

BY THE WAY . . .

- This Sunday, October 18 we will be hosting an **outdoor coffee and Parish Gathering** in the parking lot behind the school following the 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, and 12:00 Noon Masses. This event, being hosted by the The Feast Committee, is an attempt to create some of the atmosphere of camaraderie which we all missed from the cancellation of this past June's Feast in honor of Saint Anthony, our patron. Let us all take this time to come together as a parish and enjoy each other's company . . . safely.

- **Saint Anthony's Church** is open for prayer each weekday from 7:15 A.M. to 12:00 Noon. Mass is celebrated each weekday at 7:30 A.M. This Mass is also live streamed. Weekend Masses are at 5:30 PM on Saturday, and Sunday morning at 7:00, 8:30, and 10:00 A.M. and 12:00 Noon. The 10:00 A.M. Mass is live streamed.

The main door of the church, as well as the handicapped door, and the back sacristy door are available for use.

The rest rooms are once again open.

Hand sanitizer is available at each of the open doors.

Each day, and after each of the Sunday Masses, the church is sanitized. After Sunday morning liturgies, it is important for everyone to leave the building promptly so that the sanitizing of the church may take place.

Masks must be worn in the church building.

At this time the church office in the rectory remains closed. Requests are handled over the phone.

- During this month of the Holy Rosary I wanted to give a shout-out to the members of the **Parish Rosary Society**. They have been a vibrant part of parish life since 1926, but of course, like so many other groups, they have been unable to meet since last March. This weekend would have been the traditional time for their Annual Communion Breakfast. Although they are unable to gather in that way this year, I hope that some of them will be able to join us for coffee after the three Masses this morning.

- In the recent updated guidelines of Bishop Sweeney, we are now able to utilize **altar servers**. I encourage all our altar servers to volunteer to serve at whatever Mass you are present for over the weekend.

- Congratulations to all our **First Communicants** who have finally received Our Lord in Holy Communion for the first time – just five months later than originally planned. Some of the parents mentioned that some of the outfits purchased last Spring were already too small by the time the children actually received First Communion! Never mind, though. Our prayer is that the Lord Jesus in the Eucharist will always be a perfect fit for these children all through their lives.

- Monday, November 2 is **All Souls Day**, the day when the Church traditionally prays for

all the faithful departed. As always, if you write the names of your beloved dead on the envelope in your envelope packet, the names will be included on the altar during the nine-day Novena for the Faithful Departed offered on the first days of November.

In addition to the 7:30 A.M. Mass on All Souls Day, there will also be a **7:00 P.M. Mass in church**. So many of our brothers and sisters did not have a proper Christian burial this year due to the restrictions presented by Covid 19. This All Souls Day Evening Mass will be an opportunity for all of us to come and pray for the eternal repose of their souls. All the names of those who have died since last November 1 will be included in the Liturgy that night.

- This Thursday is the feast day of **Saint John Paul II** (1920-2005), and this month marks the 25th anniversary of his Pastoral Visit to New Jersey in October 1995. The Holy Father landed at Newark Airport on the afternoon of October 4, 1995 and was greeted by President and Mrs. Clinton. He then traveled to Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark where he presided at Evening Prayer in the presence of the President. Afterwards Mr. Clinton and the Holy Father met in the Cathedral Rectory. The following evening, October 5, after addressing the United Nations in the afternoon, Pope John Paul celebrated Mass in Giants Stadium in East Rutherford with 83,000 New Jersey Catholics, and at that time conferred the dignity of “basilica” on Newark’s sacred Heart Cathedral. Later in this trip, the Pope also visited New York and Baltimore.

A couple of “vignettes” or memories of that visit come to mind a quarter-century later:

--- my delight at hearing the shock of New York commentators at the fact that Newark’s Cathedral was slightly larger than Saint Patrick’s in Manhattan;

--- my shock on hearing that the Pulaski Skyway had been closed in both directions in rush hour to allow the papal motorcade to pass by safely; I did not think anyone had that much power;

--- all the 200 cloistered nuns of the state (Carmelites, Dominicans and Poor Clares) had been given special permission to leave their cloister, and were brought on buses to the Cathedral to see the Pope; in the aftermath they were chased across the parking lot by reporters who had never met a cloistered nun before and had no idea there were that many in New Jersey;

--- at the Mass the priests were assigned to assemble and vest in the Giants’ practice bubble. As the first of us reached the tent, the Giants were still practicing! Despite the football players, the day marked the first time all the priests of the Garden State had been invited to the same event since 1878;

--- I was one of the volunteer Communion distributors. We were all instructed to bring a ciborium from home with 200 un-consecrated hosts. We had to physically hold the ciborium all through the Mass. When it was time for Communion we were each “picked up” by a trained high school student and brought to a designated part of the stadium. I wound up giving Communion to a large group from the parishes of interior Atlantic County – places like Hammonton, Buena, Mays Landing and Little Egg Harbor none of which I had ever been to;

--- the careful planning for Communion had overlooked the “private boxes” in the stadium, all of which were full. As we Communion Ministers were returning from distributing the Eucharist, the “wealthy” were pouring out of their boxes begging someone to bring them Communion (there must be a homily there somewhere);

Did I mention that it rained throughout the entire Mass? In spite of the constant “holy water” it was a great day for Catholic New Jersey.

- **Prayer for Vocations**

*Creator of the Universe, God of the Nations,
Your people are longing to hear your word.
Send laborers into your harvest –
Women and men on fire with your love.*

*Dedicated single people –
Who incarnate your presence in their daily lives,
Whose availability enables them
To respond to a diversity of needs.*

*Married couples –
Whose relationships serve as a sign
Of your fidelity to your people,
Whose love overflows to their children and neighbors.*

*Ordained ministers –
Who gather the prayers and longing of your people
Who serve as a channel of your presence
Through the sacraments.*

*Religious sisters, brothers and priests –
Whose life in community foreshadows
Our eternal unity in Christ,
Whose service bring your life to the world.*

*May each of us respond with courage and generosity
To our particular vocations, and may the Church recognize
The Spirit’s call to all men and women of good will,
Trusting in your abundance to answer all our needs. Amen.*

God bless you all,

Father Ray

