

The Short Stories of Jesus

The following is from the concluding chapter of [The Short Stories of Jesus](#) by Amy-Jill Levine, professor of Jewish studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville, TN. Her work is the subject of Marcellina's Book Club which meets next Sunday in between masses in the ARK.

Jesus told parables because they serve as keys that can unlock the mysteries we face by helping us ask the right questions: how to live in community; how to determine what ultimately matters; how to live the life that God wants us to live. They are Jesus' way of teaching, and they are remembered to this day not simply because they are in the Christian Bible, but because they continue to provoke, challenge and inspire.

Jesus knew that the best teaching concerning how to live – and live abundantly – comes not from spoon-fed data or an answer sheet. Instead, it comes from narratives that remind us of what we already know, but are resistant to recall. It comes from stories that prompt us to draw our own conclusions and at the same time force us to realize that our answers may well be contingent, or leaps of faith, or traps. It comes from stories that community members can share with each other, with each of us assessing the conclusions others draw, and so reassessing our own.

The parables, if we take them seriously not as *answers* but as *invitations* can continue to inform our lives, even as our lives continue to open up the parables to new readings.

Jesus knew that the best teaching comes from stories with memorable characters who are both familiar and strange, who play upon our stereotypes even as they confront them. The concept of a good Samaritan would have been an oxymoron for Jesus' audience. The idea that a tax collector could tap into the righteousness of both the Temple system and the Pharisee would have been recognized, but I suspect not particularly liked. The idea that an elder brother – Cain, Ishmael, Esau, the second lost son – is sympathetic again prompts a challenge to our expectations, and perhaps a recuperation of our history and our family. As for the kingdom of heaven being compared to a high-end wholesaler, or heaven, or mustard seed... If this can be the case, the kingdom can be compared to *anyone* or *anything*.

The parables, if we take them seriously not as historical portraits of real people but as challenges to our stereotypes, help us to locate our eccentric traits and our excellent talents; they can inspire and humble, challenge and comfort.

Continued on page 2



The Short Stories of Jesus

Continued from page 1

Jesus knew that the best teachings come from stories that make us laugh even as they make us uncomfortable. The rabbi from Nazareth offers us images of a conniving young man, amid the pigs, salivating over the bread enough to spare available at his father's table – tenacious widows threatening judges with physical harm – a rich man unable to realize that death has changed his position of privilege – a baker surreptitiously hiding yeast in dough that will produce more bread than can possibly feed a single family – a mustard seed that can provide shelter – a lucky fellow who finds treasure in a field....

We smile, and at the same time we wonder. Are we to be sympathetic to the young man or not? Do we want the widow to achieve her goal? Should the rich man suffer even more, until he learns his place? What would we do with all that bread? Do seeds really have such potential, and if seeds do, why not us?

The parables, if we take them seriously not as “meaning” but as *soliciting* our meaning making, and if we allow ourselves to be open to various interpretations, become not tools for shaming or inculcating guilt, but for good, hard lessons learned with a sense of fullness.

Jesus himself, as we know from the rest of the Gospel tradition, cared deeply about reconciliation, and so he told stories about people torn apart and how they might be brought together. He constantly taught about laying up treasure in heaven rather than on earth, and so he told stories about rich men whose wealth does them no good and poor people who find the real treasure they need. Jesus insisted we should not judge, and that the criterion by which we judge *others* will be used to judge *us*. Therefore he offered parables in which those who judge others are trapped into being in relationship with them – he told parables in which those who judge themselves *righteous* may be *wrong* or may not realize the full implications of their righteousness.

He sought to prepare his people for the inbreaking of the kingdom of heaven – the time we would recline at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – and so he set about enacting the messianic banquet among a mixed group of saints and sinners, tax collectors and patrons, women and men, faithful and doubters. He also told stories about baking and banquets and feasts, and so in his stories nourished his followers even as he left them hungry for more.

To prepare his followers for that inbreaking, he also asked them to *prioritize*. What really matters, and what does not? The parables ask us questions. What is our pearl of great price? What would we do were we to find treasure in the field? What would *really* satisfy us, and what *should* satisfy us?

