

Parishsoft Offerings

Newsletter for ParishSOFT Users & Friends

FEATURE ARTICLE: HOLY TRINITY CHAPEL

Religious Ed at Holy Trinity Student Chapel

Even though Holy Trinity Student Chapel is the Catholic home for students at the nearby Eastern Michigan University campus, it boasts a thriving Religious Education and High School Youth Ministry program for children pre-K through 12th grade.

Set in the heart of Ypsilanti, Michigan, Holy Trinity was built in 1965, just prior to the stormy years of campus unrest. The diocese recognized the need for a student chapel to meet the needs of EMU students, and today it not only continues to meet those needs with an active student body, but also draws non-university members and families who have found a caring and involved community life at the chapel.

DRE Mark Bodensteiner, brings an energy and enthusiasm to his work and mission, reminiscent of college days at Iowa State not long past. "I try to involve all the kids in the parish as soon as possible," he says, "so I use the [ParishSOFT] database to print out blank registration forms and invite more Kindergarten and First Grade kids to come to Religious Ed." About 80 children participate in Religious Ed and 20 in the active High School Youth Group.

One of the Youth Group's highlights last year was a



Holy Trinity Student Chapel, Ypsilanti, MI

week-long mission trip in the Appalachian area of West Virginia. They drove 500 miles to join a lay order of Passionate volunteers to serve the poor building porches, tarring roofs, and helping out with Vacation Bible School and a Head Start program. "Mining is the only industry there...it was quite an eye-opener for our high school students who are used to this [university] area," says Bodensteiner.

To track all the details in these parish ministries, Bodensteiner relies upon his ParishSOFT Religious Education Module. Coming out of the winter lull, he knows events such as the Confirmation retreat and upcoming sacraments are quickly approaching. For all those letters to parents, he likes the Mail Merge and e-mail features. "The one-push e-mailing is fantastic!" he says. "I can

e-mail parents or [high school] kids to tell them what is coming up." He noted that if he weren't using up leftover sacramental certificates, he would try the automatic certificates provided in the software.

August is the big month for setting up the upcoming classes, but Bodensteiner finds it quite easy, and even found time to help the new DRE at a nearby parish. "Cloning [classes] was fantastic," he says, "and grade promoting was just click...click. This is way too easy!"

Bodensteiner appreciates the reports feature, and uses the Class Attendance by Grade Level and Student Roster "so catechists would have the addresses and phone numbers of all the students." He also uses the Birthday report for the High

continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- PAGE 2 Founder David Rosenberg** examines how Jesus calls us to challenge the status quo
- PAGE 3 Are Children Safe** with your staff and volunteers?
- PAGE 4 Dear Trish** offers tips on setting up religious education classes
- PAGE 4 Fall 2005 Customer Hero Award**
- PAGE 4 Did You Know?** Mail Merge
- PAGE 5 Welcome New Dioceses and Parishes**
- PAGE 6 ParishSOFT 101** Register today for convenient teletraining classes



A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

There is an old saying that I heard as a young man growing up in the country that goes, "Good fences make good neighbors." The saying about fences has to do with being mindful of boundaries. On farms, of course, fences are necessary to protect livestock. In modern times, boundaries are used to create "personal space" and to maintain peace and order.

I recalled those "good fences" as I read the gospel of Mark 1:21-28, in which Jesus casts the demon from the temple. When Jesus entered the temple he stood before the greatest boundary of all: the one that separates good from evil. Over time the once pure and holy temple had slowly and insidiously changed to a place of corruption. The evil one staked his claim, and he was nice and comfortable. He asked, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" Jesus was moving in on his territory. Crossing the boundary. It made the evil one nervous.

Today, the subtle and tenacious evil one still lulls society into complacency. We lock our doors and install security systems. The traditional Christmas greeting is being replaced by "Happy Holidays." Our public schools are no longer safe. Prayer and patriotism, the moral under-girding of our society, have been shunned from classrooms. I recently asked one of our Religious Ed eighth grade classes if they talked about their faith at school. Most were uncomfortable and afraid they might offend their classmates.

Are these boundaries that need to be challenged? I think so. Might some sparks fly? Probably. Is it our job to teach our children to wear Christ boldly? Absolutely!

As we begin a new season of religious education program planning, let us be mindful that Jesus challenges his disciples to face evil head-on. He is a revolutionary. In Luke 12 he tells his disciples, "Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division." In his name, we must challenge the evil one's boundaries and give our children the spiritual tools to follow our lead.

