

# 12TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

## ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

First off, we would like to extend to all Fathers a "*Happy Father's Day*". May the good Lord continue to bless all our fathers in their vocation as husbands and fathers. Fatherhood is a life-long vocation: Once a father always a father. We pray for our fathers and ask God to continue to bless them with wisdom, love and courage as they nurture, guide, and protect their children; no matter how old their children may be!

Today we return to the Ordinary Time of the Liturgical Calendar for our Sunday readings. With that being said, we return to the Gospel of St. Matthew for our Sunday liturgies for the rest of the year. Coincidentally, we are currently reading from the Gospel of Matthew during the weekday masses, which we always do from the tenth to the twenty-first week in ordinary time. If anyone suggests that Catholics do not read the bible enough, we can only tell the truth that we are saturated with the Sacred Scriptures. We just have to show up for mass and we are exposed to a tremendous amount of the Scriptures for our daily prayer and reflection.

Two of the great themes of the Gospel of Matthew are the Messiah-King and the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven. These themes run right through the whole Gospel. Consider the beginning of St. Matthew. There is the announcement of the New-Born King of the Jews. The genealogy of Jesus is rooted in Abraham who received the Promise of God that he would be a father of a multitude of nations: his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. God would lead him to a Land (Kingdom): The Promised Land to be for him and his descendants. The genealogy runs through King David who received the Promise that his throne will last forever. We read how King Herod was threatened by the news of a "rival" king as the Magi who were searching for the New, Born King of the Jews paid him a courtesy visit. The whole beginning of the Gospel is filled with this royal announcement.

The beginning of Jesus' ministry is his announcement of repent; the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. He immediately proceeds to lay out the charter and the moral code of behavior for the Kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus then names his twelve apostles and is very straightforward about the opposition they will encounter on account of him and the Kingdom. The battle lines are drawn up as a curious tension rises between Jesus and the princes of this world. There is the ultimate battle line drawn up with the number one enemy of the Kingdom of Heaven: Satan.

The final battle looks like defeat for Jesus with his crucifixion. In reality, this is the victory of Jesus, the Messiah-King. It is the religious leaders in cooperation with Rome and the full force of the Roman army who easily crucify the King of the Jews. In the face of the world, Jesus is brutalized and defeated. He is buried and the grave is sealed with a Roman seal.

There is an interesting irony at the tomb of Jesus. I never considered this before but in Matthew's Gospel he alone notes that there are two guards stationed at the entrance of the tomb. The irony is that these two military guards are standing at the entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven as if they are guarding the King in his palace. The entrance into the eternal Kingdom of Heaven passes through the entrance of the tomb of Jesus. The whole thing is turned on its head and reversed. It is also through this same entrance that the resurrected Messiah-King bursts forth bringing his Kingdom into the world. Triumphantly the Resurrected King invites all to come to the life that only he can give in his Kingdom. In a strange way this is the narrow gate

through which we all must travel since we all must pass through death. As a Christian people we pass through the narrow way through Jesus Christ: The Shepherd and the gate.

The invitation to the Kingdom of Heaven is for all peoples and nations. It is for all people who are as numerous as the stars in the sky or the grains of sand at the seashore. All people are drawn to the Holy City, Jerusalem which is a light to the nations and the glory of Israel. In Jesus we receive the universal call of salvation, drawing all people and nations to Himself. Salvation is found in and through him.

During this past two weeks for the weekday masses we have been reading from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus lays out what is expected of those who follow him. He presents the commandments forbidding killing, adultery, making false oaths... Jesus challenges his followers to go beyond the letter of the law. He challenges the human heart that harbors hate. He presses to the heart that entertains lust. He challenges the heart that is not honest and truthful. The commandments all of a sudden become more difficult: they go beyond the mere actions.

Jesus presses his follower to go beyond mere human justice which is based on "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". Jesus expects generosity where his followers give more than is expected. Jesus' followers are to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. Jesus is pressing us to go beyond, because the love of God goes beyond human love.

There is a little saying that captures the challenge of loving our enemies... "If you love those who love you, your reward is an increase in *their* love. If you love those who hate you, your reward is an increase in *God's* love." This is what we desire, the love of God that transforms our lives. This is a foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven.

In this same passage in which Jesus tells us to love our enemies and to pray for our persecutors, Jesus also tells us to *be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*. Another thing that I had not considered when preparing my thoughts for this passage (last Tuesday) was that there are two ways of looking at perfection: Greek and Hebrew philosophical thought. We are heavily influenced by Greek philosophy. The Greek ideal of *perfection* is to have no deficiencies, no faults, no flaws or shortcomings. In following this train of thought we strive to grow in perfection. We strive to measure up to some benchmark or standard of perfection. We see this in athletic competitions, academics, in various skills and talents. We compete; we try to measure up: to be flawless. However, when it comes to being perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect, we can easily get discouraged because we are doomed to failure since it will never happen. We are beset by flaws, shortcomings, weakness, misunderstandings and the passage of time that constantly wears us out. We get worn out, exhausted and eventually defeated.

However, the Hebrew thought is quite different. In this mindset, to be perfect means simply to *walk with God*, in spite of the fact that we are not perfectly good, beautiful or efficient. We have heard this injunction in the Old Testament... "*Be humble and walk with your God*". This mindset takes into account our human condition that has the desire for perfection, a desire for God. It reminds us that we will always be imperfect and flawed in this world. However, it also reminds us that we must be humble before God who alone is our strength.

The difficulty with the Greek mindset is that in our striving we are tempted to become proud of our accomplishments and our climbing in perfection. We try to measure ourselves against others. In our striving we pray that God will make it happen. It becomes more difficult to be humble and that usually happens only when we have been humiliated by failure.

