



# ST. ISIDORE

CATHOLIC CHURCH



## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS:

*In Service to One, in Service to All*

**F**ounded in 1882 by Blessed Fr. Michael McGivney in New Haven, Conn., the Knights of Columbus organization is founded upon the four pillars of Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism. Upon its establishment, the organization grew quickly and by the early 1900s, the Knights had councils in several countries beyond the United States.

The primary way that the Knights of Columbus serve its original mission of protecting the widows and orphans of their members is through their insurance programs. The Knights of Columbus have many different offerings, from life insurance to mutual funds. They also provide mortgages to many Catholic churches and schools.

At St. Isidore, the Knights fill the needs of the parish in a multitude of ways.

“In the parish, we do all kinds of necessary things,” says Gary Corrado, former Grand Knight and current Knights trustee. “We help with many different activities,

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**MASS TIMES: Saturday:** 8 a.m. *Bilingual* | 6 p.m. *Bilingual* / **Sunday:** 8 a.m. *Bilingual* | 10 a.m. *English* | 12 p.m. *Spanish*  
**Weekdays:** Monday - Friday | 12 p.m. *Bilingual*

**CONFESSION TIMES: Wednesday:** 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. / **Thursday - Saturday:** 5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

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## STEWARDSHIP OF THE CROSS

**T**he liturgical year is such a gift to us. As we turn the pages of the calendar, reflecting on the life of Christ, we have the opportunity to consider the most sublime events in the history of mankind. Of these events, perhaps none is more beautiful and worthy of contemplation than the one we are about to commemorate — Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself for us on the Cross.

It is fitting and, at the same time, paradoxical. It is fitting that God should do it, because only an infinite God could rid us of the infinite debt we owed by our sin. It is paradoxical that He not only did it, but wanted to do it out of pure love for us, His lowly creatures. What is Jesus trying to show us? Even more staggering, what is He really asking when He exhorts us, in turn, to take up our cross and follow Him?

Jesus freely gave His life for the Church, and He calls us to do the same. Some of us may, in fact, give our entire lives for the Church. But for most of us, this giving takes place by a series of daily actions, both large and small, of Christ-like, sacrificial love — specifically, by giving our time, talent and treasure for the good of the Church. Yet, by joining these actions with His, we have the chance to participate in that very same sacrifice. This month, let us take the time to examine our hearts and actions in light of Jesus’ as we journey with Him toward the Cross.

### **Jesus gave Himself unselfishly and excessively.**

Consider the manner of His sacrifice — one drop of Christ’s blood would have been more than sufficient to save the entire human race, and yet Our Lord Jesus chose to shed every last bit. From start to finish, Jesus showed us by His passion that He wanted to do more than what was merely sufficient. If there was more He could give, He gave it. He never stopped to count the cost or to look for what He could get in return.

### **Jesus made His sacrifice a supreme act of love for the Church.**

Counter-cultural even to this day, Jesus actually upheld sacrifice as desirable — the most perfect way to show our love: “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (Jn. 15:13).

In His infinite wisdom, Jesus now offers this path to us as the way to holiness: “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me” (Lk. 9:23).

### **Jesus gave Himself willingly and even joyfully.**

“No one takes [My life] from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again” (Jn. 10:18). At the first Eucharist, Jesus even went so far as to say, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you” (Lk. 22:15). Needless to say, the Passover sacrifice to which Jesus referred was not a symbolic one, but was in fact His very Body and Blood He would give for us through the sacrifice of the Cross.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts more like Yours.

A Letter From Our Pastor

## A STEWARD'S GUIDE TO LENTEN COMMITMENTS

Dear Parishioners,

**M**aking a Lenten commitment is simple. Keeping it is the difficult part! The Lenten commitments we make ourselves are frequently a lot like New Year's resolutions — they sound good, but we don't get far into the new year before they've been broken and then abandoned.

If you are like me, you approached Ash Wednesday with the intention of doing better than you did last year. But as Lent continues, our enthusiasm may wane, and it seems harder and harder to keep our commitment. And then we begin to wonder, "What's the point?"

Often, we realize we've already broken our commitment in some way — perhaps we decided we'd pray a decade of the Rosary every evening, but we were too tired one night or simply forgot. Maybe we slipped up and ate a cheeseburger on the first Friday in Lent, even though we know that all Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence from meat. So we conclude that we just can't keep a good Lenten commitment and give up trying to make it a special season in any way.

If you're tempted to give up, **don't do it!** Just pick up where you left off, ask God for forgiveness, and begin again. Our Lenten commitments should challenge us, and we can grow spiritually. We can even benefit from our failures if they help us better realize how much we need God's grace.

After all, nothing worthwhile is accomplished without discipline and structure. Whether it's a football player in training, a musician practicing or a medical student mastering the intricacies of the human body, hard work, discipline and even frustration will be part of the process. Only those who keep at it will master the skills those activities demand.

The spiritual life follows the same principles. Spiritual growth requires hard work, discipline and practice. Making our wills conform to God's will is the result of repeated efforts over a period of years.

