



Outreach

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*THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH, BROOKLYN NY*

@stfxbrooklyn

A St. Francis Xavier Family Tradition: The McLoughlin Family

Centered in the ever-changing Park Slope neighborhood, the St. Francis Xavier Parish community always offers a unique blend of individuals and families who are new to the area, and those who have been here for generations. One remarkable example is the McLoughlin family who have been members of our Parish for over a



**Great-grandfather John
McLoughlin**

century. In 1904, on the first Sunday our beautiful Gothic church swung its doors open, Ellen McLoughlin of Garfield Place was singing in the choir. A hundred years later, at the church's 100 year anniversary service, Ellen's grand niece Mary McLoughlin was a choir member.

Regarding the centennial event, held 13 years ago, Mary remembers that "three generations of my cousins came from afar to celebrate the occasion with me. Two of the little children amused themselves by waving to me up in the choir loft. Seeing no stairway, they were deeply concerned about how I would 'get down from there.' Their grandmother told them: 'She flies.' On that great day, I could have!"

Mary has spent the great part of her life in our community, and represents the fourth generation of the McLoughlin family to call St. Francis Xavier Parish home. "Just for the record," Mary clarifies, "I

didn't live in this parish ALL my life. At the beginning of my school years, we moved from President Street to Fourth Street and I grew up there with 22 McLoughlin cousins. Really! We returned to St. Francis after my college years and I've been happily here for more than 50 years." In addition to lending her singing talents to the church as a member of our choir, Mary has served on the Liturgy Committee, the Altar Guild and the Parish Council.

Mary is not only a fourth generation member—she is actually the fourth generation family member with the name Mary McLoughlin. "My great grandmother, Mary Frances, lived on Garfield Place. My grandmother Mary Lorraine lived on First Street. Her daughter, Mary Catherine, was here as well. And then there is Mary Regis, of Carroll Street.

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In many ways, the McLoughlin family's American journey mirrors the growth of our parish, and of Brooklyn. "My great grandparents-to-be arrived in New York as teen-agers around 1850. Years later, John McLoughlin from County Louth and Mary Frances McSweeney from Cork married, and soon moved to Brooklyn. After living here and there in Park Slope, in 1890 the family moved into a newly-built house on Garfield Place and became St. Francis Xavier parishioners."

Back then, almost everything Brooklyn families did turned up in the Brooklyn Eagle. One of Mary's favorite clippings from 1894 tells of a McLoughlin family gathering at home for the eldest son's tenth anniversary as a priest. Some 40 guests are mentioned by name, including Father David Hickey-- then



Grandfather Peter McLoughlin

the pastor of St. Francis.

Mary's McLoughlin grandparents, Peter and Mary Lorraine, brought up their children on First Street. Mary's father Peter was baptized in the Lyceum in 1901, while the Gothic building was still under construction. Mary's maternal grandparents, William and Veronica Dobby, were 'late-comers' to the parish, moving here with

"The McLoughlin family's American journey mirrors the growth of our parish, and of Brooklyn."

daughter Vera (Mary's mother) somewhere in the 1920s. Eventually, the Dobby's came to live on First Street too. "This made my parents' courting days very easy," Mary says. In the middle of the depression, the young couple had many a "date" playing bridge with one set or another of the parents.



Parents Peter and Vera McLoughlin

"My parents were married in 1935 by Father Hickey. During the ceremony he took a flower from my mother's bouquet, dipped it in holy water and, with it, blessed the bride and groom. He did a very good job as my parents were married for fifty years."

Everywhere in our parish, there are reminders of the McLoughlin family's long standing involvement in our parish community. "A few years ago," Mary remembers, "hundred-year-old books of the parish were set out in the rectory for everyone to peruse. I found Grandfather Peter right away. I'm sad to say, he died before any of his eleven grandchildren were born. But I love knowing that he is forever in the annals of St. Francis."



Mary McLoughlin

Calling All Volunteers: Saint Francis Xavier Needs You!

If you have a few minutes, or a few hours each week to contribute to St. Francis Xavier, please join us as we build programs and activities that benefit our parish and our neighbors. St. Francis Xavier has countless opportunities for parish members to serve in our various ministries and programs. Volunteering at St. Francis Xavier offers a terrific opportunity to meet your neighbors and fellow parishioners, and to have a lasting impact on our vibrant community.

Longtime parishioner Jeff Viera says that "I participate in ministries at SFX as an expression of my faith and an opportunity to contribute to the life of my parish. Serving as a Lector helps me to expand my reflection on scripture. Participating in the Baptism Preparation Ministry, I get to meet new families and encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities for spiritual growth offered at SFX."

Julia Cornely, who volunteers on the Liturgy Committee, Rosary Society, as Parish Librarian and Gardener, adds that "volunteering at St. Francis is important to me because I feel we're members of a community not just a church, and it's important to contribute."

