a thirst for God's word and a willingness to share what it means with others your age. We also discuss encyclicals and other books on occasion.

West Side Catholic Couples

This group of adult couples from our cluster parishes meet to discuss and share their faith on current and relevant topics.

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

For all Liturgical Ministries please contact
Jennifer Jones (330) 836-2233 Ext.101 or jonesj@stsebastian.org

Altar Servers

Altar servers assist the priest for daily and weekend liturgies. Interested boys and girls, grade 5 through high school, must participate in training sessions and periodic refreshers. Young men are needed to serve at the Extraordinary Form Mass.

Art & Environment

Members plan and prepare the church for liturgical and secular seasons with an appreciation and understanding of Catholic liturgy. Parishioners are welcome to contribute their gifts of designing, decorating, sewing, woodworking or other visual arts.

Cutting Garden for the Sanctuary

The cutting garden was established as a low cost alternative to provide flowers for the church sanctuary. It is located on the south side of the church building on Elmdale Avenue. Volunteers are needed to help with weeding, watering and general maintenance of the garden. Volunteers with some expertise in floral arranging are needed, as well.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

EMHCs distribute the Eucharist under both species for liturgies and special events. Parishioners are nominated by current EMHCs and must be approved by the pastor. Both diocesan and parish training are required. For those seeking more involvement, an EMHC may complete extra training to become a Mass Coordinator, one who oversees the duties of the liturgical ministers at the weekend or holy day liturgies.

General Intercessions

This committee meets to pray, reflect on the Sunday readings and write the Prayers of the Faithful proclaimed at the Sunday liturgies.

Lectors

These men and women proclaim the Scriptures during the Mass. As the Word is a central element of the liturgy, lectors must be willing to study the readings and proclaim them with understanding. Training is provided.

Memorial of Fresh Flowers

Would you like to remember a loved one, honor our patron saints or brighten the church with flowers from your garden?

Sacristans

The sacristan ministry is in charge of the overall preparation of Liturgical celebrations including Easter and Christmas as well as weddings and funerals. Some responsibilities include preparing the sacred vessels, fresh hosts, wine and candles, light cleaning, watering plants, arranging flowers, sewing when necessary and any other tasks needed.

Ushers

The ushers' ministry is one of welcoming and service. Responsibilities include assisting special needs people, distributing and collecting material, etc. Ushers are trained in using a defibrillator. Parishioners of all ages are welcome.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

For all Music Ministries please contact

Lynn Steward (330) 836-2233 Ext. 111, freyl@stsebastian.org or lfrey001@att.net

Cantors

Cantors lead the assembly in worship and song. A pleasant voice and a welcoming demeanor are essential. The ministry is open to anyone Junior High age or older. Training is provided; rehearsals are held seasonally.

Gregorian Schola

This is the Extraordinary Form Mass choir that sings at the 1:00 p.m. Extraordinary Form Mass. Hymns of both English and Latin based along with Gregorian Chant are performed. Rehearsals are on Tuesdays at 8 p.m. year round. No audition required.

Handbell Choir

Through the unique sounds of bells, members enhance liturgies during the year and participate in other musical outreach programs. The ability to read music is not required. Rehearsals are weekly from September to May. Membership is open to teens and adults. An audition is required.

Parish Choir

Parish Choir sings traditional and multicultural music for Sunday Liturgy as well as for other special occasions. Open to teens and adults with pleasant singing voices, they rehearse weekly from September to June. No audition is necessary and the ability to read music is optional. Some travel every couple of years (optional).

Praise and Worship Ensemble

This group provides a wide variety of instrumental, vocal, and ensemble music for Sunday Liturgies and special occasions. Teens and adults with a pleasant singing voice or capable instrumental skills are welcome.

School Liturgies

Oversee music for the Parish school and JB Akron school liturgies and plan school liturgical calendar for the year.

PARISH LIFE MINISTRIES

For all Parish Life Ministries please contact
Jennifer Jones (330) 836-2233 Ext. 101 or jonesj@stsebastian.org

Archivist

Archivists compile the history of the parish family through words, photos and videos. They review parish records and documents to preserve the history of the parish for future generations.

Athletics/CYO

Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) is a group that fosters participation in athletics for youth. All children of the parish, no matter what school they attend, may participate in CYO sports. The program is always in need of women and men to coach all sports.

