



The Prayer at Valley Forge

General George Washington at prayer at his winter encampment,
at an apparently hopeless moment
about a year and a half after
the declaration of American independence.

The snow is anything but seasonal,
but entusting our hopes for our county
to the hands of God and praying for his guidance
must be in season this Independence Day.

Painted by Arnold Friberg (1913-2010) in oil on canvas

the 14th Sunday in the Year

July 3, 2016

Saint Bernadette Parish

Saint Mary Parish

1343 Wheeling Road NE
LANCASTER, OH 43130-8701
(740) 654 • 1893

602 Marietta Street
BREMEN, OH 43107
(740) 569 • 7929

[stbernadetteparish . net](http://stbernadetteparish.net)

Sacramental Life

BAPTISM

To have a child baptized, you must register and attend a class as a couple (unless attendance just isn't possible, in which case some discussion with Kathy Kehnast will be necessary). Sessions are held quarterly for both parishes. The next session will be July 20. **Take the class before the child is born.** If you are expecting, call Kathy to register for the class. Please don't ask if you "have to go." This is an opportunity to meet with parents of children about the same age as your little one; they are in the same wonderful boat as you are.

At least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. **Both godparents need to be practicing Christians, at least one a practicing Catholic.** If you don't attend Sunday Mass regularly, there is something you can do about it: Start coming to Sunday Mass. If you can't come (health, severe weather, employment requirements, etc), speak to your confessor. He will help you.

PENANCE

The priest is available for Penance

- at St Bernadette Saturdays at 3 PM and Thursdays at 5:30 PM, and
- at St Mary Bremen on Sunday at 8 AM.

In addition to Advent and Lenten Penance Services, every Catholic priest is available whenever there is a need. There are Penance opportunities for parochial school children **four times during the year so that they will learn the beauty of frequent confession.** The Church's law requires us to receive the sacrament of Penance at least once a year.

ANOINTING AND CARE OF THE SICK

The Sick receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick **when dangerously ill, facing major surgery, or suffering from the ravages of old age.**

We celebrate the sacrament communally at a Sunday Mass before Advent and during the Easter season so that we can all pray with you for "health of mind and body."

And, we are happy to bring Penance, Anointing, and Holy Communion to the homes or hospitals of the sick or shut in. It is very helpful to **call the parish office to let us know before a hospitalization or when it has been too long** since the sacraments were last available.

HOLY MATRIMONY

Couples wishing to marry should contact the parish office six months before they wish to celebrate the sacrament. Why so long? Because **this sacrament, not just the ceremony, requires serious preparation.** And the Church needs to be involved in that preparation. The Church wishes to support couples through the years of their married life. For this reason, our diocese offers programs to enhance married life. To learn about these programs, watch the weekly bulletin.

Our Parishes

FATHER THOMAS KESSLER pastor
(614) 634-0499 wthomaskessler@icloud.com

AT BOTH PARISHES

| | | |
|------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| KATHY KEHNAST | 654-1893 | stbernaparish@yahoo.com |
| pastoral coordinator | | |
| ANGIE & KENT KERNS | 654-2588 | kwkerns@gmail.com |
| religious education | | |
| JULIE & CHASE STALFORD | 808-7294 | maristellaspirt@gmail.com |
| youth ministry | | |
| NIKKI SCHMELZER | 654-1893 | businessmstbparish@yahoo.com |
| bookkeeper | | |

AT BREMEN ST MARY PARISH

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BEN FACTOR, | liturgical music | b_factor@lancaster.k12.oh.us |
| JIM SCHMELZER, | maintenance chair | |
| TYNA FOX-SCHMELZER | | (614) 371-7702 |
| | religious education | schmelifox@earthlink.net |
| BREMEN ST VINCENT DE PAUL | | 569-3710 |

The St Mary Parish office is at the church vestibule.

Hours are 9-11 AM, Tu.

