

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

This Wednesday we recall the 47th anniversary (January 22, 1973) of the Supreme Court's decision *Roe v. Wade*. It is our desire as Catholics that this decision, which is bad law, needs to be overturned. Such a desire leaves many people feeling uneasy and nervous. It is nearly impossible to take back something that has been granted in law. The passage of legalization of abortion was passed under great pressure from special interest groups rather than reasonable debate. At the time of its passing scientific and medical facts were dismissed. The issue was wrapped in the language of personal rights and privacy. There was no real and honest discussion on these matters based on facts. Now we know that whenever this topic is raised there are raw emotional implications followed by much pettifogging of the issue. Then we also know that when something is granted in law it is not easily reversed. Even though abortion is protected under the law it remains immoral and sinful.

Sin by its very nature is irrational because sin is self-destructive. This is the big irony about sin, it is self-destructive. Sinful behaviors appear tempting but in the end they are destructive. The first casualty of sin is a hardened heart. Civil law cannot address what is in the human heart. There is no civil law against a hardened selfish heart. Such a heart is not desirable, yet it is not against the law. However, the acting out of a hardened selfish heart can be unlawful as in cases of theft, slander, injury and murder. Oh wait a minute; abortion is the unjust killing of an innocent human person: a human life was terminated by the legal decision of the mother and anyone else involved in the act.

I am often reminded of the words of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. In a speech she articulated the cause for a lack of peace in our world. She said it was abortion. She thoughtfully queried about how a country, or even the whole world, could be a place of peace when it is permissible for a mother to legally decide to kill the baby in her womb. Mother Teresa spoke hard and truthful words. They are hard to hear, but they are true.

We all know the teaching of the Church on the abortion issue as well as other bio-medical/life issues. At least we should know. We try to bring these issues up because the opposite side of the argument is always there and presses forward. One characteristic of the opposite side of the issue appeals to selfish desires hiding behind personal rights. This is not the true starting point in the mind of the Christian. We only need to look at the cross of Christ to contradict the whole notion of selfish motives and rights talk as first principles for the moral/spiritual life. Jesus Christ perfectly embodies selflessness.

Like Mother Teresa, the Church also speaks. I am also reminded of another great figure in our recent history of the Church: Bishop Fulton Sheen. He addressed this same hard truthful teaching posture of the Church. In speaking at a priests' retreat he encouraged the priests to preach the hard, truthful teachings of the Church. However, he also encouraged the priests to also have the compassionate pastoral heart in the confessional and in spiritual direction. If something immoral and sinful is self-destructive it is the loving thing to strongly warn people from traveling down that road. It is loving to instruct individuals from making sinful and immoral choices. Such decisions will always lead to unnecessary pain and sorrow. The Church, in her wisdom, knows this to be true. In my short life I also know this to be true. Sin always leaves a mark on our lives. Serious sin leaves a

serious mark. This mark on the soul can be buried deep, but eventually it will resurface and is painful; especially if it is serious sin.

Just the same the Church has a duty to teach the truth. This is particularly important in dealing with the truth of sin. For those unfamiliar with the Sacrament of Reconciliation, there is the persistent belief that the Church is harsh and always condemning. When it comes to sin, the Church must be firm in her teaching. This is also true for all good and loving parents. If parents know that something is dangerous and harmful to the life of their child, they will be firm in their instructions to avoid such things; even to the point of threatening punishment. When it comes to good behavior parents will impose discipline upon their child until they learn and impose self-discipline upon themselves. It is not different with the Church.

The church is also understanding and compassionate in the confessional. Compassion and understanding are necessary for the penitent to take a serious look at their life. It is in this forum that one can see the resurfacing of past sins and the damage such sins have had on one's life; how they have tainted relationships and have prevented growth in holiness.

Looking at the truthful words of Mother Teresa as she addressed the crowds, she was firm in her conviction. Then we take a good look at her life. The woman was full of compassion and love. Love was in her words giving them authenticity and power. Love also filled her work with those who were cast out, discarded and left to die in the streets of Calcutta. Powerful.

