

18TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Today we celebrate the 18th Sunday in ordinary time and continue reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew for our Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. This week we are reading St. Matthew's version of Jesus feeding the multitude with five loaves and two fish. We are also reading from St. Matthew's Gospel for our weekday Masses. At this point we are doing a great deal of overlapping with the Parables of the Kingdom section of Matthew. With this overlapping we get a real saturation with Matthew which in reality is not a bad thing.

Leading up to this passage about the feeding of the multitude with five loaves and two fish, is the story about the death of St. John the Baptist. King Herod had John beheaded in prison because of a foolish promise he made to the daughter of his present wife Herodias. A tragic vow made in front of many witnesses. This sad news was reported to Jesus who immediately withdrew in a boat to a deserted place to be away from the crowds. It is a touching and a very human thing for Jesus to want to be alone to absorb this devastating news. Such events call for some time for solitude and prayer. He is also aware that the times are getting serious about his own life and mission. Things are going to get intense.

When word got out that Jesus and his disciples were going across the Sea of Galilee to find a quiet place to rest and pray the people went in search of him. Instead of finding a quiet place to be alone upon his arrival Jesus was met with a large crowd. In his saddened condition and in need of some compassion Jesus was moved to greater compassion for the crowd. They were like sheep without a shepherd: they were in need. He taught them and cured their sick. As evening drew near his disciples approached him and said he should dismiss the crowd so they could go to the villages and buy themselves something to eat. Jesus told his disciples that this was not necessary and that they should give them something to eat themselves. They responded that they only had five loaves and two fish. The disciples were in need; all they had was woefully inadequate for themselves much less for the crowd! Nevertheless, at his prompting, they gave the five loaves and two fish to Jesus and he miraculously feeds the crowd of five thousand, plus with the five loaves and two fish. To put an exclamation, point on this miracle they collected twelve baskets from what was left over.

Jesus was in sorrow over the death of John the Baptist. In his humanity, Jesus was deeply in touch with the deepest sadness, emptiness and longing of all humanity. Yet Jesus reveals an important lesson for us when we find that we are in such situations. Always respond with goodness and compassion especially when we find we are in need of goodness and compassion. It is especially during those times when we are at our lowest, we need to be gracious. This is when graciousness counts the most, when times are challenging. This is when generosity is most important, especially when we find it most difficult or unreasonable. It is then that it makes all the difference and has the greatest impact. When we give to and through Jesus it is multiplied beyond our imagination. Besides, everything already belongs to him: he is the Word through whom all things were created. When we offer to him what little we think we need, he receives it and returns it to us in abundance. Again, everything belongs to him.

Trouble and problems begin when humans give into the temptation of believing that we are the masters of all that we have. We forget that we are only caretakers or stewards of God's creation. We forget that all is a gift from God. This is our

Christian view of life. However human beings are often tempted to be possessive. This is the effect of original sin on humanity; we tend to be selfish and self-centered. Sure, we work hard for all that we have earned; and we need to be thankful for the fruits of our labors. There is always a temptation through the investment of our hard work and possessions that we become selfish with all that we have. We forget our role as stewards and that everything belongs to God and that we have been blessed with many good things. We are to be thankful for all we have and try to be good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us. We come into the world with nothing and we will leave this world with nothing. If we develop a possessive attitude we are flirting with materialism. Materialism creates a false sense of security since we let temporal goods control our lives. We lose our humanity when we are controlled by things. Jesus shows us the way to grow in the image and likeness of God, becoming genuinely good human beings.

The disciples are learning this lesson. It is hinted at by the way they were holding on to what little they had. They were saving the fish and the loaves for themselves. The thought of sharing what little they had did not cross their minds. Such a gesture would leave them with nothing and make their situation worse. Nevertheless, Jesus invited them to share what little they had by giving the loaves and fish to him. It was a great act of charity. They were asked to give to him out of their "poverty": from their need. Jesus had spent all this time with them and already knew that they did not have enough to feed even themselves. By worldly standards they did not have enough to offer the people. It was a frightening request for them to hand over to Jesus what little they had. With this act of surrender to Jesus the door was opened for Jesus to reveal that he would provide for those who turn to him in their need. For his disciples this was a lesson for them to learn to trust Jesus in all things. It is an act of faith in Jesus especially when he invites them to trust him when they have little or nothing to give. Jesus clearly works through his disciples in ways that they can never fully understand. Jesus works through them especially when they are totally empty and open to him. They only need to put their faith in Him. It is the simplest thing but the hardest to do. In worldly terms it is counterintuitive.