602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107

(740) 569-7929

AT ST BERNADETTE PARISH

| | | |
|------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DEACON MARK SCARPITTI | 438-3970 | dcn.mark@frontier.com |
| DEACON JEFF CARPENTER | 681-9918 | carpenter.277@osu.edu |
| ANN ESSMAN | 653-9347 | aessman001@att.net |
| pastoral minister | | |
| STEVE HUBER | 654-3137 | shuber57@yahoo.com |
| facilities coordinator | | |
| LIZ LATORRE | 243-1872 | lizlаторre@gmail.com |
| liturgical music | | |

The St Bernadette Parish office is in the Mary Good Center, across the back parking lot from the school.

Hours are: 9 AM-1 PM, MWThF; 11 AM-1 PM, Tu.

1343 Wheeling Rd NE, Lancaster, OH 43130 (740) 654-1893

AT ST BERNADETTE SCHOOL

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PAM ELTRINGHAM | principal | peltring@cducation.org |
| BARB HUBER | secretary | bhuber@cducation.org |

Saint Bernadette School is located at

1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701

www.stbernadetteschool.com 654-3137

stbernan@cducation.org

let us pray

ON THE 14TH SUNDAY

O God, who through the grace of adoption chose us to be children of light, grant, we pray, that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

AND WITH POPE FRANCIS IN JULY

His universal intention is about indigenous peoples

That indigenous peoples, whose identity and very existence are threatened, will be shown due respect.

His evangelization intention is about Latin America and the Caribbean

That the Church in Latin America and the Caribbean, by means of her mission to the continent, may announce the Gospel with renewed vigor and enthusiasm.

in both our parishes

peter's pence

Last Sunday our diocese collected Peter's Pence, a collection that provides Pope Francis (the successor of Peter) with the funds he needs to carry out his charitable works around the world. The proceeds benefit our brothers and sisters on the margins of society, including victims of war, oppression, and disasters. Thank you for joining the Holy Father as a witness of charity to those who are suffering.

vacation church school

It has had to be rescheduled, but it is going to be a fantastic time! St Mary Parish in Bremen invites the families of all local children (especially those from Bremen St Mary and St Bernadette Parishes!) to **Vacation Church School** (not just a Bible school, but a Church school!). The new week for this exciting event is the evenings of July 11-15, from 5:30-8 PM (with a family dinner at 5:30). It will happen **at Schmelzer's Grove**, that wonderful little park on Sacred Heart Road(!) about 4 miles south of Bremen, the site of the original home of St Mary Parish. This year's theme is

**The Saints teach us about
the Virtues of Faith, Hope, and Love**

Volunteers are needed and should contact Angie Kerns at kwkerns@gmail.com.

we still need extraordinary ministers

The Church doesn't call them "**distributors**"; a distributor is a mechanical device which controls the flow of gasoline to an automobile engine; it might also be a person who puts a plastic bag of advertising on your porch. The **Eucharistic Minister** in the Catholic Church is the bishop, the priest, or the deacon. Because of the relative shortage of these, a local bishop is currently endowed with the faculty to appoint **extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion** from among a list of trained parishioners submitted to him by the pastors of parishes. These ministers are appointed for two year terms in this service in a specific parish. Their ministry is valuable for their parish. There are two reasons to have such ministers:

- They help the priest and the deacons make the distribution of Holy Communion go reasonably expeditiously at Mass, and
- They take the Sacrament to parishioners and other Catholics who are in the hospital, in a nursing home, or shut in at home, especially on Sundays.

This service is not a sign of accomplishment or prestige. It is not an item for a curriculum vitae. The requirements are knowledge and acceptance of the Eucharistic faith, as well as availability, reliability, and decorum in service to the Church. Oh, and you would need to be a Catholic "in good standing" which means not in any public way living contrary to the law or the teaching of the Church.

We particularly need men for this task. It is hard to say why it is, but we currently have a disproportionate lack of men serving in this ministry in our parish. The women are great, serving well. But we must restore balance. We currently send the inadvertent message that this ministry is a woman thing and not for men to do. Men need to step up, too, if we are to use extraordinary ministers.

