



St. Michael the Archangel Parish

Aunty Louella Branco Finds JOY IN SERVING at St. Michael

Since the 1970s, St. Michael the Archangel has held a special place in Aunty Louella Branco's heart. The parish has been an integral part of her faith journey throughout her life, and through her service to the parish, she has been able to grow closer both to God and to her parish 'ohana.

Aunty Louella grew up in Kailua on the island of O'ahu, and was raised in a strong Catholic family.

"My mother made sure all of her children received their sacraments, attended catechism weekly, and Mass every Sunday morning," she says. "As I completed my schooling, I decided to

move to Kona, and did just that in 1970. Because my mother was born and raised here, I had a lot of family. My 'ohana has been here at St. Michael's for many, many years, going back to my great-grandparents. I remember my cousin and I would bring my aunt to Mass here at St. Michael on Sunday mornings. We would be greeted by the many aunts and uncles as we made our way into the church."

Of Aunty Louella's early memories of St. Michael, she most vividly remembers her fellow parishioners coming together to serve the Lord and the parish in many ways.



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"I've compared how parishioners were involved in supporting the church then, and the ways in which we do so today," Aunty Louella says. "I look at it today as

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Aunty Louella Branco

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their 'stewardship' — they did it their way, and they laid the foundation for me and many other families to carry on. Our kūpuna had their own music ministry going on, and hearing them sing many liturgical songs in Hawaiian was so awesome."

Aunty Louella was married at St. Michael in 1971, and continued to attend Mass. After the loss of her husband, however, she went through a period of absence from the Church.

"I put blame on the Lord for taking him so young from us," she says. "This was the choice I made then, but I soon found out that I had created yet another huge void in my life. This void, though, I could definitely fix. I didn't want to set a poor example for my two daughters, so putting emphasis on attending Mass and daily prayers is what I needed to do. Now my grandchildren have also come to know the Lord, and that brings a smile to my heart."

Aunty Louella recalls that when Fr. Lio first came to the parish with a new vision and ideas for St. Michael, he needed help to bring that vision to fruition.

"While asking for kokua and participation in different areas, I could see more and more people joining in to help, which I would later realize was stewardship," she says. "During this particular time, I thought about one ministry that might need help."

Aunty Louella's family was very close to parishioner Aunty Melvine Kuali'i, who was in charge of the

funeral and bereavement ministries. Aunty Louella's cousin, Caroline, often assisted her in her duties.

"Aunty Mel would meet with families that had suffered a loss, help them through their grief, and answer any questions they had, and finalize the funeral arrangements," she says. "After Aunty Mel's husband fell ill, it was hard for her to fulfill her kuleana in that ministry. I called Caroline one day and asked her what she thought about us stepping up and taking over the funeral ministry. I definitely knew it was our time to do so. We made a call to Fr. Lio, expressed our interest, and the rest is history.

"I am so grateful for this, because it has made a huge difference in my life," she adds. "Personally, I have become more compassionate in many ways, and I also definitely got a big dosage of patience. We provide families with friendship and compassion while making the necessary arrangements at their time of grief."

Aunty Louella also volunteers in the parish office once a week, answering the phone, filing, and recording. She also enjoys helping out at the church for feast days and other special functions.

"Along the way, I've met many church members, as well as those visiting from other parishes," she says. "Camaraderie is great! I encourage everyone to go through the list of many ministries that our church offers — you will find one that's just for you. Give it a try!"





Teaching By Example

The Importance of Prayer in a Child's Life

"I want to be just like Mom and Dad!"

Perhaps nothing lifts a parent's heart like hearing these words. While certainly affirming, such words also remind us of the great responsibility that comes with parenthood.

Children often examine the lives of their parents when making decisions that will affect their own lives. For example, a young boy may dream of becoming an electrician one day, just like his father. Or a young girl may hope to become a physician, just like her mother. Could the same be said about their parents' faith lives?

Just as children learn traits and values from their parents, they should also learn the importance and great joy of developing a personal relationship with Christ. And the foundation of such a relationship is prayer — conversation with God.

How should we go about teaching our children to pray? There are several methods, but none works as well as teaching by example. Begin teaching the importance of prayer by praying openly with your spouse. This teaches children that prayer is meaningful and important, and not just a ritual. Also, pray with your children — before meals and in the mornings and evenings. Show your keiki the importance of prayer by beginning and ending each day in dialogue with God.

Catholics have an additional treasury of composed prayers that help us speak with God. Think of them like the perfect greeting card that helps you express yourself. A good rule of thumb is to start simple — maybe an *Our Father* or *Hail Mary*, and then move into

something more complex — *Hail, Holy Queen* or *Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel*, among others. Begin with prayers your children can pick up fairly quickly. Not only will this show them that praying can be fun and easy, but shorter prayers are also usually easier to understand.

