## FEATURES

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### DEPARTMENTS

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We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of human life.

– Pope Francis
I had no idea how rapidly and dramatically our world would change when I agreed to edit this magazine as a volunteer in February. As I write this, it’s unclear how long we’ll continue social distancing and I deeply miss going to Mass at The Basilica, a feeling I’m sure many of you share.

The Basilica has been an important part of my life since 2015, when my parents, visiting from out of town, insisted we go to Mass — my first Mass since high school. I was enthralled with the beautiful liturgy and the breathtaking architecture. That first visit truly reawakened my love for the Catholic faith, causing me to reinitiate the confirmation process I abandoned as a teenager. Since then, I’ve become a parishioner, served as sponsor for the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), written for this magazine, and was married at The Basilica this past fall.

I’ve found great comfort in connecting to The Basilica by working with the magazine team to edit these articles. I hope you find some solace and connection to our faith community within these pages as well. These stories serve as a reminder of what makes our faith community so special, from the meaningful art in the Undercroft galleries (“On the Way to Donuts and Coffee”) to passing on our Catholic faith to the next generation (“Children’s Liturgy of the Word”).

Perhaps the most impactful article in this issue contains reflections on To Be Certain of the Dawn: The Basilica Holocaust Memorial Oratorio, a piece of music first performed at The Basilica in 2005 to commemorate the liberation of the Nazi death camps and a Vatican II document that condemned blaming Jews for the death of Christ. Let it serve as a reminder that our world has suffered atrocities before, overcoming them not through xenophobia and violence, but through love, hope, and respect.

Wherever you’re reading this, I hope you and your family are safe, healthy, and happy, and I look forward to the day we can all gather together again.

— Rachel Newman Hogness
The Vision Still has its Time
The future of our parish

SEVERAL years ago I had dinner with a friend who, a few months earlier, had started a new job. Actually, he hadn’t just started a new job; he had started a new career. As we talked, it was clear that his new career was exciting and challenging, but also very demanding in terms of his time and energy. At one point I asked him if ultimately he thought it would be worth it. His reply was simple: “John, I’m not someone who can just rest on their laurels. I think there is more for me to accomplish in this world.” Now, several years later, while there were a few bumps in the road, his new career has taken off. He is happily married with children and is genuinely pleased with what he is doing with his life.

I thought of my friend the other day as I was reflecting on all that has been going on at The Basilica the past couple of years. During this time we have developed a new five-year Strategic Plan (Our Parish, Our Future). We have also been working with a Change Management Consultant to help us identify those ministries, services, and programs, etc., that are important and necessary for our parish community, and need to continue, as well as those that needed to change or end.

Additionally, in consultation with our Parish Council, the Basilica Landmark Board established a Master Planning Committee to work with HGA Architects and their team to develop a Master Plan for The Basilica and its campus. The Plan is very comprehensive and includes recommendations to support a broad vision for our campus, as well as respond to identified needs to better perform our day-to-day ministries and works.

The detail in the Master Plan will be used as a starting point, and will help guide us as we work to determine the appropriate scope and phases of implementing the Master Plan. These project priority decisions will be reflective of the needs of our parish community as well as the interests, budget, and giving capacity of our parishioners and donors.

In conjunction with the Master Plan, The Basilica Landmark Board also approved funding to hire the firm of Bentz, Whaley, Flessner to conduct a Feasibility Study to help determine the fundraising capacity of any potential Capital Campaign that would be needed to implement elements of the newly developed Master Plan.

I know I come from a biased perspective, but I believe all of the above work speaks loudly and clearly that at The Basilica we are not satisfied to “rest on our laurels.” Certainly we can and should take pride in all that The Basilica has been and accomplished in the past. But if we stop there, if we are content to rest on our laurels, I think we are failing in our vision and our mission. We need to look to the future to see what yet needs to be done. In this regard we are blessed by the staff and leadership at The Basilica. Truly they are leading the charge as we look forward to a future full of hope.

For all of the above, we are very grateful. Because of this, our parish is truly blessed.

— Fr. John Bauer

I wrote the following column before the COVID-19 pandemic turned our world and our individual lives upside down. The pandemic, of course, has put everything “on hold” with no clarity about when things will begin to return to some semblance of normal — whatever normal will look like. And yet, this does not and cannot negate all the good work and planning we have done at The Basilica the past few years. In this regard, the words of the prophet Habakkuk come to mind. “For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint; if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late.”

These words were spoken during a desperate time for the people of Judah. I believe, they still speak to us today. They remind us that God has not and will never abandon us. We have only to trust that the vision has its time and that it will surely come.
As I was writing this article, Minnesota was experiencing a stay-at-home order for seven weeks, plus additional weeks of social distancing. This has had an enormous impact on our lives in general and on our liturgical lives in particular. Though we have had our share of liturgical crises throughout history; this one will probably prove to be among the most memorable.

Since the downturn in vocations to the priesthood, we have been concerned as a Church about how we can best engage our communities in Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest. Today we find ourselves in the peculiar situation of Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Congregation. Neither is ideal. However, in both cases extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures.

We started livestreaming our Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Congregation on the fourth Sunday of Lent, days after our governor issued his stay-at-home order. The first two Sundays we managed somewhat amateurishly with a single iPhone. By Palm Sunday we were in full swing with a professional team and several cameras. Our communications and liturgy teams worked quickly to re-imagine the celebration of Holy Week without a congregation and via livestream. We invited people to participate at home by engaging in active listening, praying, and singing as well as in standing, kneeling, washing of feet, venerating the cross, lighting and extinguishing candles, and sprinkling Holy Water. And by all accounts many people did. On Easter Sunday alone, we had more than 25,000 households participate in the Eucharist via livestream.

Still, how we missed our communal washing of the feet, our passing of the cross, the singing of the exulted in a darkened church lit by hundreds of candles held by members of our community. Our greatest sadness was our inability to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist with those who had been preparing for months to join the Church during the Easter Vigil. Knowing of their great disappointment and experiencing the loss of this essential part of the Easter Vigil was very difficult for all of us. We look forward to the day when we will be able to welcome them into the Church.

Continued
FPO

(Top) Holy Thursday, washing of the feet with Teri Larson, Director of Music and husband Don Krubsack; (above) QwikCast video team setting up the livestream; (right) Basilica Schola Cantorum rehearsal preparation
(Top); Good Friday, Fr. John Bauer;
(above) Filming footage for the livestream;
(right) Easter procession with Fr. Harry Tasto,
Fr. John Bauer, and Archbishop Bernard Hebd.
Reflections by Parishioners

Lana Jones
“In 20 years as a Basilica parishioner, Easter this year was the most profound experience I’ve ever had. Although virtual, I attended every service from Palm Sunday through Easter morning’s glorious celebration with the Archbishop. Each was beautiful, unique, spiritual, and truly perfect. I felt totally connected in our separateness.”

Bill Keller
“My girlfriend Nici was preparing for her RCIA confirmation at Easter (I completed RCIA in 2018). Her class schedule was changing and it became evident that the beautiful services and steps toward confirmation were not going to happen in the traditional sense. We were saddened by the thought of not attending services and were feeling withdrawn from our church life, but we were determined to keep the week holy for the Lord.

We started by subscribing to The Basilica on Facebook and received notifications for live content. We started virtual worshiping and immediately it brought comfort and peace as we prayed and shared with all of our church family. Seeing the passing comments from worshipers and staff while following in the online worship guide was helpful. As time progressed, the video and sound improved greatly and it felt like we were there; the sense of loss was relieved and we really look forward to attending. We will continue to livestream our liturgies and invite you to join us whenever you can. Though our Sunday obligation to participate in the Eucharist has been suspended, our Sunday hunger for Eucharist and community continues. And we look forward to the day when we will again be able to celebrate the Eucharist together in our beloved Basilica.

