



The Eye Opener

of St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Community

O'Fallon, Illinois

September 2018

“O” Fest? O, YES! Oktoberfest on tap soon

O my, summer has flown by! That means it's time to gather your family and friends, and get on board to be part of St. Clare's 18th annual Oktoberfest! Every autumn we join together on the last Saturday of September to honor our region's German heritage with this great fundraising event.

Our “O” Fest features delicious food and drink, exciting games and raffles, a fun run, live music and much more!

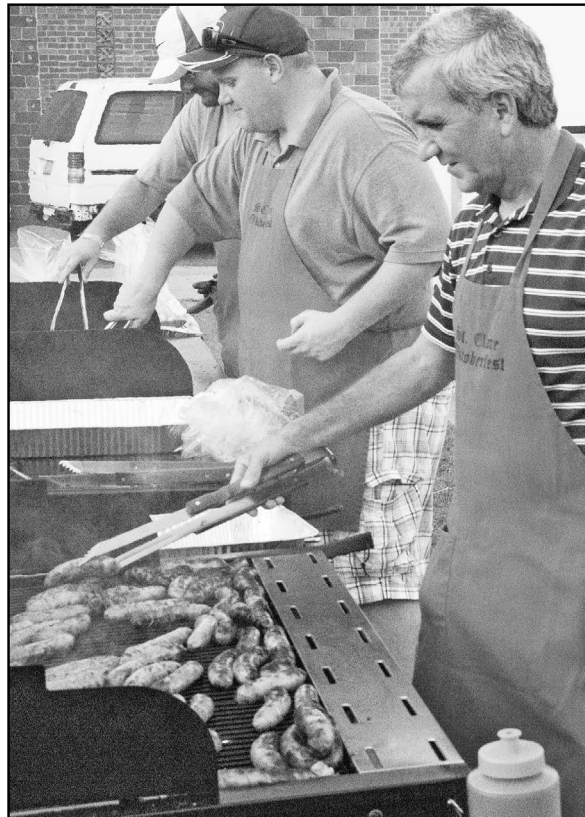
This year we are starting the fun an hour earlier – at 3 p.m. – and it continues to 11 p.m.

O by the way, you'll want to let the teens and young adults in your life know that this year we're rolling out a new Oktoberfest space that's just for them: DAS ZONE! With an incredible escape-room experience and lots of cool things to see and do, Das Zone will be the place to be!

O wait, you know there's more! How about a chance at winning \$10,000 in the Big Otto raffle? And hourly \$100 cash drawings? Add to this our returning favorites — from inflatables, games and pony rides for the kids to bingo, poker, big six and the cake wheel — and there's a full slate of fun for everyone.

St. Clare's Oktoberfest is open to the public and attracts visitors from throughout the region. Although we enjoy this annual opportunity for fun and fellowship, we also count on the revenue generated by “O” Fest to help pay down our parish mortgage. Our Oktoberfest profits to date exceed \$700,000! O wow!

We need your involvement to make our 2018 “O” Fest the best yet. Become a part of the excitement as we prepare for our 18th annual event on Saturday, September 29! As a member of our parish family, your involvement is crucial to our success. Here's how you can help:



--Want to make a donation? O, please do! Gift cards in any denomination are great, especially \$5 and \$10 cards for I Dood It prizes. Get creative by making up themed baskets for the basket raffle, or think big with donations of merchandise, services, condo stays, tickets for concerts or sporting events, or air travel for the silent auction.

--Buy and SELL raffle tickets! Raffle ticket sales are a MAJOR contribution to our festival profit! Li'l Otto tickets are only \$10 and offer a chance at five hourly \$100 prizes. But to really win big, go for the \$100 Big Otto tickets for entry in every hourly drawing PLUS a chance at \$10,000. O yeah!

--Become an Oktoberfest sponsor, with opportunities to promote your business or workplace and enjoy tax benefits as you support our parish.

--Serve as a general volunteer before, during and after the event. Signups are going on now! Just visit the parish website and click the Oktoberfest link – www.stclarechurch.org/ofest. O so simple!

--Take on a leadership role within Team Oktoberfest. Our current committee members eagerly welcome the opportunity to mentor fresh talent from our growing parish family.