Yes, we are human, and competition is important because it makes us to put our talents, skills, intelligence to good use. But the downside is that we have to expend more energy in contemplating our humble relationship with God in prayer. We need to implement the classical Hebrew idea of walking humbly with God and open our lives to His grace. God's love is there in abundance and flows generously upon us. However, we must draw close to God; walking humbly with Him in prayer and reflection availing our minds and hearts to that generous flow of grace. In a nutshell, we need both points of view.

This is a foretaste of the Heavenly Kingdom here and now. The Kingdom of Heaven is the eternal embrace in the love of God. It is a love that we cannot earn but only receive. It is a love that perfects our lives. It is a love that is most dramatically revealed on Mount Calvary in the love that is revealed in our Messiah-King. A love that is undeserved yet available to the heart that is humble before God. Thus, we strive to grow in perfection by living live a life worthy of this gift from God which is wonderfully available to us if we walk humbly with our God.

This is the perfect love of God. Let us draw closer to the cross and contemplate the love of God that transforms our lives in His perfection.

Have a Great Week  
Father Ralko



**This week we pray Week IV of the Liturgy of the hours.**

## Church Support

June 14, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$5,273.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$1,384.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly deficit	\$(5,476.00)

**May God bless you for supporting your parish!**

### Mass in Extraordinary Form

St. Ann, Dresden, is hosting the Traditional Latin High Mass on the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, June 24 at 7:00 p.m. Please plan to attend and give glory to Our Lord Jesus Christ in this "Tridentine" form of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.



# Happy Father's Day!

## A Prayer for Christian Fathers

Heavenly Father,  
you entrusted your Son Jesus,  
the child of Mary,  
to the care of Joseph, an earthly father.  
Bless all fathers  
as they care for their families.  
Give them strength and wisdom,  
tenderness and patience;  
support them in the work they have to do,  
protecting those who look to them,  
as we look to you for love and salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our rock and defender.

Amen.

- Author Unknown

### "WANTED" Girls Basketball JV Coach

Bishop Rosecrans High School (Zanesville, OH). Is seeking an Assistant Varsity/JV girls' basketball coach. Interested candidates should submit letter of interest, resume, and references to Head Basketball Coach, Vince Tolson at vtolsonus@yahoo

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** – Confessions are currently by appointment only.

**Please do not use the cry room unless absolutely necessary.**

The room is too small to afford social distancing and should only be used on a very limited basis. Thank you.

With the return to Church, **Baptisms** can now be scheduled. Pre-Jordan classes will be scheduled individually. Please call the office to schedule both Pre-Jordan classes and Baptisms. (740) 453-0597, ext. 14.

During this time when we do not have the **Music Issues** available for use, each Sunday's songs will be posted on the St. Nicholas website for you to download to your phones and sing from your phones during Mass, or even print them off for yourself. These are options to help you participate and praise God in song as fully as possible during these uncertain times.

Next week, we will take up the **Peter's Pence Collection**, which provides Pope Francis with the funds 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. Please be generous. For more information, visit [www.usccb.org/peters-pence](http://www.usccb.org/peters-pence).

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## ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. It provides a much-needed consistency for our church. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office for a brief form to fill out.

## **BISHOP ROSECRANS HIGH SCHOOL/ BISHOP FENWICK SCHOOL SCRIP PROGRAM**

Gift cards in our SCRIP program at Bishop Rosecrans High School and Bishop Fenwick Schools can still be purchased. As of now, any special SCRIP orders will be ordered on Monday's. SCRIP is still being sold from inventory. If you would like to purchase SCRIP at any time or need information about our program, please email Julie Wagner or call the school office at (740) 452-7504. A time will be arranged for the gift cards to be picked up.

You don't even have to purchase the physical cards!! Go to shopwithscrip.com and set up an account to purchase ecards that will automatically be downloaded to my wallet in your account where the gift cards can be used from your phone or can be printed for future use. If you have already purchased a physical card from our SCRIP program, you can reload the card as many times online and still earn the percentage towards tuition.

*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.**

*St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel is open to pray the Rosary on Monday at 2:00 p.m. for anyone who would like to participate.*

## *What's Happening in Our Parish*

### MONDAY, June 22, St. Paulinus of Nola

9:00 a.m., Mass: Michael Paul, Church

### TUESDAY, June 23

9:00 a.m., Mass: Pauline Davis and Doug Davis, Church

### WEDNESDAY, June 24, The Nativity of

#### St. John the Baptist

9:00 a.m., Mass: Mary Lou Wagner, Church

### THURSDAY, June 25

9:00 a.m., Mass: Pastor's Intention, Church

### FRIDAY, June 26

9:00 a.m., Mass: Thomas Trott, Church

## *13<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time*

### SATURDAY, June 27, St. Cyril of Alexandria

5:15 p.m., Mass: Deacon Gene Staker, birthday, Church

### SUNDAY, June 28

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

10:45 a.m., Mass: Ray Andrews, Church

## *Readings for Week of June 22*

Mon. . . . .	2 Kgs 17:5-8, 13-15a, 18	Mt 7:1-5
Tues. . . . .	2 Kgs 19:9b- 11, 14-21, 31- 35a, 36	Mt 7:6, 12-14
Wed . . . . .	Is 49:1-6	Lk 1:57-66, 80
Thurs. . . . .	2 Kgs 24:8-17	Mt 7:21-29
Fri. . . . .	2 Kgs 25:1-12	Mt 8:1-4
Sat. . . . .	Lam 2:2, 10- 14, 18-19	Mt 8:5-17
Sun . . . . .	2 Kgs 4:8-11, 14-16a	Mt 10:37-42