Teach your children the importance of spontaneous prayer, rather than just prescribed prayers. Spontaneous prayer is any prayer that is created at the same time it is offered. Another way to think of spontaneous prayer is "praying in your own words." Structure spontaneous prayers according to the ACTS acronym — Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. This just means beginning each prayer with words of adoration, such as "You are the Lord God Almighty. I love you." Move into a period of contrition, asking God's forgiveness for the sins you have committed. Then, give words of thanksgiving, thanking God for the gifts He has given. Finally, spend time sharing with God your heart's desires. These intentions can be personal or on another's behalf. And don't forget to LISTEN. Following this format ensures that spontaneous prayer "covers all the bases," and doesn't become just a mental wish list.

The best time to begin praying with your children is right now. The sooner they learn about prayer, the sooner they can begin cultivating their own relationship with Jesus. Many parents even pray with their children before birth, hoping their unborn child can hear their words in utero. Remember, there is no better way to teach one's keiki about the value of prayer than by example.





HAWAI'I ISLAND
Celebrates Ordination
TO THE SACRED
ORDER OF DEACONS

Congratulations to our island's
newest deacons, who were ordained
on January 30th.

Dcn. Sándor Hernández Morales

St. Michael Parish, Kailua-Kona

Dcn. Charles W. "Charley" Mapa

St. Theresa Parish, Mountain View

Dcn. George G. "Keoki" Wood

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Honoka'a



Steadfast in Faith and Devotion: St. Catherine of Siena

On April 29, we celebrate the feast day of a Doctor of the Church — one who remained absolutely devoted to living her life for Christ, even in the face of familial misunderstanding in her youth, and through societal opposition and turmoil during her later years. As stewards in our fast-paced, highly technical — and often fractured — world, we can always look to the life and example of St. Catherine of Siena, and strive to remain steadfast in our faith while facing our own modern-day challenges.

Born in mid-14th-century Italy to a large family, and in the midst of a plague outbreak, St. Catherine of Siena was her parents' 25th child, although half of her siblings did not survive through childhood. Young Catherine resisted her family's desire for her to marry — she even went so far as to begin fasting and cutting her hair short in protest. Her parents eventually relented, as Catherine strived to humbly serve her own family, treating her own father as Jesus, her mother as Mary, and her brothers as the apostles.

Such was Catherine's desire to remain in service to her own family that instead of entering a convent, she joined the Third Order of St. Dominic at age 18. This enabled her to continue serving her family at home, even as she was part of a religious society. In time, she

learned to read and began giving her family's own possessions to those in need — even though her parents didn't necessarily approve of her entirely altruistic approach to service.

Continuing with her faithful devotion as part of the Third Order of St. Dominic, Catherine developed a following of her own, as she wrote letters offering spiritual encouragement and instruction. Controversy would ensue, as her writings began to comment on public matters through her firm lens of faith.

In the midst of these spiritual developments, at age 21, Catherine underwent a profound change, as she experienced what she called her "mystical marriage to Christ." Through this experience, she was directed to help the poor and the sick.

Catherine began serving those in need in hospitals and homes, which inspired followers to assist in these important missions of service, love, and mercy. Furthermore, she continued to comment on public matters, petitioning for peace in the midst of political fracture and strife. This continued through the Papal Schism of 1378, as Catherine spent two years — the last years of her life — in Rome, praying and pleading for unity in the Church, and for the cause of Pope Urban VI.

By January 1380, Catherine was gravely ill, unable to eat or drink — shortly thereafter, she lost the use of her legs. At only 33 years old, she would pass away on April 29, 1380. She was canonized nearly a century later, in 1461.

Despite her short life, St. Catherine of Siena made a profound impact on the Church through her spiritually direct writings, her work serving those in need, and in preserving the unity of the Church in the face of great societal upheavals — all while being singularly devoted to living a life for Christ. Her status led her to be declared a copatron of Italy (alongside St. Francis of Assisi) in 1939. And in 1970, Pope Paul VI declared St. Catherine of Siena a Doctor of the Church.





YOUTH MINISTRY Keeping Our Young Parishioners Connected During COVID-19 Pandemic

In their middle school and high school years, our youth are at a crucial and formative point on their faith journey. Our parish's Youth Ministry program helps guide them through this time and offers them an opportunity to live out their faith in every aspect of their life. Through fun activities, catechesis, and group discussion, our young people can grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, learn discipleship through stewardship, and deepen their understanding of their faith and of themselves. Although the ministry has gone virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it nonetheless has been able to keep the youth connected from home.

"Youth Ministry is filled with faith formation and catechesis, Scriptures and prayers, fellowship and sharing," says youth minister Edwina Fujimoto. "Our Youth Ministry serves middle and high school students, grades six through 12. Due to the pandemic, we have been limited on the activities we can do and being in each other's presence. It has been an adjustment with all the restrictions, but our youth are handling it very well."

Pre-pandemic, middle school youth would meet on the first and third Fridays of each month, and high school

youth would meet on the second and fourth Fridays. For now, due to COVID-19 restrictions, all meetings are taking place virtually via the Zoom videoconferencing platform on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.