Year after year, the participation of every parish household makes “O” Fest a success. In this, our 18th year, we plan to raise our steins and toast the best Fest yet. Thanks for joining the fun and supporting St. Clare.

We'll see you Saturday, September 29, at OKTOBERFEST!

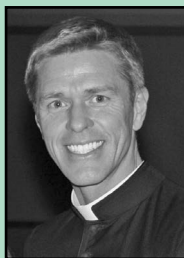
Moving forward on parish needs

Our parish-wide “town hall” gathering last spring provided a wonderful opportunity to share some “good news” on our parish finances and a grant that we had just received for our young adult ministry. Another highlight was our discussion of future building needs. Our parish council and I were glad to hear the hopes and creative ideas of our parishioners at this well-attended meeting.

One of the main things we talked about was our dire need for a new office building. This has always been a part of our master plan, but the office building is now in worse shape than we anticipated. The office is located in the old farmhouse of our church land donor, Mr. Louis Rasp, and it is falling apart. Costly bills for cooling and heating, along with continued leaks and plumbing problems, make this

From the Pastor's Desk

By Father
Jim Deiters



an inefficient and uncomfortable space for our parish staff to work in every day. When parish staff members have to wear coats and gloves inside in bitter cold, fight off wasps that come through gaps in windows during the summer or mop up water that leaks in, it does not make for a good work environment.

Everyone at the meeting agreed on the

need to build new offices as soon as possible. We also heard many people express a need for an expanded fellowship hall and kitchen for parish functions and additional meeting rooms.

With that input, we have had a number of very basic phone conversations with the architects who built our church. We are now ready to move forward with this important effort, and I will continue to seek your input to find a balance between what we want, what we need and what we can afford.

Our upcoming Oktoberfest is one very important way to raise money for paying down the debt on our church building. Thanks to all of you who are helping with that fundraiser, as we work together to meet our parish's needs.

Feed My Lambs helps kids in need



Parishioners came together to help students have good lunches this summer with the Feed My Lambs program. St. Clare worked with other local churches to donate, package and deliver lunches to more than 180 local students five days a week.



Trunk or Treat offers fall fun

Trunk or Treat – a Halloween-themed party on our parking lot – is back again, thanks to the Hospitality Committee. The event features decorated car trunks or hatchback areas and people passing out candy to children who are trick or treating in costumes among the parked cars.

Trunk or Treat starts at 6 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 26 in the church's east parking lot. People should come early to set up their displays as the parking lot will

close to traffic at 6 p.m. Best displays will win prizes.

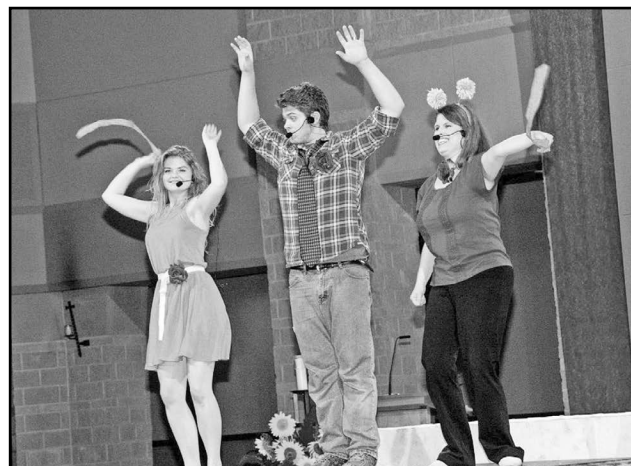
Hot chocolate, hot dogs, chili and chips are provided. Everyone is welcome to bring a crock pot of chili for the chili cook-off and a non-perishable food item for the Food Pantry.

For the safety of the kids, people with decorated cars should plan to stay until about 7:30 p.m., when the parking lot is re-opened to traffic.

Weddings

We celebrate the Holy Matrimony of **Kaitlyn Newcomb** and **Matthew Hackmann**, **Brittni Black** and **Matthew Cannella**, **Rachael Dwyer** and **Benjamin Peterson**, and **Margaret Pickard** and **Daniel Gomez**.

'Godspell' performances shine at St. Clare



St. Clare's presentation of the popular Christian musical 'Godspell' brought a talented group of parishioners and community members together to share the message of the Gospel of Matthew. The multi-generational cast of 13 adults and teens rehearsed for weeks with talented directors Jamie and Stephen Eros. They were supported by a 25-member children's chorus, which prepared through a week-long music camp.

