

**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 • 7738



**The Resurrection of Christ**

by Paolo Veronese

**Easter Sunday**

*April 1, 2018*

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

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

## St Mary Parish.

602 Marietta Street (740) 569 • 7738  
BREMEN, OH 43107

cover picture: **The Resurrection of Christ**

Painted in oil on canvas (c. 1570) by Paolo Veronese, (1528-1588)

Gemäldegalerie, Dresden

### our parishes.

**Fr Thomas Kessler** (614) 634 • 0499 [wynthomaskessler@icloud.com](mailto:wynthomaskessler@icloud.com)  
*pastor*  
**at St Bernadette Parish**

**Jeff Carpenter** (740) 681 • 9918 [carpenter.277@osu.edu](mailto:carpenter.277@osu.edu)  
*deacon*

**Mark Scarpitti** (740) 438 • 3970 [dcn.mark@frontier.com](mailto:dcn.mark@frontier.com)  
*deacon*

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*pastoral minister*

**Steve Huber** (740) 654 • 3137 [shuber57@yahoo.com](mailto:shuber57@yahoo.com)  
*facilities coordinator*

**Angie & Kent Kerns** (740) 654 • 2588 [kwkerns@gmail.com](mailto:kwkerns@gmail.com)  
*religious education*

**Liz Latorre** (740) 243 • 1872 [lizlatorre@gmail.com](mailto:lizlatorre@gmail.com)  
*liturgical music*

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

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

1343 Wheeling Rd NE, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701

(740) 654 • 1893

<http://stbernadetteparish.net>

**at Bremen St Mary Parish**

**Ben Factor** [b\\_factor@lanaster.k12.oh.us](mailto:b_factor@lanaster.k12.oh.us)  
*liturgical music*

**Sarah Borah** [sborah920@gmail.com](mailto:sborah920@gmail.com)

**The St Mary Parish office** is at the church vestibule.

Hours: 9-11 AM, Tuesdays.

602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107 (740) 569 • 7738

**at both parishes**

**Stephen Karnes** (740) 654 • 1893 [stbernbook@gmail.com](mailto:stbernbook@gmail.com)  
*business manager*

**Kathy Kehnast** (740) 654 • 1893 [stbermparish@yahoo.com](mailto:stbermparish@yahoo.com)  
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*youth ministry*

**]Saint Bernadette School**

**Pam Eltringham** (740) 654 • 3137 [peltring@cducation.org](mailto:peltring@cducation.org)  
*principal*

**Barb Huber** (740) 654 • 3137 [bhuber@cducation.org](mailto:bhuber@cducation.org)  
*secretary*

**Saint Bernadette School** is located at

1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701

[stbernlan@cducation.org](mailto:stbernlan@cducation.org)

[www.stbernadetteschool.com](http://www.stbernadetteschool.com)

Bremen St Vincent de Paul  
Lancaster St Vincent de Paul  
Diocese of Columbus  
Angels Nurture & Disciple (AND)

(740) 569-7738

[www.svdplancasteroh.com](http://www.svdplancasteroh.com)

[www.columbuscatholic.org](http://www.columbuscatholic.org)

[www.angelsAND.org](http://www.angelsAND.org)

### sacramental life.

#### Where

Our parishes are where Catholics worship. We can receive the Anointing of the Sick at any appropriate place from the appropriate minister. The first reception of Eucharist and of Penance as well as the reception of Baptism, Confirmation, and Matrimony may only be **in one's own parish church**, unless with good reason the pastor deems it **necessary** to do otherwise.

#### 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. Try to attend before the child is born. If you are expecting (or already have) a newborn or if you somehow have somehow haven't gotten around to have an older child baptized, call Kathy to make plans now.

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; those parents are in the same wonderful boat as you are.

At least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. Both godparents need to be practicing Catholics. If you don't attend Sunday Mass regularly (a major component of being a practicing Catholic!), there is something you can do about it: Start coming to Sunday Mass.

#### 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.

Every Catholic priest is **available whenever there is a need**. There are Penance opportunities for St Bernadette 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 Penance at least once a year.