The Anderson Family
“During uncertain times, the one certainty our family had is worshiping with our Basilica community. Waking up on Sunday mornings and getting our family dressed for church is a welcome routine, even if we weren’t leaving the house. Our children, Dean, and Addie, were especially excited to wear their ‘Easter best’ for 9:30 Mass with Archbishop Hebda.”

Julissa Medrano
“I moved back to Texas six years ago but The Basilica is my spiritual home. This year as we entered Holy Week, my mother was in her second week of hospice after her battle with pancreatic cancer. I was by her side and we observed Holy Week together. As much as her suffering mirrored that of Christ himself, my entire family felt the warm embrace and love from The Basilica. The livestream accessibility and rosary recordings made us feel like we weren’t alone. I washed her feet during Holy Thursday services. It took me back to being an RCIA sponsor and the beauty of the connection we have as Catholics. I will forever be thankful for having The Basilica family at my side during this time.”

Johan M.J. van Parys, Ph.D., has been The Basilica’s director of liturgy and sacred arts since 1995.
OVER the past two years the dedicated Campus Master Planning Committee has worked tirelessly to complete the Master Plan for our Basilica Campus. Last January, lead architect, Joan Sorzano, FAIA and senior project architect, John Cook, FAIA from HGA, a multi-disciplinary architecture and engineering design firm, together with members of the Campus Master Planning Committee presented the Campus Master Plan to our Parish Council, Finance Committee, and The Basilica Landmark. Each of these groups of parish leaders enthusiastically welcomed the plan and approved that we take it to the next step.

The Campus Master Planning committee will now pass the torch to a newly established Campus Master Plan Phasing Committee. This group will study how we might best take the ambitious Master Plan and stage it in a sequence of smart phases.

It should not come as a surprise that the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed us down, however we are committed to the future of our Basilica Campus and plan to take up this task as soon as we possibly can.

In the meantime, several of those who served on our Campus Master Planning Committee and will now be helping with the phasing offer a reflection on their work on our Campus Master Plan.

KATHY ANDRUS  
I’m very grateful to have had the experience of working on the Campus Master Plan Committee with other Basilica parishioners and leaders as well as our outside partners. The dedication, commitment, creativity, and resolve exhibited by each and every individual to capture our vision for how the Basilica lives on into the next 100 years has been truly transformative.

The vision statement developed by the Campus Space Planning Committee to set our course for the next 100 years was a powerful guide throughout the process. It reflects the traditions that are our foundation and builds a pathway that ensures we are a sustainable community of faith. Throughout my career I have participated in many strategic visioning projects but I can’t recall an experience that was as thorough, inclusive, and deliberate as ours was. The final Campus Master Plan was the result of countless hours of deliberation. We needed to ensure that the design that our partners created resulted in a dynamic built environment that both meets our needs as well as positions us for the future.

It was a great honor to be part of this milestone project.
TOM PAUL, Parish Trustee

In January of 2018, I began working with a group of individuals from our parish on the Campus Space Planning Committee. Soon thereafter, this led to working on a selection committee to find the right team of architects, preservationists, urban planners, and landscapers to work with The Basilica. As the team of external experts came together, the parish formed a Master Planning Committee to work over a six month period to explore and finalize a plan to ensure our campus, buildings, and neighborhood connections will best serve the needs of our parish — today and tomorrow.

We began the process by establishing a vision that drew on the traditions of generations past and present while embracing the need to adapt in order to meet the needs and faith values of generations to come. I could not help but spend time contemplating the process that may have been used at the beginning of the last century. One that enabled visionaries to build the structure and grow the community we now know as The Basilica. We know that in 1903, Archbishop John Ireland announced his desire to build a church in Minneapolis that would strikingly symbolize the values and the significance of the Catholic Church. He asked for support and cooperation from parishioners and by 1904 planning committees were established and the project had begun.

Whatever they did to make this grand vision become a reality has resulted in a growing, vibrant, and caring community still delivering on its mission over 100 years later.

I understand that the realization of the full vision for the Master Plan will likely not occur in my lifetime, but I am grateful to have been a part of this comprehensive process. I am comforted to know that similar to the planning committees of 1904 we will be laying a solid foundation for future generations to build upon.

FELICIA DE SANTOS

I have been a Basilica parishioner for almost a decade; it has been the place in Minnesota where I have felt the most welcomed and which continues to ground my life here. And my life is richer for having participated in the Master Planning process! Seeing our shared vision unfold through the incredible talent of the design team, being able to connect the tenets of science, engineering, and technology to the future we envision for our community, unlocking my own creativity and learning from the others on this journey all have been spiritually enriching and gratifying. I am pleased that the process has incorporated the diverse perspectives from across our Basilica, and I excitedly await the next steps of the plan which will hopefully be enabled by the generosity of every one of you, fellow members of my Basilica of Saint Mary family.

DEB PEKAREK

My husband, daughters, and I have volunteered in a variety of capacities at The Basilica for many years. A recent focus for me has been membership on the Master Planning Committee.

The process of working as a group to develop a Master Plan for our campus has been completely invigorating. I’ve learned a great deal about architecture, design, teamwork, and most importantly, tying vision to desired outcome.

Early on, the Campus Space Planning Committee spent several hours over two meetings to draft and clarify the Project Vision Statement. It still takes my breath away when I read it. It has guided us every step of the way. We’ve kept our minds and hearts centered not on each of our individual or family interests, but this precious opportunity to reimagine our parish spaces to serve our community and inspire faith for decades to come.

The aspect of the plan I am most excited for is a central entrance for all. As we come from our modern world into our sacred space for worship, fellowship or ministry, we will come as one. Coming through one door feels symbolic to me as well as functionally wise. Volunteers and staff from our departments of Liturgy, Learning, and Christian Life will have more opportunities for connections as they come on campus to work or serve. Our guests and those seeking refuge will have more clarity about where to go for events and services. Our guests and those seeking refuge will have more clarity about where to go for events and services. Our worship, ministry, office, and social spaces will all be connected. The physical space will be beautiful, functional, and also symbolic in its unity.

From visioning to proposals to design and projections it has been my great honor to serve the beautiful Basilica community in this capacity as we continue to seek the well-being of our city. ✨

Johan M.J. van Parys, Ph.D., has been The Basilica’s director of liturgy and sacred arts since 1995.
A Timeless Oratorio

May it continue to offer us hope and healing

“This is the task: in the darkest night to be certain of the dawn, certain of the power to turn a curse into a blessing, agony into song. To know the monster’s rage and, in spite of it, proclaim to its face (even a monster will be transfigured into an angel); to go through Hell and to continue to trust in the goodness of God — this is the challenge and the way.”

— Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

In November 2005, members of The Basilica of Saint Mary and Temple Israel, plus guests from throughout the Twin Cities and beyond, gathered for a seminal evening — the world premier of To Be Certain of the Dawn: The Basilica Holocaust Memorial Oratorio. This landmark concert celebrated two important anniversaries — the liberation of the Nazi death camps and Nostra Aetate (In Our Times), the groundbreaking Vatican II document that condemned blaming Jews for the death of Christ. The world premiere was also within a week of the annual commemoration of Kristallnacht, the beginning of open hostility towards Jews in Germany.

Created by two local artists, composer Stephen Paulus (since deceased) and poet/librettist Michael Dennis Browne, the oratorio brought us together, through music, to remember the Holocaust, condemn intolerance, and commit to building understanding for people of all faiths and races. Performers from the Minnesota Orchestra, the Minnesota Chorale, the Minnesota Boy Choir and the Basilica’s own Cathedral Choir and Choristers children’s choir premiered the oratorio here at The Basilica on November 17-19, 2005.