Photos by John Dempsey

Respect Life Month: Awareness, education and help

For Respect Life Month in October, St. Clare will again put up a symbolic cemetery for the unborn at a parishioner's house along Highway 50. If you are interested in helping with set up on Oct. 1, contact Mary Fleming (mbflem@sbcglobal.net). The display includes information about abortion and how those affected by abortion can find counseling and help.

On Oct. 13-14, pro-life materials will

be on display during coffee and doughnuts, along with the distribution of baby bottles for the collection benefitting Fontebella Maternity Home. Bring the bottles back the weekend of Oct. 27-28 with the money you have donated or collected to help pregnant women who need a place to stay during their pregnancy and as they begin raising their baby.

In addition, people will be asked to do a

"Spiritual Adoption" of babies in danger of abortion. Pick up a prayer card at church on Oct. 13-14 and then pray for those babies and their parents.

The Respect Life Convention is on Oct. 28 at the St. Charles Convention Center. For information on attending, contact Mary Fleming.

Youth: Pro-Life Video Challenge is for

Youth ages 10-21 are invited to use their creative and technical talents to create a "Celebrate Life" video in the 2018 Pro-Life Video Challenge. You might win a \$100 prize, and you are sure to make a difference in making people become aware of the importance of our pro-life values.

Groups or individuals may enter the contest, but only one entry is allowed per group or individual. Videos should

be between 1 and 5 minutes, in accord with Catholic Church teachings and all original works.

Entries must be submitted by October 8 by email to Mary Fleming at mbflem@sbcglobal.net, or by postal mail to St. Clare Church, Attn: Video Challenge, 1411 Cross Street, O'Fallon, IL 62269.

The complete rules and entry forms are available at www.stclarechurch.org or email Mary Fleming.

Pet Blessing honors St. Francis

Pet lovers: bring your pets to St. Clare on Sunday, Oct. 7, at 2 p.m. for our parish's Pet Blessing, in conjunction with the Feast of St. Francis. Deacon Dennis Vander Ven will lead a short prayer service on the east lawn and then bless each pet.

If the weather is bad, a condensed version will occur just inside the Fellowship Hall.

Young Adult Initiative is our

THE NUMBERS

1 Year of listening, learning and discerning

3 Years of innovating, implementing, refining and experimenting

13 Percentage of young adults in the U.S. ages 22-29 who are former Catholics

16 Number of parishes from 5 states in the Midwest and Mid-South in the YAI

36 Percentage of young millennials, 22-28, with no religious affiliation

What?

The Young Adult Initiative, YAI, helps parishes engage young adults, 23-29, and find innovative ways to meet their needs. St. Clare applied to participate in the YAI so that we could find new and creative ways to boost young adult involvement and integrate them into parish life. This is a huge opportunity to reach young adults, Catholic or not, in our area so that we can be enriched by their presence and help them grow in their faith and live their faith. St. Clare is one of 16 parishes working with St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology through the YAI.

Why?

We all know people who have left our faith or who do not have a faith or religion. For some of us, this includes children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, godchildren, siblings, co-workers and friends. We have chosen to focus on young adults because the Millennial Generation, ages 22-37, has the highest percentage of “nones,” members claiming no religious affiliation: 36% of young millennials, ages 22-28, and 34% of elder millennials, ages 29-37. A further note: 12.8% of young adults in the U.S. between 22 and 29 are former Catholics.

Research shows that young adults are looking for communities where they feel like they belong – people know them by name and miss them when they are gone. They seek out people who are authentic in living what they believe. They want to be able to ask questions and receive real, substantial answers without judgment. Disaffiliated Catholic young adults leave the Church because they have been hurt by us or disagree with our beliefs (or what they understand to be our beliefs or reasons for them). Some simply drift away because we are not relevant to their lives.

The YAI is a massive opportunity to change how the Church approaches young adults across our country. The Vatican is hosting a Synod on Young People, ages 16-29, in October, and the whole Church is looking for ways to engage and be engaged by young adults. The young adults we love may not live in this area and may not be ready to hear from us about coming back to Church, but other young adults right here are looking for community, companions and mentors.