Like Jesus, we, too, can cast out our demons. It often takes just one quiet act, like Rosa Parks taking her seat in the front of a segregated bus, to start a great revolution. May our own acts spread Christ's message everywhere and teach our children to be Christians with purpose.

Deacon David Rosenberg



SUBSCRIBE ONLINE

Don't miss an opportunity to improve your productivity. Subscribe today to ParishSOFT e-newsletter, and we'll keep you informed about the latest tools, best practices, and solutions for your church or school. It's fast. It's useful. It's FREE!

Visit www.parishsoft.com/news/sign-up.htm to subscribe today. Subscribers will also be eligible for occasional special offers!

JOIN THE PARISHSOFT ELECTORAL COLLEGE!

We care what you think! On your next coffee break, visit our home page at www.parishsoft.com and vote in the biweekly ParishSOFT poll. Your vote may help to shape features in the next release of ParishSOFT software.



HIGHLIGHTS: BARCODE SCANNING

Post Contributions Using a Barcode Scanner

Parishes can use their barcode scanners to post pledges and contributions in the Offering & Tuition Module. Following a one-time barcode scanner and amount template setup, simply go through your batch and complete the following steps to post with your scanner:

1. From your Offering & Tuition Module's Contribution Posting screen, choose the **Fund**, **Posting Date**, and optional **Batch** as usual.

2. Click in the envelope number **Search** field and scan the **Envelope** number.

3. Scan the amount of the contribution from the barcode template.

4. Proceed to the next pledge or contribution document and repeat steps 2 and 3.

A barcode scanner can save you keystroke time by automating data entry and tab movement through data fields with each scan. Your one-time setup will tell the barcode scanner exactly which ParishSOFT data fields should

accept scanned envelope number and **Amount** data. Your setup also specifies which fields are "tabbed through" and which buttons are automatically clicked. As part of your one-time barcode scanner setup, you can also include a cursor stop at the **Memo** field, so you can manually enter the check number or other payment note.

Step-by-step instructions for setting up your barcode scanner and amount template are available from our support tools library, located on the Web at www.parishsoft.com/support. ■

ARE CHILDREN SAFE WITH YOUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS?

As dioceses and parishes throughout the U.S. work to implement child protection and background screening programs, one thing is certain: we must ensure the safety of our children.

If you are responsible for managing the fingerprinting and criminal background checks of your staff members, catechists, and other volunteers, you already know what a challenge this task can be.

Screening requirements for catechists may be different than for bus drivers or music volunteers. Redundant work and dollars are spent screening volunteers who may already have passed the same requirements at another parish or at a diocesan office. Expired clearances are difficult to track. Paper records make it difficult to ensure that EVERY church person who has contact with our children should be allowed to do so.

Background screening does not have to be an administrative albatross for your diocesan and parish offices.



ParishSOFT's Background Screening Manager lets you ensure that all personnel who work with minors in the diocese undergo a proper background screening process. Requirements are coordinated from the diocesan level, so compliance is measured the same way at every parish, in every office. Uniting all diocesan and parish locations into a single, secure background screening database eliminates costly redundancies, meets the recommendations of the USCCB charter, and gives you the data you need to make sure no one "falls through the cracks."

Background Screening Manager has Many Benefits, including:

- Uses one powerful database (as the USCCB recommends) across the diocese and provides secure access to data in or outside of arch/diocesan offices via Web or Local Area Network (LAN).
- Protects and secures your data—only authorized personnel can view or update records.
- Stores screening requirements for each position within the diocese—once a requirement is met for one position, it is met for all similar positions.
- Shares screening results instantly with authorized personnel at all diocesan locations—without dependency on paper files and forms.
- Tracks expired clearances.
- Generates powerful reports.

ParishSOFT's Background Screening Manager is a great example of what can be accomplished through diocesan-parish collaboration. If your diocese is not using this tool, your parish can track background screening data using the Student Record "Milestones," found in the Religious Education Module. To learn more, please contact your ParishSOFT account representative toll-free at 866.930.4774. ■

FEATURE ARTICLE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

School Youth Group. Eventually he wants to set up the Milestone report so he will know automatically who is ready for First Communion and Confirmation. He also likes to download many of the reports into Access and customize them himself.

As a former Boy Scout leader, Bodensteiner appreciates the thoroughness of the background screening as required by the diocese, and he does "make sure [catechists] are screened and go through the process." He agrees it is a

lot of work to fill out the paperwork and contact the references, but he is accustomed to the process because of his previous work with the Scouts.