Booster Club

The Boosters are a group of interested parents and parishioners devoted to maintaining a sports program at St. Sebastian Parish School. Through their fund-raising programs, sports equipment and uniforms used in the sports programs are purchased.

Boy Scouts/Troop 96

Troop 96 offers a year round camping and weekly activity program for boys ages 11 through 17 and beyond. Our program here at St. Sebastian includes monthly outings and a week of summer camp each July. Scouting is primarily a boy lead program with close support of adult leaders. Scouting teaches life skills in socialization and leadership while having fun at the same time. Opportunities for adult volunteering are also available with many options for support and training.

Bridge Flights

Both singles and couples with an interest in bridge, fellowship and fun are encouraged to join! The flights meet once a month from September through May. A portion of the dues are donated for parish needs.

Brownies & Girl Scouts

In an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build character and skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adult volunteers, Girl Scouts cultivate leadership, social conscience, and conviction about their own self-worth. They enjoy outdoor fun, crafts, and community service projects, as well as the ever-popular cookie sales!

Chesterton Society

For people who enjoy G. K. Chesterton's writings this group gathers once a month to discuss various topics. For more information, current readings, and meeting times, visit akronchesterton.blogspot.com

Cub Scouts/Pack 3096

Through participation in den meetings and outings, boys in grades 1-5 play games, build crafts, earn advancement, and learn to do their best. Activities are used to achieve the aims of scouting: citizenship training, character development, and personal fitness. Many parent volunteers are needed.

Donut Sunday Ministry

Join your parish family the first Sunday of each month for free coffee and donuts! Make new friends and catch up with your old ones. The Welcoming Committee is always looking for parish groups to sponsor these monthly treats.

Gratitude Ministry

As a parish, there are many people for whom we are thankful. This ministry gives us the opportunity to express our appreciation to these groups and individuals. This is accomplished through the "Gratitude Corner" in the bulletin, personal notes of appreciation and various other ways.

Knights of Columbus

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal service organization of men, founded under the principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism. This organization provides men with a vehicle for building up the parish community and family life with an emphasis on family, youth, church, council, and community activities.

Little Flower Garden Club

Under the patronage of Saint Theresa, the Little Flower, the mission of this ministry is to stimulate the knowledge and understanding of all growing things. Volunteers, with or without gardening experience, help promote gardening and conservation efforts in the parish and community.

Sanctuary Society

Sanctuary Society, which includes all women of the parish, is financially responsible for all items relating to the sanctuary: altar breads, wine, candles, flowers, and vestments for the clergy, etc. Monies are raised through various events as well as through annual dues and donations. Sanctuary Society is always looking for volunteers to help with their fundraisers as well as serve on the operating board.

Ski Club

All parishioners and students are invited to hit the local slopes during the winter months.

Surviving Spouses

This group for widows and widowers is committed to providing encouragement, with spiritual and social support, to those who have lost their spouse. They gather for a variety of activities in the spirit of prayer, fun and fellowship.

PARISH LIFE MINISTRIES continued

Toddler & Preschool Open Gym

Toddler & Preschool open gym takes place during the school year in Byrider Hall. This is an opportunity for children to meet new friends, practice social skills, and run off some of that pent up energy. Parents or caregivers must stay with their children the entire time.

Welcoming Committee

Members of this committee welcome new parishioners through personal contact and by hosting various events to make them feel at home.

SOCIAL ISSUES MINISTRIES

For all Social Issues Ministries please contact
Jennifer Jones 330-836-2233 Ext. 101 or jonesj@stsebastian.org

Ecumenical Efforts

The purpose of this group is to develop and maintain relationships with neighboring Christian churches, affording our parish the opportunity to meet, greet, promote harmony, celebrate and worship together. Events include picnics, book reviews, speakers and joint worship services. Volunteers are needed to help plan as well as assist with physical needs of such events.

Faith & Light Community

Faith & Light Communities are prayer groups made up of persons with intellectual disabilities, their families and anyone wanting to be their friends. They meet together on a regular basis in Christian spirit to share friendship, prayer and celebrate life.

Funeral Luncheons

Easing the pain of grieving families, this group coordinates the luncheons which accompany parish funerals. Volunteers are needed to set-up, serve, and clean-up after the event.

Please note: this group does **not** provide food for the luncheons.

Legion of Mary

Through a devotion to the Blessed Mother, members seek a sanctified life through prayer and service. They attend weekly meetings and also perform the apostolic work of taking Communion to area nursing homes, hospitals and senior day care centers while promoting their devotion to Mary.

