



"I shall reflect on myself and ask: 'What have I done for Christ? What am I doing for Christ? What ought I do for Christ?'" ~St. Stanislaus Kostka



New Stan

*The Newsletter of St. Stanislaus Parish
El Boletín de la Parroquia de San Estanislao*

Winter / Invierno 2014-15

Finding a Saint in the Family

by Anita B. Cugini

As a child, I remember my mother telling me that a "kinship" existed with her mother's family (the Schneiders) and St. John Neumann. She thought it had something to do with her Uncle "Will's" wife, but wasn't sure. The years passed, and many times I wondered how I could confirm this, but I didn't know where to begin.

During my grade school years in the 1960's, I visited the Shrine of St. John Neumann with my mother and remember standing awe-struck at the sight of the saint's body encased in the altar. Mom gave a \$5.00 donation at the shrine store for a first class relic of Blessed John Neumann in a small golden holder, together with a document written in Latin verifying its authenticity.

In 2006, I began to research my family genealogy as a 65th birthday gift for my cousin Bob who was in the end stages of pulmonary fibrosis. I wanted more than anything to be able to give him the answer of St. John Neumann's relationship to the Schneider family before he died.

I was stunned that my mother's family might be connected to this great American saint who was responsible for the institution of the parochial school system and the Forty Hours Devotion, and who was instrumental in bringing several orders of religious sisters to this area to staff his newly founded school system.

I began by calling the shrine office for any scrap of information they could provide...and came up empty. I spoke with the office manager, a woman named Mary. When I told her the reason for my call, she responded, "Gee, that's funny. I've always been told that I was related to the saint through my Uncle Frank Stoll." I promised to share any information that I uncovered.

I obtained the death certificates for each of my ancestors



The author's collection of St. John Neumann relics and memorabilia.
St. John Neumann's feast day is January 5.

and visited and photographed their graves. The trip to Holy Sepulchre where Uncle William and Aunt Martha were buried brought a new piece to the puzzle. A flat marker on their triple grave contained the names of John Gantz, who died in 2003, and his wife Mary who was still alive.

With God's help -- and the White Pages -- I found "Mary." She was the granddaughter of William and Martha Schneider. She gave me copies of documents and a family tree showing the lineage of the Neumann family. It clearly shows that my Great-Aunt, Martha Schneider was the daughter of John P. Stoll and Anna Marie Neumann, a cousin of St. John Neumann. Remarkably, it also yielded the fact that the Shrine's office manager Mary, had an Uncle John Stoll and that he and my Great Aunt Martha were brother and sister. She was overjoyed when I shared copies of these documents with her! I also have a drawing of the pectoral cross that is so often pictured with our saint, and the relics it contains.

continued on page 6

The Christmas Season

by Marianne Thomas

Although TV commercials for after Christmas sales may lead us to believe that Christmas ends on December 26th, in reality, we celebrate the Christmas season from the end of Advent (on Christmas Eve) to the feast of Epiphany, well into January. As Yogi Berra famously quipped, “It’s not over ‘til it’s over.” Although the Hall-of-Famer was talking about baseball, the sentiment applies to Christmas as well. Besides the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services, the following feasts are also all part of the celebration that makes up the Christmas season:

The Feast of the Holy Family

On Sunday, December 28th, we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. Although other days dedicated to each member of the Holy Family also exist, the Feast of the Holy Family commemorates the life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph together as a family unit.

Because of their flight into Egypt, a feast for the Holy Family has been observed from very early times. In Western Christianity, however, the veneration for the Holy Family as a whole, rather than as individuals, did not arise until the 17th century and was not officially recognized as a feast day until 1921.

Originally celebrated on the Sunday after the Epiphany, the Feast of the Holy Family was moved to the Sunday after Christmas in 1969, bringing it within the Christmas season.

Solemnity of Mary

On January 1st we celebrate the liturgical feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The tradition of honoring Mary as the Mother of God can be traced back to the year

431. By the 7th century, January 1st was observed as a celebration of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin. However, by the 13th century, the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ had come to replace it.

