



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

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### 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. Annual membership dues is 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.

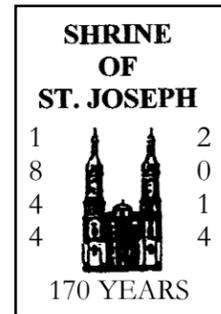
Mail the form below along with your check made out to: "Shrine of St. Joseph's Friends, Inc." and mail to 1220 N. 11th Street, St. Louis, MO 63105-4614. If you need more information, please contact Donna Milligan or Dianne Raney who serve as co-chairpersons. Phone: (314) 231-9407.

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 Shrine of Saint Joseph's Friends, Inc.

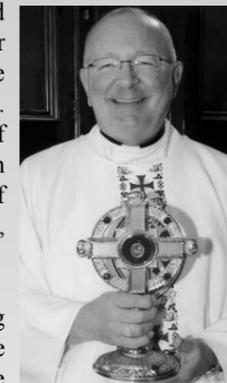
# NEWSLETTER

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

WINTER-SPRING ISSUE 2014

## Commemorating the 150th Anniversary Year of the Shrine's Vatican-Authenticated Miracle

At the conclusion of Mass at the Shrine, Father Wunderlich, our rector, holds a relic of St. Peter Claver and says, "on Mar. 16th, 1864, a healing miracle took place in this church leading to the canonization of St. Peter Claver..." However, on Sunday, March 16th, in a few weeks, Father Wunderlich's statement will indeed be very special because this date will mark the 150th anniversary year since this miraculous cure occurred here. The March 16th Mass will celebrate this occasion which had such a formidable impact on the growth of St. Joseph's parish into one of the largest German immigrant parishes in America. Since this was a church founded and run by the Jesuits until 1965, Fr. Wunderlich has invited Father Dan White, a Jesuit and pastor of St. Francis Xavier College Church, as guest presider and homilist. In addition to regular Shrine supporters, among other invited groups will be the descendants of Ignatius Strecker. The Archdiocesan Handbell Choir will also be performing at the Mass.



Fr. Wunderlich holding St. Peter Claver relic.

There have been a number of reported, non-documented miraculous cures as a result of praying and being blessed by our St. Peter Claver relic over the years here at the Shrine. However, for the Vatican to declare a cure as being authentic, there is an extensive and rigorous process involved—it is a rare occurrence—there can be no medical or scientific explanation for what happened—it must be instantaneous—and no remissions are allowed. As word quickly spread that an unexplainable miraculous cure had taken place here, it became one of the catalysts for expansion in 1866 to the church dimensions that exist today and St. Joseph's was on its way to being known as the "Church of Miracles." This very dramatic miracle was and still is a profoundly and religiously significant occurrence not only for the Shrine but also for the entire St. Louis Archdiocese.

### Ignatius Strecker's Miraculous Cure

A native of Germany, Mr. Strecker came to St. Louis with his family in 1853. He was of slender build, a conscientious hard-working man, and devoted to his family. In 1861 at the age of 40, he was accidentally struck in the chest with a piece of iron at a soap factory where he worked. There was no open wound but sometime later a tumor-like inflammation began to appear and soon he was in constant pain.



Ignatius Strecker

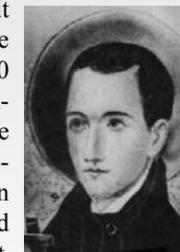
His physician, Dr. Heitzig, who tried external remedies without success, decided to cut open Strecker's chest and found that the breastbone and several ribs were in the beginning phases of decomposing. Strecker grew very weak—violent coughing set in and, over the next few months, he was also diagnosed with tuberculosis. Dr. Heitzig called in a well-known specialist, Dr. Schoenemann, who pronounced Strecker to be incurable and gave him two weeks to live.

While he did not die within those two weeks, his condition worsened as his family prepared for the worst. At this time, a well-known Jesuit priest, Father Weninger, arrived in St. Louis to preach a mission here at this church. Mrs. Strecker was in attendance when Fr. Weninger was preaching a sermon on Blessed Peter Claver and then blessed the people with a relic of Peter Claver. She went home and asked her husband to try to come to church for the blessing. The next night--Mar. 16, 1864--Strecker dragged himself out of bed and, assisted by his family, was brought to Fr. Weninger, who was

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### Father Weninger's Account of the Miracle

Father Weninger was a well-known Jesuit missionary priest and author. In 1848, he came to America from Europe. During his 40 years here, he zealously preached to vast numbers in either English, French, or German. He was well respected and had a profound devotion to the life and work of St. Peter Claver. In 1864, among the 45 missions he preached throughout several states, was the one here at St. Joseph's leading to the cure of Ignatius Strecker with a relic of Peter Claver.



Father Weninger

*The Woodstock Letters* is a detailed account of the work of the Jesuits comprising over 50,000 pages. Here are excerpts from the original account of the miracle written by Father Weninger and submitted to Woodstock by him in his own words in the year 1888:

I gave missions uninterruptedly for nearly 40 years, imposing the relic of Peter Claver at the conclusion of missions, and cures followed cures almost without interruption, so that the veneration of Peter Claver was spreading throughout the whole United States over which I traveled, but still I felt no impulse to notify Rome of these cures.