The YAI will help us read and respond to the signs of the times, so that we can continue to grow as disciples in how we live and share our faith in a changing world. We hope it will provide a blueprint for other parishes around the country.

How?

Year One: Form a core team, begin a process of self-evaluation, identify needs and develop an action plan. We will listen to young adults, parents of young adults and ministry leaders. We want to learn more about young adults' situations, needs and relationships to the Church. Through these listening sessions and additional research and data supplied by St. Meinrad, we will identify needs and develop an action plan.

Years Two-Four: Implement and refine that action plan. We will receive resources, support, advice and funding from St. Meinrad as we seek to implement what we learn and discern in Year One.

opportunity to learn, grow

Who?

The YAI Core Team is multigenerational, including Millennials, Gen Xers and Baby Boomers.



Sara Wise, 53, is married to Phil with four children, ages 24-31. She is a part-time pharmacist. Their family came to St. Clare with the Air Force 16 years ago. The Catholic Church has always been an important part of their lives, and Sara feels called to pass on our faith to younger generations.



Jeff Harris, 42, and his wife, Andrea, have four children, ages 7-15. He is a director of information technology. They feel invited and at home at St. Clare. He joined the core team to learn more about the situation and wants our Catholic community to be rich and vibrant for his children and grandchildren.



Betsy McCarty, 42, is married to Ryan and has a Shih Tzu named Yadi. She is a dietitian. Betsy wants to remind young adults that we are all sinners who stumble, yet God and our Catholic faith family are always there to welcome us back home.



Matt Flynn, 33, director of adult faith formation and mission, is married to Katie with two children, ages 3 and 9 months. He has been at St. Clare for three years and is passionate about the YAI because it challenges us to live our faith more authentically and to grow as a community.



Erin Thoman, 31, is a lifelong member of St. Clare. She teaches math and is the head tennis coach at OTHS. She has a deep love for our faith, thanks in large part to growing up in our parish. She is excited to discover how we can engage with young adults and help them be faithful Catholics.



Jon Harter, 30, and his wife, Lisa, have one son. Jon is a software engineer. He doesn't always know where he is on his faith journey but knows St. Clare is his family. He joined the core team to help our faith community draw everyone into this family, especially our young adults.



Sarah Gebke, 27, is married to Brandon Gebke, who was received into the Catholic Church in August. She works as a community relations representative. Jesus tells us that faith can move mountains (Mt 17:20). She joined the core team because this is a mountain.

You!

We need everyone in the parish to join us in this effort. First and foremost, we need your prayers. We also need the names and contact information for young adults in the area, regardless of whether they are active or inactive Catholics or do not identify themselves as Catholic at all. Please send this information to matthewflynn5@gmail.com.

All of us need to be open to what we hear at our listening sessions, especially when that involves criticism, so that we can listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit. Young adults also need us to engage with and accompany them in authentic relationships, without judgment.

Lastly, all of us can welcome and receive young adults into our parish and ministries, listening to their ideas, recognizing their needs and encouraging them to develop ownership and investment in our parish and faith.

Students have 'splashing' fun at VBS



'Splash Canyon' Vacation Bible School helped the children learn more about Jesus through Bible stories, games, music, dance and crafts. Snacks and playground time were a hit, too. Thanks to all of our volunteers for making VBS such fun.

Photos by Tanja Ramsby, Ava Pace and Jane Dotson

St. Clare School news

WELCOMING NEW TEACHERS

Students and parents saw new faces at St. Clare School as two new teachers and a new assistant principal joined the staff.

Please help us welcome these new staff members: Breanna Nimmer, who was added as a third teacher for first grade; Brice Miller, who joins the eighth-grade teaching team and previously coached volleyball and did his Althoff service project at St. Clare; and Assistant Principal Christina Howard, a St. Clare alumnus and former teacher at Shiloh Elementary School.

St. Clare School has been accepting many new enrollments, and now has 440 students. There are still some spots open for the 2018-19 school year for grades K-8.

To find out more about the quality Catholic education and "all the extras"

that St. Clare School offers, visit WWW.saintclareschool.org or call Principal Clarice McKay at 632-6327. Tours are available.