If you can help, contact Kathy Kehnast this week.

helping the Church in ecuador

Church communities in Ecuador are reeling from a 7.8 magnitude earthquake that struck on Apr 16, claiming more than 500 lives and destroying thousands of homes and roads. As many as 100,000 people have been affected. **Catholic Relief Services** teams, along with Church partners on the ground, are **focusing on meeting immediate needs in remote towns that have not received aid yet**. This includes clean water, temporary shelter, food and living supplies. CRS will also work to ensure sanitation and hygiene to prevent diseases. **You can donate** by phone at 1-877-HELP-CRS; online at donate.crs.org/Ecuador; or by check at Catholic Relief Services, Box 17090, Baltimore, MD 21203-7090.

Mass times and intentions

| at St Bernadette | | at St Mary | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 4 PM | for the people | Saturday, July 2 | |
| | | Sunday, July 3 | 8:30 AM for the people |
| 11 AM | for the people | Sunday, July 3 | |
| 8:20 AM | NO MASS | Monday, July 4 | |
| | | Tuesday, July 5 | 8:20 AM NO MASS |
| 8:20 AM | NO MASS | Wednesday, July 6 | |
| 6 PM | Wilford & Loretta Beiter | Thursday, July 7 | |
| 8:20 AM | Ann Muetzel | Friday, July 8 | |
| 4 PM | for the people | Saturday, July 9 | |
| | | Sunday, July 10 | 8:30 AM for the people |
| 11 AM | for the people | Sunday, July 10 | |

be sure to serve him faithfully

Liturgical ministers should try to find a substitute when they are unable to fulfill their assignments.

get ready for Mass

If it is something special, we get ready for it. That goes for Sunday Mass. The most important way to get ready is to be in—or get into—the **state of grace** so that we can receive Holy Communion worthily. Then we need to **fast** (a tough word for a very easy task) for at least an hour before we receive Communion. And we could try to prime the pump, as it were, for hearing the Word of God as it will be read that day by **reading and pondering that little portion of the Word** of God. Those are matters of spiritual readiness.

But to go to Mass is to approach the great sacramental mysteries, approaching physically as well as spiritually. Old-fashioned rural Protestants were on to something when they spoke of wearing their "Sunday-go-to-meetin'" clothes. We could all **dress up** a little bit, not to show off our fancy wardrobe but to "do something beautiful for God." And think of what we say to our kids before a trip or before a film or a concert: We tell them to **go to the bathroom ahead of time**. Emergencies can happen to just about everybody. And each of us has the health she/he has been blessed with. But with a little extra precaution we could be (and help others to be) even more single-minded about worship and to avoid the procession to and from the rest rooms. Thanks for thinking about all these things.

Bremen St Mary

st vincent de paul

St Vincent de Paul members will be collecting donations after Mass today. Your generous support is always appreciated.

summer square dances

St Mary Parish will have a square dance at Schmelzer's Grove for the whole family next Sunday, July 10, and again on Sunday, Aug 14, from 7-9 PM. This is a tradition which goes back to the 19th century. (The pastor's aunt says that her father played the fiddle, in a band of his brothers, for Schmelzer's Grove square dances before her mother and father were married ... on Thanksgiving of 1904. Folks with earlier memories of this Sacred Heart tradition are asked to share them with the parish.) Cost is \$3 @ person.

| ministers at mass at bremen st mary | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | lector | servers | extraordinary ministers of Communion | gifts | sacristan / usher |
| Sunday, July 3 8:30 AM | Jeanne Schmelzer | Caelie Bell Abby Skinner | Damian & Deb Schmelzer, Angi Skinner | Maurice Schmelzer family | Damian Schmelzer |
| There will not be a Mass on Tuesday morning this week at St Mary. | | | | | |
| Sunday, July 10 8:30 AM | Barb Van Fossen-Cook | Spencer Conrad Skinner | Pam Redding, Tyna Schmelzer-Fox, Barb Van Fossen-Cook | Nick Schmelzer family | Joe Young |

parish contributions

The collection at Bremen St Mary for June 26 netted \$1,358. The Peter's Pence collection for the Holy Father's charities brought in \$55.

gardening for our parish

If you would like to *help landscape and maintain the yard of St Mary*, contact Kathy Kehnast to volunteer.