Then I began to think that possibly Blessed Peter Claver was thus afflicting me, for not heeding the fact, that these cures were wrought by God, to promote his canonization. I immediately inquired from Rome what I should do in regard to the many cures worked through the application of relics of Peter Claver. I was told

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## Strecker (continued from page 1)

blessing the sick with the relic. He proceeded to bless Strecker with the relic. At that precise moment, Strecker found it hard to explain—he said he felt a sudden increase in courage and a feeling he was going to live, something he hadn't felt for months. He said he knew he would be cured. He walked out of St. Joseph's unassisted. The breastbone and ribs began to heal immediately and the tuberculosis subsided. He was back at his job within a few days. The cure was complete and there was never a relapse.

Strecker lived another 16 years and died in 1880. The city Board of Health listed his death due to hydrothorax, an advanced condition associated with typhoid fever, and in no way connected to his earlier maladies. He is buried in the old SS Peter and Paul Cemetery in south St. Louis.

## Fr. Weninger (continued from page 1)

to send two miracles to the Congregation of the Rites for examination. So I sent five miraculous cures to Rome. Of these, the Congregation selected three.

The third case they selected was that of Ignatius Strecker in the year 1864. His breastbone and three ribs were eaten by caries\* and he was afflicted with a diseased throat and pulmonary consumption\*\*. The doctors advised his wife to prepare for his funeral. His wife told him that after my mission I was giving at St. Joseph's in St. Louis I would impose the relics on the sick. As soon as the relics were laid upon him, he said to his wife: "Now I can dance." In a moment he was cured of all rottenness of the bones and of his pulmonary consumption, and immediately went back to work.

These processes of these three miracles were sent to Rome and the Congregation selected two of them for the Decree of Canonization. (Strecker and one other) When called to the witness stand, I testified that I had imposed the relics, and that cures constantly happened. Twenty years passed, and finally I heard that Blessed Claver was to be canonized. The Catholic Review printed a letter giving an account of the canonization, and I felt exceedingly thankful to God...

\* decay of the bones \*\*tuberculosis

## Rene Zajner, Shrine's Organist, to Host Wedding Music Workshop

On April 27th, 12:30 pm, Shrine organist, Rene Zajner, is conducting a wedding music workshop here which is designed for those brides and others who are involved with the planning of weddings to gain knowledge about what is available regarding types of wedding music. This workshop will showcase the many types of music and instruments that can be played or sung for weddings. For more information, please contact Rene at the rectory at 231-9407. There is no charge for attending this workshop and the event is open to anyone.

Last Nov. 23, Rene hosted some 15 St. Louis organists at the Shrine to examine our historic completely restored Pfeiffer pipe organ. He explained to them the many subtle nuances and unusual aspects of playing the Shrine's organ. The morning was known as an organ "crawl" and this was the first of several visits the group made to other churches and organs. Also on hand, was Martin Ott, who oversaw the

## Who Was St. Peter Claver?

If you had lived in the colonial port of Cartagena, Colombia, in South America in the 17th century, you would most likely have observed Father Claver making his way to the slave ships coming in to dock. His quiet presence was the self-appointed Apostle of the Slaves. He succeeded in bringing hope and comfort to the human cargo.



A young Peter Claver

The story of Father Claver began in Verdu, Spain, born to a prosperous farmer. The Claver family was very religious and in 1602, he entered the Jesuits. Peter came to recognize the wounded Christ in poor chained slaves and discerned a call to serve the slaves of Africa.

In 1609, he left Spain forever. Shortly after his arrival in Colombia, he made his solemn vow as a Jesuit and for 40 years served many of the estimated 10,000 slaves shipped each year to Cartagena for forced labor. He brought them food, medicine, and drinking water. He made the infamous statement that "we must speak to the slaves with our hands before we try to speak to them with our lips." With the assistance of interpreters, he also preached to them the Good News of Jesus Christ. He buried with great dignity those slaves who had died of disease or exhaustion. Although he was powerless to prevent slavery, he did everything possible to advise slave owners to treat slaves humanely. He managed to keep in touch with many of his converts, nurturing their faith and advocating for what few rights they had. It is estimated that he brought in 300,000 souls to the Church. during his 40 years and he humbly referred to himself as: "Peter Claver, slave of the Africans forever." In 1888, he was canonized a saint with Pope Leo XIII remarking, "No life, except for Jesus, has so moved me as that of St. Peter Claver."

A relic of St. Peter Claver is venerated after nearly every Sunday Mass here at the Shrine and is believed to be the same relic used by Fr. Weninger when Ignatius Strecker's cure took place, which then led to Peter Claver's sainthood.

marvelous restoration of the organ back in 1999, and obviously is very knowledgeable about its complexities.

Rene has been with the Shrine nearly two years. He originally grew up in Toronto and began playing the organ at age twelve after playing the piano at age five. He moved on to Chicago where he spent 15 years singing at Chicago's Holy Name Cathedral. Here in St. Louis, Rene is a member of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He sings with the St. Louis Archdiocesan Choir and is also organist at St. Francis of Assisi in Portage de Souix, which, incidentally also has a Pfeiffer pipe organ.