It is obvious that abortion is not the only life issue. We are more than aware of all the various issues we face when it comes to Respect for Life. We also hear many of the arguments contrary to the Church's position on the life issues. Just the same, we can be assured that the Church's position is consistent. Granted, it is not easy to follow the teachings of the Church. However, we are reminded that the Church is of Christ's gift to the world. The Church is the Body of Christ and thus the continuing presence of Christ in a sinful world. We know well what the sinful world did to our Blessed Lord. He was rejected, mocked, betrayed, beaten and crucified. He did this all because Jesus Christ is the faithful love of God who desires the salvation of all people. It is most difficult to follow him with that same faithful love on our part. But it is the only way to live in this world that is not selfish and self-centered. It is difficult but we are assured that the strength of the Holy Spirit has been given to us. It is that same Holy Spirit that is ever present as the heart and soul of the Church. We have to trust the Church most especially in all matters of faith and morals.

Jesus tells us in the Gospel of Matthew in chapter 7. *"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it."* Matthew 7:13-14.

Why is the gate narrow and the road difficult? The simple answer; we live in a sinful world. Left to ourselves we tend to take the easy route. Life is hard enough as it is; why not take the easy way? In many situations this is not always a bad thing. Why should we make life harder than it already is? However, when it comes to the most important thing in life, faith and morals, the easy route is not the answer. When in doubt we must check with the Church.

One of my favorite thinkers and writers, G. K. Chesterton, once said something that speaks to this point. *"We do*

not really want a religion that is right when we are right. What we really want is a religion that is right when we are wrong."

January 22nd is declared the *Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children*. Let us do our part as we pray for the genuine respect for the God-given gift of human life from the moment of conception until natural death.

Have a great week.

Father Ralko

Note Well: There will not be a morning mass on Friday, January 24th.

This week we pray Week II of the Liturgy of the hours.

Church Support

January 12, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$7,349.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$3,460.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	\$1,855.00
Weekly deficit	\$(3,400.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

*We pray for those who have died recently:
Langdon Jade Thomas*



IT'S CHILI NIGHT!
Join us Saturday, January 18th
after the 5:15 p.m. Mass.
Don't like chili?
We have potato soup too!
Donations are accepted for support
of future dinners and parish events.

PRE JORDAN

Pre Jordan will be held on **Tuesday, January 28 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Parish Office Building. The meeting is for parents, and godparents of infants and small children to be baptized. Please call Patty Boggs at 453- 0597 to register for the class.

First Communion Students and their parents are reminded to attend the **January 26th** meeting to be held at 12:00 p.m. in the Parish Social Hall (Church basement).

The Parish Office Chapel is open on Wednesdays for private prayer from 12:00 p.m. through 7:00 p.m. The Rosary will be recited at 6:00 p.m.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED
The Parish Office will be closed on Monday, January 19th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Register Now at www.columbuscatholicwomen.com for the early bird price of \$40 per person for the **Columbus Catholic Women's Conference** on Sat., Feb. 15, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Ohio Expo Center. Come rest in Jesus and join thousands of other women for inspiring speakers, Holy Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Adoration, food, shopping, faith and fellowship! Invite a friend or family member to join you. In the words of St. Ignatius Loyola, "Laugh and grow strong!" Ticket includes breakfast and lunch. Need help registering? Call the parish office! Scholarships are available. A bus will be leaving for the conference from St. Nicholas Church Parking Lot at 6:15 a.m. on Saturday, February 15th. Call the (740) 453-0597, ext. 14 to reserve your seat. The bus has been sponsored and is free. However, you must purchase a conference ticket.

CALLING ALL MEN!!!! Attend the Catholic Men's Conference on February 22, 2020 at the Columbus Expo Center - Kasich Hall. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. The event begins at 8:00 a.m. Join 3,500 men at the **2020 Men of God Conference** to hear from some of the most dynamic speakers around the country. Speakers include Bishop Robert Brennan, Jason Evert Founder of the Global Ministry, "Chastity Project"; and Head Football Coach at University of Cincinnati, Luke Fickell. Contact Mike Musselman for more information (740) 452-9806 or 297-0154 or register online at CatholicMensMinistry.com. We will be sharing a bus with St. Thomas for the Men's Conference this Year. The bus leaves from Saint Thomas Parish at 6:15 a.m.

