



Pine Times



OUR LADY OF THE PINES
ST. KATHARINE DREXEL PARISH

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MORE HIDDEN TALENTS

Connie Wright

This edition we feature **Joann Drake**, one of our talented parishioners who excels in numerous artistic endeavors. Joann is quite modest about her abilities but opened up to share of her life's experiences that led to her 'gifted hands.'

When reflecting on her childhood, Joann attributes some of her earliest artistic abilities to her parents and one of her teachers. As early as the 6th grade, she learned to design/decorate bulletin boards with letters cut from colored plastic bottles. With junior high came home economics classes such as sewing, cooking, and baking. Her sewing skills were further enhanced by her mother's instruction, who sewed school clothes for Joann.

Her father was a signmaker and, later, a mapmaker/topographer. His precision influenced Joann's natural skills, eventually leading her to a love for scrapbooking, which requires not only creativity but also neatness and well-thought-out planning.

Among her favorite artistic pastimes today are crafting, sewing, stitchery, scrapbooking, and designing her own greeting cards. In the kitchen, she loves the challenge of trying new things to bake and cook. She enjoys contributing the fruits of her baking talents to organizations, especially Our Lady of the Pines. Thank you, Joann!

Inspiration comes to this gifted lady in the form of all the artistic things that surround her, whether it is someone's home, their artwork, or even what one is wearing. Her creative ideas and many skills lend themselves naturally to decorating her home. Joann and her husband **Woody** have opened their home to the Amador Home Tours for many years.

Joann is a remarkable blend of right-brain creativity influenced by left-brain orderly precision. We should all be so blessed!

MAINTENANCE

Ted Novelli

Winter is here. Please be safe and careful while walking and driving in the parking lot area. Also we (**Mike Shoda, Rick Metcalf, Ed Kelly** and I) are in the process of putting a new cross on the roof of OLOP, made from a redwood tree cut down in Detert Park. It is taking time. If you are able to help us clean up the parking lot area, contact Mike Shoda (295-4413) or me (295-1302).



CATCHING UP WITH CHRISTOPHER STRAZZO

*A special series featuring some of OLOP's
past altar servers*



Hello OLOP community! Since leaving Amador, I've been lucky enough to meet extraordinary people, have some unique jobs, and experience the ups and downs that come with finding one's way in the world. After high school, I went to American River College for undergrad and lived with my grandparents. Getting to spend extended time with both sets of grandparents is something that I'll always treasure and cherish. While living with them, I worked at a Blockbuster video store (remember those?!) just before Netflix really blew up.

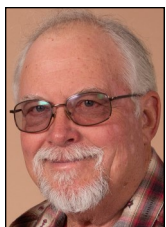
I transferred to UC Davis where I received my bachelors in English. While living in Davis, I worked reading books on tape for the visually impaired (just textbooks, though) and in an afterschool program in Sacramento. After graduation in 2010, I worked a few more years there, before deciding to go back to school for my teaching credential.

I went back to UC Davis for the credential program, where I received my multiple subject credential. While I was there I met my wife, **Sarah**, who was also in the program. We started dating toward the end of our credential program and were married in March of 2018. After the program, I decided I wasn't quite ready to jump directly into a teaching job right away, but instead worked at a tutoring center for a year. When I decided I

SEE STRAZZO, PAGE 2

OUR LADY OF THE PINES SOCIETY

Kevin Darr, President



KEVIN DARR
President

First of all, I would like to wish each and every one of you a blessed, happy, safe and prosperous New Year.

2020 was unlike anything any one of us could have imagined. Let us pray that with the coming year and the development of the coronavirus vaccine, we'll prevail and come out of this time in history with a better understanding and compassion for those we share this miracle God has given us here on Earth. By His grace, like the year 2020, this will all be in our rear view mirrors.

We have and continue to confront many challenges in our daily lives. Some of those challenges we share as parishioners of St. Katharine Drexel Parish and specifically, those who regularly attend Our Lady of the Pines. Never again will I take for granted the ability to pray together with our upcountry Catholic community and socialize with each other. As diocesan directives change what combatting the virus requires, we have gone from no Mass to limited inside Mass to, at the time of this writing, outside Mass only. With Fr. Colin's ability of a radio transmission (FM 88.1) we are able to attend Mass either "lawn-chair style" or while sitting in your car watching and listening.

This has also changed the way the OLOP Society has their monthly meetings. January's meeting was held via ZOOM and, as it was the first such meeting held this way, I made the decision to limit the attendance to "work out the bugs" so to speak. A decision will be made each month as to the way future meetings will be held. Although the *Mexitalian Two-fer* takeout dinner was a limited success, several fundraisers have had to be canceled. Those include the bake sale in December and also the Super Bowl snack sale scheduled for February. At this time a "St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage takeout" dinner is being planned for Wednesday, March 17th. Details and final decision will come out after the February 3rd OLOP Society meeting.

I hope you enjoy reading the *Pine Times*. As several of our long time contributors

have left the "hill," if anyone wishes to create or continue an article for our paper, please let **Connie Wright** (cnwright@att.net or 223-9525) or **Ray Waugh** (ray_waugh@juno.com or 295-1217) know.

