

Buckeystown: A community of sharing in Frederick

By Elizabeth Skalski

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FREDERICK – Potluck dinners at St. Joseph on Carrollton Manor, Buckeystown, are more than a good meal and a time to socialize; they are a springboard for conversation and faith sharing.

“We sit down, relax, eat and share,” said Therese Ivanisin, a member of the parish and its director of religious education. “The more you sit down and socialize with people the more comfortable you get. When I keep seeing you, the further down the levels of faith sharing you go.”

Father Lawrence K. Frazier, pastor, who has been at the parish since 1997, said its “warm and welcoming” nature sets it apart.

“We do have a community that makes an effort to reach other parishioners in their lives and certainly in their faith but also try to live their lives together as a community,” Father Frazier said.

Janette Collins, the parish’s business manager and a parishioner, believes more families are joining the parish because they move to southern Frederick County for jobs and then Father Frazier “meets you where you are.”

“He tries to find out where people are in their faith journey and it rubs off on people,” Collins said. “Everybody reaches out to each other.”

Ivanisin said the parish community is unique and tight-knit because it’s “a definite melting pot.”

“(Almost) everyone has extended family somewhere else and are looking for an extended family. We’re definitely looking for support from one another,” said Ivanisin, who added that she and her husband experienced this support when they moved to Maryland from Pennsylvania in the 1980s.

Ivanisin said if someone is having a crisis in this tight-knit community, “we have dropped everything and gone ahead to help. We don’t always ask questions.”

The parish’s Generations of Faith program brings families together once a month for both social and spiritual time – adults and children talk about the same topics, but in age-appropriate ways, Ivanisin said.

If adults are talking about morality and married life, for example, children will talk about their relationships with their friends and the importance of respect, said Ivanisin, who added that it’s important the “kids see parents coming (to church) and learning.”

Ashley Arominski, the parish’s coordinator of youth ministry who works with about 70 youths, said the parish’s teens are excited about their faith.

“I’ve really seen an excitement (here) that teens have – they want to learn about their faith,” Arominski said.

In 1997 St. Joseph’s had about 250 families. That number has more than tripled – the parish is 891 families strong, Collins said.

Because of that growth the parish has been working since 2005 to raise money to build a new church, said Therese Kennedy, the parish’s administrative assistant. The parish hopes to break ground for the new church next spring.

Currently, two of the four weekend Masses are held in the parish center because the congregation is too big for the church, Kennedy said. The parish’s current church will become the chapel.

St. Joseph on Carrollton Manor, Buckeystown

At A Glance

Location: 5843 Manor Woods Road, Frederick

Established: 1811

Registered families: 891

Pastor: Father Lawrence K. Frazier

Deacon: Gregory Rausch

Religious education: Therese Ivanisin

Youth ministry: Ashley Arominski

Sacred music: Cynthia Kindl

Faith formation: Jeanna J. Geisinger

Phone: 301-663-0907

Web: stjoesbuckeystown.org

Masses: Saturday, 4:30 p.m. (parish center); Sunday, 8, 9:30, 11:15 a.m. (parish center); Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 9 a.m., First Friday Mass and Adoration, 9 a.m.