



# The Open Door

Open wide the door to Christ! - St. John Paul the Great

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2021

VOLUME 4.3

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Some of the participants in the 2020 Flint Summer Youth Camp say, "Thank you!" to those who made the camp possible. More than 30 volunteers from Christ the King were involved in the camp.

## CTK extends sisterly love to the Catholic Community of Flint

*Opportunities abound to build relationships with our new sister parish through prayer, caring, and sharing*

by Kate Ernsting

**At the start** of a new year and decade, Christ the King is expanding with a new mission by adopting the Catholic Community of Flint (CCF) as a sister parish. The mission extends to St. John Vianney Catholic School by offering scholarships and materials, but it doesn't stop there.

Our parish's sisterly love will also support outreach to Flint's eastside families through intercession, home repair, neighborly visits, and a Bible school/summer camp for children.

While scholarships to help children attend St. John Vianney School are most needed, CTK parishioners can participate in many ways. As new volunteer opportunities develop, the key continues to be intercessory prayer. (See the article on p. 4 for more information.)

"Christ the King's support for CCF started small, but in the last couple of years, I have seen it really come together in a way that almost seems miraculous," said Sr. Rachel Benjamin, SGL, of CTK's

Launch Team. "It reminds me of how Scripture says God plans our good works and we just have to 'walk in them.' And now, we really need the whole parish to add support."

**In 2015**, Bishop Earl Boyea asked diocesan Catholics to make Flint a priority for ministry. Major employers such as General Motors had left the city and numerous Catholic schools had closed. The bishop asked Fr. Tom Firestone to be the point person for revitalizing the Catholic presence.

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"We exist to joyfully worship God and raise up Spirit-filled disciples." - Mission Statement of Christ the King

## The Gospel call on our lives to those in need

*Is our comfort zone constituted by what we know we can handle, or by what we know He can handle?*

by Fr. Ed Fride

*The poor widow gave out of what she needed. Have you ever wondered what the consequences of her actions were?*



**The Lord Jesus comments** when He observes a poor widow putting a few coins into the Temple treasury that she has given more than all the rest because they gave out of their surplus while she gave out of what she needed. Have you ever wondered what became of her, what the consequences of her actions were?

Some have ventured the opinion that she went home and starved, but it was a noble death because of her self-sacrifice. That is an interesting perspective but not particularly Catholic. As Catholics we believe that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords Whom we serve is greater than that. We believe that He cannot be outdone in generosity; we believe that as we respond to His will, He continues to take

care of us, that we are all equally precious to Him and to His Father, Whose love brought us into being and Whose love sustains us every day.

**We also believe,** in a way that is not just a poetic label, but represents actuality as far as He is concerned, that we are family. As members of the same family, with the same Father and the same elder Brother Who made us members of that family, we have a fundamental call on our lives to care for each other.

We also recognize that there is a certain priority in how we do that. Our first responsibility is to the immediate family that the Lord Jesus may have gifted us with: our spouses and our kids. The maintenance and healthy growth of the Domestic Church, as Pope St.

John Paul the Great liked to refer to the family, is the fundamental priority. But part of that family life also involves training our kids to understand that as followers of the Lord Jesus, they have a great responsibility to also care for those around them that are in need, whether spiritual, physical, relational, etc.

**Your adoption as a parish** of the Catholic Community of Flint as another sister parish to Christ the King, a generous act for which I am very grateful, gives us a wonderful opportunity to truly live out the Gospel call on our lives of service to those in need. As the Lord Jesus' parable of the Last Judgment demonstrates, how we choose to care for those in need—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, etc.—will have a direct impact on which words we hear Him say when we finally stand before Him. Will it be the greatly desired, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your master”? Or will it be the horrendous alternative, which we hear because we had chosen to not respond to His very presence in those in great need?

Mother Teresa noted that sometimes it is difficult to respond to Him in His distressing disguise of the poorest of

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Images on pages 2 and 10: Detail of *The Widow* by Gustav Doré (1832-1883). From Wikiart, [www.wikiart.com](http://www.wikiart.com). This work is in the public domain.

