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*Beautifying Our Church and Glorifying God*



## Women's Guild Project Brings Warmth to Kupunas

**W**hen the Women's Guild planned their master calendar for the year, they realized that they wanted to do another community service project besides the annual December Wahiawa Hospital Long-Term Care event.

Liz Perry, the Vice President of the Women's Guild, also volunteers with the City and County of Honolulu's Elderly Affairs Division's Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), which has programs all over the island for Kupuna. Remy Rueda, the coordinator for RSVP, advised her that Lanakila of the Pacific Waianae Wellness Group would appreciate our contribution.

The Guild held an extra bake sale where all the goods are homemade and donated by the members of the Guild to raise funds for the project. Since we always do a craft project each year, we decided to make 40 no-sew fleece lap blankets for the Kupuna.

Two workshops were held in the religious education classrooms where Guild members came to learn how to make the blankets. Some members took fabric home to help complete the 40 blankets. As the women worked on the blankets, they learned a new craft and worked with positive thoughts that their efforts would help bring warmth and healing to the kupuna who would use them.

Twelve members of the Guild delivered the blankets to the Kupuna at the center on Oct. 19.



*There were lots of happy smiles when members of our Women's Guild delivered lap blankets to Lanakila of the Pacific-Waianae Wellness.*

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# Women's Guild Project Brings Warmth to Kupunas

*continued from front cover*

“They were very, very appreciative of them,” Women’s Guild president Georgette Ane says. “We prayed over the blankets that the Kupuna would enjoy and feel the love that went into making the blankets in addition to providing warmth and healing for their ailments. They were all happy to receive our gift and after they chose their blanket, they opened them up to take a picture and share with the group.”

St. John Apostle & Evangelist Church’s Women’s Guild has 106 members who wear many ministry hats. They clean the church, decorate the church, wash the altar linens, serve on bereavement, serve as Eucharistic Ministers, volunteer for the Homebound and Prison Ministries, provide manpower for Hui O Laulima, teach religious education, sing in the choirs, serve as Lectors, welcome and usher parishioners, help with outreach and most of all, pray. They offer their time and their hearts to lead faithful, Christian lives.



*A colorful array of lap blankets is sorted before being distributed.*



*Smaller blankets were made for residents using wheelchairs to make sure the material would not tangle.*

*Any women interested in joining the Women’s Guild may contact Georgette Ane at [georgette.ane@gmail.com](mailto:georgette.ane@gmail.com).*

# Resolve to Give Back to God in 2018

Dear Parishioners,

Another new year — 2018! There was a time in my life when this date (and others) seemed so far in the future. It is amazing how those dates start to pile up and stream by, isn't it? I have reached a point where measuring one's life by the years and dates is not as significant as many other things.

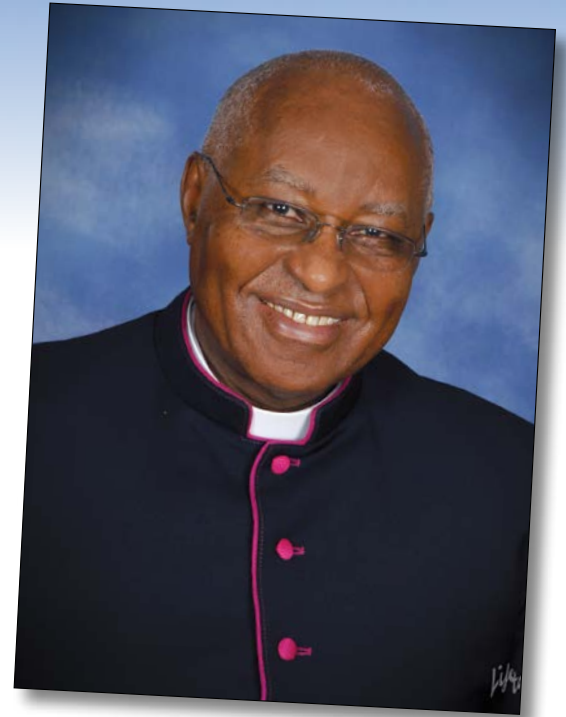
I recall reading somewhere, "The world around us asks, 'What does a person own?' But God asks, 'How does a person use what he or she has been given?'" This month of January is one filled with reminders of holiness — the official end of the Christmas season; the Epiphany of our Lord; the Baptism of the Lord; and the return to Ordinary Time, which, as we know, is not "ordinary" at all.