St Bernadette

st bernadette school registration

St Bernadette School looks forward to registering students from St Bernadette and St Mary Bremen parishes for next school year. We accept enrollment for new students grades K-5, and 3, 4, and 5-year-old preschool students. Bring a copy of their birth or baptismal certificates. St Bernadette *preschool* offers kindergarten-readiness goals, within a flexible schedule.

Elementary grades (full-day-kindergarten through 5th grade) offer a program of academic excellence and positive experiences. Make St Bernadette School *your "primary" choice for a really Catholic Education!* For information, call the school office at 654-3137.

eucharistic adoration

St Bernadette Parish has *solemn exposition* of the Blessed Sacrament at 9 AM on *Wednesdays*. We have commitments for people to keep watch for the time from 9 AM until 1 PM. We could *extend exposition further into each Wednesday*. If you can commit to a regular presence for adoration for an hour from 1-2 or from 2-3, call Kathy at the parish office.

You can come to church to adore Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament *any day during the daylight hours*.

job opening at st bernadette school

St Bernadette School is offering part-time employment in the following area for the 2016-2017 school year:

- **Cafeteria manager** The cafeteria manager is responsible for the overall operations of the National School Lunch Program in our school. This includes cafeteria finances,

lunch preparation, and cafeteria staff. An applicant must complete and maintain current BCI/FBI background checks and participate in *VIRTUS Protecting God's Children safe environment program*. Contact Malissa at malissagauerke@hotmail.com for information or to apply.

scholarships

Income-Based EdChoice Expansion Scholarships allow more students to attend St. Bernadette School. Students, meeting the income eligibility (e.g.: family of 4, income \$48,600), can attend St. Bernadette School next fall *at no cost* to parents, thanks to 8000 vouchers available from the Ohio Department of Education. Scholarships are available for kindergartners, 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders. This is a *great opportunity for single parents, one-income homes, fixed-income house-holds, and working families*. Every family can explore this possibility. Contact the school office for information.

| ministers at mass at st bernadette | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--|
| | lector | servers | extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion | | |
| Saturday, July 2 4 PM | Sandy Landefeld | Isabelle Gentile Dominic Neighbor Daniel Turner | Terry Carpenter Rosalie DeFillippo Marguerite Grimm | Jim Kuhn Becky Kuhn Craig Shaw | |
| Sunday, July 3 11 AM | David Shonk | Anna Hartig Jack Tencza Diana Woo | Tara Craaybeek Pat Dreyer Jim Merk | Rita Merk Becky Wickham Amy Woo | |
| Monday, July 4 8:20 AM | There will not be a Mass on Monday or Wednesday morning this week at St Bernadette. | | | | |
| Wednesday, July 6 8:20 AM | There will not be a Mass on Monday or Wednesday morning this week at St Bernadette. | | | | |
| Thursday, July 7 6 PM | Kathy Kehnast | Cady Tipple Joey Mannella | Mary Guinan | Paul Lonergan | |
| Friday, July 8 8:20 AM | Jim Merk | Addy Myers Gunner Robertson | Jim & Rita Merk | | |
| Saturday, July 9 4 PM | Brad Rider | Abby, Mary & Sam Frazier | Susan Garrett Kathy Kehnast Denise McGuire | Mary Steyaert Shelia Taylor Kathy Wagner | |
| Sunday, July 10 11 AM | Jim Merk | Samantha Kerns, Logan & Tori Loy | Nancy Griffith Ben Peters Teresa Scarpitti | Valerie Shaw David Shonk Julia Whitehead | |

parish contributions

The St Bernadette offertory collection for June 26 came to \$5,579. The Peter's Pence collection for the Holy Father's charities brought in \$300.

in the diocese of columbus

get your marriage in shape

Are you exercising and dieting, jogging, swimming, and playing tennis to stay fit and trim? What are you doing to keep your marriage in good shape? Why not *try a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend?* The next two weekends in central Ohio are Aug 5-7 and Nov 11-13. For information or to register, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit www.wmccolumbus.org.

bishop's annual appeal 2016

"be his hope to others"

The Bishop's Annual Appeal is off and running. Here are the results at our parishes after ten weeks.

