

# OUR LADY OF THE LAKE



## NEWSLETTER

May  
2022

### HARRY TURVEY

ACTS CORE TEAM  
COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

**This ACTS newsletter shares current news and events related to ACTS at Our Lady of the Lake Parish community.**

## A Note from Our Pastor

Welcome to our second ACTS newsletter!

After a very trying two years for everyone, we seem to be heading toward things returning to normal, or at least a “new normal.” I’m absolutely thrilled that our parish has been able to host in-person retreats to provide opportunities for parishioners to encounter God in special and meaningful ways. I’m very appreciative of the ACTS Core Team and the retreat teams that continue leading the way amidst ever-changing circumstances.

We have held three in-person ACTS retreats (two for women and one for men) over the past six months, which is truly remarkable. In addition to the ACTS retreats, we also hosted an in-person men’s retreat in January at the Abbey Guesthouse led by Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus Ken Steiner and look forward to hosting a women’s retreat June 10-12, 2022 at the Abbey Guesthouse, led by Dina Marie Hale. We are confidently planning ahead into the future and have scheduled ACTS retreats at the Father Bernard Youth Center in Mt. Angel through 2023:

#### **Men’s ACTS Retreat:**

October 6-9, 2022

#### **Women’s ACTS Retreat:**

April 27-30, 2023

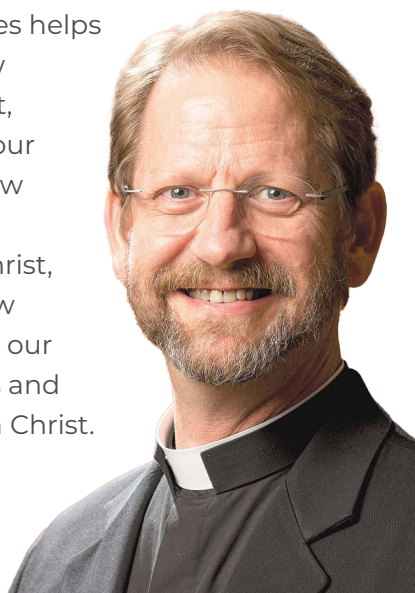
#### **Men’s ACTS Retreat:**

October 12-15, 2023

The ACTS retreats are all part of a larger parish plan of retreat offerings which include the annual men’s and women’s retreats and the couples’ retreat.

I encourage you to consider attending one of our parish retreats or to serve on one of our retreat teams. As you know, taking time to retreat from our busy schedules helps to renew our spirit, refresh our soul, grow closer to Jesus Christ, and grow closer to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

-Fr. John  
Kerns,  
Pastor



ACTS’ vision states that ACTS “partners with Catholic parishes in building vibrant, active communities through ACTS Retreats and provides ongoing parish support.”

Talking and listening to one another at an ACTS retreat help the Holy Spirit speak to us all. Despite the pandemic, we held two ACTS retreats in 2021 that helped “kindle the fire of His love.” Holding those retreats, we overcame challenges that included rescheduling the Women’s ACTS Retreat twice. With this newsletter, we revisit the Men’s and Women’s ACTS Retreats and share the retreat experiences of several parishioners. We also recount two ACTS services – supporting First Friday Adoration for the parish and Christmas Giving for St. Andrew Nativity school.

Please take a look and let us know what you would like to see in upcoming newsletters. Contact Harry Turvey ([harryturvey@comcast.net](mailto:harryturvey@comcast.net)) or Julie Arndorfer ([juliearndorfer@comcast.net](mailto:juliearndorfer@comcast.net)) with suggestions.

ACTS FACTS

7

Number of ACTS retreats hosted by OLL

158

People who have attended an OLL ACTS retreat

14

People on the OLL ACTS Core Team

# Core Team



KAREN MURPHY  
ACTS CORE TEAM FACILITATOR

ACTS stands for Adoration, Community, Theology, and Service. ACTS is a Catholic lay-led retreat ministry. This ministry is supported in our parish by the Core Team, whose primary initiatives are to facilitate the retreats that provide parishioners the opportunity to reconnect to their faith, and then invite these retreat attendees to continue their journey with Jesus Christ through participation in OLL community development and parish ministry programs.