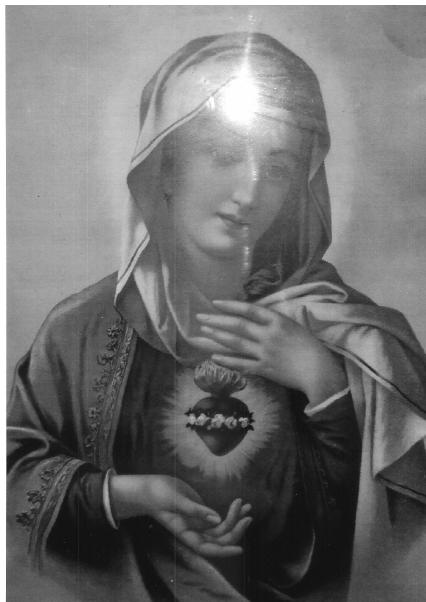


It was not until 1751, after a push in Portugal for an official feast day celebrating Mary’s divine maternity, that Pope Benedict XIV allowed



Portugal’s churches to devote a feast to Mary on the first Sunday in May. Eventually, the feast extended to other countries, and in 1914 began to be observed on October 11. In 1931, Pope Pius XI extended the feast to the entire church, and in 1974, Pope Paul VI removed the feast of the Circumcision of Christ from the liturgical calendar and replaced it with the “Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God,”

bringing Mary’s feast day back to the first day of the year.



On this day, we are reminded of the role that Mary played in God’s plan. Through the Holy Spirit, God our Father prepared Mary to be the vessel through whom His Son would become man. Christ’s birth was made possible by Mary’s sanctioning of God’s plan, by her words, “Be it done to me according to Thy word.” Since the Solemnity of Mary honors Mary as the “Queen of Peace,” New Year’s Day is also designated as the “World Day of Peace,” further acknowledging her role in our world.

The Feast of the Epiphany

The Feast of the Epiphany is traditionally celebrated on the 12th day after Christmas. In 2015, we celebrate this feast on Sunday, January 4th. The word “epiphany,” means “to manifest,” or “to make known.” This is why the feast originally celebrated four different events: the Baptism of the Lord; Christ’s first miracle (changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana); the Nativity of Christ; and the visitation of the Magi. Each of these is a revelation of God to man. Eventually, in the West, the celebration of the Nativity was separated out, as Christmas. Over the centuries, they were further separated, and now the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the Sunday after the Epiphany.

continued on page 6

Parishioner Spotlight

Father Michael Mullan

by Norman Berger

Maybe some of you know the BBC series that airs on our local PBS stations, *Ballykissangel*. The locale is a small Irish village wherein lived an interesting and colorful set of characters including “Father Mac,” the crusty pastor of the local Catholic church. In the second or third season, a new curate arrives, “Father Aidan O’Connell.” He at first finds it challenging to deal with his pastor who has little patience with his new curate. Father Aidan has no experience at all in dealing with all the happenings in a local parish and this often results in comic consequences.

This made me think of our Father Michael Mullan, a.k.a. Father Michael. Of course, I think that our parishioners would say that he is nothing like the fictional Fr Aidan. In the first place, Father Michael comes from the order of the Legionaries of Christ which has, as part of its mission “Preaching and extending the Kingdom of Christthat stimulates and directs and shapes the pastoral and apostolic activities of the Legion of Christ and of the Regnum Christi movement [in] collaboration and communion with all the lay faithful.” So, it would seem that even though he is coming from an order and discerning a diocesan vocation, Father is well prepared to deal with pastoral activities.

But let's begin at the beginning.

Michael Mullan was born after his father and mother and an older sister emigrated to the U.S. due to their experience with the “troubles” in Northern Ireland. Father Michael is the first son and third child of ten in his family of two brothers and seven sisters. His father, an astrophysicist, had obtained a job with a research institute associated with Swarthmore College and they settled in Prospect Park. The Institute subsequently moved to Delaware and the family followed, settling down in Elkton, MD, with which Father associates his growing up years. One wonders whether his astrophysicist father taught his eldest son to look up to the stars in the massive vault of

the heavens and that is where Father found his early inklings of the grandeur of God.

