

15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

No need to tell you that we are in a strange time in our history. With everything in a state of chaos it is very difficult to make plans. We are indeed making plans, but it is always with caution: the possibility of cancellations etc. As for now we are still on for our substitute for the parish festival with the St. Nicholas Family Fun Night. Things are coming together as I write this column. I have heard from several people telling me that this is a good idea. We need to have a chance to get together even if it is only briefly.

Our plans for the Vacation Bible School are coming along. We have several people volunteering which is good to see and very positive. I think it is great for our children to get together for some fun and some Biblical/spiritual education. Say a prayer for a successful VBS.

Plans are coming along for the beginning of the school year. So far it is looking good. There has been a great deal of planning and work invested in getting the school year off the ground. We are excited to make this happen. As we prepare for the opening of the new school year, we are also aware that there will be few glitches. Everyone has their own idea as to how things should go etc. Just the same, hopefully our school families will be patient, understanding and flexible as we get this thing started. Again, a thoughtful prayer for success as we get ready for a new school year would be greatly appreciated.

I know there are a few questions concerning our First Reconciliation/First Communion class and our Confirmation candidates. Without knowing what is on the horizon thus far we are still in a holding pattern, especially concerning Confirmation. Confirmation depends on what the Bishop has in mind and what he will decide needs to be done. So, in the meantime we remain in the present wait and see mode. Again, it is so hard to make plans.

There is one thing that I do find to be a source of consistent and a stabilizing strength: The Gospel of St. Matthew. As I have noted before, we are in the Sunday Mass cycle for reading the Gospel of Matthew throughout the year. Secondly, for the weekday masses we are in a stretch of reading from Matthew. In other words, we are getting a double exposure to Matthew. Thus, it has been a good source for spiritual reading, reflection and insight. This is a stabilizing element especially during these turbulent days. Our faith is the stabilizing part of our lives.

Having read the famous Sermon on the Mount we read about Jesus performing miracles and teaching as he goes along. He calls his disciples and then appoints twelve apostles and gives them direct instructions. The expectation placed upon the apostles leaves no wiggle room or half-hearted commitment. They must dedicate their full lives to him. It almost sounds harsh and unreasonable... *"If you love mother or father more than me you are not worthy of me..."* Jesus does not fool around. Apostleship demands total dedication. This is an act of faith on the part of the Apostles. Once that is in place everything else falls into proper order. It does not mean not to love mother and father. Yes, love them. To love the Lord first does not demean mother and father; in fact, their love for mother and father becomes purer: properly order.

This must be. The Apostles are now to follow Jesus closely. They are to learn from him by listening and watching all that he does. This is intense training. Apostleship cannot take place in a few hours a day etc. It is around the clock sort of business. The Apostle learns more during the so called "off time" than in direct teaching. It is during those relaxed times, casual

conversations and unguarded moments, that the truth of Jesus and all that they learned manifests itself. It is important for the Apostles to be with and see Jesus throughout the days and weeks. It is an intense learning time. Being with Jesus all the time has a way of seeing the constant and consistent way of life of Jesus Christ.

I mention this because it is not something that we are accustomed to. We expect the student to spend time in class and learn all they need to know. Then go home with some homework: maybe. Even when it comes to internships, we expect to have some "down time" for ourselves; away from instructors and classmates. Anything else seems unreasonable. This may be true to extent. Yet a mere job may not be the most important aspect of someone's life.

However, if one wants to be like the teacher, this requires more time: formal and informal. As the gospel tells us, the student is not superior to the teacher, but when completed the student will be on a par with the teacher. Nothing else will satisfy.

I think this is the subtle difference between an Apostle and a Disciple. Both have the same passion and goal: to be more like the teacher. In this case, it is to be more like Jesus Christ. I do think there is a greater responsibility placed upon the Apostles. They are the first and most important witnesses. Everyone will look to them. In our modern-day church, the successors to the Apostles are the Pope and the College of the Bishops. We look up to them and need their witness. We can also agree that they have great responsibilities because of their calling to devote their entire lives in witness to Jesus Christ.

We are aware that we are not all called to be Apostles as such. We can share in their ministry, but we still depend on them so that we are able to grow as Disciples of Jesus Christ. In this world we cannot drop everything and follow Jesus in the same way as our Bishops, Priests and Religious. However, we do depend on them to help us listen and live the teachings of Jesus Christ. As Christians we want to be more Christ-like and we must do this in the world where we find that we have many responsibilities. And even in our world of responsibilities we are still called to Love God above all else. For this we need examples that teach and reveal this love in our lives. Again, this is the responsibility of the Apostles and their successors. As Disciples we share in their witness in our everyday lives.