BY MELISSA STREIT
This masterpiece was commissioned by The Basilica and then-pastor Michael J. O’Connell as a gift to our Jewish brothers and sisters and our predecessors in faith. Pivotal to the piece are the faces and voices of children. Through the children we are invited to behold the image of the Creator, reflected in creation, and in contrast to the deliberate, systematic murder of Jewish children by the Nazis.

Fifteen years later To Be Certain of the Dawn: The Basilica Holocaust Memorial Oratorio will be performed again. At the time the article was published, the Minnesota Orchestra is including this piece in their 2020-21 season with concerts scheduled at Orchestra Hall for October 16-18, 2020. (Please visit minnesotaorchestra.org for the most current performance information.)

The voices of both adults and children from our Basilica Cathedral Choir and Choristers will participate in the performances, along with the Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Chorale, and the Minnesota Boy Choir.

In times of heightened anti-Semitism and xenophobia, To Be Certain of the Dawn invites us, through art and the voices of children, to condemn intolerance, unite in friendship with our Jewish sisters and brothers, and discover enhanced ways to understand and worship God.

“You must teach the children, so they can remake the world.”

—Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel
RABBI MARCIA ZIMMERMAN

Healing comes in varied ways and often many years after the initial hurtful and traumatic experiences that tore apart the life of innocent people. I met my husband, Frank Hornstein, when he was writing his family's Holocaust oral history for his senior thesis at Macalester College. Over 400 pages of first hand interviews with the few family members who survived the Holocaust. His mother, Dr. Lusia (Schwarzvald) Hornstein, grew up in Lvov, Poland, and his father, Dr. Stephan Hornstein, was from a small town in Hungary. Devastated by the loss of family and friends, my in-laws rebuilt their lives with courage, hope, and love.

When I met Frank’s parents they both were well-known physicians in Cincinnati, Ohio. My mother-in-law was a pediatrician with a specialty in genetic disorders and my father-in-law spent his career as an obstetrician welcoming new babies into this world. Both spent their lives after the Holocaust helping restore the broken world they lived through with a shared belief in the goodness of humanity. I was always touched by their dedication to ushering in new life and easing the pain of suffering for children struggling with genetic disorders. Neither of them were bitter, instead they focused on giving their family a secure life in a new country.

My mother-in-law was saved in part by the Catholic church, when under false papers and a false identity as a Catholic woman living all alone. I am forever grateful because my own children would not be here were it not for the nuns who provided shelter for a young woman who attended church daily.

To Be Certain of the Dawn has given shelter and healing in the aftermath of the Holocaust to the Jewish community in Minnesota. Not only has Michael Dennis Browne and Stephen Paulus, may his memory be a blessing, created a beautiful and stirring lasting tribute to those who died in the Holocaust and to the survivors in our own community who 15 years ago were more numerous and spyr than they are today. I will be forever grateful to The Basilica of Saint Mary for their leadership in conceptualizing and creating this incredible work to honor the Jewish community and individual Jews through the generosity of the Christian community. This is a healing spirit that will always be remembered.

In the depths of these times, the rise of hate crimes and anti-Semitism, To Be Certain of the Dawn is a message of hope and deep healing. Creating out of the stain of history the flowers of hope. There is a Jewish legend that is about a king who has a precious and perfect ruby. One day, as he was admiring his jewel, it drops on a stone floor and in the middle of the stone is a jagged crack. Everyone in the kingdom tries to get rid of the crack to make the king happy again. No one is successful, devastated the king has given up on a solution to the gem now flawed. An artist traveling through asks if she can work with the stone and the king hands it over to the artist. The artist works with the crack and etches into the stone a beautiful rose and the crack is the root of the flower.

We cannot erase the hurt and pain of the horror of the Holocaust, but we can find a way to both honor the deep crevices of trauma and create out of the torment a flower of healing and hope. This piece of beautiful music, images, and voices can mend the wounds of the past, and create a brighter future for our children, and our grandchildren.

JOHAN VAN PARYS

When my grandmother died, I inherited her papers and old photographs. As I went through these I happened upon a set of letters sent by my grandmother to my grandfather while he was a prisoner of war in Nazi Germany. They were lovingly tied together with a red ribbon. The letters were all very similar. In them, my grandmother tells him she and his parents are doing just fine. She often mentions how their oldest daughter, my mother always asks about him and sends her love. She begs him not to worry about them and to take good care. She ends every letter by expressing her love and hope that he might come home soon.

In return, my grandfather sent several letters to my grandmother. In them he assures her he is doing ok, asks questions about her and his children and mentions how he longs to go home. I also found a tiny book with notes scribbled by my grandfather during his time in the work camp. Most moving is the page where he notes that his third child, my youngest aunt was born. My grandmother was pregnant with her when he was sent to Germany as a prisoner of war.

Another set of beautiful letters my grandmother saved were sent to her by my grandfather’s sister who was a religious sister. In them she encourages my grandmother to persevere in her faith and never to give up, even in these darkest of moments. She promises that my grandfather will return and that he will again be the great father he was to his three daughters, including the newborn.

All this gave me a glimpse into what was going on in my hometown and with my own family during the Nazi occupation of Belgium. I am grateful for this gift. And yet, there was something I was looking for that I did not find. Granted, these were personal letters that had to do with private matters between my family members. Nevertheless,
there is no reference anywhere to the Holocaust. To be sure, the letters my grandfather wrote and received were redacted by prison guards and could not be political. And the purpose of my great-aunt’s letters was to encourage my grandmother. Still it made me wonder what they knew and what they may have thought about the Holocaust in particular and Judaism in general. The fact that my grandfather was sent to a German prisoner of war camp gives me some consolation.

The relationship between what is now Belgium (founded in 1830), and Judaism began in 1023 when Baldwin IV, count of Flanders invited a group of 30 Jews to settle in Flanders. This friendly invitation quickly changed into attempts to eradicate Jewish communities from the land. The so-called Miracle of Brussels of 1370 clearly illustrates this.

According to legend, consecrated hosts were stolen from the Cathedral in Brussels in the spring of 1370 by a Jewish merchant. On Good Friday that year, he is said to have brought the hosts to a gathering of friends who used their knives to stab the hosts. Immediately, the hosts started to bleed. Frightened, the Jewish merchant returned the hosts to the priests of the Cathedral. They enshrined the hosts and reported the Jewish merchant to the authorities. This led to the Massacre of Brussels on May 23, 1370 when several Jewish men were killed and the rest of the Jewish community was banished from Brussels.

The Eucharistic Miracle of Brussels was celebrated, except during Calvinist rule of the area (1579-1585), until World War II. After the Holocaust the tapestries depicting these events were removed from the Cathedral and the celebrations ceased. In 1968, in light of the ground breaking Vatican II document Nostra Eateate which recognizes the Jewish people as our ancestors in the faith and condemns the centuries long accusation of the Jewish people as the killers of Jesus, Belgian Cardinal Suenens, who played a key role in the Council, officially ended the practice, acknowledged the so-called miracle as a fraud and strongly condemned its anti-Semitic roots.

This is but one of many anti-Semitic acts that happened in the territory now known as Belgium. Many such so-called Eucharistic miracles and accompanying persecutions of Jews were reported throughout Europe. Catholic sensitivities were clearly used to persecute Jews and this culminated in the role Belgium played in the Holocaust.

At the beginning of the 20th century the population of Belgium was 98 percent Catholic. Out of 8 million Belgians there were only 10,000 Jews. By 1940, due to the immigration of Jews fleeing persecution in East European Countries and Nazi Germany the Jewish population in Belgium rose to about 75,000. About half of them lived in Antwerp. Though officially condemned by the Belgian authorities, fascist movements between WWI and WWII fueled the hatred of Jews. This led to the burning of two synagogues and the home of the chief Rabbi; destruction of Jewish businesses; and harassment of Jewish people during the Antwerp Pogrom of April 14, 1941. In 1942 the deportation of Jews began, at first to work camps. That however was a pretext to take them to concentration camps. At first, Jews with Belgian citizenship were spared, thanks to an intervention of Queen Elizabeth of the Belgians. In the end that protection did not hold.