FAITH FORMATION

The theme for the school's faith formation program this year is "Sharing Jesus with Everyone." Students and staff will focus on helping others and spreading the Gospel, as Jesus asks us to do. Each homeroom received a heart-shaped pillow, featuring a cross and signed by the students, to daily remind them that they are following Jesus and sharing His love with others.

"We will pass the hearts around as a reminder that we pass the love of Jesus around to others," said Director of Faith Formation Diane Overmann. "We will

have globes that help us locate the six countries we will focus on this year. Our first place is Guatemala since we have sister parishes there. We will be praying for the people there as we learn about the country."

The school's song, "Tell the World" by Hillsong, will help keep the students excited about this theme.

PARENT NIGHT

The Back-to-School Parent Night on Aug. 13 focused on how everyone works together for the students' success. It was a wonderful opportunity for parents and teachers to meet and learn about their important partnerships.

School staff and board members hosted the event, which included introduction of new staff members and an update on exciting things happening at the school.

Blessing of backpacks for back to school



Father Jim and our students pray to our Lord while facing the crucifix during the Blessing of Backpacks. The blessing was held during the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which coincided with the start of the new school year. Photo by Patti Leisure

Seniors offer fun programs

The St. Clare Seniors will host educational and entertaining speakers at their upcoming meetings this fall, while enjoying delicious dinners.

Seniors will enjoy Barb Kay's portrayal of women in history at the Sept. 10 meeting. Monsignor Willie McGhee will be featured on Oct. 8; he will play his accordion and ragtime piano selections. They will have a game night on Nov. 12 and a Christmas party on Dec. 10.

Any parishioner over 55 is invited to join the Seniors group, which usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of the month in the Fellowship Hall.

For more information, contact Judy Bugger at 618-632-4074.

Group offers 'hope for the journey'

Hope for the Journey welcomes anyone who has lost a loved one. The small group meets monthly on Wednesdays in the church library.

The 7 p.m. meetings are Sept. 19, Oct. 17 and Nov. 7. Upcoming meetings at 2 p.m. are Sept. 26, Oct. 31 and Nov. 28.

The group meets for conversation, suggested reading, encouragement, prayer and to walk this journey with you. For more information, contact Ken and Barb Kenney at 618-726-7587 or kj_kenney@sbcglobal.net.

In Memoriam

We extend our prayerful sympathy to the family and friends of deceased parishioners **Wray Barr**, **Craig Seipp**, **Barbara McNease** and **James Papproth**.

Baptisms

We welcome our newly baptized children: **Alexandra Kristan**, daughter of Michael and Anna Turner; **Grant Michael**, son of Chad and Karen Truran; **Elise Claire**, daughter of Robert and Christine White; **Josephine Elizabeth**, daughter of Christopher and Candice Schubbe; **Kate Janelle**, daughter of Barry and Kim Stolle; **Raiden James**, son of Charles and Laura Bailey; **Benjamin Bryce**, son of Alvin and Beth Ruckwardt; and **Asher Brennen**, son of Dave and Tina Bereda.

Welcome to our newcomers

We welcome these newcomers to St. Clare Parish:

Matt Drake recently moved here for his work. He was led to St. Clare by looking for a new place to worship God and hopes to make new friends.

Shawn and Gina Kinzer and their children, **Matthew**, 10, **Makenna**, 9, and **Cohner**, 6, moved here from Aurora, IL. When visiting, they were truly moved by the sermon given by Father Jim and the time he spent talking to them after Mass. They are also impressed by all the outreach programs and cannot wait to be members of this exciting parish. Shawn works at Scott AFB, and Gina is the owner of Gina George Designs, Interior Painting and Painted Decorative Finishes. Their family has moved many times, and they are excited to finally put down roots here.

Joseph and Brandy Meyer and their daughters, **Eleanor**, 12, and **Evelyn**, 9, moved back from Seoul, South Korea. They were parishioners at St. Clare in 2006-09, when they were last stationed at Scott AFB. Joseph is a 375th AMW vice wing commander and Brandy is a teacher. They are very happy to be returning to St. Clare Parish and for Eleanor and Evelyn to attend St. Clare School.

Daniel and Estrella Helpingstine and their children, **Emerald**, 1, **Evangelina**, 3, and **Eidan**, 2, recently moved here from Colorado Springs, CO.