At Epiphany we hear, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matthew 2:11), a reference to the Magi and their visit to the Christ Child. The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their gifts for Him is one we should all try to follow. Each of us is called to open our gifts before Jesus and offer Him what He needs. I heard a suggestion once

that if you have a problem with this thought, you should perhaps keep one of the Magi from your Christmas Nativity set and place it on your desk as a reminder.

During the Baptism of the Lord, God makes it clear when He proclaims from the Heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). God has given us the greatest gift He could give. He gave His only Son. When we think about the enormity of that gift of Jesus sent to save us, in addition to all the other blessings which God has entrusted to us, it is very humbling. God has given us so much. What do we give in return?

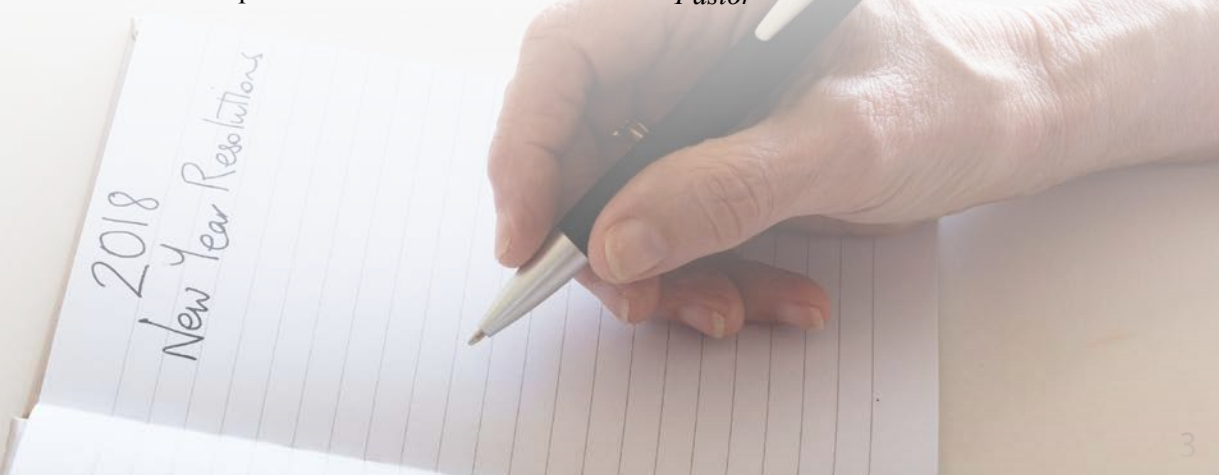
Making resolutions is common at this time of year. We will also hear this month about how Jesus called the first apostles. The Lord calls us as well to follow Him. Let us resolve to try to do that better — all of us. That does not mean we have to leave our work and our families behind, but we do need to put our service to Jesus. That should be our top resolution.



In *The Theology of the Hammer*, Habitat for Humanity co-founder Millard Fuller wrote, "The only truly safe investment one can make in life is what is given away." First and foremost, God wants us. That should be our real resolution — to give ourselves to the Lord. May we all do a better job of that in 2018. God bless you all.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. John S. Mbinda  
Pastor





# Prayer:

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## COME TO

**W**e make constant reference to the “three Ts” of stewardship, recognizing that to truly live as a stewardship people, we must give God the first fruits of our time, talent, and treasure. It is easy for us to see the concrete reality of the latter two. If we are to give God our talents, we must first recognize with what talents He has blessed us, and then use those talents for His greater glory. And as we continue our stewardship path, we know very well that our money is something concrete. When we recognize it as a gift from God, we know that we are to give a certain amount back to Him. It is easy for many of us to understand what it means to give God our talent and our treasure.

But what does it mean to give God a portion of our time? This idea is much harder to grasp, and yet giving to God the first fruits of our time is just as important as the other two. And if we understand this idea and implement it properly, our stewardship of time will serve as the very foundation from which our stewardship of talent and treasure bear fruit.

When we talk about stewardship of time, we are referring to prayer time. Prayer is of the utmost importance in a disciple’s life, and in the Diocese of Wichita’s *The Pillars of Parish Stewardship*, it is also one of the four pillars of stewardship.