It is difficult to admit to this, but many Belgians collaborated with the Nazis, also in the deportations. Although Belgian authorities forbade them from doing so, about 50 percent of the Jews sent to the concentration camps were rounded up by Belgian police. However, many other Belgians, especially Catholic priests and nuns worked hard to slow down the deportation and helped in hiding many Jewish people. 25,437 Jews were deported from Belgium during WWII, only 1,207 of them returned. Antwerp, home to the largest Jewish community in Belgium lost 65 percent of its Jewish population. In total, it is estimated that 6.5 million Jews were killed by the Nazis, 1 million of them being children. It must also be acknowledged that most of the 500 Roma who lived in Belgium perished in the Holocaust, as did other “undesirables.”

It is with a very heavy heart that I write about this evil part of the history of the Belgian people and beyond that of Europeans. However, it is this heavy heart and a sense of making amends that has propelled my love for interfaith dialogue and action. So, when Michael O’Connell and Rabbi Marc Zimmerman invited Teri Larson, our music director and myself into the dialogue about the possible commission of an important piece of music commemorating the liberation of the concentration camps I was happy to accept. The result was To Be Certain of the Dawn, an oratorio created by Michael Dennis Browne (librettist) and Stephen Paulus (composer). The world premiere took place at The Basilica

Continued
of Saint Mary on November 17, 2005. The performers included the Minnesota Orchestra, Chorale and Boy Choir and our own Cathedral Choir and Cathedral Chorister under the direction of Osmo Vänskä. Since then the Oratorio has been performed over 25 times, mostly by college and university choirs and orchestras.

2020 is the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps and the 55th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, the Vatican II document acclaiming the Jewish people as our ancestors in the faith and decrying the heresy that “the Jews” killed Jesus. Sadly, anti-Semitism is rearing its ugly head once again both in Europe as well as in the United States.

STEPHEN PAULUS (transliteration of Hebrew, meaning ‘may his memory be a blessing’)

Before his untimely passing in 2014, Stephen Paulus composed 600 works for chorus, orchestra, chamber ensemble, solo voice, concert band, piano, and organ, receiving premieres and performances throughout the world as well as a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition in 2015 and 2016, which he won posthumously in 2016. Stephen’s wife, Patty, and son, Andrew, generously share some memories of To Be Certain of the Dawn.

Patty Paulus says To Be Certain of the Dawn was Stephen’s most important and significant piece because it had a great purpose and emotional message to convey. She said this piece had come later in his career when he was a seasoned composer. In working with his longtime collaborator and librettist Michael Dennis Browne, “both egos took a back seat for this greater message and purpose.” Patty observed that Paulus and Browne had worked together for so long and they could really write this piece together. After the commission, she recalls a trip to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC and how humbled and taken Stephen was with that experience. Upon their return, Stephen “knew exactly how the piece should go.”

Fifteen years later, she feels there is even more significance to the piece. With every subsequent performance, “each group puts its own stamp on it” and it transcends everyone — the effects can be seen in all of those performers. She cites a group from Saint Cloud State University who performed the oratorio on the border of France and Germany at a former camp and crematorium with survivors in the audience. “We could see the kids sobbing, while hearing the sound of birds in the background,” which evoked for her a recollection of the dove image in the To Be Certain of the Dawn logo.

In 2015, Andrew Paulus wrote “I grew up watching and listening to my Dad compose music on the grand piano in our family house. Over the years, memories of what pieces he was working on start to blend together, but a few stand out. One of those is To Be Certain of the Dawn.”

“My dad approached writing this piece with a particularly deep level of compassion and empathy that made an impression on me even as a young teenager at the time. The connection between Stephen, Michael Dennis Browne, and Michael O’Connell, who commissioned this work, was particularly strong throughout the entire process. They all seemed to profoundly understand the importance of this piece and its potential impact.”

MICHAEL DENNIS BROWNE

Michael O’Connell’s vision for the oratorio is alive and well — the work is accessible to good student musicians and is receiving numerous performances. Since the premiere in 2005, I have attended perhaps fifteen (from San Diego to Mankato to Manhattan to Alsace Lorraine) and have always been heartened to see the effect of the work on both performers and audiences.

The commission was a large challenge for Stephen and myself; one wants a work of art to take the measure of what it is addressing, and with the Shoah — that bottomless atrocity, that surd, as Geoffrey Hartman calls it — the best one can hope for is glimpses and echoes of the immensity. We were stretched and, yes, intimidated, especially in the early stages. We also had some healthy arguments, 30 or so years into our relationship as artistic partners, as we began to work our way through what we sensed was required of us.

I have confidence in the work — its power to move audiences, to represent at least some of the concerns of the Jewish community from the perspective of the Christian community, and to articulate a layered message of hope such as we need more than ever in these times.

When I hear the music, I sense Stephen’s presence in and among the notes; he lives there, though he is gone from us in his physical incarnation. I miss my beloved friend more than I can say, and I trust the power and vividness of his musical imagination as an enduring presence (that word again) in our lives.

I am deeply grateful for the privilege of this life-changing connection with Jewish faith and its profundities, and to all who, time after time, bring their skills to bear in presenting the oratorio to audiences in temples, churches, concert halls. There is no question that we are all in this together, our dreams for a world in which we can enhance, rather than destroy, our common and utterly mysterious humanity.

Melissa Streit is the Director of Engagement and has been an active volunteer and parish member since 1996.
The announcement last year that Archbishop Hebda was calling for an Archdiocesan Synod to provide input on his pastoral priorities was both remarkable and challenging. It has been more than 80 years since the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis has held a Synod. In many dioceses, a Synod has reflected the ideas and wishes of the leadership. Here, the people of the Archdiocese have been asked to provide input, share their concerns and priorities, and describe both what is working and what can be improved in our local Church. This is a rare and unique opportunity for Catholics, both practicing and not, to share their thoughts with the Archbishop and to join others in prayer, discernment, and a formal process to facilitate change.

To help The Basilica community maximize this opportunity, Fr. Bauer convened a Synod Committee of a dozen parishioners. The mission of the committee is simple: educate about and be ambassadors for the Synod process, encourage the fullest parishioner participation, offer feedback on their own experiences with Synod events and activities, and consistently pray for all the Synod participants.

The committee members have been participating in the various listening sessions across the Archdiocese over several months. These have been attended by thousands of fellow Catholics and by the Archbishop himself. In addition, committee members spoke about the Synod during the Ministry Minute at Basilica Masses in January, and engaged with parishioners and guests after Masses and at various other Basilica ministry events. As awareness about the purpose of the Synod process and the listening sessions continue, we’ve seen interest and engagement increase. All of the Synod committee members welcome your feedback, ideas, and thoughts.

“The large turnout at the Synod listening sessions so far has been extremely encouraging. It indicates how much the people of the Archdiocese care about what’s going on in their Church”

Bob Kleiber is a member of the Strategic Planning Committee and has been a parishioner since 2006.

FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE
The COVID-19 pandemic is requiring the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis to alter the Synod schedule. To keep our focus on parishes and schools without any distraction, Archbishop Bernard Hebda has decided to delay by one year the “Parish Consultation with Small Groups” stage of the Synod. The Parish Consultation process, originally planned for fall 2020, will now occur in fall 2021. The Synod Assembly originally scheduled for Pentecost 2021 has been moved to spring 2022. Archbishop Hebda will announce the initial set of focus areas in late May. Those areas will set the parameters for discussions at the deanery and parish levels.

