



## The Parish Covenant Corner

A weekly look at how our faith community is living out the Parish Covenant and growing in our relationship with God.

*“ I will make a covenant of peace with them...*

*I will be their God and they will be my people.”*

*(Ezekiel 37:26-27)*

When I was first asked to share how my family was living out the parish covenant, I thought "why me, I'm sure there are other people who do more for St. Mary than I do". I'm a busy, working mom who never seems to have enough time in each day to get everything done. So I decided to make a list of some of the ways we show our commitment to the covenant. I was surprised how easily I filled that list.....

It starts way back in 2nd grade, when I made my First Holy Communion here at St Mary! I was raised to believe that worship is a key part of our faith. At the same time, my husband, Kevin, was being raised in a family that also worshiped and prayed together. As children, we witnessed our parents and siblings being active members in a variety of church activities. It was just part of our daily life. Now, as I am thinking of ways my own family is participating in the covenant, I am realizing that we too, have simply made it fit into our lives. Most of the activities that we participate in, are done with our children. By doing so, we are not taking time away from our kids, but we are actively involving them in the covenant as well.

Things we do together as a family involve weekly mass, daily prayer at supper and bedtime, and seasonal prayer such as putting together a Jesse Tree and Advent Wreath during Christmas. The kids are also actively involved in choosing gifts and food to give to the poor. They even do extra chores around the house to earn money for these items. At times, I feel that it would be a lot quicker and easier if I just did it myself, and I am tempted to do so. One day, our neighbor boy had his stereo stolen from his car. When our 4 year old, Cooper heard about it, he wanted to get money from his piggy bank to buy him a new stereo. That was when I knew that taking the extra time to involve our children in these activities was all worth it. They also enjoy making pictures for our disabled neighbor in hopes to make her feel better. Cooper said that he doesn't know how the picture helped her feel better, but it just did!

We also like to remain active and have found many ways to do so in a charitable way. My dad, Ken Wildt, has started a family tradition of riding in the "Wheeling for Healing" bike ride to raise money for Community Memorial Hospital. We also participate in walks to fund the Make a Wish foundation and The Down Syndrome Association. I also enjoy running in "Al's Run" and the "Crazy legs" run every year. In all of these cases, we explain to our kids why we do this and who will benefit from our simple actions. In addition, my mom, Nancy Wildt, takes our children with her to deliver food for the "Meals on Wheels" program. Tonight, while making dinner for the family, my kids helped to double the recipe so we could give a meal to the St. Bens meal program. That is something I use to do with my mom! There are some activities and meetings that the kids can not participate in, so Kevin and I share the load and spend time with the kids alone while the other helps out at church or school. Once when I explained to Cooper that his dad was doing yard work at St. Mary's, he cried the whole time Kevin was gone. He was devastated that his dad was cutting the grass without him. I guess that would have been better left unsaid! The kids are also not thrilled that we give blood, but they are starting to understand why we do it. They do make us promise that we will never make them give blood, "no matter how sick the other people might be". We hope that eventually they'll change their minds!

There are many other school related activities that I have found to be fun for me and my kids, but to also benefit the school. Together, we have helped or currently do help out in the computer lab, SCRIP distribution, book fair, giving tours during Catholic Schools Week, and special events such as the book signing last year. I have found that with almost every activity I have helped with, I have made a new friend or learned something new. It sounds cliché, but I honestly feel that I am getting more out of these opportunities that the people I am serving. Our daughter, Carley has quoted me saying, "I go to St. Mary's because that's where my mom's heart is". She's absolutely right. That's why I feel that so much of what we do here is not a burden at all. We are committed to raising our children to be good Christians, just as we were raised. We are simply living our lives the way we were taught, and in the mean time, we are helping others along the way. It doesn't have to be anything big like chairing a committee or an event. In remembering that a little bit goes a long way, I feel that we have shown our kids a variety of ways to fulfill our covenant. We hope that they too, will continue many of these traditions with their families in the future.

Joy Conway

**Each week we will highlight a family/individual or group of people that is finding their unique way to live out the Parish Covenant. It is our hope that by doing so we may all continue to grow in our faith and relationship with God. If you have a personal story you would like to share please email Sue Miller at [mmiller101@wi.rr.com](mailto:mmiller101@wi.rr.com)**