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| households participating | St Bernadette 138 | St Mary 60 |
| total pledged | \$ 38,035 | \$ 20,710 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|----|--------|----|--------|
| average gift | \$ | 276 | \$ | 345 |
| total paid | \$ | 18,985 | \$ | 5,345 |
| parish BAA goal | \$ | 43,136 | \$ | 12,703 |

The Appeal *supports our parish schools of religion and the education of our future priests and deacons, and many families in need of our help.* Your gift and your prayers will help to make this year's appeal a success. The Diocesan Goal is \$6,300,000. Every contribution counts; every dollar that we raise over the stated goal will be returned to our parishes to benefit our communities directly.

Last year St Bernadette pledged slightly over and collected slightly under the goal. Bremen St Mary pledged well over the goal and has received the rebate from the diocese. One reason for our strong effort at St Mary was a three-year campaign three years ago to collect more, so that the amount would be over the goal, which would be rebated to the parish and support the costs of the new roof there. At St Bernadette we had what seemed a less urgent need and the support for the BAA has been accordingly less. So there is no rebate this year for St. B. But the diocese has needs and so do the parishes.

We know *we can reach the goals* and support the diocese as well as go over and support the parishes. It requires thoughtful consideration and prayer, with everyone giving according to our ability. We are blessed with much; let us remember the needs of others, as well as the needs of our own parishes.

catholic youth summer camp

Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC), a ministry based in our diocese, is a 6-day and 5-night experience providing students with a week full of *high adventure actives and high adventure faith.* CYSC is open to all students entering grades 6-12, and there are 8 sessions available this summer. CYSC offers a truly Catholic and safe environment with daily catechesis that awakens faith and builds missionary disciples. A week at camp includes daily Mass, adoration, reconciliation, small group conversations, worship, service, and authentic community. For information, visit www.cysc.com.

in the deanery

| confessions & weekday Mass nearby | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|-----------------------------|
| These are the regularly scheduled times. They sometimes change, though, so call ahead | | | | | | | |
| parish | confessions | Mon | Tues | Weds | Thurs | Fri | Sat |
| Bremen St Mary | 8 am Sunday | | 8:20 AM | | | | |
| Lancaster St Bernadette | 5:30 Thursday 3 PM Saturday; 8:30 AM 1 st Sat | 8:20 AM | | 8:20 AM | 6 PM | 8:20 AM | 1 st Sat 9 AM |
| Lancaster St Mary | 4 PM Saturday | 7 AM | 9 AM | 7 AM | 9 AM | | |
| Lancaster St Mark | 5:30 PM Saturday | 8 AM | 8 AM | 6 PM | 8 AM | 8 AM | |
| Sugar Grove St Joseph | ½ hour before each Mass | 8 AM | NOON | 8 AM | NOON | 8 AM | |
| Circleville St Joseph | 4 PM Saturday | 9 AM | 7 PM | 9 AM | | 9 AM | 10 AM |
| Logan St John | 4 PM Saturday | 8 AM | 8 AM | 9 AM | | 8 AM | 9 AM |

help lancaster st mary athletic association

The Saint Mary School Athletic Association has several vacancies for next school year. Terms are for two years beginning at the August meeting and all Saint Mary School parents (grades K-8) are eligible to apply. Visit the Athletics page (saintmarylancaster.com/athletics) to learn about the roles and responsibilities of the association. Applications can be downloaded; deadline is Monday, Aug 1. Contact Cheryl Cale with questions at ccale@saintmarylancaster.org.

tune in ewtn 820 am

No matter where your summer travels take you, take EWTN Radio with you. Check out AM 820 Columbus or tune into Channel 130 on SiriusXM, EWTN's home on satellite radio. No radio? No problem. Download Tunein, iHeartRadio or EWTN's free app that allows you to stream live radio shows right to your mobile device or computer. Find EWTN around the dial, around the globe, and listen to your favorite Catholic programs today.

fortnight for freedom 2016

current threats to religious freedom ... in our own country!