The Core Team members for 2022 include:

**Karen Murphy**  
Facilitator

**Rich Thornton**  
Co-Facilitator

**Rip Howell**  
Financial Coordinator

**Harry Turvey**  
Communications Coordinator

**Colleen Gardner, Mo Olbrich, and  
Lynette Pierson**  
Retreat Support Coordinators

**Brad Barker**  
Retreat Supply Coordinator

**Pappy Corbitt & Susan Welch**  
Spiritual Coordinators

**Jennifer McCarthy**  
Music Coordinator

**Scott Olsen**  
Events Coordinator

**Julie Arndorfer**  
Pastoral Liaison

**Laura Patton**  
Director of Adult Faith Formation



## Women's Retreat

Father Bernard Youth Center, Mt. Angel

The next women's ACTS retreat will take place April 27-30, 2023 at the Father Bernard Youth Center in Mt. Angel, OR.



**Men's Retreat**  
Father Bernard  
Youth Center,  
Mt. Angel



*October 17, 2021: The ACTS Men sing at the Sunday 11am Mass.*

## October 2021 Men's Retreat a Success

MIKE MCCALLUM

Our Lady of the Lake held our third men's ACTS retreat last October. The retreat was held at Father Bernard Youth Center in Mt. Angel. Once again, the retreat proved to be a success. There were twenty-four men in attendance as retreatants and nineteen men served on the retreat team. This high ratio of team members to retreatants again proved to be essential in making this an intimate and mutually beneficial experience.

The purpose of ACTS is to deepen the participants' relationships with God. This retreat had profound experiences throughout, both for retreatants and team members. The format is especially conducive to getting men into the right frame of mind to appreciate the source of strength that our faith can be to each of us. It facilitates awareness of the personal relationship with God we all seek to strengthen.

This was the first Men's ACTS Retreat that was led exclusively by OLL parishioners. It marks an important step into the future of ACTS in our parish. Father John, Deacon Kevin, and Tom Tomaszek again illustrated their strong support for this lay-led ministry by serving on the retreat team. Their presence on team and for the three-day retreat indicates how strongly they believe that this retreat experience can change lives.

These ACTS retreats require involvement from many parishioners. Previous retreatants help with various components of the weekend experience. This ensures that relationships between parishioners are strengthened and thus, our parish is stronger.

If you haven't attended an ACTS retreat, do so. If you are asked to serve for future retreats, I hope you will say "yes"! ACTS is a gift that just keeps on giving.

## First Friday Adoration

MARGARET JAMIESON

My experience with Adoration started back in 1995, when I was at The Cathedral for the 5:30 p.m. Mass. Archbishop Vlazny introduced a priest from Chicago, who spoke of Adoration in the homily, saying that the parishes who had Adoration in Chicago were thriving. After his homily, Archbishop Vlazny told us that The Cathedral would begin Adoration the following month. Guess what? After Mass we were lined up to select a day and time of the week for Adoration, which would be held in a small chapel behind the Cathedral, in the building where Archbishop Vlazny lived. I signed up for 6:00 p.m. on Friday nights and thus began my quiet time with Our Lord. I could share oodles of stories relating to times in Adoration, both about others who were there and those who came when my hour was over.

During Covid, the Cathedral Adoration Chapel was closed, so I went over to St. Agatha's in Sellwood, which was the first Adoration Chapel in Portland. The last I heard was that we now have 7 Adoration Chapels in the

*continued on p. 4*



*continued from p. 3*

Portland archdiocese. Some chapels are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



We are very fortunate that Adoration is available at Our Lady of the Lake Parish on First Fridays, beginning after the 8:30 a.m. Mass and concluding with prayers and hymns from 7-8 p.m. with our two priests. In addition, our church is open every day for private prayer in the presence of our Lord in the tabernacle. When I attended Catholic high school, the nuns told us never to walk by a Church without going in to speak to Jesus in the tabernacle – even if only for a few minutes. How blessed we are at Our Lady of the Lake to be able to pray in the presence of the Lord during First Friday Adoration and during the day in our beautiful church. Jesus waits for us.