... The parables of Jesus will continue to be open to *new* understandings. But not *all* understandings have the same weight.... If the interpretation does not raise more questions for us – if it does not open us up to more conversation – if it creates a neat and tidy picture – we need to go back and read them again.

On Mother's Day

An acknowledgement of the Wide Continuum of Motherhood

- ♦ *To those women who gave birth this year to their first child — we rejoice with you.*
- ♦ *To those who lost a child this year — we mourn with you.*
- ♦ *To those who are in the trenches with little ones every day and wear the badge of food stains — we appreciate you.*
- ♦ *To those who experienced loss through miscarriage, failed adoptions, or running away — we weep with you.*
- ♦ *To those who walk the hard path of infertility, fraught with disappointment — we walk with you. Forgive us if we say foolish things. We don't mean to make this harder than it is.*
- ♦ *To those who are foster moms, mentor moms, big-sister and spiritual moms — keep it up, we need you.*
- ♦ *To those who have warm and close relationships with your children — we celebrate with you.*
- ♦ *To those who have disappointment, heartache, and distance with your children — we sit with you.*
- ♦ *To those whose mothers died this year — we feel that loss with you.*
- ♦ *To those who experienced abuse at the hands of your own mother — we acknowledge your pain and betrayal.*
- ♦ *To those who lived through driving tests, medical tests, and the overall testing of motherhood — we are better for having you in our midst.*
- ♦ *To those who have aborted children — we remember them and you on this day.*
- ♦ *To those who are single and long to be married and mothering your own children — we hope that life may yet turn out the way you longed for it to be.*
- ♦ *To those who step-parent — we want to walk with you on your often complex paths.*
- ♦ *To those who envisioned lavishing love on grandchildren — yet that dream was not to be, we encourage you to still love.*
- ♦ *To those who will have emptier nests in the upcoming year — we feel both your loss and also rejoice with you.*
- ♦ *To those who placed children up for adoption — we commend you for your selflessness and remember how you will always hold that child in your heart*
- ♦ *And to those who are pregnant with new life, both expected and surprising — we anticipate your joy and the hope of new beginnings with you.*
- ♦ *On Mother's Day, we pray for all of you.*

Our thanks and acknowledgements go to Amy Young who provided the basis for this expanded idea of Mother's Day.

All Things Considered

It would be my aim today to honor mothers without alienating others. I want all women to feel welcome, appreciated and needed here at St. Ambrose Parish. That is why I found **Amy Young's** list honoring "continuing motherhood" so intriguing. We need to honor mothering for the ways it reflects the *Imago Dei* (Image of God) by bringing forth new life and nurturing those on their life's path by providing both freedom and a safety net. Lots of women fit that job description. A blessed Mother's Day to all of you!

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There are always complications getting a new endeavor off the ground – even a fun one. Our **BEE at the TEE**, Golf Outing is new for us and thus is having certain difficulties starting up. Our goal is to have 60 –70 golfers for this first event. We have 10 confirmed.

We are just a month away from the Friday, June 12th date. In order to make realistic preparations, we ask that golfers and sponsors commit themselves now. You'll find registration information on the next page. I honestly anticipate more activity over the next few weeks. But, for this event to work well, we need all interested parties to pre-register.

Sponsorship is also simple and easy. There are unlimited opportunities for sponsors at the Tee Box Level, with some limited sponsorships at higher levels. We hope to attract professional services like attorneys, realtors, doctors (and other non-food industry persons, who already support Oysterfest) to round out our golf sponsorships.

To date we only have 3 of 15 **GREEN SPONSORS:**

- US Financial Services
- St. Clare of Montefalco Athletics
- The Satterfield Family

We have an unlimited number of **TEE BOX SPONSORSHIPS** available. To date our TeeBox sponsors are:

- **Scott Adlhoj;** Adlhoj & Associates

- **Timothy J. Kramer,** Attorney; Abbott Nicholson P.C.
- **Fertscape Landscaping**
- **ML Elrick,** of Fox 2 News – Pulitzer Prize, Emmy winning investigative reporter.

In terms of actual golfers, our first golf foursome to sign up was **Joe and Linda Boyle**.

The next two weeks are critical in confirming golfers and soliciting more sponsors. I need your help. Join the event. Like it on facebook, tell your friends about it, ask your doctor, lawyer, dentist, etc. if they could be a sponsor. And remember that you can join us for the dinner that night, even if you haven't golfed that day.