## CTK extends sisterly love ...

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Fr. Tom quickly discerned the need for young priests who could energetically respond to the hefty need in Flint. The bishop agreed and assigned four young priests to serve the CCF. They joined two local deacons who had been serving the Flint community for many years.

Other clergy and lay people in the diocese also responded. Among them, Dcn. Mike Martin of St. Mary's in Chelsea started going there regularly to participate in prayer walks through the streets on the eastside, which were started by those already serving in Flint and which continue to the present day. From these walks, relationships were built and other needs identified.

**In 2017**, Sisters Sarah Marie Draper and Christina Frey from the Servants of God's Love (SGL) started visiting Flint weekly to explore ways to help.

"The SGL sisters serve where we see God inviting us to bring His love. When there is a need that 'matches' the gifts of an individual sister," explained

Sr. Rachel. "Our superior helps discern a calling and then supports the sister's ministry. The point isn't the service, but to bring God's love."

Fr. Tom asked the SGL sisters to move to Flint to provide a much-needed prayerful presence. Sr. Rachel continued, "Sr. Dorcee Clarey, then our superior, said 'no' at first." The Servants of God's Love, a small diocesan community, had just established a fourth house in Ypsilanti. But the urgent need for the power of prayer kept growing and so Fr. Tom kept asking. After prayer and discernment, the sisters established a household in Flint in 2018 and were joined by St. John Vianney School Principal Theresa Marshall, a



A young girl prays before the icon of Mary, Mother of Flint at the shrine located on the grounds of St. Mary's Oratory. On May 13, 2018, Flint was entrusted to the care of the Blessed Mother under this title.

consecrated virgin in the Diocese of Lansing.

In 2019, Sr. Rachel and CTK Director of Youth Discipleship John Hoving started a Summer Youth Camp on Flint's eastside that involved over 30 volunteers from CTK. Providentially, this brought many Flint families to Sr. Christina and Dcn. Mike

Photos on pages 1 and 3 taken by Mrs. Chris Church.

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### Did you know?

- The Catholic Community of Flint (CCF) consists of St. John Vianney Catholic Church, including St. Mary Oratory; St. Matthew Catholic Church; St. John Vianney Catholic Grade School; and St. Luke N.E.W. Life Center.
- Fr. Tom Firestone is pastor of the CCF, assisted by Parochial Vicar Fr. Tony Smela; Deacons Sean Costello, Mike Dear, Mike Martin, and Tony Verdun; Dr. Theresa Marshall, principal of St. John Vianney Catholic School; and Pastoral Associate Sr. Christina Frey, SGL. Fr. Jim Rolph, chaplain of Powers Catholic High School, and Fr. Paul Donnelly, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, both in Flint, also assist as needed.
- You can learn more about the CCF at [www.flintcatholic.org](http://www.flintcatholic.org) and through the "Flint Catholic Podcast" with Fr. Tony Smela, available online at [anchor.fm/flintcatholic](http://anchor.fm/flintcatholic) and through many podcast platforms.





Kate Ernsting is a founding member of Christ the King, who has worked in communications for many years, including as a journalist for Ave Maria Communication's former newspaper, *Credo*.

## CTK extends sisterly love...

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Martin's outreach, which has placed a tremendous responsibility of pastoral care on the Flint mission. Flint families have come to recognize St. Mary's (the eastside campus of

the CCF) as a place where they can encounter God's love and mercy.

Now, with the adoption of the CCF as a sister parish, the invitation to engage in this

ministry has expanded to CTK as a whole parish. To learn more, read the article below to meet the CTK Flint Catholic Community Launch Team and discover ways to participate!

## Want to help our sister parish in Flint? Ask the Launch Team!



The CTK Flint Catholic Community Launch Team meets regularly via Zoom to discuss ways that Christ the King parishioners can get involved with our sister parish in Flint. The Launch Team consists of (top row) Deanna White, Sr. Rachel Benjamin, SGL, Dcn. Pete Hansen; (bottom row) Peter Benjamin and Rosalia Guza.

