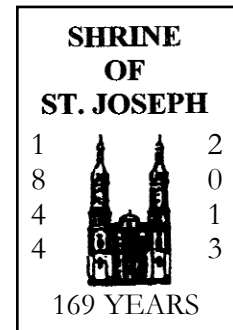




The Shrine of Saint Joseph's Friends, Inc.  
1220 North 11th Street • St. Louis, MO 63106-4614

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*The Shrine of Saint Joseph's Friends, Inc.*

# NEWSLETTER

1220 N. 11th Street • St. Louis, Missouri 63106-4614 • Rectory Telephone (314) 231-9407

SUMMER-FALL ISSUE 2013

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Check if appropriate:  
 My name is misspelled.  
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 Please clip this address panel and mail it to us noting your request.

## Religious Services

Sunday Mass--11 a.m.

First Friday of each month--Mass at 12 Noon

Veneration of St. Peter Claver or St. Padre Pio Relic after Mass

Fr. Dale Wunderlich, rector, and recipient of an Aquinas Institute "Great Preacher" award.

## Supporting the Shrine with Your Membership



Doris Kannady

The restoration and on-going maintenance of the Shrine is accomplished strictly through private contributions. We receive no funding from the archdiocese. Annual membership dues are only \$10 (\$20 for husband and wife). All donations are tax deductible. If you are already a member, we **GRATEFULLY THANK YOU** and ask for your continued support. If you are not a member, please consider joining. **Your financial support is needed** to help in preserving this irreplaceable historic and religious landmark for future generations. If you have any questions, please contact Doris Kannady, your Membership Committee Chairperson, at (314) 231-9407.

**Please Remember the Shrine in your Will or Trust.**

Application for Membership  
Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc.  
Dues are \$10 per person per year

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ms. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to:  
Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc.  
1220 N. 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63106-4614

## Air & Steam Club

Members of the Air and Steam Club have, since the beginning, helped to cover utility costs. We need your continued support for the Shrine.

Your donations last year contributed about 60% toward the Shrine's heating, air conditioning, gas, and water bills.

**Thank you! Thank you! Please continue your level of support for the Shrine. If you are not currently participating, please join now. Your help is needed!** Drawings are monthly for prizes totaling \$200. Tickets are \$12 each yearly with no limit to the number you may purchase.

Mail the form below along with your check made out to: "Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc." and mail to 1220 N. 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63105-4614. If you need more information, please contact Donna Milligan or Dianne Raney who serve as co-chairpersons. Phone: (314) 231-9407.

Air and Steam Club  
Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc.  
1220 N 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63106-4614

1st prize \$100  
 2nd prize \$50  
 3rd prize \$50

**3 winning tickets every month! \$12 per ticket**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## The Importance of Ann Biddle's Land Gift to the Shrine

No history of the Shrine is complete without recognizing the contributions of Ann Biddle. She, along with her father, John Mullanphy, were both great benefactors to many Catholic religious organizations. Mullanphy, an Irish immigrant, came to St. Louis in 1804 and is reported to have been the first millionaire west of the Alleghenies. He made his fortune by cornering the cotton market and selling it back to England at 7 times what he paid and then investing in real estate. His generosity was legendary and he is referred to as St. Louis's first philanthropist.



Portrait of Ann Biddle from MO Historical Society

John left an enormous estate when he died in 1833: between 3 and 4 million dollars and about 1,000 acres of land within the St. Louis city limits. One area of 175 acres that Ann inherited became known as the Biddle Tract where the Shrine now stands.

Mullanphy and his wife had 8 surviving children--7 girls and one boy. Ann was the 4th child and was born in 1803. At age 20, she married Major Thomas Biddle, a paymaster in the U.S. Army. Ann and her husband made their home in an elegant mansion at 20 S. 4th Street.

What follows is well known in the annals of St. Louis history: In 1831, her husband, Major Biddle, was killed in a duel on Bloody Island (a sand bar) on the Mississippi River. His opponent was



The Biddle Mansion

Spencer Pettis and the disagreement stemmed over a banking issue. Both were mortally wounded, with Pettis dying the next day and Major Biddle 4 days later. Major Biddle's death was a deplorable event for Ann. One person close to Ann following his death said, "she has been only with her sister, and never leaves her room." The old *St Louis Star Times* reported: "the individual loss to Ann is incalculable..." They had no children and she remained a widow the rest of her life. She spent the greater part of her remaining 15 years using her inheritance to work with St. Louis charities and churches--she died in 1846.