What does he like best about ParishSOFT's Religious Education Module? Bodensteiner says, "It's easy access to various grades, so I can find anything I need to know. Usually I have all the parent information right there." With the busy, full parish life available for students and families alike at Holy Trinity Chapel, ParishSOFT



is glad to help keep the details straight, so there is more time for the important things – like ministry. ■

A TESTIMONIAL



I can't say enough about Tech Support. It is out of this world! Every

single person I have talked to at ParishSOFT is wonderful. I've never hung up dissatisfied, and I'm not exaggerating."

"We just started to use automatic withdrawal for our Sunday Contributions and Debt Reduction payments [ACH Module]. It has worked out really well so far. I can't believe how easy it was to set up. And of course Tech Support was always there to help me through each step."

Peg Elwarner
School Tuition and Parish Offerings
Coordinator
St. Thecla Parish
Clinton Township, MI

DEAR TRISH

Q. What's the Fastest Way to Set Up My Religious Education Classes for the New School Year?

A. If you already have a previous school year set up, you can "clone" it! Cloning utility copies your sessions and classes into a brand new school year. Once your new school year has the "cloned" sessions and classes, simply edit any session details and update the calendar session dates. Then edit class details to add Catechists and Room #s.

1. Click **Utilities > Religious Ed Utilities > Clone Previous Year** (in your ParishSOFT Reports).

2. Choose the school year you wish to copy.

3. Select the new school year (sessions and classes will be copied into this year).

4. Click **Copy > Yes**. You can now edit any session dates or class details needed for the new REP year.

See ParishSOFT Reports *Utilities, Clone Sessions and Classes* on page 129 of your version 3.5 Religious Education User Guide for step-by-step instructions.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mail Merge

Lost in the land of Mail Merge? Can't find that letter you created? Follow the directions below to save your *Word* document correctly, so you can find it later as a template.

1. Create your letter in *Word*.

2. Click **File > Save As**.

3. Select Office Template

Files (.dot) from the **Files of type** drop-down list.

Q. Where, oh Where, are Those Registration Forms?

A. ParishSOFT's Religious Ed Module provides three types of registration forms: *Registration Students*, *Registration All*, and *Blank Registration*.

The *Registration Students* form captures and prints data for students who are already registered in the selected classes, session, or year. This form lists the parent's address and contact information with names and records of all children in the family.

The *Registration All* form captures and prints data for members of a specific age range (e.g., ages 4 to 17). Forms are printed for all children—including those who have not been enrolled in classes before. This form includes the same data as the *Registration Students* form.

The *Blank Registration* form is not populated with any member data. *Blank Registration* forms are ideal to include in parish information packets for new families.

For step-by-step instructions, see *Print Registration Forms*, page 74 of the Religious



Education User Guide, version 3.5.

Q. Can I "CC" My Catechists When I Send Mail Merge Letters or E-mails to My REP Families and Students?

A. Absolutely! I recommend that you add your catechists to their class lists (the same way you add a student to a class), so any letters to parents will also be sent to the catechists. If you have catechists' e-mail addresses, be sure to add them to their family or member records. Any time you send an e-mail to parents or students, the catechist will also be sent a copy.

Do you have a question for our support team?

Please e-mail us at support@parishsoft.com or call us at 866.930.4774 x2. ■

PARISHSOFT NOTES

Our support call response system ensures that the highest number of possible calls are answered directly by a support representative. Because we do not allow customers to remain "on hold," the rest of our calls are returned within the hour. We want to better our service and avoid callbacks whenever possible, so we are working to improve our response rate by making our software more intuitive and easy-to-use; providing more self-help resources on our website; improving our staff availability, and more. As always, we appreciate your suggestions.



FALL 2005 CUSTOMER HERO AWARD



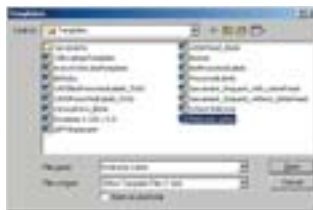
ParishSOFT is proud to present Elizabeth Mathew, DRE at St. Mark and Mary Queen of Heaven Parishes in the Diocese of Brooklyn, NY, our Customer Hero Award for Fall 2005. While Elizabeth was DRE at Holy Family Parish in Brooklyn, she attended the 2005 National Conference of Catechetical Leaders held in Kentucky and visited ParishSOFT's booth. After seeing a demonstration of our Religious Education Module, she liked it so much, she helped organize a seminar, held later at her parish. As a result of this seminar, three parishes, including Holy Family, chose to purchase the entire ParishSOFT suite.