#### Anointing and Care of the Sick

The priest gives the Anointing of the Sick to one who is 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."**
- The priest brings Penance, Anointing, and Holy Communion to 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 a wedding. Why so long? Because **this sacrament, not just the ceremony, requires serious preparation**. And the Church needs to be involved in that preparation. Catholics who marry outside the Church have left the sacramental life and need to change that situation before receiving the other sacraments. The Church wishes to support couples **through the years** of their married life. That's why our diocese offers programs to enhance married life. To learn about these programs, watch the weekly bulletin.

## At Prayer with the Church

### The Church Prays

#### at the Easter Vigil

O God, who make this most sacred night radiant with the glory of the Lord's Resurrection, stir up in your Church a spirit of adoption, so that, renewed in body and mind, we may render you undivided service. 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 on Easter Sunday

O God, who on this day, through your Only Begotten Son, have conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity, grant, we pray, that we who keep the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit, rise up in the light of life.

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.

#### the Regina Coeli

Queen of Heaven rejoice, alleluia:  
For He Whom you did merit to bear, alleluia,  
Has risen as He said, alleluia. Pray for us to God, alleluia.  
Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.  
For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

#### Let us pray.

O God, Who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Pope Francis Asks Us to Pray This Month

that economists may have the courage to reject any economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths.

### Mass Intentions This Week

Father Kessler will be away during Easter week. The only weekday Mass this week will be at St Bernadette on First Saturday morning at 9 AM (preceded by Confessions at 8:30).

Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will be at the usual time on Wednesday (9 AM through 1 PM).

### Belonging to the Church

It makes sense that Holy Mother the Church expects that we will worship in the parish where we live. There are exceptions: military people, college students, people visiting or caring for relatives, and the like. But we all live somewhere and have neighbors. Ordinarily we go to the Church there, with them. If you have moved to another place (or from another place), for more or less all of the foreseeable future, you should register in the parish in the new place. If you are going to be a practicing Catholic, you will most likely practice your faith with the people who live nearby and in the church that is nearby. We shouldn't dismiss the connection to the local parish lightly.

If you actually live in the neighborhood of one parish and go to church in another parish for a good reason, register where you worship. But don't go shopping for a parish home the way you might decide which grocery serves you best, has the best produce or the best prices. Our commitment to the Lord and his Church must never be reduced to a matter of consumer shopping. It is more a matter of blooming where you are planted.

We are not like some Christian denominations for whom membership in a congregation is a matter of taste preferences and is permanent. Our permanent membership is in the Catholic Church; parish membership needs to be registered with the parish where we worship each Sunday. Our "home parish" is important to us, but, if we don't live there anymore, it is not likely to be our actual place of worship on anything like a regular basis. For purposes of baptism, first Communion, confirmation, marriage, sacramental sponsorship, burial, and such, the parish where we have registered and where we ordinarily worship is the one that counts.

This has been the practice of the Catholic Church for a very long time, but it only becomes obvious when people grow up, establish a home, and sometimes have to move to another place. Whether it is here or there, register in the parish where you worship on Sundays!

### Hear God's Word

<b>Mar 31, Holy Saturday, the Great Easter Vigil</b>	Genesis	1:1-2:2	Ps	33	Mark	16:1-7
	Genesis	22:1-18	Ps	16		
	Exodus	14:15-15:1	Ex	15		
	Isaiah	55:1-11	Is	12		
	Ezekiel	36:16-28	Ps	42		
	Romans	6:3-11	Ps	118		
<b>Apr 1 Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord</b>	<b>Acts</b>	<b>10:34-43</b>	<b>Ps</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>Colossians</b>	<b>John 20:1-9</b>
Apr 2, Monday	Acts	2:14-33	Ps	16	Matt	28:8-15
Apr 3, Tuesday	Acts	2:36-41	Ps	33	John	20:11-18
Apr 4, Wednesday	Acts	3:1-10	Ps	105	Luke	24:13-35
Apr 5, Thursday	Acts	3:11-26	Ps	8	Luke	24:35-48
Apr 6, Friday	Acts	4:1-12	Ps	118	John	21:1-14
Apr 7, Saturday	Acts	4:13-21	Ps	118	Mark	16:9-15
<b>Apr 8 2nd Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)</b>	<b>Acts</b>	<b>4:32-35</b>	<b>Ps</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>1 John</b>	<b>5:1-6</b>

### Rice Bowl

We hear in Sacred Scripture this week how Christ redeemed us not by a one-time small gift, but by becoming one of us and giving His whole self even unto death on a Cross. Through our support of Operation Rice Bowl, Catholic Relief Services gives more than short-term assistance to poor countries; it **establishes long term, person-focused, sustainable programs** that provide better opportunities for each individual, and it remains in communities to help these efforts succeed. Please remember to return your Rice Bowls in the collection at Easter.