Among Ann Biddle's many charitable donations was the land that the Shrine of St. Joseph sits upon. The land was presented to Father Van de Velde, Jesuit president of the old St. Louis University, by Mrs. Biddle in 1844. He said in a letter to the Archbishop in Vienna, Austria, "a rich and charitable lady has made a present of a piece of ground... and I have started at once the building of a church so sorely needed for the Germans." And on April 14, 1844, Bishop Kenrick laid the cornerstone. The Rev. Cotting, who was pastor for

the overflowing crowd of German worshipers that had been using St. Aloysius chapel at the university, led the ceremony on that day and paid eloquent tribute to the generosity of Ann Biddle.

There was one additional extremely important aspect of this land gift. Her transfer of the land on Dec. 12, 1844, stipulated that "if the tract of land shall not be used as a site for a Roman Catholic Church, then this deeded gift shall be null and void..." It would then revert back to the surviving heirs of the Biddle family.

In the mid 1970's, a consortium that included powerful business forces, attempted to create a massive truck depot in this area. But the Shrine, in its fading splendor, stood right at the center of these plans. So the design partner produced studies that indicated that the physical condition of the Shrine was beyond restoration and should be demolished. This is when Landmarks Association, a preservation group, engaged architect Ted Wofford, who was known for his honesty, to investigate the truth of these claims. In the course of his exhaustive study, he concluded that the Shrine could and indeed should be saved and restored. Along with Wofford's favorable study, Ann Biddle's condition that she placed on her land gift also became known, and seriously complicated the truck depot group's efforts, and this bought some time. That delay, along with Father Filipiak's murder that altered public opinion in favor of saving the Shrine, were the two major catalysts that enabled our organization to act and the Shrine to be saved.

Little did Ann Biddle realize how significant the condition she placed on her generous gift over 130 years later, would prove to be in helping to stave off the sale and demolition of the Shrine. This historically and religiously significant landmark and irreplaceable gem is her lasting legacy.



The sign at the Shrine's entrance pays fitting tribute to Ann Biddle's land gift.

## Shrine's Video on EWTN Continues to Inspire Viewers

Last March 19th, the morning of the Feast of St. Joseph, the EWTN Global Catholic Network--as it always does--ran our video. As a result, there were at least some 80 calls that came in across North America requesting the video and/or asking for more information about the Shrine with one TV station requesting permission to play it locally. This inspiring, award-winning video can still be obtained in the thrift ship or by calling the rectory.

## Friends of St. Joseph's-Memoirs From An Earlier Era

In the 1950's, after the school here at St. Joseph's had closed, there were only a handful of dedicated people remaining who took care of this historic edifice that was so badly in need of care. Way



before our organization came along in 1979, these early "friends of St. Joseph's" were very important to the Shrine's survival--these devoted folks should never be forgotten. Al and Clara Baldes, who lived at 1115 Chambers, about 2 miles from St. Joseph's, were an important part of the small group of volunteers who kept the church alive--they succeeded at sustaining the Shrine through difficult years when there was no guarantee of its future. What follows are memoirs from their son, Bob Baldes, as he grew up observing the sheer dedication of his parents and their group from that era of the Shrine's recent and challenging past.

Clara-their son, Bob-and Al Baldes

He said that his father, Al, and a man named Norman Twist met with the archbishop in the early 1950's several times asking that the church not be closed and abandoned. Finally, the church was allowed to remain open but without archdiocesan financial help.

"Then a core group of about 8 families got busy and formed a "friends of St. Joseph's group," said Bob, "and my father was its president. As best as I can remember, some of these people most directly involved with keeping the church going were my parents, Al and Clara; my uncle, Joseph Baldes; Ralph Ellerbrock and his sister, Dorothy; John and Marcella Karras, Bill and Ann Kalinowski, Bill and Dorothy Curley, Ross Barrole, Janie Wesolowski, Fred and Helen Hoffmann, Stanley and Helen Galkowski, and Ben and Emily Hardi.

"My mother, Clara, sang in the choir with the late Ralph Ellerbrock, Shrine's long-time organist. She also put in many hours baking 14 pies every single Friday for weekly fish fries, and started the Go Getters Club which held dances, lottos, and all kinds of events to raise money for the church."