**The CTK+ CCF Launch Team** was formed to establish the relationship between CTK and the CCF as sister parishes. The team is meeting regularly until December 2021. We welcome your prayers and ideas! Contact the Launch Team at [FlintMonthlyMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:FlintMonthlyMinistries@gmail.com) or visit [ctkcc.net/flintmission](http://ctkcc.net/flintmission).

**Sr. Rachel Benjamin** co-directed the Eastside **Flint Summer Mission (FSM)** youth camp in 2019 and 2020. Thirty-plus CTK volunteers provided activities and supervision. Sr. Rachel also helps with care package assembly and distribution, prayer ministry, and (outdoor) home visits. Planning for the FSM 2021 will begin in March. Volunteers are welcome!

**Dcn. Pete Hansen** was first asked by Dcn. Mike Martin to fix up a CCF home that was sprayed with bullets in a senseless act of violence. CCF owns **four homes on the Eastside**, to provide housing for needy families. These homes and others are in frequent need of repair. Dcn. Pete is looking for capable volunteers to help with home repairs. Consider coming once, twice, or monthly!

Master Gardener **Deanna White** and her husband David created a **Community Garden** in Flint in 2018. This garden has provided fresh vegetables and beautiful flowers for the neighborhood. Deanna also befriended a resident and helped to expand her garden to include a greenhouse! Deanna continues to arrange for needed items and gifts for Flint residents remotely and could use volunteers.

**Peter Benjamin** and his family chose to "**Adopt a Family**" in September 2020. They pray regularly for and send gift cards to their fami-

ly. In December, Peter and his 3-year-old helped distribute donated Christmas presents on the eastside and met their family. Many Flint families still need specific prayer support from parishioners.

**Rosalia Guza** first helped remotely with preparations for the 2019 Flint Summer Mission. She then went to Flint in October 2020 as a mentor for the "**Caring for God's Girls**" group. Rosalia and four other women provide personal attention to five girls for an afternoon of crafts, reading, and games. There is a need for male and female young adults to serve as mentors.

The **SJV Catholic Grade School** has a great need for scholarship assistance and classroom supplies. The CCF has also requested help with **Sr. Christina's salary** (see article on p. 5). If volunteering does not work for you, please consider donating toward these needs. To learn more, go to [ctkcc.net/flintmission](http://ctkcc.net/flintmission). Mary, Mother of Flint, pray for us!

## Ministry Profile

# Sr. Christina Frey, SGL

*As part of our commitment to our sister parish in Flint, we plan to take up a special collection each year to support their needs. For this year's collection on Ash Wednesday, we will support the work of Sr. Christina Frey, SGL, who ministers to families and children in one of Flint's poorest neighborhoods. We asked Sr. Christina to tell us a little about her ministry in Flint.*

### How and why did you first get involved with serving the Catholic Community of Flint (CCF)?

Sr. Dorcee Clarey, who was superior of our community at the time, asked if I would be willing to go to Flint to check things out and serve. Fr. Tom Firestone had been continually inviting our community to move and be a prayerful presence in Flint.

Sr. Sarah Marie and I started going in Spring 2017 on Wednesdays and served at both St. Luke's N.E.W. Life Center and with Mary Dowsett and Dcn. Mike Martin in the St. Mary's neighborhood. We both fell in love with the people of Flint. We experienced an extreme amount of peace and a sense that the Blessed Mother was visiting and welcoming us through so many beautiful people.

### How were you serving as a Servant of God's Love before you started serving in Flint?

I was blessed to be able to learn and serve at Emmanuel House for 15 years, working with the elderly who were in need. I also served in Detroit at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen for 10 years as a volunteer, attending 12-step groups and leading a Christian women's support group and a little sewing class. Both services helped form



Sr. Christina Frey, SGL, is shown here in a community garden on the Eastside of Flint, made by a resident for the neighborhood.

and shape me for the ministry that I am doing now.