A number of local businesses have contributed to items or services that will be part of the dinner activities in the ARK. Also our 8/9 grade Religious Education classes are helping with a number of different tasks.

Chandler Park has never looked better. Come and see the improvements. Enjoy a great day with us on the 12th. Bee at the Tee, in whatever way you can.

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Short Stories by Jesus is a challenging read, but an enlightening one. Professor **Amy Levine** strips away layers of meaning added to the stories by centuries of Christian interpreters in order to help modern readers contemplate Jesus' parables as they might have been heard by the original Jewish audience. This is a great way to get closer into the mind of Jesus, and in the process see his parables in a new light.

Today's bulletin front page gives you some insight into her methodology and thought processes. Join me for a discussion of her work at Marcelina's Book Club which will meet next Sunday in the ARK in between masses.

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There is only so much any single parish can do in bringing the message of Jesus to those who need to hear it. That is the point of the **Catholic Services Appeal**. This fund finances a multitude of outreach ministries that no parish, by itself, could ever hope to do.

Every spring, we engage in a substantial fund-raising effort on behalf of the Catholic Services Appeal.

2	0	CSA
1	5	Box Scores
Number of Families 840		
Returns to date 27		
Average Gift ('14).....\$413		
Quota for the Archdiocese\$106,011		
Property/Liability Insurance ... \$50,000		
Parish '15 Target.....\$156,011		
Received as of 5/4/15.....\$13,832		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We've begun the 2015 Catholic Services Appeal in a strong way. Please contribute by using the CSA forms sent to you, or you can make a contribution electronically through stambrosechurch.net. * We fully expect to again meet our Archdiocesan obligations. Remember that any overage to the CSA campaign reverts to our parish at 100% 		

We started the 2015 campaign this past week. The box score at the top indicates our mandatory goal.

The CSA allows us to share Christ's message through serving countless people in ways we may not realize. This includes all the central services of the Archdiocese, plus a sizeable subsidy to our Seminary and Catholic schools.

Please take a prayerful moment and consider your responsibility as a Catholic to "Bring Jesus Christ to All" here in Southeastern Michigan. Make your contribution or a pledge to the CSA using the mailing information that has been sent to you. If at all possible, please get your CSA contribution in before the end of this month. And remember, any shortfall is billed back to the parish as part of our debt.

We hope to wrap up this campaign by June 7th. On that day we have scheduled a "victory concert" wherein donors to the CSA are invited to our annual Opera Breakfast, along with **David DiChiera** and talents from the Michigan Opera Theater.

This is our way of giving thanks to those who have generously given to the annual Catholic Services Appeal.



Bee at the Tee
St. Ambrose Golf Classic
Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park

Make plans now to join in the inaugural St. Ambrose Parish golf outing on Friday, June 12, 2015. We're planning a great day of golf and socializing at the beautiful Chandler Park Golf Course (chandlerparkgolf-course.com).

The event includes a scramble format with four-person teams, lunch and awards, with a great dinner to conclude the day at the ARK at St. Ambrose. A person can register to play a round of golf with dinner, or just for dinner.

Register *now* online at planmygolfevent.com/26900-St-AmbroseBeeAttheTee. Registration, sponsorship and volunteer forms are available in the back of church. Questions? Email st.ambrosegolf@gmail.com.

Sponsorships will be available in many different price ranges. Consider signing up your business as one of the first supporters of our first golf outing. Personalize your own Tee sign to celebrate a special event, to thank or remember someone special, or to congratulate a friend, or a group.

Religious Education Update

Happy Mother's Day! Today the religious education classes gathered over at church to celebrate our heavenly mother, Mary. This year we focused on the copy of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help icon that is near the tabernacle in our church. The care for the original icon was given to the Redemptorists by Pope Pius IX in 1865 with the direction to "make her known throughout the world".

In addition to an instruction about Our Lady of Perpetual Help, the children crowned the icon and we recited a decade of the rosary together. To conclude, George Bush and Shannon McGlone played two Marian hymns for us.

Next week is the last formal class until fall. We will celebrate the closing of our program year with an Ascension Party on the plaza!

