



## The Shell

An e-letter for

Saint James the Greater Church, Cincinnati, Ohio

*The Shell*, is a periodic email newsletter for the parishioners and friends of Saint James Church. This does not replace the Sunday bulletin or Parish Life. It's an opportunity for brief updates and news. A symbol for our patron saint is a shell and that gives the name to our e-letter.



### Our Giving Trees

It's almost as quiet as a gentle snow fall. There isn't a publicity campaign, no yard signs, no robo calls to homes. There are a few paragraphs in the Sunday bulletin and a simple reminder at the announcement time at Sunday Mass. And as the 1600 people filed out of Sunday Masses, many stopped and took a tag or two from the Giving Trees in the main entrance. In a day or two all 1200+ tags are gone. Saint James Parish once again reaches out to the needy at Christmas.

When Connie Lanter was thanked for organizing the Giving Tree program again this year, she replied that it is the whole parish that responds and the parishioners need to be thanked. And she is right. She and a few others make the ornament tags, sort out the returned gifts and get them where they need to go. It's all very quiet.

Nobody stands by the trees and yells "I'll take three!" to get the attention. People quietly reach out to take the tag and they will unassumingly return the wrapped present before December 14 at Noon. It is a quiet generosity but that is the pattern of our parish. Publicity isn't our thing, either about individual accomplishments or parish ones. Whether it's the youth group handing out sandwiches to the homeless downtown or the Fathers' Ministry singing Christmas carols at people's homes, our parish does it quietly like the snowfall.

By December 14 at Noon (*Did you notice the date and time again?*) over 1200 gifts will fill the church hall. There will be coats, toys, laundry products, grocery gift cards, dresses, hats and gloves, shoes and whatever is needed. Nobody will calculate the cost of the items as volunteers begin delivering the gifts near and far away on December 14. Those same people who took the tags will come back to Sunday Mass on the 21st and act as if nothing unusual has



happened. And in a real sense for this parish nothing has. It's just the way we are - kind, generous and quiet.

## Cemetery Blessing

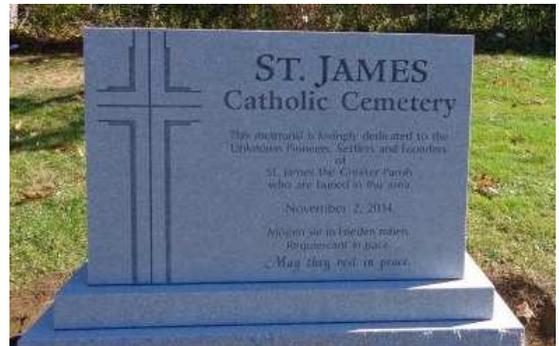


On November 2, the feast of All Souls, we blessed the new monument in our cemetery for those who are buried near the school. We don't have a record of who is buried there, but because of the x-rays made of the area we know it is full of caskets from the 1800s. Now we have honored those people with a large marker. Their names are forgotten but we remember them as our ancestors.

The Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and American Heritage Girls were all invited to

participate in the procession and prayer service after the Noon Mass that Sunday. We all appreciated their participation, especially as the color guard for the day, and the nice crowd who stayed after Mass and joined in the service

Stop to look at the wonderful monument, which was donated by a parishioner who wants to be anonymous. (There's that quiet generosity coming up again.) Thanks to everybody who participated in this event.



## A Blog

I hope that you have continued to keep up with Nic Kovatch's blog which is part of our adult faith formation effort. Check it out at <http://whystoriesmatter.blogspot.com/>.

Fr. Nolker