### Fish to Fry

Lancaster **Knights of Columbus** will fry fish on Apr 6. Cost for adults is \$8 and for children is \$6. The Kof C hall is at 343 E Walnut St.

## St Bernadette Parish

### Friends Forever

Join the **Friends Forever** gathering on Thursday, Apr 19, as they meet for lunch at Main Street Bistro. Contact Ann Essman at (740) 654-1893 for information.

## St Bernadette School Registration

St Bernadette School announces **invites you to register now your children** grades preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> for the 2018-2019 school year. Private tours and classroom observations are available at any time. Want to send your children to a fine Catholic school like St Bernadette, St Mary's middle school, or Fisher Catholic High School, but you wonder about the cost? Assistance is available.

For information, call the school office at (740) 654-3137.

The **preschool program** offers a progressive learning approach, and kindergarten-readiness goals, within a flexible schedule.

**Elementary grades** (full-day kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) offer a highly respected program of academic excellence and positive experiences.

St Bernadette School offers a full day **kindergarten program** that fosters the academic, social and emotional growth and development of each child in a very family-friendly environment. Studies show that the advantages of a full-day program far outweigh a half-day, including but certainly not limited to, full-day kindergartners learning more literacy and mathematics than those in half-day programs.

## Ministry at Mass at St Bernadette

+	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion
<b>Holy Saturday, Mar 31, at 9 PM Easter Vigil</b>	Terry Carpenter, Bob Christy, Dennis Forquer, John Hartig, Becky Kuhn, Brad Rider, David Shonk	Anna Hartig, Samantha Kerns, Logan Loy, Daniel Turner	Angie Christy, Teresa Hartig, Kathy Kehnst, Jim Kuhn, Teresa Scarpitti
<b>Sunday, Apr 1, at 11 AM Easter Sunday</b>	Tara Craaybeek	Clara & Susan Craaybeek, Eve Darfus, Dominic Neighbor	Rosalie DeFillippo, Sandy Landefeld, Ben Peters, Larry Sanford, Anna Seigny, Becky Wickham
<b>The only weekday Mass this week will be Saturday at 9 AM.</b>			
<b>Saturday, Apr 7, at 4 PM Vigil of 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy)</b>	Amy Woo	Brennan Quaintance, Diana & Sarah Woo	Susan Garrett, Marguerite Grimm, Joyce Guenther, Lee Guinan, Mickey Steyaert, Kathy Wagner
<b>Sunday, Apr 8, at 11 AM 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday)</b>	Jim Merk	Dominic & Emeline Neighbor, Gunner Robertson	Tara Craaybeek, Pat Dreyer, Rita Merk, Ben Peters, Larry Sanford, Teresa Scarpitti

## Bremen St Mary Parish

### Your Donation to the Food Pantry

The Bremen Food Pantry needs margarine or butter (among other things!). Place your donation in the refrigerator in the kitchen at St Mary parish hall. This will help the **Pantry Open House** in Bremen, on Saturday, Apr 14, from 9-11 AM, when any family in need can stop by to receive food assistance, with no prior registration or sign up needed.



## St Vincent de Paul

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Bremen takes up a collection on the first Sunday of each month. **St Vincent always needs members.** Call Angi Skinner at (740) 438-0027 if you can help.