Betty Haley

A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Today's gospel challenges us to "love one another as I have loved you." Jesus is our model and he asks us to "lay down our life" (our time, attention, opinions and needs) for each other. This is the "sacrament of the family," when God is made visible in our sacrificial love for one another.

Catholic Young Adult Soccer

Catholic Young Adult Soccer (CYAS) is a great summer league for those ages 18-35 to come together through fellowship and friendly competition through the sport of soccer. This is an opportunity for all young adults, even if you have never played before! Games are played Saturday mornings 5/30-8/08 (except 7/04) at Bishop Foley High School in Madison Heights. For more information, including registration, visit facebook.com/CatholicYoungAdultSoccer/, e-mail catholicyoungadultsoccer@gmail.com or follow on Twitter @CYASDetroit.

Spring Cleaning for a Good Purpose

The Gospel today, has Jesus saying to us, "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you... You are my friends if you do what I command you." This is our model and standard for our Christian behavior. Christ calls us to be persons for others especially those who are most in need.

It's time to clean out your closets and organize your attics. Our St. Ambrose St. Vincent de Paul Society's "Bundle Weekend" will take place Saturday, May 30th and Sunday, May 31st. To save you a trip to the donation center, a pod will be located in the church parking lot to collect your items. We are in particular need of new/clean bed linens. If you have those, please put them in a separate bag and let us know when you drop them off. We are also in need of kitchen items, such as pots and pans, and small furniture such as card tables and chairs. Good clothing in good condition is always needed.

We have an ongoing need for clean twin mattresses, box springs and bed frames. We can arrange to pick these up from your home if you are not able to bring them to the pod. Just call the rectory and let us know. Organize your stuff now for a drop off the last weekend in May.

A One Day Retreat for Married Couples

When we can sincerely listen to our spouses, we discover new energy. Discover a new "Springtime" in your relationships. Next Sunday, May 17th, start the evening with refreshments at 4:30, a delicious dinner at 5:15 and an inspiring program at 6:15 – 8:30 at the beautiful Capuchin Retreat House, located at 62460 Mt. Vernon in Washington, MI.

Fred Cavaiani, marriage counselor, psychologist, and spiritual director will facilitate this program. Call (248) 651-4826 to make your reservation or log on: CapRetreat.org The cost is a well-spent \$60/couple.

The Buzz

Happy Mother's Day! This May celebration coincides nicely with the Church's continuation of the Easter season as well as with its dedication of the whole month to our Blessed Mother. So, peace and blessings upon all moms today . . . those living with us here, as well as those who live not that far away from us in eternal life!

May is a good time of year to rededicate ourselves to closer ties with Mary and all of our mothers by being beloved disciples in communion with our brother Jesus. (see *John 19:26-27*)

Moms have a special way of helping us identify who we are. Take a moment and identify how much of an influence your mom has had on who you are today. Spend some of today praying thanksgiving for all the great and the good things you discover in this meditation. And forgive whatever you find that you dislike. With such awareness, you can make changes in yourself – so that mom, who is more important than any bad memories, can receive your full love and appreciation.



Being that it is May, our Catholic thoughts also traditionally focus on Mary as mother. She is mother of Jesus, and because of this has been hailed by believers as "*Theotokos*" – God Bearer / Mother of God. In Eucharistic communion with Jesus, we share his life so thoroughly that we can unreservedly declare that his mother is OUR mother.

Yet, what exactly is your image of Mary? Soft and tender? Conniving (to get things for us from her Son he wouldn't grant us otherwise)? Beautiful blue-eyed blonde? Jewish teenager pregnant by someone other than her husband? Powerful queen of heaven and earth? Someone who makes regular appearances with prophetic messages to visionaries?

How you relate to your mother in heaven may reveal a lot about many other aspects of your faith.



Moms are famous for healing and comforting many cuts, bumps and bruises of life. On a bigger scale, Holy Mother Church maybe has the best track record of all history in caring for people in need physically and emotionally as well as spiritually. We are the Church – the caring, helping, healing members of the Body of Christ in our world today. If you have been moved in human compassion for our brothers and sisters devastated by the earthquake in Nepal, and seek an outlet for an active response, a guaranteed quality organization for this is Catholic Relief Services. See p. 6 of this bulletin for how to join others from the Archdiocese of Detroit in this loving and much-needed effort.