It is true that sometimes we must reevaluate our



Lenten commitments. If we are aware we're consistently failing in some way, we may need to modify how we approach our commitment. Above all, the key to success is our steady, day-to-day observance of prayer, fasting and almsgiving all through the season.

But when we do fail, we should remember the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). He had failed miserably. Suppose he had concluded, "I've blown it. I rejected my father and my home. There's no way I can go

back." He'd have given up in despair. But "coming to his senses," he decides to return home in penitence, to be a servant. When he arrives home, he is welcomed with joy and restored to his position.

This parable sets forth the pattern we should follow when we fail in our Lenten commitments. Begin our observance again, and keep up our Lenten journey, eventually arriving at the joys of Easter. God our Father will welcome us. Then we will indeed be ready to celebrate.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Avram Brown". The signature is written over a background of a blurred Bible page with a gold cross.

Rev. Avram Brown  
Pastor

# ST. ISIDORE

CATHOLIC CHURCH

MEET PARISHIONER

## CHERYL ERIKSON

*Growing in Faith to Serve the Parish and Diocese*

For many of us as Catholics, we have received most of our catechetical formation during religious education classes as a student, as well as through attending conferences, speaker series or lectures on the faith. However, we all thirst for more knowledge about our faith, whether we realize it or not, but sometimes it's hard to find resources to help us dive deeper into our Catholic faith.

Parishioner Cheryl Erikson noticed this need for more information on different topics in our faith, beyond what is offered on EWTN or through Catholic radio — rather, she envisioned something more tangible. Enter the Lighthouse Ministry at St. Isidore Catholic Church.

“We began the Lighthouse Ministry at St. Isidore under Fr. Matt Blank a few years back,” Cheryl says. “There’s a kiosk of books, CDs, and smaller booklets on a wide range of Catholic topics for parishioners to purchase here at the parish. These resources offer the opportunity for parishioners and guests to continue their education in the faith and grow spiritually.”

When the kiosk was installed, materials were flying off the shelf. This warmed Cheryl’s heart, because it meant that people were growing a little bit in faith through these materials. Occasionally, parishioners witnessed her restocking and were able to put a face to the woman behind the ministry.

Cheryl and her husband, Larry, have been parishioners at St. Isidore for almost 40 years. They make it a priority to step up and help the parish and greater



*Cheryl Erikson with her granddaughter, Violet*

diocesan community whenever they get the chance. Larry is a member of the Knights of Columbus, Cheryl is in her third year on the Pastoral Council, and the couple helped with marriage preparation for many years.

In addition to her service in the St. Isidore community, Cheryl is the coordinator for the Unbound Ministry within the Diocese of Sacramento. According to the diocese’s website “Unbound is a ministry of freedom and inner healing that helps release the Gospel into our lives.” Through prayer teams, this ministry walks with individuals to listen and pray with them as they seek out healing. Cheryl notes that she could not serve

in this capacity if it weren’t for her husband’s support.

“Larry is so supportive of the work of the Unbound Ministry for the diocese,” Cheryl says. “Oftentimes, I am pulled away for other things to dedicate time to Unbound and he supports the work I do with that ministry.”

As she reflects on the ministries in which they’ve engaged at St. Isidore, Cheryl recognizes many joys and encourages others to find their niche in parish ministries.

“The church is our second home,” she says. “When everyone pitches in to support the parish through their distinct talents, the whole of parish life runs smoother. Yes, we always need financial support, but the gift of people’s time and talent doing things they love and are good at makes such a huge difference in our parish. When we are happy about applying our talents to our parish home, we can only see growth.”

***“The gift of people’s time and talent doing things they love and are good at makes such a huge difference in our parish. When we are happy about applying our talents to our parish home, we can only see growth.” — CHERYL ERIKSON***