Said Baldes, "in addition to being president, my father was head of the acolytes, was instrumental in re-starting the men's club, and ran the annual homecoming picnic which raised a few thousand dollars. He also spent countless hours doing physical labor with some of the others in order to keep the church open." Bob added, "I remember when they ran out of paint--my dad would put a cigar box on the dining room table and ask for donations and when they had enough money, they would buy more paint to finish a room they were working on. That's how they were able to do many projects."

Baldes remembers how the church needed a great deal of work, but funds of that size were simply not available. Pigeons were plentiful in the church from broken windows. "I remember serving a wedding when a large pigeon landed on the head of St. Joseph on the altar and it watched the proceedings as I observed the funny look on the faces of the wedding party... the priest explained it as the Holy Spirit!"

Bob commented that despite all of the church's problems, people loved coming to this beautiful old church. Said Bob, "sometimes in winter Mass was moved to the basement chapel because it

was warmer. However, they didn't like to do this because people who came wanted to be in this extraordinary church--in spite of its problems. Special events like the Propagation of the Faith or the Knights of Columbus Mass would still bring out large crowds to fill the church including the lower balcony. I remember at one such function the guest speaker was Bishop Fulton Sheen of TV fame."

"My uncle Joe, was the church's caretaker for 30 years and he lived in a room above and behind the main altar. It wasn't much of a place but he didn't seem to mind. He would often send me down to the basement area directly under the church to bring up boxes of candles. Lighting was sparse down there and, as a young kid, it was scary. Also, I knew that many years prior to this time, a Brother assigned to St. Joseph's committed suicide by hanging himself in the very back among the mounds of dirt."

Baldes remarked on his memories of the rectory: "I remember it was very chilly inside. It needed a lot of repair and only received token attention because Fr. Corey (Shrine's priest, 1950 to 1959) never wanted to spend valuable money that would benefit only the priests. The front parlors were seldom used except when the archbishop or visiting dignitaries came. During the 1950's, the priest had a bedroom on the 2nd floor with a library room nearby."

"The former school building received much attention because it offered the possibility of housing functions that could generate funds to pay the church's bills. All of the work that needed to be done on the school was donated. The 1st floor held the kitchen, the bar, and a large room called the Knights Hall used by the Knights of Columbus and also used for dances, lottos and fish fry overflow. The 2nd floor had two large rooms: one was used for overflow and the other as the Men's Retreat Center where a portable altar could be brought out on Wednesday nights-- the retreat was popular for a time. The 3rd floor held a big stage which we didn't use much after the school closed except for storage."

Bob's grandparents, his parents, and he and his wife were all married at the Shrine. His father died in 1978 and his mother in 2005. Bob said, "the Shrine and the people who saved it during the 1950's made up my family's religious and social life. They were all wonderful people and taught me the value of self-sacrifice. I hope that my parents are able to look down and see how all of their earlier hard work finally paid off and to appreciate the wonderful things you all have done to restore this beautiful church. My mother did get to see some of this work, but my father would be truly amazed if he could have lived to have seen the fruits of your restoration."

This group of unsung heroes so loved this church that they worked tirelessly to keep it going when everyone else had left. Only this small nucleus of people seemed to care about the Shrine's fate. Without their efforts which allowed the Shrine to survive through troubled times, there may not have been a Shrine left for us to save and restore when our current Friends' corporation was eventually formed. We all owe them a big debt of gratitude.

Al Baldes standing in front of booths at their annual Homecoming picnic - 1960



Al Baldes standing in front of booths at their annual Homecoming picnic - 1960

## excerpts from Fr. Wunderlich's Homily Given on Feast of St. Joseph

When Jesus' mother, Mary, had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit, and her husband-Joseph-being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

The adjective-just-is related to justice and righteousness. These words are highly charged theological terms that mean consummate rightness with God. They connote a sense of salvation, shalom-peace, connectedness with God, walking "in sync" with God. They speak of the goal of the whole history of salvation that the Bible is all about.

Among all the saints, no other saint among the thousands is given the description of "just." -- only St. Joseph, our patron saint. "Just" is the descriptor found in the Gospel. It designates Joseph as the one saint who is/was uniquely right with God.