## The Gift He Didn't Know He Needed

Gary Hanifan attended the October, 2021 men's ACTS retreat held at Father Bernard Youth Center. At the return Mass on Sunday at Our Lady of the Lake, Gary shared his experience with the congregation after the homily. Gary offered words of encouragement for anyone who may be considering attending an upcoming retreat. He also suggested the retreat would be a great gift for someone you love. The retreat was the gift that he didn't know he needed.

Father John invited Gary to attend the men's retreat and his wife, Melissa, encouraged him to attend. Melissa helped Gary remove any obstacles that might get in the way or provide an excuse not to attend or be fully present during the retreat.

Gary said "I wasn't just pleasantly surprised, I was impressed. The retreat met me where I was in my spiritual journey. In fact, it met us all where we were, uniquely, in our spiritual journeys."

An outcome of the retreat for Gary was a deepening of his Catholic faith. "The opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, pray the rosary and attend Mass with my Brothers in Christ made the weekend a unique experience. I was able to build relationships with these men through this shared experience. The retreat experience reignited my faith and reminded me God loves me. I am energized to listen and hear that quiet voice, that whisper of God's plan for me. I am ready to take action to serve his will as a Disciple of Christ and to be a better son, husband, father and man."

Since returning from the retreat, Gary and Melissa are both serving as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and Gary has also served as a Lector. Their two boys, Luke and Paul, serve the parish as altar servers and Gary said "it's special when the whole family serves together." Melissa was able to attend the March 2022 Women's retreat, making ACTS and parish life truly a family affair.



*Melissa's parents, Luke, Paul, Melissa, and Gary Hanifan*

## Bright and Beautiful

Amanda Helling is a busy wife, mother of 5 children, homeschooler, and parish and school volunteer. She attended the November 2021 retreat at the encouragement of Father John and fondly recalls the love and support she encountered at the retreat. "From the men who greeted us at the parish, to the women who met us at the retreat house, all I could feel was their love."

Amanda joined the Church in June, 2020 and was interested in deepening her faith. "I knew the rules, I knew I was forgiven and loved by God, but I didn't feel any different. I was happy that I could receive the Holy Eucharist and that my family was so proud of me. But that was it. The ACTS retreat and my amazing Sisters showed me how to feel God's everlasting love. I now turn to him, though still a little bashfully, when I need guidance or forgiveness."

After returning from the retreat, Amanda and her husband,



*Amanda and Matt Helling with their children on a family trip to La Pine, OR*

Matt, began praying the rosary together daily. Their children occasionally join in and Amanda said "watching my four-year-old daughter recite the rosary like a pro just brings tears to my eyes." Amanda prays regularly and believes "God is listening. I believe he loves me. I have found the love that I so desperately wanted. It just took me 31 years to find it."

Amanda encourages others to consider attending an ACTS retreat. "Do it. Attend. It is amazing how much your life can change in just a few days. I know that we live in a busy time and it can be hard to break

away from our routines. I am a homeschooling mom of five. The world can survive a few days without you and when you return to it, everything will be brighter and more beautiful. Trust me."

Amanda served on the March, 2022 women's retreat team and loved helping another group of women realize God's love and to witness lasting friendships blossom among the women attending the retreat as well as serving on the team. "I never knew how deeply I needed positive, uplifting, devoted Catholic Sisters. They are the best!"

## All in the Family

For Amanda Stanbro, attending the ACTS retreat was somewhat of a family affair. She and her mom, Michelle Barker, attended the November, 2021 women's retreat together and her dad, Brad, attended the men's retreat in April, 2019 and has since served on a men's team and is currently serving on the Core Team.