Blessings,
Kevin

RUMMAGE SALE 2021

The Our Lady of the Pines Society voted to cancel this year's annual Rummage Sale due to complications from the COVID-19 pandemic. We pray that the vaccine will clear the way for *The Upcountry's Biggest Rummage Sale* to return next year, 2022. Thanks for your understanding! And remember that St. Katharine Drexel is conducting its Tag Sale March 11-13. They are accepting gently used donations, beginning February 6. Check the parish website or weekly bulletin for details of drop-off times and what items are acceptable.

LENT — A SEASON OF FASTING AND FEASTING

Joan Nikolai

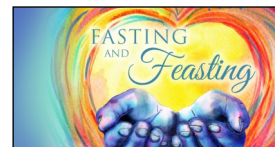
Our God, who loves us into being and whose mercy and forgiveness are never ending, calls us once again to re-form our lives. Sprinkled with ashes, we begin another Lenten journey with humble honesty. "Here I am again, Lord, still working at becoming the person you intended me to be."

Lent focuses our attention on the experience of conversion, not a once-in-a-lifetime "lightning bolt" moment, but an ongoing lifelong process that keeps us alive in our faith and draws us ever closer to God. The quiet, introspective atmosphere of Lent offers us the opportunity to look deep within ourselves and to examine with humble honesty the way we are living out our faith in this time and place. Are there behaviors and attitudes that need to change so that we might live the gospel values more fully?

Once again we are invited to consider the traditional Lenten practices of *Prayer, Fasting and Alms Giving* as a means of creating a new heart. How might the traditional practice of fasting lend itself to this process? As children we may have fasted from candy, and on Easter morning our efforts were rewarded with a veritable feast of candy in our basket. As you make your

Lenten resolutions you might consider this more unique way of fasting:

The challenge is to **fast** from thoughtless and hurtful attitudes and behaviors in order to **feast** on the positive aspect. On Easter, come with a new heart to once again celebrate the new life Christ gained for us.



Fast from judging others; *feast on the Christ dwelling in them.*

Fast from emphasis on differences; *feast on our oneness.*

Fast from thoughts of illness; *feast on the healing power of God.*

Fast from discontent; *feast on gratitude.*

Fast from pessimism; *feast on optimism.*

Fast from worry; *feast on trust.*

Fast from stress; *feast on taking time for yourself.*

Fast from bitterness; *feast on forgiveness.*

Fast from selfishness; *feast on compassion for others.*

Fast from problems that overwhelm; *feast on prayer that strengthens.*

Fast from talking; *feast on listening.*

Fast from frantic busy-ness; *feast on purposeful silence.*

Fast from discouragement; *feast on hope.*

Fast from all uncertainty; *feast on God's love.*

FROM PAGE 1

STRAZZO

was ready to try to teach again, I started subbing at a local school in Natomas, where I was offered a 3rd Grade teaching position. The position didn't work out and sadly I left the school.

I am now lucky enough to work at my wife's school (she teaches kindergarten) as a school librarian. I love my job as a librarian and I'm happy that I still get to do the things I loved about teaching. I promote a love of books and reading, I challenge students to think critically, and I get to encourage students to be learners, not just in the classroom, but also outside it. Despite the craziness of the last year, Sarah and I are still successfully teaching through distance learning, happy, healthy, and completely enamored with each other.



In Memory
Marilyn Anderson
 1938 - 2020
 ✠
*Rest in the
 Peace of Christ*



In Memory
Stan Rasmussen
 1943 - 2020
 ✠
*Rest in the
 Peace of Christ*

In the past few months, two former parishioners from Our Lady of the Pines were called home to the Lord — **Marilyn Anderson** and **Stan Rasmussen**. *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

We also pray that the Holy Spirit will bring comfort and healing to their surviving families and their beloved spouses, **Garry Anderson** and **Charlene Rasmussen**.



FEAST OF ST. KATHARINE DREXEL

The feast day of the patroness of our parish, St. Katharine Drexel, is March 3.

St. Katharine Drexel is the second American-born saint to be canonized by the Catholic Church. This amazing woman was an heiress to a large bequest who became a religious sister and a brilliant educator.

On February 12, 1891, Katharine made her first vows as a religious and dedicated herself to working for the American Indians and African-Americans in the Western United States.

Taking the name Mother Katharine, she established a religious congregation called the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored, whose members would work for the betterment of those they were called to serve.

From the age of 33 until her death in 1955, she dedicated her life and her fortune to this work.

St. Katharine was beatified on November 20, 1988, and canonized on October 1, 2000, by Pope John Paul II.

She is the patron saint of racial justice and philanthropists as well as our parish.

YMI NEWS

Phil Fondale



This is being submitted before the Council met in January. Hopefully the meeting took place and some ideas were submitted for this year's activities.

The Council is still considering an after-Sunday Mass fundraiser, social and lunch during one of the upcoming months if things ever get back to normal. It would depend on us having Sunday Mass again at Our Lady of the Pines and the hope that a COVID-19 vaccine had been received by all of us.