Does this mean that in order to be true disciples, we should say the *Our Father* three times a day or pray



# KNOW THE LORD

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a daily Rosary? Not particularly. Of course, we must not discount the merits of prayer, as the Church in her wondrous wisdom has given us certain prayers to help guide our lives. However, the disciple's deep life of prayer involves even more.

St. John Chrysostom explains, "You should not think of prayer as being a matter of words. It is a desire for God, an indescribable devotion ... the gift of God's grace" (*Hom 6*). That is, if we look at prayer as a mere regimen that we must follow every day, then we do not see to the heart of it. The reality is that prayer will take on different forms for every one of us. One person may have a deep devotion to the Rosary, and in praying it, he is closely united to the Lord. Another person might feel deeply connected to Him through constant conversation – in the car on the way to work, before bed at night, or at other hours throughout the day. Meanwhile, for another person, a daily or weekly hour of silence before the Lord in Eucharistic Adoration is the best place for him to offer the Lord his heart. No matter how we choose to pray, we must get to the root of it all. If we are to truly give God our time, it must be a gift of ourselves. It must come from the heart and not take the form of mere word repetition. If we offer an *Our Father* without meditating on the words, it can simply become recitation.

The point of prayer is to get to know the Lord. If we are committed to living as His disciples, we must be on personal terms with Him. The first disciples didn't know what it meant to pray the Rosary. And until the Lord taught them the *Our Father*, they couldn't pray that either. But they were definitely true stewards of their time. They walked with Jesus, talked with Jesus, and ate meals with Him. He was their best friend, and the more they got to know Him, the more they longed to serve Him.

The same holds true for us today. We can walk with Him, talk with Him and sit with Him, just as they did. And He wants us to do this, too. St. John Chrysostom proclaims, there is nothing more worthwhile: "For prayer unites us to God as His companions" (*Hom 6*). How can we serve Him if we don't know Him? If we truly desire to be a servant people, we must talk to Him whom we wish to serve. We must get to know Him. Then, most assuredly, we will fall in love with Him. We will undoubtedly desire nothing more than to serve Him.

Recognize Jesus as your best friend and spend time with Him as such. He is the Lord, the Creator of the Universe, without whom we would cease to exist. Bring Him your cares and concerns, your excitement, your worry, your fears and your frustrations, and allow Him to comfort you. He is there, and He wants to speak with you.

*No matter how we choose to pray, we must get to the root of it all. If we are to truly give God our time, it must be a gift of ourselves. It must come from the heart and not take the form of mere word repetition.*

## Nutritionist Answering Call to Steward Parish Health

**B**ody, mind and spirit — when all three are working together, the world is a much better place to be. Our resident parish health nutritionist, Stefanie Chang-Hiu, RDN, wants to help parishioners feel their best in every way possible.

“I feel my primary role as the Parish Health nutritionist is to help keep parishioners healthy by increasing their knowledge about nutrition and engaging them in a healthier lifestyle, through newsletter articles, and providing food demonstrations at health fairs,” Stefanie says. “Our bodies are temples where the Holy Spirit resides, and all of us should take care of our bodies physically, mentally and spiritually. I strongly feel that food is medicine — we have the power to choose health and eat the proper foods.”

As Director of Nutrition and Lifestyle Services at the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, Stefanie oversees two other dietitians, a health educator, and the Fitness Center. Her role here at the parish was brought to life one Sunday morning just as Mass was ending.

“My journey started several years ago, at the 9 a.m. Mass,” she says. “It was almost finished when Msgr. John Mbinda asked if there was a dietitian in the parish. I had a rush of excitement and felt led by the Holy Spirit to answer Msgr. Mbinda’s and God’s calling. After church, I waited in line to shake hands with Msgr. Mbinda and told him with anticipation that I am a dietitian and would love to offer my time, talent, and be a part of His greater plan.”

Stefanie says her vision for the ministry is to encourage parishioners to treat their bodies with respect and eat for health. Growing up, she says it was her family’s change to a healthy lifestyle that inspired her choice of career.

“My dad had a strong influence in my pathway to healthcare,” she says. “He would listen to these health broadcasts on the radio and changed our eating habits when I was in high school. We switched from white rice, white bread and sugar cereals to brown rice, whole grain bread, and non-sugar cereals just to name a few. To my surprise, I felt better, had more energy, and a stronger immune system.”