Amanda grew up in California and attended the University of Oregon. She was born and raised in the Catholic faith and attended Catholic schools. She and her husband, Evan, love living in Oregon and enjoy hiking on weekends and crabbing and fishing on the Oregon coast.

After experiencing a traumatic event in her life six months prior, Amanda decided to attend the ACTS retreat at the prompting

of her dad and the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Having not attended church regularly in about 12 years, Amanda was feeling very alone and in need of a support system. She desired to be making life decisions more centered on God and her faith.

On her retreat, Amanda enjoyed how present God was in every encounter and activity. She

*continued on p. 6*



*continued from p. 5*

felt a deeper connection to God and her faith and enjoyed the community of women also on the retreat, all of whom she is proud to call her “Sisters for life”. Her faith has grown in a number of ways since attending the retreat. Amanda said “when I pray, I now have conversations with God and listen to what he is telling me, rather than just reciting many of the wonderful prayers we have. I have also attended Mass every Sunday since the retreat and have gotten involved in the parish.” Amanda served on the team for the March, 2022 retreat and said she “enjoyed the opportunity to give any women like me the hope and love that the retreat gave me. I even asked for a Bible for Christmas this year, and have tried to read it every night.”

When asked how her life has changed as a result of attending the retreat, Amanda said “the ACTS retreat saved me. I was not heading down a great path, and the retreat brought me back to God and to a community of people who love me and pray for me and whom I pray for and love. It taught me that my faith is the most important thing in my life and is the only thing that has ever stood by me and brought me out of the dark place I was in.”

As part of the team who led the March, 2022 retreat, Amanda enjoyed “experiencing the retreat from a different perspective so I could grow in my faith and in my relationship with God. I am so beyond thankful for the ACTS retreat and will forever be grateful to God for calling me to be a part of it. My faith saved me.”



**Amanda and Nick Stanbro with Amanda's parents, Michelle and Brad Barker, and brother Nick**

## Christmas Giving at St. Andrew Nativity

The OLL ACTS community and the parish group God Shots displayed their commitment to Community and Service with their very generous response to the St. Andrew Nativity School Christmas giving program. Now that the ACTS ministry is a couple of years old and more firmly established, the ACTS Core Team determined we definitely have the capacity to organize and live out the mission of ACTS even more fully. We are called to take care of and build our community (in our parish and beyond) and to serve those in most need. St. Andrew Nativity is a Jesuit Catholic middle school in North

Portland that educates and serves families below the poverty line. At Christmas, we were able to cover the entire wish list for the 7th grade students at the school as well as their siblings. Additional donations helped fund other needs of the program. Our ACTS brothers and sisters adopted one or more families and purchased the requested gifts or gave cash donations to support kids who may not receive gifts in celebration of our Lord's Birth. I am so very grateful for the kindness and generosity of our parish ACTS family. My hope is that our ACTS community will be able to assist with this program again next year. St. Andrew Nativity School and their families appreciated this act of love so very much!



## An Invitation to Contribute to ACTS Ministry

Our Lady of the Lake's ACTS Retreats are in full swing. Our ongoing goal is to grow our ACTS community while keeping retreats accessible and affordable.

An "ACTS Retreat Fund" has been established and is used to keep our ACTS registration fees at a reasonable level and to deal with unanticipated retreat expenses. Please consider this ministry in your

parish charitable giving. When you decide to participate, please write your check to "Our Lady of the Lake Parish" with the notation "ACTS Retreat Fund" in the memo portion

of the check. If you give online, you may select "ACTS Retreat Fund" from the ministry drop-

down menu.

Any amount contributed will be included in your annual parish giving account statement. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to our ACTS Financial Coordinator, Rip Howell, at

howler78@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for assisting our parish in providing truly life-changing experiences through this retreat ministry.