We are called to be people of faith. This is most important when things are not going well. It is particularly difficult when we feel empty and weak. In the same way we are to be people practicing the virtue of love. This is especially important when we find it most difficult with people and situations that would dictate otherwise. It is only during these times that it matters the most. Left to ourselves we are woefully inadequate in these virtues: we only have five loaves and two fish! But the good news is that we need to give it all to Jesus. Pressed a little further, we need to hand over our woefully inadequate and weak faith, hope and love. Jesus wants our faith, hope and love. Only Jesus can multiply what we give to him. It is then that we can give to others and have plenty left over. Jesus Christ is not only Lord of all creation; he is Lord of our lives. If we let him, he will work through our lives and pour out his blessing through the conduit of our lives.

Have a blessed week.

Father Ralko

Note Well: The Bishop's Annual Appeal is continuing. If you have not done so by now, please pick up an envelope in church and make your response. Thank You.



THANK YOU!!!



TO OUR SPONSORS, DONORS, TO ALL WHO ATTENDED AND ESPECIALLY TO OUR VOLUNTEERS! SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

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

*We pray for those who have died recently:
Linda K. Davis*

CHANGE IN OFFICE HOURS

Beginning Monday, July 27, our office hours will be Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. and Friday 8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.



I would like to thank EVERYONE who helped in anyway with this year's Vacation Bible School! It was a tremendous success with 30 children in attendance! Here's hoping next year will be even bigger and better! God Bless, Patty Boggs

We are pleased thus far with the response to the **Bishop's Annual Appeal**, but there are still some parishioners who have not yet returned a pledge envelope. We urge you to prayerfully consider a gift in support of the programs and ministries available through our diocese, many of which benefit the good people of our parish. Our hope is to have 100% participation. No gift is too small, and our parish will receive any amount over our goal. Pledge envelopes are available in the pews. Thank you for your generosity.

Church Support

July 19, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$6,346.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$2,457.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	\$1,855.00
Weekly deficit	\$(4,403.00)



May God bless you for supporting your parish!

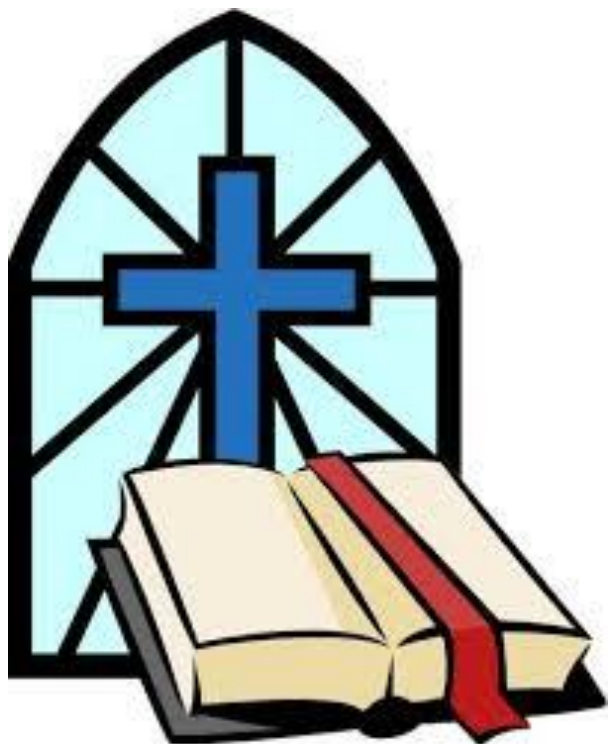
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ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

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 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.



What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, August 3

9:00 a.m., Mass: *Mary Baughman, Church*

TUESDAY, August 4, St. John Vianney

9:00 a.m., Mass: *Emma Barry, birthday, Church*

WEDNESDAY, August 5, The Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major

9:00 a.m., Mass: *Dixie Kreissl, Church*

THURSDAY, August 6, The Transfiguration of The Lord

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

FRIDAY, August 7, St. Sixtus II, Pope

9:00 a.m., Mass: *F. Paul Nestor, Church*

9:30-4:00 p.m., *First Friday Eucharistic Adoration*

19th Sunday of Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, August 8, St. Dominic

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

5:15 p.m., Mass: *Dan Rapol, Church*

SUNDAY, August 9

8:15 a.m., Mass: *Chuck Durant, Sr., Church*

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

Readings for Week of August 3

Mon.	Jer 28:1-17	Mt 24:22-36
Tues.	Jer 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22	Mt 14:22-36
Wed	Jer 31:1-7	Mt 15:21-28
Thurs.	Dn 7:9-10, 13-14	Mt 17:1-9
Fri.	Na 2:1, 3; 3:1-3, 6-7	Mt 16:24-28
Sat.	Hb 1:12-2:4	Mt 17:14-20
Sun	Kgs 19:9a	Mt 14:22-33

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.