One commentator points out that because Joseph was right with God, in harmony with God and God's designs, that that is why he decided to divorce Mary quietly. He was not acting out

of shame, embarrassment, or frustration like a jilted fiancé might. Instead, he was trying to step aside in humility. Rather, he trusted Mary and trusted the mysterious ways of God and accommodated himself to the plan, as it unfolded, as unusual as it may have seemed. Hence, the angel told him not to "step aside" but to "step up" in courage and faithfulness. He could have only responded this way if his whole life had been lived as a good Jew, growing in righteousness, justice, and rightness with God.

Joseph was not divine like Jesus. He was not like the Mother of God conceived without sin. He was fully a man, a human being like all the rest of us. He became uniquely the model of the goal of every human one of us by leading a life consummately lived in trusting faith, a faith which made him consummately right with God - a just man.



Fr. Dale Wunderlich

## Our Air & Steam Club Staff

Back in the late 1970's, Fr. Filipiak created a group of donors who would defray the costs of the Shrine heating bills, and it was referred to as the "steam club". But with the addition of air conditioning in 1997, the club's goal was expanded to include electric and other necessary utilities as well as the steam heat costs; hence, it was renamed the "air and steam club."

A lot of work is done by six long-time, devoted, and trusted volunteers on a weekly basis who meticulously handle and account for donations coming in from air and steam club members. Also, these same volunteers take care of the Shrine's two annual fundraisers. With both of these fund raisers, donors are informed in advance of a specific project that will be funded from the proceeds received.

Dianne Raney and Donna Milligan are co chairpersons with a lot of help from Bernie and Dooley Pestka, Walt Raney, and Pauline Frost.

Donna Milligan, a very long time volunteer, initially began in the choir and then helped to create the Shrine's wedding program. Now, she has first-hand experience in working with nearly every facet of our organization. Both the Raney's began volunteering with the wedding group. Since then, Walt and Dianne also have been involved with several Shrine jobs. Today, in addition to air and steam work, Dianne is also chairperson of both yearly fund raisers and Walt is chairman of the Board's finance committee. Having been married here in 1955, you can see that Bernie and Dooley Pestka have had a very lengthy devotion to the Shrine. In fact, Bernie remembers ringing the church bells as a boy when they were rung by ropes. He is also men's club vice- president and head usher.

Said Pauline Frost, our organization's devoted treasurer since 1988, "most all of our donors are people who have loyally and consistently contributed to our effort and we are also blessed by those who donate more than expected." Several of the staff commented that, regrettably, our loyal donors are passing on, and we need to replace them with new air and steam members. We thank you, our donors, so very much for your contributions and a great big "hats off" to these six volunteers who dedicate so many hours handling all of our mailings and donations received from many of you.



Standing from left: Walt Raney, Dooley & Bernie Pestka. Seated from left: Pauline Frost, Donna Milligan, Dianne Raney

## Shrine's Board Elections

The 15-member Board of Directors oversees the restoration, on-going maintenance, and fund raising here at the Shrine. Each Board member comes up for re-election every three years-anyone who is an active member of the Friends' organization can also run for the Board.

In March at the annual meeting, the following four incumbents were voted back for another 3-year term: Gloria Brostoski, the Board's secretary; Howard Matthews, public relations; Conrad Phillip, chairman of the building committee; and Walt Raney, chairman of the Board's finance committee.



Gloria Brostoski



Howard Matthews



Conrad Phillip



Walt Raney

## Completed Projects

A great big thanks to Joe Finazzo and his son-they have transformed the Shrine bathrooms and surrounding areas into "works of art" involving beautiful ceramic tile on floors and lower walls with high quality vanities added. All work was donated by them and materials bought at reduced prices.

Re-finishing of the sanctuary hardwood floors has been completed and the new sanctuary carpeting has just been installed. Both of these projects were financed by proceeds from folks who participated in our two yearly fund raisers. We gratefully thank you.

## Tours

The Fall and Christmas season is a superb time of the year to make a pilgrimage or arrange for a tour of the Shrine. On a tour, you will hear the entire story of how, through grass-roots efforts, this extraordinary religious monument was saved -- and you will see its marvelous, acclaimed restoration. Although there is nearly always a tour after Sunday Mass, tours at other times can also be scheduled by calling the Shrine's rectory at (314) 231-9407.