## March 2022 Women's Retreat - A Glimpse of Heaven

Our Lady of the Lake hosted our 4<sup>th</sup> Women's ACTS Retreat at Father Bernard Youth Center on March 10-13, 2022. Seventeen women served on the retreat team, with Jennifer McCarthy serving as the Director, Julie Arndorfer as Co-Director, Susan Welch as the Spiritual Companion, and Agnes Zueger provided beautiful music all weekend long. Father John Kerns was present the entire weekend, celebrating sacraments, delivering one of the talks, and getting to know the women on the retreat through presentations, small group discussions and sharing meals together. Twenty-four women attended as retreatants, ranging in age from 17 to 80-something. For Julie Arndorfer, the best part of the weekend was "time away from the regular routine and the gift of the time over the weekend with a wonderful group of women to grow deeper in our faith and to grow in holy friendship and sisterhood with one another." Jeanie Kramer, one of the retreatants, said "thank you for giving us a window into what heaven might be like - joy, forgiveness, affirmation, love, sisterhood, kindness, inclusion, humility, peace and so much more."



*March 13, 2022 - The ACTS women's team and retreatants sing at 11am Mass.*



## A Trip to Find “Home”

Amy Verheggen attended the Women’s ACTS Retreat in March, 2022. Raised in a Catholic family, she was baptized at age three after her parents brought her home from India. Amy grew up attending Mass with her family, and her parents ensured she was surrounded by faith mentors and peers by encouraging her participation youth group, retreats, and Higher Calling Ropes Camp. Amy describes her faith “as a primary source of joy and solace during the seemingly endless years of high school.”

During her college years, Amy tried to be consistent when it came to her faith practices. After college she became a flight attendant, which made attending weekly Mass increasingly difficult. After a breakup that left her heartbroken, followed by social isolation as a result of the pandemic, Amy recalls she “was hurting, alone, and forming unhealthy habits to cover the pain.” She stopped going to church altogether. “Aside from being angry with God, I didn’t feel a point in attending, as I was unable to receive the precious Body of our Lord and Savior due to not having gone to Confession for some time.”

Amy’s mom, Jean, attended the November 2021 Women’s ACTS Retreat and came home “clearly FILLED with the Holy Spirit and a renewed determination to bring her daughter back to church. I found myself praying to God for an opportunity to bring me back to my faith, if that is what He



*Amy Verheggen at her niece's baptism (Josephine Grace Verheggen)*

wanted. On January 3rd, 2022 my best friend’s mother texted me, asking if I would be interested in attending a women’s retreat in the spring. I agreed and later realized this was God’s answer to my desire to come closer to Him.”

At that time, Amy “didn’t have many friends that attended Our Lady of the Lake, as they had moved elsewhere, which was another factor of me not wanting to attend Mass. It wasn’t until I attended the ACTS retreat that I gained more friendships built in faith and love. Meeting so many new women and forming deeper relationships with women I already knew was such an incredible experience. Thanks to the retreat I was given the opportunity to attend the holy sacrament of Confession (something I had not done in years). I felt a renewed sense of faith and trust in God. Despite all my mistakes and doubts, He

was and still is here for me. I once again feel as if I belong back in the church (and truth be told, I knew I was always welcome, I was just not in a place of accepting that invitation). “

As a result of attending the retreat, Amy shared that she “feels a sense of peace with myself. I have learned to forgive myself for previous mistakes I have made, and I know God has forgiven me. My schedule is still inconsistent due to my career as a flight attendant, so I haven’t been able to attend Mass regularly at OLL. That being said, I have made a point of finding and attending Mass in the cities that I have layovers in. While Our Lady of the Lake is my home parish, I know that God will always provide a place of worship for me, even while on the road.”

When asked what encouragement she would offer others considering attending a



retreat, Amy replied, “the best encouragement I could provide is that there will ALWAYS be a reason to say to say no: “I can’t leave my animals for that long; my kids and spouse need me; my job won’t allow it.” The list is endless. I was almost unable to attend because I had a work trip starting in the middle of the retreat. I asked God, if I was meant to attend to please allow me to trade trips with a coworker. Miraculously, someone agreed to take the trip just days before the retreat, allowing me to attend. You will meet and have some of the most unlikely but beautiful friendships you’ve ever had.”