## Ministry at Mass at St Mary

+	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Communion	gifts	sacristan / usher
<b>Easter Sunday, Apr 1 at 8:30 AM</b>	Jeanne Schmelzer	Spencer Conrad, Nicole Terry	Wyatt Borah, Tyna Schmelzer-Fox, Barb VanFossen-Cook	Catherine Noll, April Schmelzer	Barb Van Fossen-Cook
<b>There will be no Mass on Tuesday this week.</b>					
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday) Apr 8 at 8:30 AM</b>	Susan Foltz	Reagan Conrad, Charles Schoenlaub	Susan Foltz, Leo Kunkler Sr, Jim Schmelzer	Leo Kunkler Sr family	Jim Schmelzer

## Here and There

### Weekly Confessions & Masses

But these times sometimes change, so to call ahead!							
parish	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Penance
<b>Bremen St Mary</b>		8:20 AM					8 AM Sun
<b>Lancaster St Bernadette</b>	8:20 AM		8:20 AM	6 PM	8:20 AM	9 AM on First Sat	5:30 PM Thu, 3 PM Sat, 8:30 AM on First Sat
<i>Lancaster St Mary</i>	7 AM	9 AM	7 AM	9 AM			4 PM Sat
<i>Lancaster St Mark</i>	8 AM	8 AM	6 PM	8 AM	8 AM		5:30 PM Sat
<i>Sugar Grove St Joseph</i>	VARIE S	NOON	7 AM	NOON	NOON		½ hour before Mass
<i>Circleville St Joseph</i>	9 AM	7 AM	9 AM		9 AM		4 PM Sat
<i>Logan St John</i>	8 AM	8 AM	9 AM		8 AM	9 AM	4 PM Sat
<i>Fisher Catholic HS</i>					2:40 PM		2 PM on First Fri

### Day of Recollection

On Saturday, Apr 14, from 10:30 AM to 3 PM **Sister Louis Mary Passeri OP** in the Lancaster St Mary Church Spirit Center, will guide **reflections on the appearances of Jesus after His resurrection.** Call St Mary parish office at (740) 653-0997 to register. Fee of \$15 includes lunch and is due to the office prior to this day of recollection.

### Pilgrimage to Carey

Join a Marian pilgrimage to Our Lady of Consolation Basilica and Shrine in Carey, on Wednesday, May 2, for a **day of prayer.** Cost is \$35. Lunch may be purchased at the cafeteria. Send a check (payable to Margaret Kronenbitter, 2700 Wayne Ridge Rd, Zanesville, Ohio 43701) by Monday, Apr 2. Call Rita Merk at (740) 654-3255 or Ann Messerly at (740) 654-3447 for information.

## in the Diocese of Columbus

### Why Do We Believe?

St Mark Church presents Fr Thomas Blau OP speaking on the theme *Why We Believe in the Resurrection* on Apr 15, 16, and 17 at 7 PM.

### Time to Think Spring

The St Mary Teacher Association Spring Flower Sale takes orders from Apr 3-16. Order forms are available on their website: [www.saintmarylancaster.com](http://www.saintmarylancaster.com) or at the school office at (740) 654-1632. Orders can be picked up at St Mary School on Friday, May 4, and Saturday, May 5. All proceeds benefit St Mary School tuition.

### Irish Alumni Golf Outing

Alumni of St. Mary, Bishop Fenwick and Fisher Catholic High Schools will play at Pleasant Valley Golf Course on Saturday, June 9, at 9 AM at \$150 per team. For information and to check availability contact Molly Neighbor at (740) 654-1231 or [mneighbor@cducation.org](mailto:mneighbor@cducation.org).

### Put a Spring in Your Step

That's what you'll have after a **Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend**. The next two weekends are July 13-15 and Sept 14-16, both in Central Ohio. Marriage Encounter is where married couples can get away from jobs, kids, chores, and phones and focus only on each other. For information or to apply, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit [www.wmecom Columbus.org](http://www.wmecom Columbus.org)

### Silent Retreat for Women

The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women presents a **women's silent retreat** on *Being Present in the Here & Now* at St Therese Retreat Center in Columbus from Friday, Apr 13, at 5 PM through Sunday, Apr 15, at noon. The retreat leader is Fr Sean Dooley. Cost is \$130 which includes meals. Contact DCCW president Katie Boesch at [kboesch@columbuscatholic.org](mailto:kboesch@columbuscatholic.org) or (614) 228-8601.

### Bid O'Luck at Fisher Catholic

Donations are being gathered for the live and silent auctions at the **Bid O'Luck dinner auction** happening on Saturday, Apr 28, with the theme of *Saturday Night Irish Fever*. Contact Milea Quaintance at (740) 689-3288 to **donate goods, cash or services**. Bid O'Luck **raffle tickets are now on sale** for one \$7,500 prize and five \$500 prizes. Tickets (\$100 each) can be purchased after Mass today and on Apr 14 & 15 or by contacting Kellie Shonk at (740) 654-1231 or [keshonk@cducation.org](mailto:keshonk@cducation.org). Buy a raffle ticket for yourself, or gather your friends and split the cost.