# MEET PAIGE WESTLAKE, MARRIAGE PREPARATION COORDINATOR

*Guiding Couples as They Prepare for Sacramental Life Together*

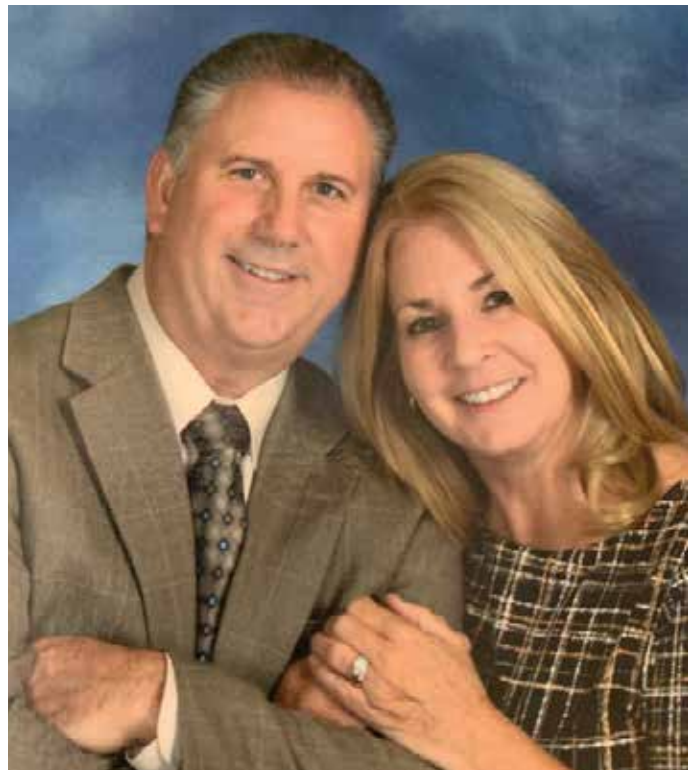
**F**or the past six years, Paige Westlake has served St. Isidore couples through her position as Marriage Preparation Coordinator. Through this ministry — Paige, her husband Mark, and a team of dedicated parish volunteers — couples are given the tools to discern the Sacrament of Matrimony, prepare for marriage, and successfully communicate and solve problems together.

“The Catholic Church takes marriage very seriously, and because of this the Church has established several basic requirements for the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony,” Paige says. “It is the job of the Marriage Coordinator to oversee that the requirements have been fulfilled and to ensure a sacred celebration of the sacrament. For the last six years, I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to uphold the Church’s teachings on marriage, family life, prayer, Scripture and the sacraments.”

In 2015, Paige and Mark became certified FOCCUS ((Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study) facilitators. FOCCUS is designed to provide engaged couples and their trained facilitator with a personalized profile of what is needed in the couple’s marriage preparation formation.

“We encourage engaged couples to talk openly to each other,” Paige says. “We do not act as therapists, and we are not there to fix problems. We are there as a resource to support the relationship and promote healthy communication. We love that the sessions offer a unique opportunity to celebrate a couple’s strengths, to have them practice positive communication skills, and explore important areas that may present problems later.”

At St. Isidore, the marriage preparation process begins via an initial meeting with the engaged couples. In this meeting, Paige determines whether the couple are free to marry, and that there are no impediments or obstacles that could prevent the marriage



*Paige Westlake with her husband, Mark*

from taking place — for example, a prior marriage, or a couple with mixed religions. If an impediment or obstacle is determined, Paige will assist the couple with the appropriate process to have it removed or corrected, if possible.

“A central theme of the marriage preparation process at St. Isidore is to assure our couples that there is someone who cares about their situation and will help guide them through the process with compassion and understanding,” she says. “Once I have established that the couple is free to marry, or that there is a pathway forward to marriage, I will take time to learn about what the engaged couple’s views are on Christian marriage. I will also assess their

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## MEET PAIGE WESTLAKE *continued from page 5*

readiness for marriage.”

Paige also assists couples in scheduling the wedding Masses, rehearsals and celebrants, as well as helping them plan their wedding liturgy. She also helps them obtain the required documentation needed to be married in the Church — including an original Baptismal certificate, proof of First Communion and Confirmation, and documents required by the state of California for legal marriage.

“One of my favorite steps in the marriage preparation process is obtaining the Form A testimony statement [for the state],” Paige says. “The statements are done separately from each engaged person, so this provides me with an opportunity to get to know them on a more intimate level. It is always heartwarming to learn that the ‘essentials of a valid

marriage’ are present.”

Engaged couples are also required by the Diocese of Sacramento to attend a diocesan-approved marriage preparation instruction program — our parish uses a program from Agapè Catholic Ministries.

“The program is designed to immerse the couples in the teachings of St. John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body* and orient them toward a shared Christ-centered life that will utilize the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony,” Paige says. “In the beginning of 2018, Mark and I became certified Agapè Catholic Marriage Preparation Instructors and happily shifted our class format to the Agapè Program. We have treasured the opportunity to teach and support the couples as they prepare for their divine vocation of being a ‘domestic church.’”

*If you would like more information about this ministry, please contact the parish office at 530-673-1573.*

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS *continued from front cover*

usher and greet at weekend Masses, we clean up after projects, do fundraisers and provide funds for special projects or needs throughout the parish.

“The church has one paid maintenance employee and we help with the rest,” he adds.

Being a part of the Knights of Columbus is a way of being involved within the parish in a deep and meaningful way. In serving the parish and filling the needs of the church, men are growing in their walk with Christ and being stewards of the parish.

“We speak often about being a better Christian, dad, husband and brother,” Gary says. “We have principles that we pledge to follow when you join. These things make us better Catholics.”

The counsel at St. Isidore has approximately 130 members. These members fill many different roles within the church. Since the Knights are involved in so many different functions throughout the parish, the men involved use their talents and gifts in many different ways.

The Knights meet on the third Tuesday of the month. Dinner is at 7 p.m. followed by the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The meetings are located in the Knights of Columbus building, located by Quinn Hall.



*If you would like more information, or to join the Knights of Columbus, please contact Clemente Polines at 530-218-8771.*