During his September 2015 visit to the United States, Pope Francis emphasized the importance of religious freedom, saying in front of the White House that religious

“freedom remains one of America’s most precious possessions. And, as my brothers, the United States Bishops, have reminded us, all are called to be vigilant, precisely as good citizens, to preserve and defend that freedom from everything that would threaten or compromise it.”

Although Americans generally do not face the kind of violent persecution endured by many people of faith around the world, Pope Francis has recently spoken of a “polite persecution” that many people face, as “when someone is persecuted not for confessing Christ’s name, but for wanting to demonstrate the values of the Son of God”. Religious freedom continues to be threatened in the US:

- **HHS mandate for sterilization, contraception, and abortion-inducing drugs.** The mandate of the Department of Health and Human Services forces religious institutions to facilitate or fund a product contrary to their own moral teaching. Further, the federal government tries to define which religious institutions are “religious enough” to merit protection of their religious liberty.
- **Catholic foster care and adoption services.** Boston, San Francisco, the District of Columbia, and the State of Illinois forced local Catholic Charities out of adoption or foster care services— by revoking their licenses, ending government contracts, or both—because they refused to place children with same-sex couples or unmarried opposite-sex couples who cohabit.
- **State immigration laws.** Several states have passed laws that forbid what they call “harboring” undocumented immigrants—and what the Church deems Christian charity and pastoral care to immigrants.
- **Discrimination against small church congregations.** New York City adopted a policy that barred the Bronx Household of Faith and other churches from renting public schools on weekends for worship services, even though non-religious groups could rent the same schools for other uses.
- **Discrimination against Catholic humanitarian services.** After years of excellent performance by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Migration and Refugee Services (MRS) in administering contract services for victims of human trafficking, the federal government changed its contract specifications to require MRS to provide or refer for contraceptive and abortion services in violation of Catholic teaching.
- **Christian students on campus.** In its over-100-year history, the University of California Hastings College of Law has denied student organization status to only one group, the

Christian Legal Society, because it required its leaders to be Christian and to abstain from sexual activity outside of marriage.

Pope Francis has asked American Catholics to preserve and defend religious freedom, both in the United States and throughout the world.

Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty
www.usccb.org/freedom | Twitter: @USCCBFreedom

fortnight for freedom

Witnesses To Freedom concludes on July 4, a time when our liturgical calendar celebrates a series of great martyrs who remained faithful in the face of persecution by political power—St Thomas More and St John Fisher, St John the Baptist, Sts Peter and Paul, and the First Martyrs of the Church of Rome. Visit the USCCB website at www.fortnight4freedom.org.

living mercy in a jubilee year

mercy: beating heart of the gospel

Pope Francis writes: “It is absolutely essential for the Church and for the credibility of her message that she herself live and testify to mercy.” *Mercy, he says, is “the beating heart of the Gospel” (Misericordiae Vultus)*. To live mercy, we must rediscover both the *spiritual works of mercy*

- counsel the doubtful
- admonish sinners
- forgive offences
- instruct the ignorant
- comfort the afflicted
- bear patiently those who do us ill
- pray for the living and the dead

and the *corporal works of mercy*

- feed the hungry
- clothe the naked
- heal the sick
- give drink to the thirsty
- welcome the stranger
- visit the imprisoned
- bury the dead.