## A Renewal of Faith

Jeff Lango is a newcomer at OLL, although he has known Father John for years. As an Occupational Therapist, he provides adaptive driving services for individuals with disabilities and/or medical conditions which may impede independent driving. He also works as a Hand Therapist providing rehabilitation for individuals with orthopedic injuries. He has been in Oregon for over 20 years now and feels “that I have developed some good Duck feet!” He is the proud father of two children who were both altar servers for Father John at All Saints Parish. He enjoys running, backpacking, and cycling and has developed a recent love for scuba diving.

Jeff had been looking for a

## Parishes in Oregon with ACTS Ministries

Listed in the order in which ACTS was adopted in each parish.

1. Our Lady of the Mountain, Ashland
2. St. Pius X, Portland
3. Our Lady of the Lake, Lake Oswego
4. St. Anthony, Tigard

men’s retreat to attend for several years, and when Father John invited him to attend the October, 2021 ACTS retreat, he decided to go. “What I enjoyed most about the retreat was seeing men gathered together to celebrate God and the gifts that God has put into each one of their lives. These men came from all walks of life, but that day they expressed their humility and embraced each one of us on our own journey. Sometimes we don’t choose the day and time that God walks into our lives or opens the door to embrace us. The ACTS retreat weekend allowed us to take the time and reflect on our lives as men and what is important in

life.”

After being adrift from the Church for a while, Jeff’s faith was renewed as a result of attending the retreat. “The retreat helped me reflect on the important things of life: family, friends and service. It is not often that men gather to share their faith and their commitment to something they believe in. I feel that I have several new Brothers in my life and I am thankful for all of them!” He encourages others to attend the retreat and “embrace the weekend. Let it open the door to a new spiritual journey.”



*Jeff Lango with daughter Anna and son Michael.*



*The 2021 Women's ACTS retreatants sing at the 11am Mass on Nov. 21, 2021.*

## The Importance of Team Formation - 2021 Women's Retreat

The role of Director for an ACTS retreat begins when a person is asked by the Core Team to lead the retreat, ideally 4-6 months prior to the retreat.. Lynette Pierson began her journey when she was named Director of the 2021 women's ACTS retreat that was originally scheduled to take place in August, 2021. Lynette embraced the role of leading the team for many months in the middle of the pandemic, including planning, spiritual formation, and team bonding. Like so many events over the past two years, the August retreat had to be rescheduled due to Covid, and Lynette was not available on the re-scheduled weekend. Mitzi Brumbaugh, the Co-Director, stepped into the Director role to continue leading the team in preparation for the retreat which was eventually held in November, 2021 at the Canby

Grove Conference Center. Jackie MacMillan continued to serve as the Spiritual Companion and also took on the Co-Director role. Sixteen women attended the retreat led by a team of nine women. Thank you to all these women who stepped up into leadership roles and continued to march forward through trying circumstances to lead an in-person retreat for the women of our parish.

The team formation process is an integral part of the ACTS retreat, and even though Lynette was not able to serve on the team that ultimately led the November, 2021 retreat, she received so much by being involved with the amazing women on the team. "The ACTS team formation process is incredible. The #1 thing I noticed was how all the women came together as a team. Jackie, our wonderful Spiritual Companion, led us through a reflection during our team meeting every week which enabled us to get to know each

woman on a more personal level. As we prayed each week, the team blossomed. We could feel the Holy Spirit guiding us. Our whole team looked forward to having a few moments away from our busy lives to pray, share fellowship and plan the retreat. It was very fulfilling for us all." Lynette has since joined the Core Team and is continuing to use her gifts to serve the ACTS retreat ministry.

*Come  
Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts  
of your faithful  
and kindle in  
them the fire of  
your love.*

Do you have an interesting story or idea for the next newsletter?

Contact Harry Turvey  
([harryturvey@comcast.net](mailto:harryturvey@comcast.net)) or  
Julie Arndorfer ([juliearndorfer@comcast.net](mailto:juliearndorfer@comcast.net)).