Contact The Basilica Synod team at synod@mary.org.
A 25 Year Partnership

Faith into action with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity

BY JACKIE PEAK

TWIN Cities Habitat for Humanity was a much different organization when it began its partnership with The Basilica of Saint Mary in 1995. With half the number of staff, the Twin Cities affiliate sold roughly 35 homes per year to low-income families in the metro area. Today, it is a much larger organization still focused on serving the needs of our community. They continue to build on the framework from the 1980s and 1990s, remaining committed to families’ long-term success as homeowners, developing meaningful partnerships, and innovating to reach more Twin Cities families. It’s a magical moment when a family receives the key to their Habitat home. Last year, 114 Twin Cities families received keys, and that’s just a fraction of the hundreds of families impacted.

I proudly work with faith communities and companies that donate and volunteer with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, and I have been a parishioner at The Basilica since moving back to the Twin Cities in 2014. My dad, Dave Arnason, is on The Basilica’s Habitat for Humanity committee, and every summer, we build together during The Basilica’s build week. He says that he became involved because “housing is an issue I am passionate about and volunteering allows me to use my skills to meet the needs of the community.” A lifelong handyman, he has been an incredible asset on the construction site, but volunteers of all skill levels are invited to participate.

The Basilica’s remarkable impact over the past 25 years with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity includes thousands of volunteer hours to move families out of homelessness. These contributions create both immediate and long-term changes for families and communities. Many of the homes The Basilica has helped build are located in North Minneapolis, an area which has faced a century of disinvestment, segregation, and concentrated poverty. Affordable homeownership has made a profound effect in the community and has provided better health, education, and employment outcomes for the families moving into their Habitat homes.
Julia Buege Freeman, The Basilica’s Coordinator of Outreach, reflected on a quarter century of partnership saying, “affordable housing is so critical to the health of our community, and our volunteers find it rewarding to be involved in building affordable, well-constructed, quality housing for families. In these homes, kids can grow and flourish in stable housing; the research proves the lasting impacts!”

This 25-year partnership between Habitat and The Basilica has created an impact which ripples for generations. As we look to the next 25 years, I am proud of the work these organizations are doing together. The Basilica community is truly putting their faith into action. ✝️

Jackie Peak has been a parishioner since 2014.
OVER the last two years, more than 75 individuals at The Basilica collaborated to create and begin realizing Our Parish, Our Future: a comprehensive five-year strategic plan that reaffirms our mission, vision and values as a Catholic parish, builds on our many strengths, and identifies areas of strategic focus and opportunity to increase the impact of our work in the community.

Our Parish, Our Future focuses on four primary strategic directions:

- **Increasing engagement** through fostering a welcoming environment, growing participation in our ministries and programs, and implementing best practices in communication and volunteer management
- **Strengthening our presence and partnerships** by building and growing relationships that extend our reach and engagement in the greater community
- **Enhancing belonging and excellence in our ministries** through building an inclusive community and fostering innovative and impactful programs
- **Stewarding our resources** through optimizing our business operations and programs, communicating transparently and building our technology capacity

The plan also emphasizes three areas of programmatic strength for The Basilica: the arts, inclusivity, and service to the homeless. You can find the full text of Our Parish, Our Future at mary.org.

As a member of the parish council, I was honored to be a part of this collaborative and visionary process. The Basilica has so many strengths as a parish community, and it is thrilling to see the strategic plan highlight these strengths and envision a vibrant future in which The Basilica continues to increase its impact as a home of spiritual nourishment, a beacon of hope,
and an advocate for change. At this time of significant change within our society and within the Church, The Basilica’s decision to invest time and resource in creating and implementing a comprehensive strategic plan is a great example of our parish’s leadership in defining best practices for Catholic churches of our day and our sincere commitment to advance our mission and better serve our community.

At the center of this plan is increased engagement — among members of the parish and among new participants in our ministries and activities. As a result of the plan’s focus on increasing engagement, a new key staff position was created. Melissa Streit, The Basilica’s new Director of Engagement, shares her thoughts on Our Parish, Our Future.

As Director of Engagement, what do you see as the Basilica’s biggest areas of strength and areas of opportunity to grow engagement?

An amazing number of volunteers are already infused through every ministry and at every level at The Basilica. But there are undeniable societal shifts: people are increasingly pulled and stretched with demands on their time and a variety of priorities. Volunteer and church attendance patterns are changing. We have to be intentionally flexible and inclusive so that all who want to engage with our community can do so in a meaningful and impactful way. And we have to share the compelling stories of the tangible impacts this community and our constituents make across a variety of platforms.

What excites you most about Our Parish, Our Future?

My efforts are about both helping individuals along their personal spiritual journey and advancing parish ministries and partnerships through volunteer engagement. It is a privilege to share the opportunity to volunteer with others — inviting them into a deeper connection with others, with our community as a whole, and with God. The Strategic Plan clearly articulates those goals and ties them to our vision statement to seek the well-being of our city.

There are a lot of exciting areas of work in the plan. How can someone get involved?

It only takes one small step to get involved at The Basilica. We have volunteers at our Connect and Welcome Desks after every weekend Mass ready to answer questions and share next steps. All of our volunteer ministries are listed online at mary.org, with links to our regular volunteer orientation sessions and new member brunches. Volunteers on our Gifts Leadership Team are happy to meet one-on-one with people and help them discern the gifts and talents given to them by God, and how to use them in our parish community. And I am happy to chat with anyone over coffee, by phone, or via email to help them get connected to our parish and the impactful ministries here. It is an honor to help people find a ministry that provides joy and fulfillment.

Katelin Richter Davis is currently the Parish Council Vice Chair and has been a parish member since 2015.
Staff Anniversary Reflections

Serving The Basilica for 20+ years

THE BASILICA is a very special place to work — for staff it is not only their parish faith community, but also their place of employment. Within the past year we have celebrated several staff members marking milestone work anniversaries. Here are their thoughts and reflections.

BY MAE DESAIRE

JANICE ANDERSEN
Director of Christian Life • 25 years
I vividly remember the interview process at The Basilica during the summer of 1994. I was humbled, yet knew if I was called into service at The Basilica, I was not alone. The Spirit was alive in the community. If I was called, God would be my strength and my guide.

The Basilica has provided me a community of faith to serve, to learn from, and to praise God with. Our world is full of beauty and pain, truth, and brokenness. We have much to do. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to listen to the movement of the Spirit and serve with faithful and passionate staff and parishioners. Together, we find ways to respond individually and collectively. Together, as we say “Yes” to our God, we transform our lives and our community in love.

If I can be on one small part of this important and transforming work, I am deeply grateful. Come, Holy Spirit!

TERRI ASHMORE
Managing Director • 27 years
When I joined the staff in 1993, the parish paid $1,000 a day in loan interest, we scheduled activities in pencil on a wall calendar, and 50 children were registered. Today, The Basilica’s 6,200 households include 1,500 school-aged children.

Through world changing milestones like the internet, 9/11, iPhone, multiple recessions, and a pandemic, The Basilica steadfastly offers beauty, healing, support, inspiration, and hope to all who enter. It’s a privilege to be involved in the life of this parish and The Basilica Landmark — to worship here, grow my faith and talents, and share them with a remarkable staff, dedicated volunteers, and generous donors.

HEATHER CRAIG
Archivist • 20 years
Working at The Basilica has meant deep-diving into an amazing history here in the city — not just of this beautiful building, but about the parishioners who are the heart of it. As what is known in the archives industry as a “lone arranger,” I have been able to do a bit of everything: exhibits, magazine articles, presentations, oral history interviews, historical research, and even designing a new archives storage and workspace. And I have been able to do all this as part of an organization that does really good things in our community. I feel quite blessed to call The Basilica home.
INTERVIEW

KATHY DHAEMERS
Associate Director of Sacred Arts • 20 years

Working at The Basilica for twenty years has been a rewarding and enriching experience. I’ve had the pleasure of joining with colleagues, volunteers, artists, and community partners in living out its mission and vision. I value our commitment to hospitality and biblical stewardship, and to being a beacon of hope.