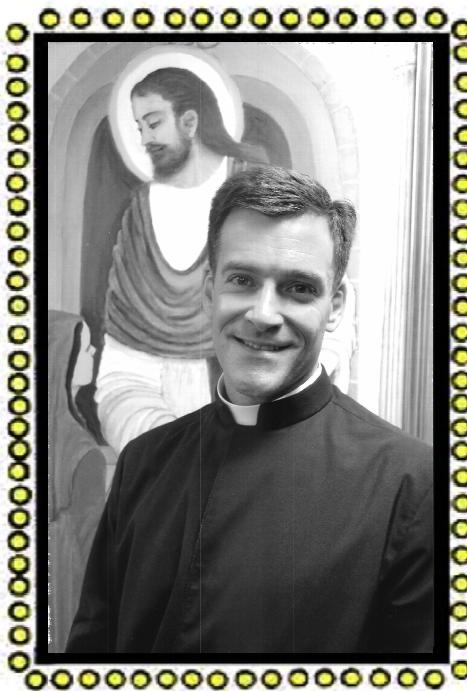
Father Michael attended his local parish school through fifth grade, serving as an altar boy starting in second grade and continuing through high school. Father thoroughly enjoyed serving at the altar with his fellow altar boys whom he refers to as his “band of brothers.” Fifth grade is where he first had thoughts of becoming a priest. At that point he followed his two older sisters into a public middle school. It was in the summer following his middle school that his father, having heard of the new foundation, the Legionaries of Christ (LC), sent young Michael to a

summer camp for boys. Michael thoroughly enjoyed it, so his parents then decided that it would be better for his faith formation to attend a Catholic high school. The Salesianum School – run by the Oblates of Saint Francis De Sales – was the choice. During the Salesianum years, Father had two formative experiences. One concerned his mother giving him a prayer card containing a novena to St Therese of Lisieux. On the fifth day of faithfully praying the novena, the supplicant is supposed to encounter an appearance of roses. Father and his sisters, upon returning home from a shopping excursion, found a vase with a dozen roses on his front porch. Roses had never before and would nevermore appear at his door. The flowers had been delivered to the

wrong address! His novena petition had involved the mental question, “God, are you there?” Another happening at this time was being invited to work a summer job after eleventh grade at another summer camp the LC’s ran. Having found his vocation, he applied himself with new zeal to his studies. After high school, he entered the LC novitiate. The first seven years of his priesthood were spent in Ireland giving retreats, pilgrimages, etc. for the order. In September, 2014, he was reassigned here at St. Stanislaus, his first parish assignment in America!

By the way, a younger brother followed him into the LC

continued on page 6

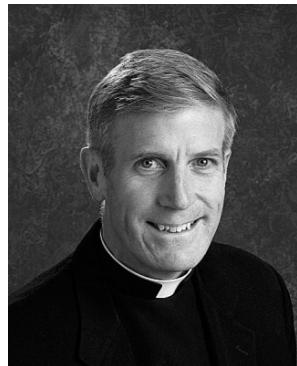


Our Pastor's Pen



Dear friends / Mis amigos queridos

I hope these early days of 2015 find you resting and well, and I am praying that we do not have a winter like the last one in the New Year! Snow is a beautiful and picturesque backdrop when taking photographs, but not when trying to get to Church on Sunday or for the Vigil Mass. If you are like me, you hate to drive in the snow too. June cannot be here fast enough for this writer! That being said, our Christmas celebrations were beautiful this year, and I want to thank and compliment everyone who had any role in our gatherings.



Unlike the writer of our lead story this issue, I do not have any relatives who are saints, but I have had five opportunities to shake hands and meet with two. Those encounters are among the highlights of my studies in Rome. Each year, Cardinal Bevilacqua would visit with the Papal Foundation and bring the Philadelphia priests along with the Foundation members for a private audience with Pope St. John Paul II. That happened four times, usually in the fall. On another occasion, I attended the Sisters of Charity solemn profession at the Order's European Motherhouse in Rome. That year, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta was attending the same event at the local parish near the Motherhouse. All of the priest-concelebrants met briefly with her after Mass. What a thrill to be introduced to living saints!

It made me realize what James Martin writes about in his book *My Life With the Saints*. In one chapter, he shares what one theologian says concerning how people approach the whole notion of saints: that there are two traditional ways of relating to the saints – as *patrons* and as *companions*. It was hard not to see JP II and Mother Teresa as anything but companions, teachers in the way of holiness of life, totally consistent in word and action. “In order to be a saint,” Mother Teresa said often, “you have to seriously want to be one.”

Do you ever want to be better than you presently are? Sanctity of life is for “regular” people who do things extraordinarily well. What a great New Years’ resolution for each of us to adopt. Nourished by community, Word and Eucharist, it could become a reality in our lives. You are always invited to give it a try!

Sincerely in the Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive ink that reads "Msgr. Joseph Tracy".

Surfing Around?