Elizabeth continued to recommend ParishSOFT to other DREs in the Diocese of Brooklyn. As a result, two more parishes bought the entire suite, and five more parishes purchased the Religious Education Module, bringing the total to 10 parishes!

ParishSOFT is grateful to Elizabeth Mathew for sharing her knowledge and experience of working with ParishSOFT products. For her outstanding service, Elizabeth and her staff will receive a free lunch, compliments of ParishSOFT.



*Congratulations
Elizabeth Mathew!*



4. Change the folder in the **Look in** drop-down list to the template folder where your database is located (i.e., Program Files\ParishSOFT\Templates).

5. Click **Open** to save your template file. ■

WELCOME NEW DIOCESES AND PARISHES!

ParishSOFT Customers since November 2005

Diocese of Arlington, VA
Reston, St Thomas a Becket

Diocese of Belleville, IL
Evansville, St Boniface

Diocese of Biloxi, MS
Bay Saint Louis, OL of Gulf

Archdiocese of Boston, MA
Boston, St Anthony Padua
Cambridge, St Peter
Holbrook, St Joseph
Winchester, St Eulalia
Winchester, St Mary
Winthrop, St John Evangelist
Duxbury, Holy Family
Newburyport, Imm. Conception
Plymouth, Bldd Kateri Tekakwitha
Shirley Ctr., St Anthony Padua
S Boston, OL Czesochowa
Topsfield, St Rose Lima

Diocese of Bridgeport, CT
Bridgeport, OL Fatima
Bridgeport, St Ann

Diocese of Brooklyn, NY
Brooklyn, St Barbara
Jamaica, Sts Joachim & Ann
Whitestone, St Luke

Diocese of Camden, NJ
Barrington, St Francis de Sales
Hammonton, Bldd John XXIII
Williamstown, St Mary

Archdiocese of Chicago, IL
Antioch, St Peter
Kildeer, St Thomas Villanova
Mt Prospect, St Cecilia

Diocese of Colorado Springs, CO
Littleton, St Mark

Archdiocese of Detroit, MI
Temperance, OL Mt Carmel
Bloomfield, St Hugo of Hills
Grosse Pte Pk, St Ambrose

Diocese of Fall River, MA
South Attleboro, Holy Ghost

Diocese of Grand Rapids, MI
Twin Lake, St Mary of Woods

Diocese of Helena, MT
Thompson Falls, St William

Diocese of Jefferson City, MO
Palmyra, St Joseph

**Diocese of Kansas City-
St Joseph, MO**
Belton, St Sabina
Butler, St Patrick
Kansas City, St Matthew
Saint Joseph, Co-Cathedral St
Joseph

Diocese of Lincoln, NE
David City, St Mary

Archdiocese of Los Angeles, CA
Diamond Bar, St Denis

Diocese of Manchester, NH
Hudson, St Kathryn

Diocese of Metuchen, NJ
Bloomsbury, Annunciation
Bound Brook, St Joseph
Bridgewater, Holy Trinity
Carteret, Sacred Heart
Carteret, St Eliz Hungary
Carteret, St Joseph
Far Hills, St Elizabeth
Great Meadows, Sts Peter & Paul
Hampton, St Ann
Manville, Sacred Heart
Martinsville, Bldd Sacrament
Pittstown, St Catherine Siena
Raritan, St Joseph
Raritan, St Ann
Spotswood, Imm. Conception

Archdiocese of Miami, FL
Miami, Mother Our Redeemer

Archdiocese of New York, NY
New York, St Teresa

Diocese of Norwich, CT
Coventry, St Mary

Diocese of Orange, CA
Irvine, St Thomas More

Diocese of Paterson, NJ
Pompton Lakes, St Mary

Diocese of Peoria, IL
Peoria, Cathedral St Mary

Diocese of Pittsburgh, PA
W Homestead, St Rita

Archdiocese of Portland OR
Myrtle Creek, All Souls

Archdiocese of Santa Fe, NM
Springer, St Joseph

Diocese of Salt Lake City, UT
Brigham City, St Henry
Cedar City, Christ the King
Delta, St John Bosco
Ephraim, St Jude
Fillmore, Holy Family
Gunnison, San Juan Diego
Helper, St Anthony Padua
Huntington, San Rafael
Huntsville, St Florence
Kanab, St Christopher
Layton, St Rose Lima
Milford, St Bridget
Monroe, St Elizabeth
Ogden, Holy Family
Ogden, St James
Ogden, St Joseph
Price, Notre Dame
St George, St George
Torrey, St Anthony of Desert
Tremonton, Santa Ana