### Help in the Opiate Addiction Epidemic

For **resources and suggestions** for families, schools, and parishes to respond to the opiate addiction epidemic in Ohio, visit [www.columbuscatholic.org/drug-awareness](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/drug-awareness) or contact the Social Concerns office at (614) 241-2540.

### Bethesda Healing Program

The Bethesda Healing Program is held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month. It is **for mothers and fathers who have suffered the experience of abortion**. They gather twice a month to share, heal, and grow. The first step of the healing journey is to acknowledge the hurt; the second step is to seek support. They provide a

confidential safe place where anyone hurting from abortion can come for healing, prayer and love. To learn about time and place call the office at (614) 718-0277. Discover more at [www.bethesdahealing.org](http://www.bethesdahealing.org). Confidential ministry support lines are (614) 309-2651 and (614) 309-0157.

You are invited to **Rich in Mercy**, a special Bethesda Healing Ministry **benefit event**, on Thursday, Apr 26, at St Agatha Church. Mass is at 5:30 PM followed by dinner and a program. The celebrant and speaker will be Bishop James Wall, bishop of Gallup, NM. Featured harpist is Mrs Kathleen Tully, director of music at St Patrick Church. An appeal will be made at the dinner for your help in continuing this ministry of hope and healing. Tickets are \$30 each and can be purchased at [bethesdahealing.org](http://bethesdahealing.org) or by calling Diana Davis at (614) 718-0277.

### Jail & Prison Ministry Conference

The **Living as Missionary Disciples** conference is for both experienced prison ministers and those interested in prison ministry. It happens on Saturday, April 28, from 9:30 AM to 3 PM at St Elizabeth Church in Columbus. Keynote speaker is Ron Zeilinger, executive director of Dismas Ministry, a national Catholic prison outreach. Conference topics include restorative justice, models of ministry, reentry ministry, and advocacy. Cost is free. Register by Apr 24 at [www.columbuscatholic.org/prison-ministry-criminal-justice](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/prison-ministry-criminal-justice) or call (614) 241-2540.

### Catholic Men's Luncheon Club

The next Catholic Men's Luncheon Club happens on Friday, Apr 6, at St Patrick Church in downtown Columbus and features a talk about the ARCH (Accompanying Returning Citizens with Hope) Ministry. Speaker is Jerry Freewalt, diocesan director for parish social concerns ministry and rural life. Mass is at 11:45 AM, followed by lunch and the presentation. No reservations are necessary; \$10 covers the lunch and meeting. Bring a friend.

### Catholic Familyland Retreats

Life is hectic. This spring, slow down and spend a quiet weekend with Our Lord. Attend an **Alone with God** retreat at Catholic Familyland in Bloomingdale, Ohio.

- **Men's retreat** is Apr 12-15;
- **Women's retreat** is Apr 26-29.

Step away from the intensity of daily life to rediscover your Father's love in the silence. Retreat includes inspiring conferences to deepen your knowledge of God, spiritual direction for your journey of faith, abundant graces given through the sacraments, and rest. Learn more or register at [afc.org](http://afc.org).

### You Are Not Alone

Many today are deeply concerned with *the same-sex attraction of a son, daughter, or spouse*. Encourage is a **Catholic support group** which seeks to offer solace to parents and relatives of those with same-sex attraction, faithful to the Church's teachings. You may contact the Columbus Encourage chapter at [patoner@saintjosephplainscity.com](mailto:patoner@saintjosephplainscity.com), (614) 296-7404, or Marriage and Family Life Office, (614) 241-2560.

### Looking for Good Samaritans

Fairfield Medical Center has many **volunteer opportunities**. They have a **wonderful social opportunity** to serve and to interact with many people. Most volunteers serve a 4-hour shift each week. Volunteer applications can be obtained at [www.fmchealth.org](http://www.fmchealth.org) or at either information desk. Contact Heidi Reed at (740) 687-8109 or [heidire@fmchealth.org](mailto:heidire@fmchealth.org).