Desire to spend time with Christ every day? The Church is open for private prayer and adoration of Christ in the Tabernacle; weekdays, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. until noon and Saturdays from noon until after the 5:15 p.m. Mass.

UNPLANNED

Join the respect life groups at St. Francis DeSales, Blessed Sacrament, and St. Edwards with partner Greater Columbus Right to Life for a special showing of "Unplanned" for the Licking County Community. There is no cost to attend. RSVP's are not required but will assist us with planning (and popcorn!)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH at 7:00 p.m.

**ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
JOHNSON HALL
40 GRANVILLE STREET
NEWARK, OH 43055**

The Catholic Foundation's Applications for Scholarships will open on January 31 and close March 2. Since 2007, The Catholic Foundation has awarded over \$825,000 in scholarships empowering over 150 young people to continue their academic and vocational studies. For more information and to apply, please visit www.catholic-foundation.org/scholarships. If you have any questions about our scholarship process please feel free to contact Dan Kurth, VP of Grants, at 614-443-8893 or dkurth@catholic-foundation.org.

2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

It is your responsibility to find a substitute if needed.

**January 26, 2020
3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Saturday, January 25 @ 5:15 p.m.

Cantor: Laura DeCoy
Lectors: Tom J. Pitcock, Adelaide Pitcock
Servers: Justin Ewart, Mason Harmon
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Laurie Harmon
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Margaret Kronenbitter, Don Susa
Eucharistic Ministers: Jim McKee, Karen Robinson, Dan Snider, Charlotte Snider

Sunday, January 26 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Sandy Black
Lector: Patti Logan, Susan Thompson
Servers: Libby Pratt, Luke Pratt
Eucharistic Minister- Coord: Mary Mirgon
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Angie Hustey, Jeff Hustey
Eucharistic Ministers: Susan Pratt, Dan Sylvester, Cheryl Sylvester, Joshua Wright

Sunday, January 26 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Sr. Bernadette Selinsky
Lectors: Stephanie Bridwell, Sam Palleschi
Servers: Thomas Bernath, Will Bernath
Eucharistic Minister - Coord: Carolyn Arnold
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Karen Hardman, Kevin McCarthy
Eucharistic Ministers: Mike Musselman, Larry Taylor, Gerald Tiberio, Claire Tiberio

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Praying the Rosary will resume in the St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. sometime in February. The exact date will be published in the bulletin.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, January 20, St. Fabian

8:00 a.m., Mass: Rita Petho, Church
Parish office closed

TUESDAY, January 21, St. Agnes

8:00 a.m., Mass: Clara Shumate, Church
9:30 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, January 22

8:10 a.m., School Mass: *Intention of Fr. James Walter*, Church
7:00 p.m., R.C.I.A., Parish Office

THURSDAY, January 23, St. Vincent

NO MASS

FRIDAY, January 24, St. Francis De Sales

NO MASS

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, January 25

4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Doug Davis, birthday, Church

SUNDAY, January 26

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church
9:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m., Religious Education, Bishop Fenwick
10:45 a.m., Mass: Tom Nash, anniversary, Church

Readings for Week of January 20

Mon.	1 Sm 15:16-23	Mk 2:18-22
Tues.	1 Sm 16:1-13	Mk 2:23-28
Wed	1 Sm 17:32-33, 37, 40-51	Mk 3:1-6
Thurs.	1 Sm 18:6-9; 19:1-7	Mk 3:7-12
Fri.	1 Sm 24:3-21	Mk 3:13-19
Sat.	Acts 22:3-16	Mk 16:15-18
Sun	Is 8:23-9:3	Mt 4:12-23

The book **Letter to a Suffering Church: A Bishop Speaks on the Sexual Abuse Crisis** by Bishop Robert Barron available for free. The books can be found near the doors of the church. Already have a copy? Please share this important information with friends and family. Bishop Barron also recorded a series of videos that correspond with the book. The videos can be found on our website: stnickparish.org.

INCOME TAX

If you would like to have a record of your donations to the Church for tax purposes, please fill in your envelope number, name and address or email and place it in the collection basket. A statement will be sent to you.

Envelope No. _____
 Name _____
 Address _____ or
 Email address _____