

The St. Alphonsus Parish Council

Christopher Kraszewski, Chair

Hometown: Pulaski, WI

Length of time you have been a parishioner at St. Alphonsus: Five years

Other activities you're involved in at St. Alphonsus: Eucharist Minister, FOCCUS couple facilitator

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: The parish has given me the opportunity to be part of a community. My wife and I met at St. Alphonsus and we have met several of our good friends through the parish. Being involved in the parish council will allow me to help others increase their experience with the parish.



Alicia Newland

Hometown: Morton, IL

Length of time you have been a parishioner: Ten years

Other activities you participate in at St. Alphonsus: Eucharistic minister, FOCCUS couple facilitator, Mission Honduras Trip in '09

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: St. Alphonsus is both a community and a source of spiritual renewal for me. My husband and I have developed many important friendships within the parish, in addition to sharing important milestones. St. Alphonsus is a place where I can reflect, recharge my batteries and keep my life in perspective.



Erin Bartholomy Birks

Hometown: Long Beach, CA

Length of time you have been a parishioner: Eight years

Other activities you participate in at St. Alphonsus: FOCCUS couple facilitator, School Parent

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: Being involved in the parish keeps me committed to both my worship community and my individual faith. I enjoy the communal aspect of parish worship, and my worship experience at Mass is enhanced by sharing it with friends. Being a FOCCS facilitator couple has enabled my husband and me to get to know many newly married couples as well as other facilitator couples. The experience has also brought us closer together as a married couple. Also, as a school parent, our whole family enjoys praying with our kindergartener's friends and their families every week.



Timothy Bradbury

Hometown: Chicago, IL

Length of time you have been a parishioner: Twenty four years

Other activities you participate in at St. Alphonsus: Previously volunteered as a choir member, cantor, RCIA catechist and Team member, completed Archdiocesan Lay Ministry Training Program in 1991, taught second grade CCD classes for two years.

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: The importance of involvement in parish life for me is summed up in one word: community. I like people, all kinds of people. My personal goals of living as Jesus taught can be gauged and demonstrated in relationships both near and far. If I have learned one thing over the years it is that I need people to sound me out when I am wrong and give support when I may lack perseverance. Our parish community is a living entity, a diverse group of individuals, families and couples who share a common belief—that worshipping God in Christ Jesus and following His teaching is a worthy enterprise. In order to facilitate this endeavor and "make straight its paths" I am happy and humbled to join my brothers and sisters on the parish council. I would like to hear comments, ideas and suggestions from any member of our parish family on how to improve our parish life and so continue the legacy of faith left to us by our predecessors.



Tim Cahill

Hometown: Fairview Park, OH (suburb of Cleveland)

Length of time you have been a parishioner at St. Alphonsus: I have been going to St. Al's regularly since 2006.

Other activities you participate in at St. Alphonsus: I have helped out with Views from Veranda the past 2 summers; I have participated in parish retreats and gave a talk at a retreat last year. I am most visible as a lector and have had the pleasure of reading at Easter Sunday Mass and on Christmas Eve at the family Mass. I also participated in the restoration campaign.

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: I still believe in the "old" model of parish life, where parishes sprung up in neighborhoods and were the heart of that neighborhood. They not only provided people a place to worship, but also to socialize. I think many parishes have become just spiritual havens for their members. I believe that St. Alphonsus still embodies the notion of community almost as important as it holds the Eucharist. I also realize that I am a visible member of the parish through my activities and would hope that, now that people know I am part of parish council, they will approach me with questions and comments so as a parish we can continue to be a strong and vibrant member of our community!



Tom Figler

Hometown: Munster, IN

Length of time you have been a parishioner at St. Alphonsus: Fourteen years

Other activities you're involved in at St. Alphonsus: I am a school parent—I have two boys at Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts, one in preschool and one in kindergarten.

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: I have been on the parish council for approximately 10 years. Prior to my involvement in parish council, I had little knowledge of all the parish organizations, how the church attempts to reach out to its parishioners and how it attempts to address significant church, local and world issues in the light of the Catholic faith. I continue to learn new things about the parish, the Catholic faith and the Archdiocese at each meeting. The progress of St. Alphonsus has been amazing to watch unfold. Father Hurlbert is excellent at addressing current events and placing them in the context of a life as a Catholic. Being a member of the council allows me to see all the effort, thought and knowledge that the church staff brings to St. Alphonsus, which makes it such an inspiring place.



David Grzenia

Hometown: Chicago, IL

Length of time you have been a parishioner at St. Alphonsus: Twenty one years.

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: All three of my sons are graduates of St. Alphonsus and were altar boys. We have all been part of the community and have many family friends from our parish involvement. My middle son (Bryan) is currently coaching the 3rd grade basketball team, for the school. All my sons still remain in contact with Father Hurlbert.



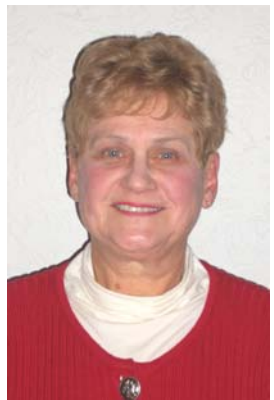
Margaret ("Nancy") Oliver

Hometown: Chicago, IL

Length of Time as a Parishioner of St. Alphonsus: Fifty seven years

Other activities you're involved in at St. Alphonsus: Minister of Care, Eucharistic Minister and Young at Heart, seniors group

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: Involvement in my ministries has helped me better understand what it means to be Christian. In sharing time with others I receive a kind of peace and happiness. It is important for me to thank our Lord for all the blessings he has given me, and through my ministries I can thank Him.



Matt Norton

Hometown: Earlville, IL

Length of time you have been a parishioner: Fourteen years

Other activities you participate in at St. Alphonsus: I am the Parish Pastoral Council's representative to the regional Deanery, which is a group of representatives from about 10 other northside parishes that meets several times per year. Also, my kids are in the Religious Education program.

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: Chicago is such a large city, I think it's important to build a community where you can find it. St. Alphonsus provides the opportunity to be involved in a growing and changing community on the ground floor. It is a parish that has recently grown substantially in numbers and reputation. It's an exciting time to be involved in a changing community, while learning about and preserving the important historic aspects of this parish.



Jerry Kennedy

Hometown: Oskaloosa, Iowa

Length of time as a parishioner: Fifteen years.

Other activities you participate in at St. Alphonsus: I was on the Finance Council for over twelve years, and worked on staff as the Business Manager for ten years.

Why is being involved in the parish important to you: I have been a parishioner here at St. Alphonsus since the mid-1990s when I married my wife, Cheryl. She has been a member since the early 1980s. Upon joining the parish, I became a member of the Finance Council. In 1998 the parish was without a Business Manager and I volunteered to help get the financial records straightened out. In July of 1999 I became the Business Manager here and served in that capacity for 10 years, retiring in June 2009.

Prior to my work at St. Al's I spent 20 years with a \$5 billion manufacturer of paper, newsprint and packaging products with over 200 facilities world wide as the Director of Internal and Operational Auditing. Prior to that I spent several years in public accounting and hold a CPA certificate and an MBA degree from the University of Chicago.