When I started volunteering in Detroit in 2009, one of the words from the Lord to our community was, "I will never leave you. I am always with you. Do not be afraid to go out into the streets. Go out into the streets and hold onto Me." I was blessed to do that in Detroit, through prayer walks in the neighborhood around Hope Clinic in Ypsilanti, and now on the Eastside of Flint.

### What exactly is your current position in the CCF?

My current position is Pastoral Associate, but I would rather like to be seen more as a servant of God's Love. While I do some work with the parishioners, my main service tends to be ministering with the neighbors and residents, which includes some parishioners.

### Please describe a typical day

It's hard to describe a typical day because it varies from day to day. It begins with our com-

munity Morning Prayer and ends with a *Memorare* in front of our Mary, Mother of Flint image in our convent. It could also begin with a text or phone call from someone asking for help with an urgent need like food or furniture or prayers for an interview or for their loved one who is sick.

We do a lot of ministry of presence through our prayer walks and drives and many home visits throughout the week. We try to follow up and check in on neighbors we haven't seen in a while or who are going through a difficult time. Sometimes residents will call or stop by St. Mary's with a host of different needs; we just try to be available to listen, pray, and help when we can.

We have a women's Christian support group every Wednesday, and on Thursdays we have a time of prayer. We have Benediction every Thursday from 2:30pm to 3:30pm for the neighbors and the people of

*Sr. Sarah Marie and I started going [to Flint] in Spring 2017... We both fell in love with the people of Flint.*

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Photo by Jodita Jackson.

*My day consists of not trying to fix things or people but just simply trying to bring Jesus to whoever is in front of me.*

## Sr. Christina Frey, SGL

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Flint. We also try to touch base and reach out to other community leaders and see where we can help each other with resources and prayer. We also do a lot of coordinating of groups and volunteers who want to serve alongside of us.

My day consists of not trying to fix things or people but just simply trying to bring Jesus to whoever is in front of me.

**Do you have any specific stories that you could share?**

We see Jesus everywhere in the beauty and the suffering of the residents of Flint.

One beautiful lady, "Pat," even after being shot and almost dying over a year ago, returned to the streets because of her addiction and pain. She had been grieving the loss of her husband and had a history of PTSD after losing her Mom, who had been tragically killed. But God did not give up on her and was pursuing her and calling her to Himself. After inviting her to church and offering rehab to her several times, she decided on her own one day that she was ready to receive help.

She is now employed and joyfully seeking the Lord, praying daily, writing prayer meditations, studying Scripture, and doing the next right thing one day at a time, serving in her community. She is now

inspiring me and many others. God is *sooo* faithful and loves His people.

Recently, my faithful friend and Eastside resident Jodita and I were out in the neighborhood with a list of people to visit and our own agenda. As we went, we prayed and asked the Lord to accompany and lead us to wherever He wanted us to go.

*Jesus is the Savior;  
I am His lowly, cracked vessel, privileged to walk alongside His treasures.*

At one point, as we turned a corner, Jodita spotted a blind woman putting out garbage to the curb. She said, "Sister, let's stop and help that blind lady." So we stopped, introduced ourselves, and began to help her. "Sherry" asked in a tearful but excited voice, "Did you say you were from St. Mary's Church?" We responded yes. She then told us how she had been wanting to go back to the Catholic Church and was currently attending a Protestant Church. She said how much she believed in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, and she missed Communion and the Rosary. So we invited her to come to St. Mary's the next day for Benediction, and she was able

to pray the Rosary and receive Communion. Afterward, I asked her how it was for her, and she peacefully and deliberately said, "I am finally home. I'm at home." Both of us did not have dry eyes at that moment thinking about the goodness and the love of God for His beloved children.

Jesus definitely hears the cry of the poor. God accompanied and blessed us that day to have eyes to see Him in the distressing disguise of the poor and to not follow our agenda and list of things we had intended to do that day.