*Stefanie (at left) says one of the best parts about her involvement with the Health Ministry is the connection she feels to other believers and the strength she gains from fellowship.*



*Our resident parish health nutritionist, Stefanie Chang-Hiu, RDN (at right), wants to help parishioners feel their best in every way possible.*

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# Liturgical Environment Ministry

## *Beautifying Our Church and Glorifying God*

Of course, it is the people who make a Catholic Church a *church*. However, the people of a parish need to gather to worship, to pray, and for the various sacraments. Here at St. John Apostle & Evangelist, we gather often and especially on the weekends in our holy church. We are blessed with a group of people, our Liturgical Environment Ministry, who help us to maintain the sacred nature of our church.

“We gather twice a week after the 8 a.m. Mass on Tuesday and Friday to clean the interior of the church, especially the floors and the chairs,” says Alexis Salvador, who coordinates this ministry. “We sweep and mop the floor. The lanai is swept and mopped also. On a quarterly basis, we clean and oil the chairs.”

The people in the ministry recognize how important their work is to the life of the parish. When asked why they participate in the Liturgical Environment Ministry, participants had varied answers, but with one consistent basis — the fact that this is a holy place. They say, “It is

an honor and a privilege to clean the house of the Lord.” “God has helped me in so many ways — this is a way I can give something back to Him by cleaning His house.” “Doing this helps us to be better people spiritually by working together to keep our Lord’s house clean, not only for us, but for the entire community.”

“We began this ministry this past April,” Alexis says. “Not only is it an excellent way to serve God and our parish, but it also is economically wise. Prior to that, we contracted with an outside company to come in and do what we are now doing. The problem with that was twofold — first, it was expensive; second, the people actually doing the work were capable, but they did not literally love our parish like we do. Stewardship means truly being an active part of the parish. We the parishioners are responsible for every part of its success and growth. It is up to us, the people, the parishioners to recognize that this is our church, our community, and we need to care for it and maintain it.

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## Liturgical Environment Ministry *continued from page 7*

“A good steward does good without the expectation of reward or recognition,” Alexis continues. “This is a case where our work is sometimes only noticed when we miss something or fail to clean it. We may not provide a physical example to a lot of others, but those parishioners who do see us in action offer compliments and ‘thank you.’ They recognize that we may toil in obscurity,

but perhaps that helps them better understand what stewardship is.”

The ministry currently has about five people who are regularly there to help out, and others help sometimes, as well.

“If anyone has just an hour to spare on Tuesday or Friday morning, please come and join us,” Alexis says.

*If you are interested in becoming involved with the ministry, as Alexis notes, “any amount of time will be helpful.” To learn more, please contact Alexis at 808-798-7856 (phone call or text), or alexiskanani0707@gmail.com.*

## Nutritionist Answering Call to Steward Parish Health

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Stefanie is a graduate of Mililani High School and received an A.A. in liberal arts from Leeward Community College before pursuing her bachelor’s degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. From there, she completed her dietetic internship in Ann Arbor, Mich., before returning to Hawaii to complete the national exam and receive her Registered Dietitian credential.

“After a few years, I went back to school to get my master’s degree in Maternal and Child Health, and five years ago obtained my Certification in Diabetes Education,” Stefanie says.

In the midst of her journey to complete her education, Stefanie also became a Catholic.

“I grew up in a home that didn’t go to church, never spoke about Jesus, and didn’t know about Jesus,” she says. “However, somehow I always believed there was a higher being. It wasn’t until I went to Ann Arbor for my dietetic internship that I got baptized and confirmed and experienced a greater exposure to Christianity.”

She says one of the best parts about her involvement with the Health Ministry is the connection she feels to other believers and the strength she gains from fellowship.

“I see and hear how He is working in their lives which ignites my faith,” Stefanie says.

*“Our bodies are temples where the Holy Spirit resides, and all of us should take care of our bodies physically, mentally and spiritually. I strongly feel that food is medicine — we have the power to choose health and eat the proper foods.”*

*— Stefanie Chang-Hiu, RDN*

*Parishioners who are interested in working with Stefanie Chang-Hiu, RDN to improve their health can seek her out at an upcoming health fair or call the Women’s Health Clinic at WCCHC at 808-697-3480 to schedule an appointment with her. Parishioners may need to seek a referral from their physician prior to the appointment. You can also visit the health center’s website, [www.wcchc.com](http://www.wcchc.com) to find fitness classes and learn more about what the center offers.*