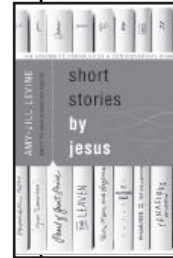
Caring about the earth and its resources as gifts from God is the focus of a newly formed St. Ambrose Environmental Committee. The group meets once a month on Sunday mornings. There are already a half-dozen participants, but they would like their membership to grow to at least full disciple/apostle numbers. In particular, they are seeking young adult(s) to bring their special perspective to this consideration. Contact Chris Walsh for more information about this at cwalsh423@gmail.com.



Finally, Pentecost is coming up on the calendar in just two weeks. In recent years we have developed a tradition of parishioners reading a couple of lines from the first scripture passage at mass in another language. If you speak or at least can read/pronounce a few lines in another language, see me after mass or call me anytime at (313) 822-1248.

Chuck Dropiewski

Marcellina's Book Club



In Short Stories by Jesus, Amy Jill Levine, a renowned biblical scholar, author of The Misunderstood Jew, and editor for The Jewish Annotated New Testament interweaves history and

spiritual analysis to explore Jesus' most popular teaching parables, exposing their misinterpretations and making them lively and relevant for modern readers.

Levine takes readers back in time to understand how the parables' original Jewish audience understood them.

Marcellina's Book Club will meet next Sunday morning, May 17th at 9:45 a.m. in the ARK. Make this book your Easter season reading.

The Beehive

The the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Pastor: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc
Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski
Religious Education: Elizabeth Haley
Minister of Music: Marilyn Biery
Office Manager: Theresa Harthen

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –
 Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
 Sunday - 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton
 Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230
Tel: (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838
Email address: stambrose@comcast.net
Religious Education: (313) 822-1248
Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814
School Archives: 313-237-5846
Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

Monday, May 11

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Tuesday, May 12

St. Nereus, Achilleus & Pancras, martyrs

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Frank Simonds,
Rosemary Flanagan

Wednesday, May 13

Our Lady of Fatima

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

Thursday, May 14

St. Matthias, apostle

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Bob and Fay Gorman,
The Kieltyaska Family

Friday, May 15

St. Isidore

8:30 a.m. - Msgr. James Robinson,
Bishop Kevin Britt

Saturday, May 16

4:00 p.m. - Mass - For All People

Sunday, May 17

The Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord

8:30 a.m. - Mass - For All People

11:15 a.m. - Mass - For All People



Scriptures for the 6th week of Easter

Monday, May 11

- Acts 16: 11-15
- Ps 149: 1b-6a, 9b
- Jn 15: 26-16: 4a

Tuesday, May 12

- Acts 16: 22-34
- Ps 138: 1-3, 7c-8
- Jn 16: 5-11

Wednesday, May 13

- Acts 17: 15, 22-18: 1
- Ps 148: 1-2, 11-14
- Jn 16: 12-15

Thursday, May 14

- Acts 1: 15-17, 20-26
- Ps 113: 1-8
- Jn 15: 9-17

Friday, May 15

- Acts 18: 9-18
- Ps 47: 2-7
- Jn 16: 20-23

Saturday, May 16

- Acts 18: 23-28
- Ps 47: 2-3, 8-10
- Jn 16: 23b-28

Sunday, May 17

- Acts 1: 1-11
- Eph 1: 17-23 or 4: 1-13
- Mk 16: 15-20

The Ascension of Our Lord

May 16th and May 17th

4:00 p.m. – Saturday – Celebrant: Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Mary Urbanski

Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Bennert, Peter Hern, Ron Hoffman

Altar Servers: Charlie, Daniel, & Eleanor Bernas

8:30 a.m. – Sunday – Celebrant: Fr. Bede **Lector:** Grace Muawad

Eucharistic Ministers: Colleen Gatzke, Liz & Steve Linne, Karen McShane,
Bernadette Pieczynski, Joellyn Valgoi, Chris Walsh