Like to learn more about the Legionaries of Christ, our newest priest Father Michael Mullan’s congregation? Read about them on their website at www.legionariesofchrist.org.



NEWSTAN

MISSION STATEMENT

In response to the St. John Paul II's call to evangelization, St. Stanislaus Parish started publishing *NewStan* to serve members of the parish community and the community at large, to inform parishioners and members of the North Penn region about new developments in the parish, and to serve as a channel for communications among St. Stanislaus parishioners and benefactors.



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Those who wish to contribute items for publication should forward them to the *NewStan* mailbox in the St. Stanislaus Parish Center. The inclusion of submitted material is subject to the judgment of the editors in consultation with Monsignor Tracy and the St. Stanislaus Communications Director. The editors reserve the right to edit all submitted material for length and content.

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Do you have a question about St. Stanislaus Parish, or about the Catholic faith in general? Forward your questions to the *NewStan* mailbox in the Parish Center, anonymously if desired. We will direct the questions to the right person and publish the answers in a future issue.

Finding a Saint

continued from page 1

Since my genealogic research began, St. John Neumann has sent me seven first class relics under very strange circumstances. I promised that if he would help me uncover the truth, I would provide the families of my mother's five living siblings with copies of this proof of our "kinship" and a first class relic to pass to their descendants.

In 2009, my cousin, a seventh grade student at St. Robert's Parish School was given an assignment to write a report on the life of a saint. He chose St. John Neumann. I shared my research with him, and gave him a first class relic. His report was met with skepticism by his teacher and classmates alike. The general consensus was, "Nobody could trace their family back that far!"

In January 2010, he took the Neumann Scholarship examination, just a few days after our sainted relative's feast day. In February, he received word that he was one of two students in his county who had earned a full tuition scholarship to the high school of their choice (he chose Archbishop Wood). Did St. John Neumann look out for him as he competed for this scholarship? I think so.

I think St. John Neumann is pleased with my efforts to unravel the mystery of our family's "kinship" with him, and through his powerful intercession, the puzzle is complete....the extended members of the Schneider family now have verifiable proof (and a first class relic) to share with their descendants, a woman who has devoted her life to working at his shrine can verify her connection to him, and I know my cousin Bob beams with pride from heaven above! ✕

The Christmas Season

continued from page 2

In many parts of Europe, the celebration of Epiphany is at least as important as the celebration of Christmas. In Italy and other Mediterranean countries, Christians exchange gifts—on the Epiphany—the day on which the Wise Men brought their gifts to the Christ Child. And in Northern Europe, it's not unusual to give gifts on both Christmas and Epiphany (often with smaller gifts on each of the twelve days of Christmas).

So while it sometimes seems like the secular world chooses to start the Christmas season earlier and earlier, the fact is, it generally ends it the day after Christmas. While in truth, the season really isn't over, 'til it's over – 12 days later. ✕

Father Michael Mullan

continued from page 3

novitiate in high school, and after seventeen years of formation, Father Michael and his family joined his younger brother in Rome for the latter's ordination on December 13th!

Of St Stanislaus so far, Father says that he enjoys the perpetual adoration chapel and feels that it is a great blessing for the parish. He also speaks highly of his early experiences with the students, faculty, and school spirit of Mater Dei Catholic School.

Blessings on you, Father Michael, and best wishes for a meaningful discernment. ✕

Upcoming GIFT Events

The theme of the **Growing In Faith Together** program for the upcoming season is **Family**, in anticipation of the World Meeting of Families and the Papal visit next September. We heartily welcome the following speakers.

- ✖ **Tuesday, January 13, Bishop John McIntyre**
 - Bishop John McIntyre will provide the latest update on the Archdiocesan plans for the World Meeting of Families.
- ✖ **Tuesday, February 10, Msgr. Paul DiGirolamo**
 - Msgr. Paul DiGirolamo, from the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese, will present the procedures for pursuing an annulment.
- ✖ **Tuesday, March 10, Eileen McKeron**
 - Our own parishioner, Eileen McKeron will prepare us for Divine Mercy Sunday by providing a history and orientation to the Divine Mercy Chaplet.
- ✖ **Tuesday, April 14, Father Michael Mullen**
 - Father Michael Mullen will explore the challenges of teaching values in today's world and keeping God in the family.