Diocese of Savannah, GA
Americus, St Mary

Diocese of Sioux Falls, SD
Clear Lake, St Mary
Estelline, St Francis de Sales
Garretson, St Rose Lima
Gary, St Peter
Orient, St Joseph
Redfield, St Bernard
Salem, St Mary

Seneca, St Boniface
Sioux Falls, OL Guadalupe
Yankton, Sacred Heart

Diocese of St Cloud, MN
St Cloud, St Augustine

**Archdiocese of St Paul-
Minneapolis, MN**
Chanhassen, St Hubert

Diocese of St Petersburg, FL
Clearwater, Light of Christ
Land O'Lakes, OL Rosary
Plant City, St Clement
St Petersburg, St Paul
Tampa, Christ the King

Diocese of Stockton, CA
Hughson, St Anthony
Linden, Holy Cross
Newman, St Joachim
San Andreas, St Andrew
Modesto, St Stanislaus
Stockton, Presentation BVM
Turlock, Sacred Heart
Twain Harte, All Saints

Diocese of Superior, WI
Ashland, OL Lake
Tomahawk, St Augustine
Tomahawk, St John Baptist

Diocese of Trenton, NJ
Lawrenceville, St Ann

Diocese of Tucson, AZ
Tucson, St Ambrose

Diocese of Worcester, MA
Worcester, Blessed Sacrament
Worcester, Cathedral St Paul.

**Chaldean Diocese of St Thomas
Apostle, West Bloomfield, MI**

ENVELOPE TIP *brought to you by ParishSOFT's partner* **OurSundayVisitor**

Did you know that parishioner information can be sent directly to your envelope supplier from your Offering & Tuition Module? Simply go to **Reports > Envelope Utilities** and follow the steps to export your envelope data to a spreadsheet file. This file may be attached with your e-mail to your envelope supplier.

Please note that this feature requires that you have a MAPI-compliant default mail client, such as Outlook™ or Outlook Express™, configured on your computer. Please contact ParishSOFT support at toll-free 866.930.4774 if you need assistance. ■

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Has your e-mail or mailing address changed? You can update your contact information online at www.parishsoft.com/updateinfo

ParishSOFT

825 Victors Way, Suite 200
Ann Arbor, MI 48108-2830

866.930.4774 (toll free)
734.205.1000
734.205.1011 fax
www.parishsoft.com

Sales

866.930.4774 x1
info@parishsoft.com

Billing

866.930.4774 x103
customerservice@parishsoft.com

Training

866.930.4774 x126
training@parishsoft.com

Customer Support

Hours: Mon-Fri, 9am to 7pm ET.
866.930.4774 x2
support@parishsoft.com

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
ANN ARBOR MI
PERMIT #318

PARISHSOFT 101

Register today for one of our convenient teletraining classes, or arrange for a trainer to come right to your location. For costs and teletraining dates, visit www.parishsoft.com/training or e-mail training@parishsoft.com.

ACH Electronic Giving	Set up specific parish funds and member accounts for automated transfer and contribution postings.
Extended Tuition	Manage school tuition and/or religious education billing fees; send statements; post payments, and more.
Fundamentals	(a.k.a. Family Directory) Manage records, sacraments, workgroups, and reports.
Ledger & Payables	Set up and manage your entire accounting process.
Offering	Post contributions; manage pledge campaigns; generate statements and reports.
Payroll	Handle employee accounts and pay cycle tasks.
Religious Education	Set up your entire program; maintain student and class records; generate reports.
Reports: InDepth	Build standard and custom reports.
Time & Talent	Create and manage ministry groups; use auto-scheduler; post to the web.
Web Solutions	Learn to administer your parish website, calendar, facility scheduler, and more on ParishesOnline.com .

Come and See ParishSOFT Close Up!

Conferences and Events

February 17 - 19, 2006
Washington, DC
34th Annual East Coast
Conference for Religious
Education

March 31 - April 2, 2006
Anaheim, CA
Religious Education
Congress

April 29 - May 4, 2006
Rosemont, IL
National Conference for
Catechetical Leadership

Visit us online @ www.parishsoft.com