Altar Servers: Emilio & Diego Garcia, Delaney Jackson

11:15 a.m. – Sunday – Celebrant: Fr. Pelc **Lector:** Pat Sperti

Eucharistic Ministers: Anne Billiu, Lupe Davila, Doris Fleming, Cristina Swiatkowski,
Cynthia Warner, Patty Yaden, Anthony Yaden

Altar Servers: Liam & Maria Liburdi, Shea Vatalaro

Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish

requires a *minimum* of \$10,127.00

On Sunday, May 3, 2015

in envelopes we received\$8,362.00

in the loose collection\$ 580.00

in electronic donations\$1,200.00

in children's envelopes.....\$19.00

for a total of**\$10,161.00**

Over budget for the week \$34.00

Number of envelopes mailed 800

Number of envelopes used 163

Incredible week! We managed to make budget.

It's like winning the game by one run: tense, but good. Please use the offertory envelopes that have been mailed to you, or by electronic giving.

Our Sick

Please pray for our parishioners who are seriously ill or hospitalized: Roma Affelt, Kay Balas, Elizabeth Howard, Maria Chinchilla, Mary Ellen Greenup, Bonnie McKenna, Karen Culver, Joseph MacEachern, Mary Myers, David Schumacker, Carter Billiu, Bob Ramsey, Fred Schroeder, Ann Sullivan Kay, Mary Pat Egan, Pat Blake, Dominic Centorbi, Irene & Brian Scopel, Ray Oberly, Milton Aitchison, Donald & Marilyn Miriani, Kathleen Elbersen, Maureen Barron-Brioc, Ginger Weiksna, Laura Bush Terry, Lennie O'Brien, Maryjane Cullen, Andrew Chavez, Angela Hansen, Barbara Mann, Elizabeth Robert, Bernadette Gutowski, Dan Fleming, Katherine Brennan Lee, Jeanne Noto & Bishop Joe Imesch.

Help Earthquake Victims in Nepal

The Archdiocese of Detroit is collecting funds for disaster relief in Nepal, following the April 25th earthquake that left thousands dead and displaced tens of thousands more. The Archdiocese is encouraging people to be as generous as possible to the relief efforts underway. Funds collected will go to Catholic Relief Services (CRS), which is working with partner Caritas Nepal. The organizations plan to support 10,000 families with emergency shelter, blankets, water treatment kits and hygiene kits.

CRS has an emergency aid station in nearby Bihar, India, and flew more emergency personnel to Kathmandu following the earthquake. CRS was founded by the Catholic Bishops of the United States and works with Church institutions around the world to provide disaster relief and assistance to the impoverished and disadvantaged anywhere in the spirit of Catholic Social teaching.

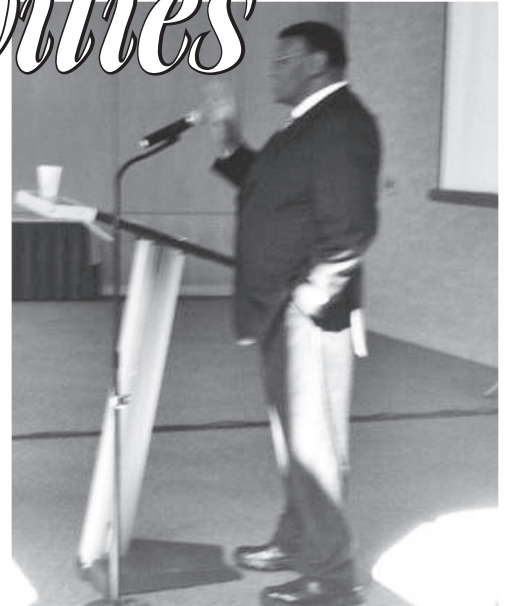
Online donations are being taken at the Archdiocese of Detroit website, aod.org/crs. Checks also may be sent directly to the Archdiocese. Please make them payable to "Archdiocese of Detroit" and indicate "CRS Relief" in the lower left memo line. Address them to: Archdiocese of Detroit, CRS Nepal Earthquake Relief (3rd floor), 12 State Street, Detroit, MI 48226.



Last Week's Ambrosian Activities



Join us on Facebook
[facebook.com/stambroseparish](https://www.facebook.com/stambroseparish)



For additional and color photos
go to [facebook.com/stambroseparish](https://www.facebook.com/stambroseparish)