All presentations begin at 7:30 in the Parish Center Lobby meeting room. We look forward to active participation by all parishioners. ✕

The New Parish Sign

Ever since 2012, when the Archdiocese created our regional school, the Parish has been missing something. When MATER DEI CATHOLIC SCHOOL was in the process of creating its logo, branding, and signage, the parish passed the Parish sign into the school's possession. This made sense due to the sign's location. When it was St. Stanislaus Parish School, a sign branded as "St. Stanislaus Parish" made sense, but when the school changed names and colors, the sign had to change too. Since then, plans have been in the works to get the parish its own, new sign.

This goal was at long last accomplished at the beginning of December as the brand new Parish sign was erected in front of the church, near the corner of East Main Street and Lansdale Avenue.

The design of the new sign is truly the function of much deep thought and contemplation. As Laverne Sheetz, a parishioner who was integral to the new sign states, the goal was to have a sign "that would complement our church both architecturally and aesthetically. A flashing, electronic sign for example, was rejected as inappropriate. Instead, the new sign has colors that match the building; the frame matches the church brick, while the letters match the church mortar. Even the angled shape of the sign purposely complements the angle of the church roof.

The sign was positioned so that it could be seen from all directions, and both sides are lit so it is always easy to read.

The (Sorta) New Bells

If the parish had missed *seeing* a parish sign for a little over two years, it had missed *hearing* something for even longer, as the bells that once chimed from the roof of the church had already been silent for more than a decade when the sign moved to the school. This too was remedied in the late fall of 2014.

One might say that the bells that now ring at the top of the roof are not new, just repaired, but that's not quite true either. The fact is, the sonorous sounds heard from the church are not – and never were – issued from the bells one sees on the roof! When the church was first built, the bells placed on the roof were more for aesthetics. The sounds came through speakers which were connected to large tape decks which played recordings of various bell tolls. It was this tape deck system that eventually broke down and needed to be repaired.

However, rather than just repairing the system, thanks to



At the top of the sign is a Christogram with the three letters IHS, representing the first three letters of "Jesus Christ" in Greek. Below these are a cross and three nails representing Christ's Crucifixion. All these symbols are found within the image of a sun.

Truly the new Parish sign has been a labor of parishioners' love. The sign was funded from parishioner donations – including some from the auction of the letters from the parish school. Parishioners like Laverne thoughtfully designed the sign, and parishioner Ed Ward led the actual installation. As the church building enters its next fifty years, it has a sign that will not only serve to message information and inspirational thoughts to its parishioners, but will also serve as a sign of those parishioners' love for the church and parish.✿

The (Sorta) New Bells

parishioner and St. Stanislaus Parish School alum, Tore Albright, the system was instead fully upgraded. It was discovered in reality all the wiring and speakers were fully functional which was a blessing. The amplifier was upgraded and the tape deck replaced with a modern computer system that plays .mp3s, just like your iPad.

Now the church has access to over 2000



continued on page 7

St. Stanislaus Parishioner Pondering

New Year's Traditions

by Dianne Spotts

Father Time did it again – whisked away the old year, to welcome the new! Did you bang pots and pans at midnight, or set off fireworks? The ancients thought noise and fire would dispel evil spirits and bring good luck.

Remember the New Year's Eve that ushered in Y2K? Father Time bade farewell to a century that night amid warnings and cautions of possible problems as the year 2000 emerged. Thankfully, the evil spirits lost.

Being Philly born and bred, my childhood New Year's celebrations included going ‘into town’ to watch the Mummers' Parade. ‘Back in the day,’ the costumes and routines were completely the work of the club members and their wives. Whether layered in warm clothing, shivering on a bleacher by Wanamaker's Department Store on Market Street, or cozy on the 12th floor of my aunt's office building, we would not miss that annual spectacular. Our fun continued at my grandparents' home in South Philly where an Italian feast awaited us – but not before we dashed across the street to Horn & Hardardt's for their signature coffee and blueberry pie.

The strutters have become a marching variety show, whose feathers and sequins are only outdone by the Hollywood flair, and a staggering budget – both theirs and the city's. Police protection has been stepped up over time to keep this uniquely Philadelphia tradition a family event.

According to Culinary Historian Edythe Preet (my cousin), “New Year's Day is a time to renew ties of kinship and to feast on special food. Calling on friends to wish them well on New Year's Day dates to ancient Rome when guests were given cakes made with honey so their lives would be filled with sweetness. African American traditions include Southern Hopping John or Ham Hocks with Greens. Scots make a Black Bun Cake, and the Dutch make Raisin Doughnuts. Italians eat pasta smothered in little coin-shaped lentils, for prosperity and good luck.”