**What do you find most challenging about serving in Flint?**

The most challenging thing is watching some people make repeated harmful decisions, like choosing to stay in an abusive situation, or trying to support people who are struggling with addictions, who have kids involved, who aren't ready to take the next step and get help. Also, witnessing the pain that families go through because of the senseless violence and shootings and overdoses that occur. I have a hard time reconciling and understanding it all. Yet Jesus is the Savior; I am His lowly, cracked vessel, privileged to walk alongside His treasures. God has graced us all with the beautiful gift of free will and I have to respect that. I'm learning to surrender and

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## Sr. Christina Frey, SGL

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trust that God is still on the Throne, His will is best, and He is a very good Father Who loves them so much more than I could ever fathom.

### What is most gratifying?

What I find most gratifying about serving in Flint is watching how lavish the Lord is with His people. How He loves and provides for them in surprising ways, materially, but most of all spiritually. I thoroughly enjoy watching someone grow in their faith and love for God. Some have gotten baptized and have come into the Church. Also getting to be a witness of those who once had no hope now begin to smile and have a joy and a deepening in their relationship with the Lord. Seeing those who had no idea of God's love for them begin to see that they are very beloved children of God.

Also gratifying is when the residents will just call and simply ask for prayer or when others want to learn how to pray the Rosary who aren't even Catholic. Seeing how grateful most of the residents are when we stop to pray for them or have our Eucharistic processions. The neighbors know something special is happening and welcome the presence of Jesus and pray for their community. It is such a beautiful grace to see Jesus throughout the streets on the Eastside and to see God mysteriously at work.

### How do you see your service in the CCF fitting in with your

### vocation as a Servant of God's Love?

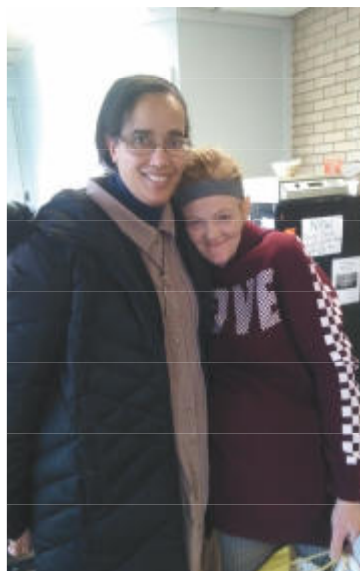
As part of our Servants of God's Love prayer every morning we say,

*Lord, we want to be a sign and a witness today to Your people and to the world of the personal strong love You have for Your people...and be a witness of the kind of love You want Your people to have for You.*

So, as broken as I am, our prayer calls me on to be a sign and witness of God's love in the power of the Holy Spirit. I am extremely humbled and blessed to be able to be and do what I was created for: to profess God's intimate love, to love God with all of my being, and to love His people in the midst of my own poverty to the best of my ability.

I have been blessed as a religious sister in our community to witness and experience God's love again and again. I want nothing more than to spread God's love wherever and to whomever I encounter. I really want people to have a relationship with Jesus and to know their identity and dignity in the Lord, to know how tender, how merciful, and how loving is God, Who is our Father! Seeking to grow in holiness and knowing one's identity and dignity enables us to then serve as a disciple bringing others to Jesus so that they in turn can do the same.

### How can CTK parishioners best support you in prayer and other ways?



Sr. Christina with a resident from the Eastside of Flint. Part of her ministry is to be available when people stop into St. Mary's to listen, pray, and help when she can.

Please pray for hope, continued conversion, and healing for the people of Flint and grace for our priests and the Catholic Community of Flint. Pray for renewal and revival for the city, for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the young and the old. Jesus alone is the solution that can change, heal, and renew our hearts.

Jesus is waiting for you here in Flint. Pray and discern if and how you are to get involved. Personally, I had to recognize my own brokenness, accept my poverty, and then trust in the Holy Spirit to equip me in my weakness to serve His people. Lean on the Lord; be very quick to love, to listen, to learn, and to share about the inherent beauty and dignity of the person in front of you. You will encounter Jesus and you will learn and grow from the many beautiful people that you will meet here in Flint.