My understanding of the role of art has deepened and I continually witness the impact on all who are touched by beauty. In our celebration of Sacred Arts during these years we have: displayed art from around the world in more than 150 exhibitions; hosted hundreds of concerts of different genres; cared for The Basilica’s collection to preserve it for current and future generations; and integrated the arts in a multitude of other ways to evoke beauty and help to make God present in the world.

Over the years I sang countless liturgies, weddings, and funerals. I sang in the choir and with the Schola Cantorum. I taught religious education classes. I was married. My three children were baptized, commended, and confirmed. Twenty-five years ago, I helped create a wedding program. Ten years later, I joined full-time working on the Employment Ministry and creating the Mental Health and Disability Awareness Ministries. This melded my interests and passions: liturgy, service, and justice.

I had no idea that I would stay and that so much of life would revolve around The Basilica of Saint Mary, but 44 years ago I stepped inside and knew it was home.

TERI LARSON
Director of Music • 25 years

Twenty-five years ago, had anyone told me that I would become a member of a Church that didn’t ordain women, I would have laughed. I was hired as an interim choral conductor for one year in 1995. I thought, “I can handle just one year.” And now it is 25 years later. I found a home that both nourished my musical gifts and allowed me a pastoral sense, having considered becoming a pastor in my 20s.

Working at The Basilica has been an incredible journey of beauty, joy, stress, and endurance. But the profound and eternal impact on my life has been the volunteers that make up The Basilica Cathedral Choir and Choristers. They are family to me and I have found a home that I truly cherish.

JOHN M. J. VAN PARYS, PH.D.
Director of Liturgy and the Sacred Arts • 25 years

When Carol Frenning, a long time parish member and friend, alerted me to this position in the spring of 1995, I had little or no interest. I was an academic, not a parish liturgist. Carol assured me that The Basilica was not an ordinary parish and she encouraged me to apply. Knowing that it was just a one-year interim position, I applied. During my interview weekend, I was struck by the community’s love for the liturgy and their commitment to the social teachings of the Church. I was the interim director for five months when I was offered a permanent position. Having fallen in love with The Basilica, I accepted and have been here ever since.

Carol was absolutely right; this is no ordinary parish. I have experienced the deep faith and strength of our community throughout these 25 years, though most poignantly while I was being treated for cancer. I will never forget the celebration of Pentecost 2018. Sitting in the sanctuary next to Fr. Bauer, I felt very vulnerable as I was unable to hide the side effects of chemotherapy. The celebration of the liturgy and your supportive presence transformed my vulnerability into strength. When we sang “When in our Music God is Glorified,” I physically felt the healing power of God at work in me.

Every Sunday, we experience the force of our faith and the care of our community in the celebration of our liturgies. From that, I draw so much strength, and I will be eternally grateful.

Mae Desaire is the director of marketing and communications for The Basilica.
THE Children’s Liturgy of the Word ministry began five years ago, when my now 12-year-old daughter was preparing for sacraments and my son was just three years old. Two fellow parents, who have since moved away, started this ministry offered during the special seasons of the church year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. It is geared toward children in grades one to five, though younger children are welcome with a guardian and older siblings to be role models. The children are called to the sanctuary after the Introductory Rites, where they are blessed and sent forth with the prayer leader and other parents.

We go to the Saint Joseph Chapel on the ground level, and in that warmly lit and cozy space, we gather in a circle, listen to the readings, sing the psalm, and have a dialogue rather than a homily. It helps the children explore the meaning of the text in their own lives. The volunteer prayer leader is given resources for this ministry, including the handbook, “How to Lead Children’s Liturgy of the Word” published by LTP, which explains:

“The shape of what children experience should imitate a normal Liturgy of the Word at Mass... it’s not a religion class.... When children arrive there, they should have a sense that they have come to pray... children should experience ritual-silence and song, hearing and proclaiming, processions and reverence for the Word of God.... That reverence is one of the greatest gifts you can share with children”.

BY ELISE BENDER
The handbook also suggests, “To be an effective leader... you need a love for Sunday Mass. You also need a love for children.” I am the youngest of eight children from a Catholic farm family in southwest Indiana, and now have 22 nieces and nephews along with my own two children. You could say my love for children comes naturally. Even though I now live far from my childhood family, I’ve gained support from this wider spiritual family at The Basilica.

I was drawn to this ministry because it gave my children a way to be more active participants in the Mass. It was also another way for us to get to know other Basilica families. Parent volunteer Viveca Pinto agrees and says, “It is a time for our children to learn about the readings and the Gospel in a kid-friendly environment, and is such a great way to introduce them to Scriptures.”

Belonging to the Body of Christ is important for my children. Belonging to this faith community helps us as individuals to feel part of something greater than ourselves. Parents cannot do this on their own; the Church helps us to look to God who will never let us down. For our Catholic faith to continue for generations to come, our children have to be taught to love the Church.

Getting to know fellow Catholic families on the same path helps. Children benefit from examples, and during Children’s Liturgy of the Word, we encourage the children to add their own petitions during Prayers of the Faithful. This time can be particularly poignant as children with sick and dying relatives coming together in this small group praying for one another. These children are building a community which will help them to love the Church.

Elise Bender is a volunteer and parish member since 2011.

“Start children off on the way they should go and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”

– Proverbs 22:6
On the way to Sunday morning donuts and coffee, have you stopped to notice the art displayed on the wall? Do you notice appealing pictures with a religious theme? Or do you sometimes hurry by an uncomfortable image with a pointed social justice message? Or maybe you noticed the Christmas crèche display from a wide variety of countries.

The inclusion of an art gallery when the Undercroft was completed was intentional. For 20 years, Saint John XXIII Gallery has displayed a wide range of Sacred Arts over 150 exhibits, fulfilling an important part of The Basilica’s mission. As a co-cathedral The Basilica models and teaches about the central role visual arts have had since the beginning of Christianity. The very earliest places of worship contained images, and learning about the history of art in the Church is a fascinating journey. Some of the displays in our gallery reflect images from this early history, such as images of the good shepherd or icons of Christ, Mary, or the saints. Every November, The Basilica has a display of icons. Some of those displayed are newly made, others are very old — each one represents one of the very oldest art forms associated with Christianity.

Thomas Merton said that art “attunes the soul to God,” meaning art can make us more receptive to God. Art can even be our first introduction to Christianity, our first step to becoming Christian, as it was for the artist He Qi, whose works were exhibited in 2005 and 2010. His chance encounter with a copy of an image forbidden during China’s cultural revolution started this journey. Beauty in art can lead to art as evangelization. What effect has the beauty of works displayed in our gallery had on you?

“For from the greatness and beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen.”

– Wisdom 13:5
Attuning our soul can make us more aware of God in our natural world. A wide range of beauty in nature was displayed in past exhibits. From the Flowers of Mary shown in 2003 by A. Joseph Barrish to the Photos of the Judean Wilderness by Stuart Klipper in 2010, many forms of meaning and beauty in nature were captured. Finding beauty in the natural world leads us to God.

In miniature manger scenes of our annual exhibit of Christmas crèches, we see the miracle of the Incarnation expressed in the birth of the baby Jesus. We see through every culture and in a wide variety of media this basic Christian story made tangible. The crèches connect us in a profound way to the global church. They are the most anticipated exhibits of the year for many adults and children. Pope Pius VI, in his Letter to Artists (no.13), tells us that there is “a special bond between art and Christian revelation.” That bond, so evident in the crèches, is a form of visual theology.