Rene with the Shrine organ

## Children's Sunday

No one can remember if or when there was ever a Children's Sunday at the Shrine. But on Dec. 1st-- it occurred. After Mass, some 25 children and their parents or grandparents were invited back to the seasonally-decorated rectory for a visit with Santa (a.k.a. Tom Milligan). No, he didn't come down the chimney—instead he rode in on his sleigh and parked in the rear like the rest of us. Children (even adults) had their picture taken with Santa, talked to him, and enjoyed goodies baked by Santa's elves!

## Final Phase of Central Ceiling Work Is in Progress

During January, February, and March we will complete the entire central ceiling work that was begun two years ago during the winter months. This obviously requires the necessity of scaffolding during these months. This project was aimed at analyzing and solving the problems of minor flaking before it became a serious condition. Said Ted Wofford, Shrine's architect, "we have removed the many layers of non-compatible paint down to the plaster and then re-painting with breathable primer and finish material". Before that, the entire central ceiling will have been cleaned and various areas of loose plaster corrected.

"We have been very fortunate over the last 30 years," said Wofford, "to have a very highly skilled group of artisans, some in their third generation, who see this work as much more than just another job. They have a dedication and respect for the Shrine that is very personal. If you look at the ceiling ornamentations, you see that their skill and love is evident in the exquisite high standard of their work."

Early on, back in 1985, Wofford, the Shrine's highly respected architect, had to decide on the artisans to perform the complex work involved here who had knowledge of "trompe l'oeil" and "faux" painting. He called upon the skilled group who were expert at Victorian restoration that he had assembled when he was working on the Governor's Mansion in Jefferson City. And, over 10 years, after diligently and patiently working through layers of paint to reach the fragile original colors, they completely restored the Shrine back to its original splendor. "This restoration," said Wofford "is a tribute to the abilities, the keen eyes, and the loving patience these artisans continue to display in their work here."



Views Up and Close. It takes 5 days to erect scaffolding to reach the 60 ft. high central ceiling.

## Restoration of Parquet Flooring

For many years, we knew that there was an irreplaceable masterpiece of flooring in the priest's sacristy in need of restoration. A cheap rug has been lying over this floor to protect it so that "someday" it could be brought back to its former splendor. This floor literally contains hundreds and hundreds of pieces of wood composed of six species and laid out into several intricate and beautiful patterns on its approx. 400 sq feet.



1st step was sanding off old varnish

"Someday" has finally arrived--it was decided from the annual Men's Club Harvest fund-raiser, we would use your donations toward the restoration of this exquisite 19th century parquet flooring. This work has just begun. We gratefully thank you, our donors, for your contributions. (More on this project in the next newsletter when it is completed)

## Outdoor Fall Festival

The Shrine's fall festival was held in mid-October and we were blessed with some glorious fall weather for the event. In addition to food, music, and camaraderie, guests were also treated to Gene Wetzel's 1929 model A Ford that he restored, and was driven all the way from their home to the Shrine. Gene has been the Shrine's volunteer master carpenter for a number of years.



Gene Wetzel with his 1929 Model A Ford

## Thrift Shop

Please join us after every Mass for complimentary donuts and coffee. After Christmas is a good time to drop by and see what has been donated in terms of household items, clothing, or books. And then, too, take a look at the religious counter and Padre Pio counter. In addition, there is always day-old bread and bakery goods.



Mae Skubiz and John Coughlin offering doughnuts and coffee

## In Memoriam

**Ray Brodzinski:** was affectionately known as "Monday Ray" because he gave tours and manned the desk on Mondays. Ray had a devotion to the Shrine that was contagious--when he completed a tour, there was no question of his love for the Shrine.



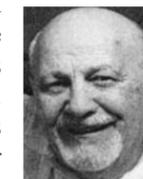
Ray Brodzinski

**Agnes Renda:** was an early founding member of the original thrift shop volunteers dating all the back to its inception. She had love for everyone as symbolized by her cooking of superb Italian luncheons on Tuesdays for fellow volunteers.



Agnes Renda

**Pete Vitale:** was the owner of Vitale's Bakery on The Hill and a very long-time member of the Shrine Men's Club and usher group. He was extremely devoted to the Shrine and to St. Joseph. He baked and provided for many years thousands of loaves of bread at greatly discounted prices for our annual Feast of St. Joseph.



Pete Vitale

### To Shrine Supporters Far and Wide:

You are cordially invited to join us as we observe and celebrate the **150th Anniversary of the Shrine's Vatican-Authenticated Miracle** on Sunday, March 16th, 11 am. Fr. Dan White, S.J., pastor of St. Francis Xavier College Church, guest presider and also to our annual **Mass of the Feast of St. Joseph** on Wednesday, March 19th, 12 noon. Most Rev. Robert Carlson, Archbishop of St. Louis, honored guest and homilist. Blessed bread after both Masses along with the Knights of Columbus Honor Guard.