***Lean on the Lord; be very quick to love, to listen, to learn, and to share about the inherent beauty and dignity of the person in front of you.***

Photo by Pastor Tanya Hodge of "Always Hope" Ministries and Church, Flint.

## “We belong to each other”

Showing the people of Flint that they are worthy of love

by Nina Hufford

Boyle insists that *O Holy Night* is “the job description of human beings seeking kinship. It’s about ‘appearing,’ remembering that we belong to one another, and letting souls feel their worth.”



Nina Hufford (3rd from right) along with other CTK parishioners and/or Core Team members, including Liz Gavrilides (left of Sr. Christina), Gianna Hoving (center in purple jacket), Rosalia Guza (2nd from right), and Margaret Muisse (far right), work with the “Caring for God’s Girls” group, helping them know their worth in the eyes of God.

**Mother Teresa lamented** in her time that “we have forgotten that we belong to each other.” In his book, *Tattoos on the Heart*, Gregory Boyle ties this quote to the lines in *O Holy Night* which proclaim:

***Long lay the world in sin  
and error pining  
till He appeared and the  
soul felt its worth.***

Boyle insists that *O Holy Night* is not only “a song about Jesus and Christmas,” but it is also “the job description of human beings seeking kinship. It’s about ‘appearing,’ remembering that we belong to one another, and letting souls feel their worth.”<sup>1</sup>

Sr. Christina Frey, SGL, lives out this “job description” in Flint and leads her volunteers to do the same. When she encounters the poor in Flint, she

first looks at what they have: an inherent dignity and beauty. She then seeks to show them that value through the way that she ministers to them.

**Recently, I had a moment** when I felt like I joined in this mission. Sr. Rachel Benjamin, SGL, and I had accidentally walked up to the wrong house in an Eastside neighborhood to deliver food. As we were realizing this, a man opened the door. Since we had somehow landed on his doorstep, we asked him if we could pray with him, and he agreed. To our surprise, he began crying as we prayed, telling us, “I can feel God touching my heart.” We turned to go after praying with him, but he asked us if he could lead a prayer for us in return.

In that prayer, I realized that I had arrived on his doorstep with the conception that I was

here to help him. But since God had just reminded him of his own worth, he could turn to us and minister to us in the same way. By the time that we left him, he had agreed to be one of our intercessors, praying for Flint from the heart of the Eastside. In that short conversation, God had broken into his heart and shown him who he was and, in doing so, had bound us together so we could no longer forget “that we belong to each other.”

**Another time,** I was wrapping Christmas presents for some of the kids we know in the Eastside and found that the blankets I was wrapping had not just been donated after years of use. A Christ the King parishioner had made these by hand, incorporating powerful Scriptural quotes into the vibrant material.

Those quilts spoke volumes to the people receiving them. They also reminded me that, although we can’t fix every problem we find in Flint, we can show the people there that they are worthy of love. We can help them to “feel their worth.”

<sup>1</sup> Gregory Boyle, *Tattoos on the Heart*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 196.



Nina Hufford has been a parishioner of Christ the King her whole life. She graduated from Hillsdale College in May 2020 and is now working as a Communications Assistant at Father Gabriel Richard High School.

Photo at top of the page by Sr. Rachel Benjamin, SGL.



# Flint: A battleground

*"Not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord." Zechariah 4:6*

by Gene Firn

## "Flint has a water problem."

When I hear that, my immediate reaction is, "Of course they do, why wouldn't they?" If something can go wrong there, it will.

- Almost half of the 95,000 people in Flint live under the poverty line of \$11,880/year.
- 58% of children live in poverty.
- High crime: Flint is one of the most dangerous cities in America of those cities with over 65,000 people.
- Drugs, gangs, prostitution, school, and healthcare challenges abound.
- Chaos and disorder are a daily challenge everywhere. Many know the name of someone who has been murdered—sometimes many names.

So many problems and no easy answers. It is unlike anything I have ever seen and, certainly, nothing like Ann Arbor. But, in the midst of it all, there is Mary, Mother of Flint and Defender against Demons, seeking to bring Flint to Jesus and Jesus to Flint.