Continued
There have been and will continue to be exhibits that may cause discomfort, such as those that portray the effects of the Holocaust (2005, 2006), perceptions of disability (2016) or unmasking brain injury (2019). We may see them as reminders to us of those “less fortunate,” but they are more than that. Our uneasiness asks, “what can we do?” What can we do to support those who find themselves as refugees (2018, 2019), experience mental illness (2019), are in need of shelter, like the children in the 2002 exhibit, or in the Homeless Jesus sculpture outside our Basilica? More than a reminder, these works of art are a call to action for justice in the world.

The Sacred Arts are a core part of the mission of The Basilica of Saint Mary. Our bishops tell us that, “authentic art is integral to the church at prayer” (Built of Living Stones, 146). Through the perceptions of artists, these exhibits reveal the beauty, the truth, and the justice that leads us to God.

Carol Frenning has been a parish member since 1975. She is an art historian and a liturgical design consultant.
Dear Johan,

We have been participating in the Sunday Mass via your livestream. We never thought we would like it, but it has been a lifeline for us to our Basilica community and to our faith. Will you continue offering this in the future, even when we can return to The Basilica for Mass?

Gentle Reader,

If you would have asked me last year if we might ever livestream Sunday Eucharist, I would have been very quick to answer with an emphatic NO. And yet here we are. It was not a theological conviction that caused us to embrace livestream, but rather a pastoral need that pushed us toward it.

Several of my liturgy colleagues, most of them academics, have taken issue with livestreaming the liturgy. They argue that the liturgy needs to be celebrated in-person in order to honor the full, active, and conscious participation by the entire Body of Christ as called for by the Second Vatican Council. And who can argue against that?

Our faith is essentially incarnational as it is rooted in the fact that God took on our human flesh and shared our humanity in Jesus, the Christ. Our Church and everything we do is fundamentally incarnational, meaning in the flesh. Think of the way we celebrate the sacraments. Anointing used at Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination, and the Sacrament of the Sick, e.g. cannot be administered without physical contact. Also, most sacraments are necessarily celebrated in the midst of the community, the gathered assembly. What does that mean when no community can be present and no physical contact is permitted?

Maybe, the pandemic is forcing us to engage in new ways of thinking about how we are church or re-discovering the old way of being church.

Though it is true that our faith and our liturgies are indeed incarnational, in the flesh, they are also ex-carnational, beyond the flesh or spiritual in nature. For instance, we believe that whenever we gather for Eucharist the entire Church is gathered, no matter how many people are actually present in church. Whenever the Body of Christ celebrates the Eucharist, the entire Body of Christ is present, including those who have gone before us, those who are anywhere in the world today and even those yet to come. As a result, most of those present at the Eucharist are virtually or ex-carnationally present. They are not present in body but rather they are present in spirit.

Then there is the question if we can be fully present even if we are not physically present. Jesuit Father Felix Just argues that even if we are not physically present we can still be fully present. The dichotomy that is often posited between “virtual” and “real” he sees as false. According to Fr. Just there is “virtual reality” or ex-carnational reality and there is “physical reality” or incarnational reality. Both realities are very real though they are real in different ways.

The celebration of the liturgy is a rich embodied experience of symbols and relationships. Therefore liturgy is very much incarnational and a profound physical reality. So the preferred way to be present to the liturgy is in a bodily way. However, the liturgy is also a profoundly ex-carnational or virtual reality which allows for complex and mysterious ways of being present to the liturgy, also through 21st century virtual means. Being really present virtually may not be ideal and more difficult, but has the potential of being no less real.

Now to your question: our intent is to continue to offer the livestream of our liturgies even after we are fully operational again. Nevertheless, we trust that you will make every effort to come to The Basilica for the liturgy since the primary way to participate in our liturgies is and remains in person and physical. It is the difference between listening to a recording of a concert and the actual concert — and so much, much more.

Johan M.J. van Parys, Ph.D., has been The Basilica’s director of liturgy and sacred arts since 1995.
Focus for 2020

Securing the foundation for future generations

The Basilica Landmark is a separate nonprofit organization dedicated to its mission to preserve, restore, and advance the historic Basilica of Saint Mary for all generations. Each year, The Basilica Landmark funds essential restoration projects that would be difficult for the parish to undertake from its own operating budget.

Over the past decade, The Basilica Landmark has invested more than $11 million to preserve our historic campus. One of the primary ways The Basilica Landmark raises funds to fulfill its mission is through The Basilica Landmark Annual Fund campaign which hopes to raise $375,000 this year. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has forced the cancellation of two other essential sources of revenue for The Basilica Landmark. Both The Landmark Spark fundraising gala and The Basilica Block Party usually provide critical dollars for The Basilica Landmark’s operating budget. These major event cancellations were unavoidable and have caused significant strain to the bottom line making the annual fund campaign more important than ever before.

BY ANNE KANE
This year The Basilica Landmark hopes to raise the necessary funds to support finishing the south façade entrance of the school, repairing and refinishing The Basilica wood floors and doing the necessary maintenance of our beloved organ. Given the current economic conditions, the 2020 project list has been prioritized to focus on the most immediate needs, while ensuring that the well-being of our campus is maintained. More extensive work on the exterior façade through tuck-pointing and other repairs can be accomplished if additional funds are raised. As our community knows so well, tuck-pointing is a continual, labor intensive and delicate process that repairs the inevitable masonry deterioration at the mortar joints.

The strength of our community is based on the integrity of our campus and buildings. Our building of hope provides an essential foundation to the ministries that serve thousands with countless physical, mental and spiritual needs. During these challenging times, we hope you will be inspired by this important restoration work and help us ensure The Basilica will continue to flourish.

*Anne Kane joined The Basilica staff in 2019 as a Development Officer.*

Please consider supporting The Basilica Landmark’s Annual Fund by making a donation online at thebasilicalandmark.org or by contacting Stephanie Bielmas at sbielmas@mary.org.

*Join us in this important initiative and together we will secure the foundation for future generations.*
Promoting Order and Decorum (and Welcome!)

The Ushers Club

Soon after arriving as Rector in 1921, Fr. James Reardon called a meeting of the Ushers Club. While, of course, men had been greeting and seating parishioners since the days of the old Immaculate Conception church, he wished to gather his ushers together on a monthly basis for an exchange of views and a free discussion of their duties. The Basilica Archives is fortunate to have the club meeting minutes from 1921 to 1929. In the 1920s, parishioners “pledged” by paying a quarterly Pew Rent, which reserved for them a specific pew at a specific Mass. One key duty of the ushers was making sure the seats were filled correctly; parishioners presented cards stating their rent was paid (printed in different colors for each quarter). There was significant discussion at the meetings about what to do about pew crashers, but the general conclusion was that once seated, people should not be moved, whether they had paid for that seat or not.

Ushers also assisted with the parish census counts and took charge of the dance floor at the Rosary Club’s Tuesday dances. They showed care for their parishioners, requesting several times that a pitcher of water and glasses, as well as a couch, be available in the back of the church for women “who faint or are otherwise overcome during Mass.”

Not that they were perfect. Many times the ushers were gently chastised for arriving late, leaving early, chatting during Mass, or stashing their hats and coats in the confessional. Concerned with crowd control, some ushers consistently asked for ropes to be strung in the outside aisles and for doors to be locked. Such measures seem extreme, but it was noted once that the 10:00 AM Mass saw an attendance of more than 2,100 people.

While the club initially met monthly, by the 1950s they were meeting semi-annually at a banquet dinner. Issues for Advent and Lent would be discussed, and then the inevitable cigar box would be passed around.

Clarence Birk joined his father Conrad among the ranks of ushers in 1954, and welcomed people through the doors of The Basilica for 65 years. In a 1999 interview he said his favorite place in the church was “where I am almost every Sunday when we’re in town, right inside the doors in the front of the church, meeting and greeting people... talking to them, finding out where they come from and making them feel that we want to see them again.”