Which spiritual works of mercy might Christ be calling you to practice? Which corporal works of mercy?

the Church’s plan to read God’s word

| Sat | July | 2 | Fourteenth Sunday | Isaiah | 66:10-14 | Galatians 6:14-18 | Psalm 66 | Luke | 10:1-20 |
|-------|------|----|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Mon | July | 4 | <i>Independence Day</i> | Hosea | 2:16-22 | | Psalm 145 | Matthew | 9:18-26 |
| Tues | July | 5 | St Anthony Zaccaria, St Elizabeth of Portugal | Hosea | 8:4-13 | | Psalm 115 | Matthew | 9:32-38 |
| Weds | July | 6 | St Maria Goretti | Hosea | 10:1-12 | | Psalm 105 | Matthew | 10:1-7 |
| Thurs | July | 7 | | Hosea | 11:1-9 | | Psalm 80 | Matthew | 10:7-15 |
| Fri | July | 8 | | Hosea | 14:2-10 | | Psalm 51 | Matthew | 10:16-23 |
| Sat | July | 9 | St Augustine Zhao Rong & Companions | Isaiah | 6:1-8 | | Psalm 93 | Matthew | 10:24-33 |
| Sun | July | 10 | Fifteenth Sunday | Deuteronomy 30:10-14 | Colossians 1:15-20 | Psalm 69 | Luke | 10:25-37 | |

The Church Still Teaches

The decision of the Supreme Court last year redefining *marriage as merely an affective union* between two people of any sex was disappointing if not unexpected. As the minority of the judges said in their dissent, “The majority’s decision is an act of will, not legal judgment.” This is *simply a wrong, mistaken decision*.

Of course, this is *not the first time the Supreme Court got it wrong*.

In the 19th Century, in the *Dred Scott decision*, the Court decided that a black man had no rights that a white person had to respect.

In the 20th Century, the Court decided in *Roe v Wade* that a baby could be killed in her mother’s womb at any time before birth.

And now in the 21st Century, the Supreme Court makes another wrong decision. *Bad decisions lead to bad consequences* and do not “settle” anything.

Dred Scott made inevitable *a bloody Civil War* that cost more lives than any other war in our history and the racism that inspired the Dred Scott decision is still a cancer on America’s soul. *Roe v. Wade* has resulted in *more than 50 million abortions*. Yet, abortion still troubles the conscience of *America* and an increasing majority of Americans reject “abortion on demand”.

This decision redefining marriage will also bring bad consequences. For our culture to lose the understanding of marriage as a conjugal union of a man and a woman in a permanent and exclusive commitment conducive to welcoming and raising the children born from such a union weakens the family as the basic cell of society; and it imperils the human flourishing of future generations.

Allowing “an act of the will” to be substituted for “legal judgment” is *a recipe for tyranny*.

—Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami

VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL ...

A SPECIAL WEEK AT A VERY SPECIAL PLACE

Next week Bremen St Mary Parish will host our annual Vacation Church School at Schmelzer's Grove. It is a wonderful week of early evening gatherings of children from St Mary and St Bernadette parishes, from other Catholic communities in the area and, well, any children who want to come (and have their parents' approval). We need kids—and volunteers!—from all our Catholic parishes. They will *play and laugh and run around*. But they will also *pray and learn about the Catholic Christian Faith*. There will be special attention to *the saints and what their stories have to teach us about the virtuous life, the life of faith, hope, and love*.

On *Friday evening, the 15th*, we will *celebrate Mass together* in the shelter house at the Grove. When the insurance people were rating the shelter house they called it a “dance hall.” Well, that's one of the things it is, but I said that it sounded too much like a saloon (“the Longbranch”?) in an old TV western. When the paperwork came through, it had turned into a “pavilion”. I like that better.

The generosity of the volunteers will make possible their own cheerful joy in being with the kids. There is a lot of sacrifice of free time that goes into the effort; but the rewards are even greater.

I am particularly happy that we have a *Catholic* Church School. If children go to an “interfaith” or “non-denominational” religious education program, even a summer one that is so much fun, they receive a formation that is Christian, minus the specifically Catholic elements, like the sacraments, the saints, Our Lady, the reliable teaching from our Pope and bishops. If you *take Christianity and subtract these things, you have Protestantism*. We are delighted for our Protestant brothers and sisters who have good times at their Protestant Vacation Church School programs. But it is good that the bonding of our Catholic kids is precisely in a Catholic context, with the Bible and the whole life of the Church.