# Self-Giving Love: *Humanae Vitae*'s Paradoxical Wisdom

Part Four      *By Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of the Diocese of Phoenix*

*This (the third of a five-part series from Bishop Olmsted originally appeared in **The Catholic Sun**, newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, between July and September of 2005. It is reprinted with permission. Visit [catholicsun.org](http://catholicsun.org).*

Arthur Schopenhauer once wrote, "All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as self-evident." The seeds of truth planted by *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, while initially ignored or even rejected, are now beginning to bear fruit. This is evident in the lively interest of many in the **Theology of the Body** and in the desire of engaged couples to know more about **Natural Family Planning**. Now, pastoral efforts must be directed to respond effectively to this fresh desire and new interest.

Let us consider the roles and duties of married couples and of the clergy and others engaged in faith formation initiatives, at both the diocesan and parish levels. Just as past failure to heed the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* has brought suffering to many married couples and their families, so the faithful presentation of this teaching and obedience to it, now and in the future, will bring about a new springtime for couples, their children and the larger society.

## A right to the truth

Love of neighbor requires commitment to the truth. Our contemporaries have a right to the truth about sexuality, marriage and family. They deserve to know what is good and true; they also deserve to know what is wrong and false. People, for good reason, expect us to teach what Christ teaches through His Church. Consequently, all Catholics, and the clergy in particular, have a grave obligation to proclaim this truth faithfully. In this regard, Paul VI wrote in *Humanae Vitae*, #29,

*"Refusal to compromise anything concerning the saving doctrine of Christ is an outstanding act of charity to souls; yet at the same time it is necessary always to combine this with tolerance and charity. When He spoke and associated with men and women, the Redeemer Himself exemplified this truth. Coming not to judge the world but to save it, He was severe against sin but patient and merciful to sinners."*

## Not a peripheral issue

The issue of contraception does not stand on the edge of Catholic life but near its center. Every act of contraception is a serious sin that inflicts grave harm on the love between husband and wife and on their love for God. It tears apart **the two meanings of the marital embrace**: the life-giving meaning and the person-uniting meaning. No wonder so many couples that resort to tubal ligations, vasectomies and other acts of sterilization struggle to find meaning in their marriages. Conversely, it is not surprising that couples who follow the Church's teaching experience few divorces and grow in mutual love.

Married couples are greatly helped to integrate the Church's teaching into their lives when the teaching is done with fidelity, confidence and enthusiasm. Even though our Catholic teaching contradicts popular erroneous theories, we should never be embarrassed or intimidated. For Christ is and has always been a sign of contradiction. What seemed like failure in His life, namely the Cross, was, in fact, the greatest victory of love and truth. Indeed, His Spirit is at work in both those who teach and in those who receive the teaching, leading us all to obedience of faith and to fruitful living of the Gospel.

Listen again to the advice of Paul VI to priests (*ibid*), "Preach with full confidence and be certain that the Holy Spirit of God, who guides the Magisterium in its teaching, will illuminate the hearts of the faithful and invite them to give their assent. Teach spouses the indispensability of prayer; instruct them properly so that they may come regularly and with great faith to the sacraments of the Eucharist and of Penance."

## New invitation to married couples

How grateful I am for married couples that embrace and put into practice the good news of *Humanae Vitae* and the Theology of the Body. **Fidelity to the truth has its own rewards**, as such couples will be the first to attest. Today more than 30 percent of all marriages end in divorce, but the rate is only 3 percent for those who use NFP. The truth sets us free; it also lays a solid foundation for love.

Unfortunately, many couples are still unaware of the Church's teaching on marriage, or may have been duped by prevailing opinions that run directly contrary to it. To all of these I extend a new invitation and heartfelt plea to open your minds to this good news, and to examine your consciences about contraception and related issues. Do not forget that **our conscience helps us grow to maturity in Christ only to the degree that it is formed by the truth**. If you have fallen into the sin of contraception, seek the Lord's forgiveness through a good confession. Or if, because of infertility problems, you have had recourse to procreative techniques that separate the unitive from the procreative meaning of marital love, techniques that mechanically substitute scientific manipulation for the marital embrace, seek forgiveness through sacramental reconciliation.