Clarence trained long-term minister Karl Jones, who refers to him fondly as the “Godfather of Ushers.” Serving mostly at the 7:30 AM Mass since 1988, Karl now primarily serves at the Easter Vigil and Christmas Midnight Mass. He has a hundred stories demonstrating that no two Sundays are alike, and that the Ministers of Hospitality are called upon to fill many roles besides greeting and passing the baskets.

Joan Spehar is a team co-leader who felt called to join the Ministers of Hospitality about five years ago. She is always on the lookout for a Mass regular with a friendly smile, so she can invite them to join a team of liturgical volunteers. “I look at being a person who welcomes others into our worship space as probably the foremost responsibility that I take as a greeter. Because once they come in and see a smile, you greet them in some way, extend a kindness or welcome, and it allows people to really feel special in the space. I feel humbled to greet people from all over the world.”

“Think a warm smile and a sincere greeting, in this day and age, really goes a long way.”

Heather Craig is The Basilica’s Archivist.
During these unprecedented times the challenge we face, as representatives of The Basilica Landmark, is balancing the future goals with our current needs. Since 2018 we have been actively working with The Basilica Master Planning Committee to envision the future and the possibilities to come. The Master Planning Committee is developing a long-term, multi-phased Master Plan. A multidisciplinary design and architectural team led by HGA, is focusing their work on historic preservation, renovation, architectural design, urban planning, and landscape strategies to serve our ministry needs.

Our Landmark Board is thankful for the thoughtful, detailed work that has gone into this thorough process. The dedicated committee has worked many late nights and studied countless details to determine the scope of the plan. The Master Plan will help determine the future fundraising and capital campaigns that will need to be completed prior to construction.

Not surprisingly the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed our progress. However, The Basilica Landmark continues to fulfill our daily mission to care for the historic structure, while remaining committed to the future of The Basilica and its campus. The Basilica requires constant maintenance to ensure the safety and security of our campus.

This past year, crews replaced warped and damaged floor-boards in the church in addition to sidewalk repairs, and parking lot resurfacing. The Basilica School exterior façade masonry repairs were completed in the fall with special care taken to match the original brick color and style. In addition, our Teresa of Calcutta Hall was refurbished with new paint and flooring after 20 years of wear. Our annual fund will continue to fund these critical on-going repairs and keep The Basilica a welcoming and safe place for all.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has forced the cancellation of two other essential sources of revenue for The Basilica Landmark. Both The Landmark Spark fundraising gala and The Basilica Block Party usually provide critical dollars for The Basilica Landmark’s operating budget. These major event cancellations were unavoidable and have caused significant strain to the bottom line making the annual fund campaign more important than ever before. Please consider making an annual fund gift at thebasilicalandmark.org/give.

This will be my last letter as President of The Basilica Landmark as my term expires in June, 2020. I have been honored to serve on the The Basilica Landmark Board for the past seven years with so many dedicated people attempting to restore, maintain, and preserve our beautiful Basilica of Saint Mary. I look forward to seeing many of the positive changes contemplated this past year becoming a reality in the future!

Although we won’t gather this year, we look forward to the future when we can once again gather together to celebrate all the good things that come from The Landmark to support The Basilica of Saint Mary! Until then, stay safe and healthy, support each other and I hope you will consider making a gift to the Basilica Landmark annual fund.

Thank you for your support of The Basilica Landmark.

— Jim Jetland, President
of The Basilica Landmark
As the election approaches, many are bracing for tense political discussions, social media wars, and other hallmarks of an increasingly polarized political climate. “The one thing Americans agree on is that we’re too divided,” said Bill Doherty at a February 16 presentation at The Basilica. Doherty is the co-founder of Better Angels, an organization founded in 2016 with the aim of uniting Americans across the political spectrum.

Doherty, a family therapist, has facilitated workshops where Democrats and Republicans can explore their stereotypes of each other, learn more about the other side’s beliefs, and forge friendships. His presentation kicked off a Better Angels workshop series in partnership with the nationwide Civilize It initiative from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Civilize It includes a pledge of “honoring human dignity through civil conversation.”

Regarding other opinions with compassion is essential for Catholics, with roughly equal shares of Catholic voters identifying as Democrats or Republicans (47 percent and 46 percent respectively, according to the Pew Research Center). “Our faith is meant to be lived out fully and in all aspects of our lives,” said Janice Andersen, Director of Christian Life. “This sense of political polarization isn’t new, but it is heightened. It is our responsibility and our opportunity as a parish to listen to the needs of our community and engage in these discussions.”

Chris Scanlan, a parishioner who attended Doherty’s talk, said she’s noticed an increase in the vitriol surrounding political debates and is concerned with how this affects her teenage granddaughters. “It’s a struggle so many people face and don’t know how to deal with,” she said. “Sometimes it’s hard to speak in a way that’s not going to make people offended or angry when they disagree with you.”

Doherty shared tips for navigating these discussions. “Abandon the expectation that you’re going to change someone’s mind,” he said. Instead, remain curious about the experiences that have shaped their beliefs. Doherty also recommended that people employ phrases like, “I believe” or “I think” rather than declaring their beliefs as truth. “Arguments melt down when I characterize my side as the saintly side,” Doherty said. “We find that we have a lot in common when we talk.”

To learn more about the Civilize It initiative and take the pledge, visit mary.org/CivilizeIt.

Rachel Newman Hogness is the editor of BASILICA magazine and a parishioner since 2017.

CIVILIZE IT:
Dignity Beyond the Debate

A non-partisan call to focus on the dignity of all people, even those with whom we disagree, and to put faith in action.

Pledge to root your political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well formed conscience, which involves prayer, conversation, study, and listening. Stand up for your convictions and speak out when you witness language that disparages others’ dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others’ experiences.

We invite you to join Catholics throughout the United States and model love for our neighbors by pledging to Civilize It and committing to civility, clarity, and compassion in 2020.

I PLEDGE:

1. Civility: To recognize the human dignity of those with whom I disagree, treat others with respect, and rise above attacks when directed at me.

2. Clarity: To root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well formed conscience, which involves prayer, conversation, study, and listening. I will stand up for my convictions and speak out when I witness language that disparages others’ dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others’ experiences.

3. Compassion: To encounter others with a tone and posture which affirms that I honor the dignity of others and invites others to do the same. I will presume others’ best intentions and listen to their stories with empathy. I will strive to understand before seeking to be understood.

Step 1: Let our Basilica community know you are taking the Civilize It pledge at mary.org/CivilizeIt.

Step 2: Take the pledge at: CivilizeIt.org

As a community we will work together to honor human dignity through civil conversation.
Give from the heart and still give smart.

Establishing a Donor Advised Fund allows you to easily and efficiently support causes that reflect your values. Along with tax benefits and flexibility, you’ll gain access to CCF’s deep knowledge of community needs, connecting you to the causes most important to you.

**GIFT**
You make a gift at any time and receive an immediate tax benefit.

**INVEST**
Your gift is invested and grows tax-free.

**GRANT**
You advise grants to the charities and causes you hold dear.

Catholic Community Foundation of Minnesota

Call us to get started
651.389.0300 | ccf-mn.org
The Basilica Landmark’s Mission is to preserve, restore, and advance the historic Basilica of Saint Mary for all generations.

The Basilica of Saint Mary is a community rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As disciples of Jesus Christ we:
• Practice biblical stewardship
• Share our faith with others in word and deed
• Pursue ecumenical and interfaith relationships
• Extend Christian hospitality, and
• Rejoice in rich diversity.

As Co-Cathedral of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis we are committed to provide:
• Inspiring liturgies and sacred arts
• Transforming life-long learning opportunities
• Engaging service to one another and justice for all.