Edythe made a huge pot of lentil soup for a cousins' reunion 23 years ago when a dozen of us met at our aunt's home on Broad Street in South Philly. The soup's inviting aroma welcomed our cold, tired bodies back from watching the parade, and we had the good fortune that year to share our holiday with families from California, Texas, Georgia, and New Jersey.



The Spotts currently enjoy the German tradition of succulent pork, sauerkraut, and mashed potatoes. As much as it tantalizes our taste buds while it's simmering and during the meal, its lingering aroma in the house cries for a spice-scented candle to burn for the rest of the day.

Whether you welcomed the New Year with a quiet dinner, followed by a little bubbly at midnight, or counted down the seconds with family and friends, watching the ball drop in Times Square, or weathered the cold at Philly's Mummers' Parade, I hope you enjoyed it. Happy New Year! May the Lord richly bless you and yours in 2015.✿

Note: Photo credits go the PHL17. Photo from the 2014 Mummers Parade care of www.phillymummers.com. For more photos and Mummers content visit them or www.phl17.com.

New Bells

continued from page 6

possible songs that can be programmed to play as needed. The Westminster Chimes are programmed to play hourly from 9AM to 8PM each day. The “Angelus” also plays each day at 8:30AM, 12:00PM, and 6:00PM. Finally, there is a “Call to Worship” which plays ten minutes before each Mass on Sunday. Additionally, the programming can be adjusted and new songs added temporarily or permanently. Thus during the Christmas Season, Christmas Carols were temporarily inserted to play. Similar seasonal changes can be made throughout the year; modern technology providing for far more flexibility than the old tapes (or a parish Quasimodo) would have done!

The new bell system is another sign of the time, talent, treasure, and dedication of parishioners like Tore Albright, and every time we hear them, that love of parish rings through and true.✿

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 *Finding a Saint in the Family*
- 2 *The Christmas Season*
- 3 *Parishioner Spotlight: Father Michael Mullan*
- 4 *Our Pastor's Pen*
- 5 *Upcoming GIFT Events*
- 6 *The New Parish Sign*
- 6 *The (Sorta) New Bells*
- 7 *St. Stanislaus Parishioner Pondering: New Year's Traditions*

Parish Census Data for September – November 2014



Caroline Swan Bruno
Corrina Loretta Burns
Aaron Cabrera
John Augustus Carrozza, Jr.
Vincenzo Rocco Diliberto
Jacob Dimotsis
Colton Edward Fulmer
Joshua Stephen Girard
Angeline Guerra
Michael Guerra
Elyse Claire Karmilowicz
Kieran Patrick Landman
Felicia Lucia Loya
Mila Rae Lyons
Christian Jesús Mora Maltes
Leo Christopher Mattingly
Audrey Donnelle Mullen
Ashley Elizabeth Murphy
Veronica Marie Snell
Michael Ethan Vaccaro
Joseph Paul Wysoczanski
Adrealys Zhagnay



Michael & Charla Ayres
Jose & Antonia Coronado
Catherine Curaney
Josh & Alyse Garrett
Sean & Alison Hoskinson
Michael & Melissa Dimotsis
Daniela Duran
Matt & Kristine Gonnella
Josh & Alyson Homa
Shawn & Christina Kehan
Jesus Mora & Kimberly Maltes

James & Mary Ann Moffett
John & Maryanne Mogensen
Stella Oh
Jill Roller
Henry Ruppert & Kathleen Becker
Andrew Slavin
Charles & Kristen Sulzbach Jr.
Justin & Laura Walko
Eustaquio & Lidia Watts
Anthony & Fran Zancolli

Hilda Solis Beltran and Jose Alberto

Plaza deJesús

Katie Lynn Fagan and Henry Andrew Kulik

Alexandra M. Falconi and Philip M. Vuletic

Kimberly Annette Haas and Charles Michael Bleasdale

Morgan Elizabeth Karpac and Alexander Thomas Komatick

David Charles Knight and Jessica Lynn McAleese

Donald Paul McGinnis and Anne Marie Slomiany

James Boyd McIlvaine, Jr. and Megan Ann Sweeney

Robert Jesse Pritchard and Jessica Lynn Roberts

Emily Patricia Sutton and Louis John Marquet III



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