One of the things that makes the VCS at Schmelzer's Grove so special is *the coming together of Lancaster and Bremen kids and their parents*. To see members of the two parishes I serve as pastor *working together and playing together* so cheerfully is a delight, not only to me but also to the people, young and old, involved. Such cooperation holds so much promise for the Church in our communities!

Did I mention that the program was held at *Schmelzer's Grove*? That is a place that is very special. I certainly don't say this as an outdoorsman who knows every inch of the land. I'm not! And I certainly haven't known it all my life. *My Dad took me there about 25 years ago*, but he hadn't been there for about 50 years at the time. But I learned that *his Mom was born within walking distance of the Grove*. And her ancestors had once owned the 80-acre site. *In 1855 the original Schmelzers deeded the land to the diocese* for the building of the church at the top of the hill. It was called *Sacred Heart Church, and its cemetery* (which serves the Bremen Catholic community and which is a remarkably nicely kept cemetery) is on the property at the site of that old church. The road is still known as *“Sacred Heart Road”, a surprising name* in the era of extremist forms of separation of church and state. The name particularly impressed Bishop Campbell. It may be a challenging road, especially in the winter, but where else are you going to find a road with such a Catholic name in this part of the world?

The Bremen parish still owns the land, and we call it the “Sacred Heart Property.” When that Sacred Heart Church (which was taken down in 1964) was being built in 1855, there was a casualty. My great-great-grandfather, Jordan Schmelzer, was killed in a logging accident. It is a sad story, but *I am proud to have a church builder for an ancestor*.

During World War I, when the bishop determined to have the parish relocate to the thriving oil-boom town of Bremen, *the pastor understandably became somewhat unpopular*. He was a man named Father Lucius Kessler. And since he came from Logan, I know he must have been a relative of mine as well, for all of those Logan Kesslers had settled in 1837 about as far north of Logan as Geneva is south of Bremen. Father Lucius was not the only Kessler to serve as pastor in those hills. *Father Jeff Rimmelspach* who was pastor at Bremen St Mary at the beginning of this Millennium, is my second cousin. Father Jeff's uncle was *Father Ed Kessler* who was pastor at St Joseph in Sugar Grove for many years. To this day, when I call Father Walter at St Joseph, I identify myself to the secretary as Father *Tom* Kessler, because I don't want to create any confusion. And when I tell St Joseph people that my name is Father Kessler, I tend to be given an especially warm greeting because of Father Ed's reputation for humility and kindness.

In case you are wondering, I am not only linked to the Bremen (and the former Geneva) parish. My Dad was born in what is now the other parish at which I am pastor, St Bernadette. He was born and spent his early childhood across North Ewing Street from the Fairfield Medical Center, only he was born one year before the hospital was even built. In his childhood Ewing Street was the city limits, so his family lived “out in the country.” That was in St Mary Parish in Lancaster (the other St Mary!), when Dad moved away before World War II, and he was 50 years old by the time *St B was established in 1964*. Long before I ever came to serve in these Fairfield County parishes, I had come to St Bernadette for funerals of aunts and uncles and a cousin as well as some family weddings.

My pastoral involvement with these family links is the result of coincidences. I did not inherit my pastoral assignments. In fact, my being a priest didn't have much (that I am aware of) to do with any of this story. Growing up, my family wouldn't have struck anyone as religiously remarkable. Until recent years I didn't know any more about those connections than I do about my mother's great great grandfather (the Irish side) who was a Baptist preacher (and abolitionist!) over in New Lexington. That's another story, for some other time. I tell it because I am proud to be connected to the Church in these parts and, more importantly, because I pray that some of the young people who seemed to have such a good time at the Vacation Church School may prayerfully consider *whether they too might have vocations to the priesthood or the religious life*.

— Father Thomas Kessler

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