Marife Sabillano is originally from the Philippines, but has been living in the area for six years. She was born and

raised Catholic and would like her daughter, **Izabella**, 5, to be the same. She likes the atmosphere and friendliness of people at church. Marife is a single parent and a nurse extern at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. She will graduate from nursing school in May 2019.

Guy and Diane Cooley returned to O'Fallon after 15 years of living in Caseyville. Diane is an operations officer at FCB Swansea Bank, and Guy is retired military and a program manager for Skillsoft. They moved to O'Fallon in 1995 and loved the old St. Clare Church because it reminded them of the churches in Germany, where they had been stationed before moving to Illinois. But they absolutely love the new church!

Allen Medford

Kyle and Emily Stigler and their son, **Weston**, 1

Sinead Mullinax

Matthew and Emily Joost and their children, **Abigail**, 8, **Gianna**, 6, **Cecilia**, 4, and **Maria**, 1

David and Margaret Ingebretsen and their children, **Carl**, 17, **Katherine**, 15, **Jack**, 12, and **Clara**, 9

Rocky and Joy Warren, and their children, **Reegan**, 19, **Ellery**, 10, and **Oliver**, 7

Dianne Clarke

Charles and Laura Bailey and their son, **Raiden**, 5

Paul and Shannon Dawson, and their sons, **Benjamin**, 9, and **Jack**, 6

Charles and Kristina Pope and their daughters, **Kory**, 5 and **Aurora**, 1

Breanna Nimmer

St. Clare Newsletter
The Eye Opener

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Grow in faith, fellowship this fall

Sister parish visit slated for January

This fall don't miss the harvest of faith formation opportunities available at St. Clare.

MEN'S GROUP

Men, get to know other men in the parish at the Second Saturday Men's Night BBQ on Sept. 8, following the 5 p.m. Mass at the St. Clare garden pavilion (Fellowship Hall if it rains). On Oct. 13, the group will order pizza and watch the movie "Romero" in the church library following the 5 p.m. Mass. Bring drinks to share both nights. RSVP for the BBQ to Mike Howk at mike.howk@gmail.com.

ENCOUNTERS WITH HOPE

If you are looking for signs of hope in our world, check out Encounters with Hope, a new discussion group for people with questions about and experiences with poverty, injustice and social sin. Conversations will be guided by Deacon John Gomez and Matt Flynn. The group will have its first meeting on Thursday, Sept. 20 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the church library.

CORNERSTONE SCRIPTURE STUDY

Transform your heart and mind with the Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study on the Book of Revelation on Wednesday mornings this fall at St. Clare. Learn about the spectacular visions of God's kingdom and

find yourself yearning for our heavenly home and the fulfillment of God's promise to "make all things new." All new members must attend the first session at 9:30 a.m. on Sept. 19 in the fellowship hall. For more details, call Kristy Turner at 618-402-0885 or Kathleen DuMontier at 618-398-5122 or visit www.thecornerstonescripturestudy.org.

TUESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Learn more about the Psalms over the course of six weeks with the Tuesday Night Bible Study, starting Oct. 2, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Call the parish office at 618-632-3562 to register by Sept. 18. The cost is \$20.

AGING GRACEFULLY

Are you or a loved one dealing with issues related to aging? Dr. Gary Behrman, a professor at St. Louis University with his own counseling practice, will give a presentation on "Aging Gracefully" at 7 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 29, at St. Clare. This presentation, sponsored by the Diocese of Belleville's Ministry to the Sick and Aged, will examine the aging process and how it affects us emotionally, socially and spiritually. This presentation is good for caregivers, retirees and people preparing to retire.

Members of St. Clare Parish are invited to visit our sister parish, Our Lord of Esquipulas, in Guatemala from Jan. 2 to 9, 2019. Those making the trip will meet members of our sister parish, visit some of the mountain villages, participate in parish life and activities and witness some of the ways they use the money we send. What a great way to get to know members of our sister parish and to pray and reflect on our faith!

Estimated cost, including airfare, meals, souvenirs, incidentals and one or two nights in a hotel is around \$1,000 per person, with the fluctuation in airfare price being the largest factor. A valid passport is required, and anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent.

For more information or to express interest, contact Laura Polillo (lpacmt@gmail.com, 618-541-9680) by Sept. 16.