It was necessary for Jesus to have such faithful followers, the Apostles, because they are the witnesses of all that Jesus said and did. Their credibility as witnesses is essential to pass on the faith. Although they remain human, it is the grace of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit that gives them the necessary strength to witness to Jesus Christ for others. We pray for them because they are human after all. We also depend on them to strengthen us in our faith that we too may share in their ministry of credibly sharing the faith.

We all have a task of listening to the Word of God (Jesus Christ) and learning from him. We also need to spend time not only in listening but in living in imitation of Christ. The call to discipleship is for all of us. Our lives will benefit from this as well as those around us.

This Sunday we will be reading the parable of the "Sower and the Seed". The seed, the Word of God, is scattered generously everywhere. It lands on the foot path, rocky ground, among the thorns and thistles as well as the fertile soil. The Word of God is generously given to all. Although the Word is given generously, we have another gift from God that is called Free Will. We have Freedom. That means that we can receive it, reject it or be indifferent to the Word. As the Word is generously

made available to all people God does not force it upon us. We have Free Will in this matter. We can be shallow or lukewarm about receiving the Word. We can also clutter up our lives with many other things or people and leave no room for the Word of God. Or we can freely open our lives and receive the Word of God with loving and welcoming hearts. It is then that it has the greatest power to transform our lives and properly order our lives in this world.

Have a great week.
Father Ralko

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

*We pray for those who have died recently:
Dixie Cherrington Kreissl and
Mary Lemon*

SAVE THE DATE



RECONNECT WITH YOUR PARISH FAMILY

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2020

4:00 P.M.- 11:00 P.M.

behind Bishop Fenwick School

**Join us for a Fun Night of Food,
Fellowship,
Games & Entertainment!!**

Watch the bulletin and stnickparish.org for more details in the coming weeks!

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO MAKE THIS EVENING A SUCCESS! PLEASE CALL THE PARISH OFFICE TO SIGN UP!

Bishop's Annual Appeal

Bishop's Annual Appeal Kick-off weekend is this weekend. Envelopes can be found at the end of the pews. Please consider giving to this year's Appeal. To make your gift, you may submit a pledge envelope or go online columbuscatholicgiving.org to make a secure online pledge or gift. With your support, if we exceed our Parish goal, the overage will be returned to our Parish for our unique needs.

Church Support

July 05, 2020

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| OFFERTORY | \$6,717.00 |
| Diocesan Tax | \$(770.00) |
| Fenwick Subsidy | \$(2,635.00) |
| Rosecrans subsidy | \$(485.00) |
| Available for Parish Operations | \$2,828.00 |
| Parish Operating Expenses | \$(7,825.00) |
| Religious Education Expenses | \$(890.00) |
| Other Income | \$1,855.00 |
| Weekly deficit | \$(4,032.00) |

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Volunteers Needed! Vacation Bible School will be held the week of Monday, July 27th through July 31st. If you would like to help with this year's Vacation Bible School, please call the parish office. Many hands make light work!

"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

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.



Cat.Chat Vacation Bible School is coming to a Catholic Church near you!

Come along as we learn about the...

MARVELOUS MYSTERY
The Mass Comes Alive

Who: Kids ages 4 to 11

Where: St. Nicholas Church Activity Center & Church

Time: 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. daily

Registration Deadline: July 22nd!

When: July 27th – 31st

Cost: Free – Donations accepted

Contact: Patty – (740) 453-0597

Music! Games! Faith! Snacks! Crafts! ...and More!

“The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word but then the cares of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit.” - MATTHEW 13:22

15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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 or our website: stnickparish.org.

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 as you like online and still earn the percentage towards tuition.



What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, July 13, St. Henry

9:00 a.m., Mass: Florence Schoeppner, Church

TUESDAY, July 14, St. Kateri

9:00 a.m., Mass: Tom Nash, Church

WEDNESDAY, July 15, St. Bonaventure

9:00 a.m., Mass: Ned Englehart, Church

THURSDAY, July 16, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

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

FRIDAY, July 17

9:00 a.m., Mass: Dan Rapol, Church

16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, July 18, St. Camillus de Lellis

2:30 p.m., Wedding: Mara Long and Ethan Rothacher, Church

4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church

5:15 p.m., Mass: Emma Barry, Church

SUNDAY, July 19

8:15 a.m., Mass: Joy Larson, Church

10:45 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

Readings for Week of July 13

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|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Mon. | Is 1:10-17 | Mt 10:34-11:1 |
| Tues. | Is 7:1-9 | Mt 11:20-24 |
| Wed | Is 10:5-7, 13b-16 | Mt 11:25-27 |
| Thurs. | Is 26:7-9, 12, 16-19 | Mt 11:28-30 |
| Fri. | Is 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8 | Mt 12:1-8 |
| Sat. | Mi 2:1-5 | Mt 12:14-21 |
| Sun | Wis 12:13, 16-19 | Mt 13:1-23 |

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.