This fall St. Francis Xavier is looking for volunteers for a wide range of ministries:

Are you a welcoming person? **Ministers of Welcome**, or Ushers, are men and women who assist those who are attending Mass by welcoming and guiding parishioners through the aisles and taking

collection. Ministers of Welcome can commit to one Mass per week, or whatever their schedule allows.

Hospitality Ministry provides three annual receptions, with coffee, snacks and conversation, for parishioners in the church vestibule following weekend Masses.

Would you like to lead children's religious education classes? **Catechists** are teachers of faith formation who lead classes at our Saturday program for children in grades 1-6 and Friday evenings for children grades 7 and up. Catechists also serve in our Children's Liturgy of the Word program at our Sunday 9:30 Family Mass.

Can you belt out a tune? The **Church Choir**, which participates in the 9:30 Sunday Mass and special occasions, is looking for a few new strong voices to fill its ranks.

Do you wish to serve your neighbors in need? **St. Vincent de Paul Society** meets Wednesday evenings in the rectory to plan activities that serve our less fortunate neighbors. The Society's work includes maintaining a food pantry. Additionally, before Thanksgiving and Easter, **Jack's Sandwich Project** prepares fresh bag meals for homeless community members.

Can you help to offer Communion? **The Extraordinary Ministers of Communion** serve the community during Mass by helping to distribute Communion, and also bring Communion to homebound and/or elderly members of the parish. For younger parishioners, Saint Francis Xavier trains and supports **Altar Servers** who can assist our priests during services.



The Seventh Heaven Street Fair, June 2017

How is that knitting project coming along? **The Prayer Shawl Ministry** knits and/or crochets shawls and lap blankets and prays for people who will receive these shawls as gifts.

Are you a people person? At Saint Francis Xavier there are a number of community events that members plan, set up, decorate, operate activities. These include the **December Santa Breakfast** for families in our Faith Formation Program; the **March Parish Pot Luck**; the June **Parish Picnic** in Prospect Park, and operating a booth at the **Seventh Heaven Street Fair**. For more information on opportunities to volunteer and support our parish, please contact the rectory office at (718) 638-1880, or visit www.STFXBrooklyn.org.

Faith in Action: Saint Francis Xavier's Social Justice Ministry

Our parish has a long history of attending to Social Justice needs in our community. It was members of St. Francis Xavier parish who founded CHIPS, now a soup kitchen and service center for the homeless and hungry located on 4th Avenue. Our own Lyceum was used as a nighttime shelter on coordination with NYC Department of Homeless Services in the 80's. Our St. Vincent dePaul Society distributes food from our Food Pantry and connects those in need to Social and entitlement services.

Today, Social Justice projects are coordinated by parishioner Regie Hawkey. All in the parish are invited to take part in activities such as the summer respite shelter organized by CAMBA at Old First Reformed Church, "Deacon Jack's Sandwich Project," or the recent Valentines Day Toiletry

Drive to benefit the Brooklyn Women's Shelter.

Regie also maintains a list of parishioners who are interested in meeting immediate needs as they arise. In the past, these have included donations of furniture for a family in need, winter coats for the children of a family and school supplies for a family in need.

Any parishioner who would like to help out or who identifies a need in our community can contact Regie by email at: regie@stfx-brooklyn.org or call the rectory during business hours and leave her a message.

Save The Date:

Sat. Nov. 4 at 5 pm: Annual Memorial Mass.

Sat/Sun. Nov. 18/19 (after all masses):

Hospitality Weekend

Nov. 22 at 7:30 pm: Parish Thanksgiving Mass

Dec. 11 at 7:30 pm: Advent Lessons and Carols and our Outdoor Tree Lighting Ceremony

December 16: Faith Formation Program Christmas Play & Breakfast with Santa

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A Letter From Our Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

This issue of Outreach highlights the many forms of Catholic service we have here at St. Francis Xavier. In particular, we are proud to spotlight Mary McLoughlin, whose family had been a strong and vibrant presence at St. Francis for over 100 years! Mary herself has kept up their tradition of being involved in the parish, and is a great example to all of us.

With that in mind, we present some of the many ways that all of our parishioners can become more deeply committed to our parish. We have many ministries and areas of service that beckon you to become more involved.

As we approach Thanksgiving, a wonderful way to praise God and give thanks for His many gifts would be to become part of one of these ministries. Not only would you be thanking God by your involvement, you would also be making your faith stronger and ensuring that St. Francis Xavier parish will continue to be a beacon of Christ for all to see. So I ask you to please spend some time in prayer, asking the Lord to enable you to deepen your faith through a deeper commitment to ministry at St. Francis Xavier.

Sincerely,

Fr. Bill Rueger

Fr. Bill Rueger
Pastor