Take heart and do not be discouraged. **To belong to Christ means to share in His Cross**, i.e. to sacrifice for the sake of love. But remember that the Cross is the Tree of Life. **It is the only way to Resurrection and eternal joy**. To the world the Cross seems like foolishness. Once we obey, however, and become Christ's faithful followers, we find a joy and peace the world can never give.

## Future plans for NFP and marriage preparation

What is the Lord asking of us now in the United States? He is calling us, without a doubt, to make even greater efforts to hand on the Theology of the Body and to teach approved NFP methods.

Our late Holy Father John Paul II, shortly before he died, said, "The moment has come for every parish to have personnel available who can teach married couples how to use the natural methods of family planning." May the Lord grant us the grace to achieve this goal very soon!

*This is the 4<sup>th</sup> part of a five-part series from Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of Phoenix which originally appeared in *The Catholic Sun*, newspaper of the Diocese of Phoenix, between July and September of 2005. Read: *Humanae Vitae*, the encyclical letter of Pope Paul VI on the Regulation of Birth. © 2005-2018 The Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix. All rights reserved. Used with permission.*

# Christ Is Risen! He Is Truly Risen!

‘Christ is risen!’ For many millions of Christians, especially the Orthodox Christians of Slavic and Middle Eastern countries, the answer to that is: ‘He is truly risen!’ They *don’t* say “Happy Easter.” For them that would be about as bland as saying “Have a nice day.” They want to greet one another by announcing the good news that Easter brings, they want to say it: ‘**Christ is risen!**’ they want to respond by saying: ‘**He is truly risen.**’

Eastern Christians have a lively sense, a sense that is contagious for other Christians when they are around them at Easter time, that this is the most important and the most delightful thing that any human can ever say. Christ is risen!

Saint Paul showed he had a lively sense of the centrality of this fact when he told the Christians at Corinth that he wanted to remind them of the basics, the basics he was giving his life for and that he would eventually die for. He wrote to remind them of the message or Good news through which they are in the process of being saved. He wrote about this in his reflection on the resurrection in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of his first letter to the Christians at Corinth.

Listen to the wonderful Easter words of Paul:

Now I am reminding you, brothers, of the gospel

- **I preached** to you,
- which **you** indeed **received and**
- in which you also **stand**.
- Through it you are also **being saved**,
- if you **hold fast** to the word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

Paul took that gospel, that message awfully seriously, but awfully joyfully. It was the message **he had received** from others and which **he passed on** and to which they needed to hold onto.

Here is Paul again:

For I handed on to you as **of first importance** what I also received:

- that Christ **died** for our sins in accordance with the scriptures;
- that he was **buried**;
- that he was **raised** on the third day in accordance with the scriptures;
- that he **appeared** to Kephias, then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me.

There were four facts that Paul wanted to affirm: Christ died. Christ was buried. Christ rose. He appeared to a whole raft of disciples, Paul himself included. For Paul—and the tradition he was repeating— **to note that Christ was buried** was to underline that he was really and truly dead, so dead that he was buried. **To note that he appeared** was to underline that he was really permanently alive and had been, for a little while, available for people to meet eye to eye and face to face. Truly dead and then, after that, truly alive.

Two of those things are there to confirm the reality of the thing that had gone just before: He really died, so he was buried. He really rose, and we know because he showed himself to all those people. But then, even the dying has its point in the one main thing: Christ is risen! That’s the message that Paul had received, that he preached, that we received, that we stand on, that we need to hold fast to, through which we are being saved.

The reason this was such good news for Paul is highlighted in what he wrote to the Romans a few years later:

... we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

There are two other phrases in his letter to the Corinthians that Paul (and the Holy Spirit who inspired him) wants us to listen closely to.

Paul said that Christ died **for our sins**. That means his dying puts an end to the destructive power of us human beings to make a shambles of our lives in this world.

When he wrote that it was **according to the Scriptures**, he probably didn’t even think about the fact that what he was writing was actually destined to become part of the Scriptures. He was thinking about what we call the Old Testament, the communication from God which had paved the way for this ultimate revelation of God’s love.

This Easter greeting (Christ is risen!) with its response (He is truly risen!) is much more than an ethnic custom from some other ethnic groups. It is a lesson about what matters in our Faith. I am not very good about remembering to use that greeting, but I am going to give it a try this year.

*Father Kessler*

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