**I have been volunteering** weekly for a while now. I have the time, health, and painting skills that Dcn. Mike Martin from St. Mary's in Chelsea can use to help him restore the housing that they subsidize for the poor. There are also great efforts by many hardworking volunteers, including Sr. Christina, SGL, who all minister in great love with material, emotional, educational, and spiritual outreach to

those in need. The COVID-19 problem, of course, has made personal interactions more difficult but not impossible. There are so many opportunities to see the "distressed face of Jesus" there and to simply love Him in the poor.

However, there is more to do! We need an army—maybe an army of spiritual Navy Seals to "stand and fight"! The spiritual warfare is intense, and when someone doesn't know that they are "in a war," they are probably losing, or at least a casualty. The age-old enemy and his demons use deception, division, diversion, and discouragement to wreck havoc. You see similar patterns in all fallen human beings, but especially in these distressing social conditions.

**But Momma Mary** has the answer: Revival in the power of the Holy Spirit for new life ... healing ... repentance ... deliverance ... truth ... righteousness ... love ... freedom ... and peace.

So, yes, the enemy's fortress is well-fortified. Yes, who knows when the social conditions will change significantly. But Mary, Mother of Flint, has the hearts of each in her heart,



*Flint is unlike anything I have ever seen and certainly nothing like Ann Arbor. But in the midst of it all, there is Mary, Mother of Flint and Defender against Demons, seeking to bring Flint to Jesus and Jesus to Flint.*

and demons flee from her. We are being called to stand with her to free Flint from bondage. Jesus' victory over sin and death is for all, including Flint. The Holy Spirit has been poured out to rescue all from the enemy.

**I encourage you all** to take Flint into your hearts and, with Momma Mary, fight for Flint. Yes, Flint is a battleground, but it is not hell. No, hell is hell, and the Lord Jesus desires ALL to be saved. Revival tarries when prayer is lacking, so make a difference. Pray for revival every day, and volunteer when you can!

Gene Firn is a founding member of Christ the King. A former seminarian, Gene is a retired painting contractor and a divorced father of four. He writes at [prayerpoetry.blogspot.com](http://prayerpoetry.blogspot.com).

Photo by Sr. Christina Frey, SGL

## The Gospel call on our lives to those in need

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the poor, but that failure to do so has consequences. At the same time, of course, the parish is committed to meeting the needs of those the Lord has placed in our local parish community as well.

**What keeps us** from responding to those in need? I think that during these current very strange and often troubling times, it is not so much selfishness or a cavalier attitude toward others that keeps us from responding. It is sometimes more a question of fear: "I don't know what's coming so I need to keep it all to make sure I have enough for what we need."

On the one hand, the virtue of prudence is an essential gift in helping us to make informed decisions about how we should act. On the other hand, drawing closer to the Lord Jesus so that we can hear and respond to His will for us will sometimes place us in situations where, on the surface, the invitation does not seem particularly prudent:

"Abraham, leave your home and go to a Land I will show you";

"Moses, go set My People free"; "Peter, get out of the boat!"; etc.

Many of those truly great Kingdom-building actions that the Scriptures and the lives of the saints demonstrate would not have been actions that would be deemed prudent by some. However, ultimately, the most prudent thing we can do is to do what the Lord Jesus calls us to do! If we feel called to do something, especially something heroic, and the resultant emotion is that we are filled with fear, then we need to stop and examine our relationship with the King. Fear and faithful trust are both options—one resulting from putting all the focus on ourselves and our resources, the other resulting from remembering who we are and Who it is Who takes care of us.

Mother Teresa would also comment that her ability to recognize Him in that poorest of the poor disguise derived from her spending an hour before His Eucharistic Presence every day and receiving Him in the Eucharist. If we are called to transcend our human limitations, we can only do so with His supernatural grace, with His Presence and the power of His Holy Spirit.