Ministry to the Sick

So much of Jesus' ministry was healing the sick. Whether through his miraculous cures or his peaceful presence, He brought God's healing touch. All of us are called to heal the sick in some way and every time we visit someone in the hospital or one who is homebound we participate in Jesus' healing ministry. In addition, St. Sebastian Parish has a staff member to visit hospitals on an almost daily basis to visit sick parishioners and bring Holy Communion. We also have a group of dedicated parishioners (including, but not exclusively, the Legion of Mary) who also visit the sick helping them to keep connected with our church and community.

Mother of Sorrows Support Group

Mother of Sorrows is a support group for the bereaved. This ministry is one of worship, service and healing. Members attend all parish funerals to offer support and consolation through prayer, song and group presence.

Respect Life Committee

This ministry is dedicated to defending human life from conception to natural death. The committee works to build a "culture of life," primarily through prayer, but also by educating the community about current legislation and practices that uphold the dignity of life. With volunteer help, activities are organized throughout the year: Life Chain, Mother's Day carnation sale, Crosses for Life display and the Right to Life media campaign.

St. Vincent de Paul

A traditional Catholic organization, it provides care for the poor within the parish boundaries through the distribution of funds, blankets and food. Referrals to outside social service agencies may provide additional assistance for clients.

Social Justice...and Justice for All

This group seeks to lead the parish and community effort that responds to the call of Jesus – through prayer, education, advocacy and action – to raise awareness of today's social issues and implement the Church's mission of justice. Together, members read, study and discuss issues of social justice locally, nationally and internationally, in order to educate themselves, the parish and the community. They meet monthly.

SPIRITUAL MINISTRIES

For all Spiritual Ministries please contact
Jennifer Jones (330) 836-2233 Ext. 101 or jonesj@stsebastian.org

Adoration (Eucharistic)

Parishioners are invited and encouraged to spend time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament every Tuesday during Eucharistic Adoration from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. ending with Benediction. Volunteers are needed as the Blessed Sacrament cannot be left unattended. Sign-up sheets are located by the Blessed Mother's Shrine and at the back entrance of the Church.

Book Rack

The parish bookrack in the church vestibule provides a means of adult faith formation by offering Catholic periodicals for sale. Pamphlets from Christian social service organizations and prayer cards are available free of charge. The parish office oversees the suitability of materials placed.

Disciples for the Dying

This ministry prays for those living throughout the world every day, but die due to illness, wars, tornadoes and other forms of violence. On the first Friday of each month, a mass is said for those dying daily and is rotated within our cluster Parishes.

Eucharistic Holy Hour Prayer Group

Meets every Tuesday during Eucharistic Adoration from 7:00 – 7:45 p.m.

McDonough Resource Library

This library, located in the rear of the church, is the perfect quiet spot to read or study our Catholic Faith. It houses an extensive collection of books, periodicals, audio and video tapes, and equipment for the use of parishioners and catechists. Additional volunteers are needed to help maintain this valuable resource.

Men's Breakfast Club

Open to all Catholic men, the breakfast club meets on the first Saturday of each month to reinforce the grace available through camaraderie, shared faith, and commitment to each other and the church. Our primary mission is to allow Jesus to open the spiritual eyes of these men and to set their hearts ablaze for Christ, helping them to become truly men, truly Catholic.

Prayer Line

When parishioners request special prayers, their intentions are passed to many people via the Parish Prayer Line. This is an effective way to intercede for important prayer intentions. New intercessors are always welcome.

The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCDS)

The Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, officially Ordo Carmelitarum Discalceatorum Saecularis, and formerly known as the Third Order Carmelites, is an association in the Roman Catholic Church with lay persons as its primary members but can also accept members of the secular clergy. OCDS exists to give lay contemplatives to Christ and His Church. The Secular Carmelite Order follows a specific tradition of spirituality within the Church from the doctrine of St. Teresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross, our Carmelite parents. If you are being called to a deeper life of prayer, you are welcome to join the OCDS Community of the Holy Family (Akron- Canton). For more information, visit our website, ocdsakroncleveland.catholicweb.com.

Vocations Promotion

This group fosters vocations to the priesthood and religious life by providing material for the bulletin, arranging speakers to share inspirational testimony and providing prayers and the Traveling Vocation Cross.

Votive Lights

Volunteers are needed daily after the 8:00 a.m. Mass to maintain the votive candles in the church and collect the donations.