

We had a good **Generations of Faith** session last Wednesday evening. At the beginning of the evening, our First Reconciliation/Communion class performed a lovely song (see picture below). After the breakout sessions for children, middle school, high school and adults, Rick Schultz who is one of our RCIA candidates gave a powerful testimony based on this experience representing our country in Iraq. At the end of the evening, **Matt and Andrea Jankowski** took their oath as **Marriage Advocates** for our parish (picture below). I am very grateful to Matt and Andrea for taking the training to help those dealing with pain of a broken marriage.

First Reconciliation & Communion Class perform song at Generations of Faith



Matt & Andrea taking oath as Marriage Advocates, Ryan holding Bible



I want to thank all those who participated in the **Senior Prom**. I put a few pictures on our parish online album: <http://stmaryvalleybloom.org/stmaryalbum.html> Special thanks to Leonard Bichler whose band (the Monrovians) provided wonderful music. Below are pictures of Ryan Chestine dancing with Sr. Barbara – and of Dwight and Claudia leading a Conga Line.

Ryan and Sister Barbara



Leonard Bichler and the Monrovians



Dwight & Claudia lead Conga Line



This coming Friday (April 8) at 11 a.m. we have the **funeral for Jesus Cardenas**. All are welcome to come to this Mass. It will be celebrated with both English and Spanish. On April 13 at 7 p.m. we have our **Lenten Penance Service**. Please mark that date on your calendar. I hope that all able-bodied men and women will participate in our **Spring Clean** on April 16. I am particularly looking forward to the arrangement of flowers that we will plant around the newly landscaped Shrine of Our Lady. There is a lot more that we need to do to make our grounds and buildings beautiful for Holy Week.

As of Thursday morning, 134 people have turned in the **Spiritual Adoption** pledge. I placed the pledge cards in a red box that will remain in our Blessed Sacrament Chapel (in front of the Lady of Guadalupe statue) until Christmas Day. Sister Barbara has made a calligraphy list of all the names we have received. The Spiritual Adoption pledge is a commitment to say a short prayer every day for nine months for a child in danger of abortion. Here is the prayer:

“Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of [baby’s name] the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion.”

- Prayer of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

A final prayer request: Last week Pastors Steve Whalen, Dustin McCuen and I had a good meeting with **Monroe High School** principal John Lombardi. On behalf of Christian ministers in Monroe we offered ourselves as “resources” for our high school teachers and students. This initiative flows from a desire for the transformation that we saw powerfully depicted in the *Appalachian Dawn* video. Your prayers are vital to a deep and genuine renewal in our Valley.