In my own experience, it is when I have stepped out in faith that I have experienced His greatest actions in my life. For example, the time I spent

ministering in the inner city in situations which were constantly dangerous, one might even say "imprudent," was the time I saw the greatest miracles and supernatural interventions as He not only took care of me but met the needs of those I was trying to serve. It may be good to consider that as He calls us to serve the needs of this new sister parish of ours, that this will require an increase, perhaps even a significant increase, in our relationship with Him, so that we have the faith to joyfully respond to this new call on our lives.

**Jesus always empowers** what He inspires, but sometimes we get into trouble because we respond to His inspiration without adequately seeking His power! Perhaps part of the reason He has called us into this new venture is precisely to help us grow in our ability to more deeply seek Him and allow Him to empower us! Is our comfort zone constituted by what we know we can handle, or by what we know He can handle?

The King loves us beyond words and delights to fill us with more of His Spirit that we may joyfully, faithfully fulfill His will. Let us continue to seek Him, to listen for that still, small voice, and to joyfully follow where He leads! Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come!

*Many of those truly great Kingdom-building actions that the Scriptures and the lives of the saints demonstrate would not have been actions that would be deemed prudent by some.*

*However, ultimately, the most prudent thing we can do is to do what the Lord Jesus calls us to do!*



Fr. Ed Fride is Pastor of Christ the King.

**Please Note:**  
 Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this schedule is subject to change.  
 Please check our website, [ctkcc.net](http://ctkcc.net), for the latest information.

**Schedule of Major Events**

- 1/31-2/6: Virtual Vianney Nights Auction, St. John Vianney Catholic School (for details, see [sjvkids.org](http://sjvkids.org))
- 2/3: Alpha Online Team Training
- 2/6: Evangelization Workshop
- 2/10: Alpha In-Person Team Training
- 2/12, 26: Upper Room
- 2/15: Into the Breach Online Men's Group begins
- 2/16: Alpha Online begins
- 2/17: Ash Wednesday, Day of Fasting and Abstinence; special collection for the Catholic Community of Flint
- 2/17, 18: Alpha In-Person begins
- 2/22: Witnesses to Hope

For more information about these and other events, check the bulletin or go to [www.ctkcc.net](http://www.ctkcc.net).

**MAJOR EVENTS—FEBRUARY 2021**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Jan. 31	Feb. 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	Mar. 1	2	3	4	5	6

**Save the Dates!**

**Holy Week and Triduum of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

Sunday, March 28, through Sunday, April 4

Liturgy schedule to be announced soon.



**Confirmation Mass with Bishop Earl Boyea Thursday evening, April 29**

Please pray for our students as they prepare to be sealed with the Holy Spirit.



**Pentecost—Christ the King's 40th Anniversary!**

Saturday-Sunday, May 22-23  
 Christ the King's first public Mass was on Pentecost in 1981. Let's praise the Lord for 40 years of His goodness and faithfulness to us!



Check future bulletins for more details about these great events!





## Christ the King Catholic Church

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### Coming in future issues...

- The Year of St. Joseph
- Anniversary celebrations!

Look for this and more in future issues of

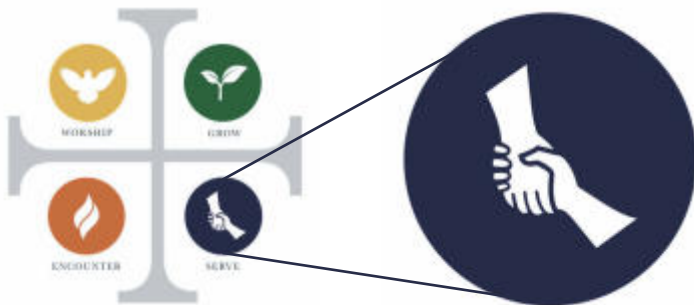
## The Open Door

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We welcome your comments. Please send them to Theresa Hofer at thofer@ckcc.net.

*The Open Door* is the bimonthly newsletter of Christ the King Catholic Church.



*And the King will answer them,  
"Truly, I say to you,  
as you did it to  
one of the least of  
these My brethren,  
you did it to Me."*

Matthew 25:40