The Brothers were saddened to hear of the passing of Brother **Stan Rasmussen** the week before Christmas. He was a fixture at our meetings and his presence will be greatly missed. Please remember Brother Stan in your prayers.

Our meeting night is the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5:30 PM in Haran Hall. All men of the parish are welcome to come and enjoy the fellowship of our monthly dinner and short business meeting.

The main purpose of our council is to give the Catholic men of OLOP and the surrounding area the opportunity to get together, strengthen their faith, have fellowship, and help our parish and community. We hope to see our fellow Catholic men and future brothers at our next meeting.

The Young Men's Institute was founded in 1883, and Our Lady of the Pines Council #137 is proud to be a part of this national organization.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL NEWS

Kevin Darr

Although challenging to the St. Vincent de Paul Society as with every other aspect of our lives, I cannot believe how many of our parishioners, local residents, and businesses stepped up to graciously help and support the growing number of those in need due to the ongoing pandemic.

One of the community activities SVDP has continued is the preparation and serving of the third-Thursday-of-the-month meals for unhoused individuals and families at St. Patrick's Hall. The time and treasure for this meal is provided by your SVDP members as well as several other community volunteers. Upcountry this includes **Del Rae Svarc** and **Shirley Blancett**. Thank you, Ladies!! We supplied 40 meals in December. We gave needed winter time gifts to many of those folks who had requested specific items. Several community members stepped up to donate over \$2400 for that cause. This year we gave out over sixty \$100 Walmart gift cards to families during the Christmas season that we had interacted with throughout the past year.

"If today you hear His voice" and would like to join our conference, please call our help line 223-5865 and we'll get back to you. Again, thank you for your continued support.



SUNSHINE MINISTRY

Tom Stapleton

We are all reminded to contact **Tom Stapleton** (tistapleton7@gmail.com) when and if we wish to have a card sent to someone who needs a touch of sunshine in his or her life. He will also request a Mass intention for those who pass away. He prefers if you contact him by email to ensure he receives your information accurately. You can also reach Tom by phone at 209-296-1772. Please note that he shares a telephone and answering machine with his kids.

THE ANGELS OF OLOP

Connie Wright

One of the angels of Our Lady of the Pines is our own **Shirley Blancett**. Always one to step up to a challenge, Shirley spearheaded two 'angel' projects this past Christmas:

Each Christmas for quite a few years, OLOP has had a 'giving tree' that helps provide Christmas gifts to those less fortunate in the county. Our efforts benefit the homeless shelter in Jackson. This year, our tree had 19 angels, each one bearing the name of one of the residents of the shelter—adults as well as children. Each of those angels was taken by a parishioner and then returned with at least one beautiful gift. The residents of the shelter were all very touched by our kindness and sent a lovely thank-you card. Thanks to all the generous OLOP angels who helped make someone's Christmas a little brighter.



The OLOP Society provided another kind of 'angel tree' to the parish's *Amazing Advent Outdoor Bazaar* in December. This was a small artificial tree decorated with an angel theme; the angel ornaments were donated by our parishioners. Some of those ornaments were antique collectibles from a private collection. The tree was auctioned off, along with other donated 'themed' trees, to benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

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*We bid a fond farewell to parishioner **Carole Sooy**, who moves to Arizona in early February. Godspeed, Carole! We will miss you. Many blessings from your friends at Our Lady of the Pines!*  
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CHURCHES OF EUROPE

Joan Alimonti

FAMOUS DUOMOS OF ITALY (Part 1)

The **Duomo of Milan** is the largest cathedral in Italy. Although St. Peter's Basilica is larger, it is within the walls of the Vatican, a sovereign nation, not Italy.

The cathedral took nearly six centuries to complete: Construction began in 1386, and the final details were completed in 1965. It is Renaissance and Italian Gothic architecture, and seats 40,000 people.

It has 135 spires, and a walk on the roof among them gives you a close-



up experience and views of all Milan. The main spire has atop of it *The Gold Madonna* at a height of 356 feet above the cathedral.

Mark Twain visited Milan in the summer of 1867. "What a wonder it is! So grand, so solemn, so vast! And yet so delicate, so airy, so graceful! They say the Cathedral of Milan is second only to St. Peter's at Rome. I cannot understand how it can be second to anything made by human hands."



Church is what you do. Church is who you are. Church is the human outworking of the person of Jesus Christ.
Let's not go to Church, let's be the Church.

Technically, Moses



was the first person
with a tablet
downloading data
from the cloud

OLOP SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Kevin Darr
1st Vice President: Ron Burns
2nd Vice President: Barbara Garcia
Secretary: Terri Darr
Treasurer: Gary Sims

OLOP MEETINGS

Our Lady Of the Pines Society meets on the first Wednesday of every month, now on Zoom. Contact President Kevin Darr for the Zoom meeting info. All parishioners of OLOP are members of the Society. There are no dues. We welcome your participation and look forward to seeing some new faces on Zoom!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you need an announcement placed in the parish bulletin or a name placed on the parish prayer list, please contact the Bulletin Editor at the Parish Center, at 223-2970 or bulletin@stkatharinedrexel.com. Deadline is Tuesday for the following weekend's bulletin.

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