"First, we are all together, and then during the evening we break into smaller groups for a deeper sharing with their peers — then we join back together," Edwina says. "Judy Glickstein, Ian Lewenhaupt, and Wynn Hanato Smith are such a blessing and help lead the small-group sessions."

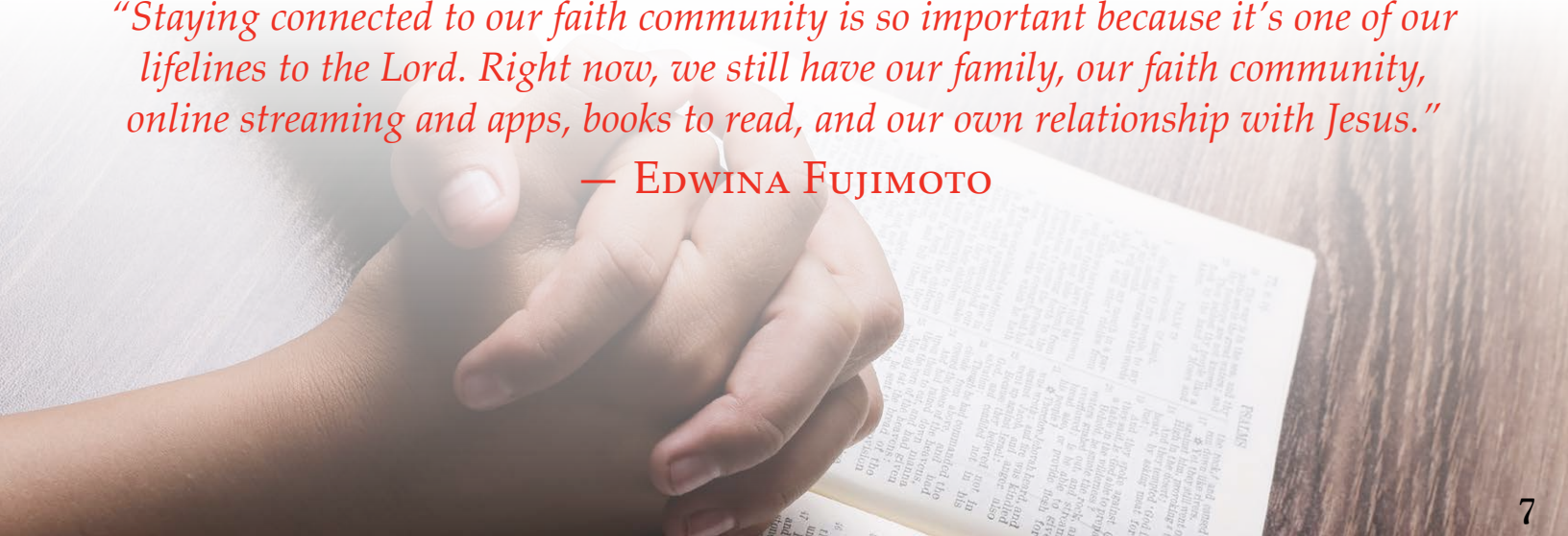
"Since we've gone virtual, we have a smaller crowd than usual, but I believe it is safer for the teens on many levels, and they have the convenience and security of being home," she adds. "Because of our unusual circumstances, we have had the opportunity to invite St. Benedict Youth Ministry to join us, and it has made our discussions richer."

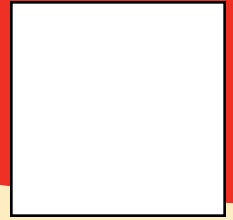
While the ministry participants miss their usual activities — such as gathering together in person, attending retreats with youth ministries from other parishes, serving the kūpuna at Life Care Center, and sharing holiday activities and meals at Ulu Wini Housing — they have

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— EDWINA FUJIMOTO





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Keeping Our Young Parishioners Connected During COVID-19 *continued from page 7*

nonetheless enjoyed meeting virtually and getting creative with what they can do. By staying connected during this time, our youth have been able to participate in fellowship from afar, and strengthen their relationship with the Lord.

“Currently, we participate in various games during our virtual meetings, and are given challenges like praying for the street folks we see while riding in our cars, helping more at home, writing letters to family members — especially the grandparents — and ministering within our households,” Edwina says. “Staying connected to our faith community is so important because it’s one of our lifelines to the Lord. Right now, we still have our family, our faith community, online streaming and apps, books to read, and our own relationship with Jesus.”

*If you would like more information
about our Youth Ministry,
or to get involved, please contact
Judy Glickstein for middle school at
808-222-5535 or judyglickstein@aol.com,
or Edwina Fujimoto for high school
at efujimoto@rccharwail.org.*

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m. • Sunday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (English), 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. (Spanish)

Daily: Mon-Sat 7 a.m. • Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 5 p.m. • Confessions: Saturday 9 a.m. • Adoration: Wednesdays 7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.