

28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

From the Pastor's Desk

Over the last couple of weeks our Gospel passages from St. Matthew have been about images of the Kingdom of Heaven; a theme that we continue with on this 28th Sunday of Ordinary Time. At the very beginning of Jesus' public ministry, we hear the proclamation of the Kingdom of Heaven. "*Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*" Mt 4:17. This is the first address of Jesus and we hear his reference to it thirty times throughout the gospel. In the gospels of Mark and Luke we hear the words "*Kingdom of God.*" Scripture scholars agree that these terms are equivalent.

At the heart of this teaching is the notion that God is now establishing his kingship over the world through His Son the Messiah. With his presence Jesus is proclaiming the presence of heaven on earth. Heaven is the dwelling place of God. Heaven is the place from which Jesus has come from the Father. The kingdom of heaven is now being established on earth. The presence of the kingdom of heaven on earth is attributed to the presence of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the one who comes down from heaven revealing the establishment of the kingdom for those who do the will of God on earth. Jesus is the first to fulfill the will of the Father on earth. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. We pray this in the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus reveals the kingdom of heaven in his words and actions. His Word is the seed that is planted in the world. There is a hidden power in the word that grows and influences us and God's creation. Through his word we are challenge to grow in our knowledge, our love and serve to God in this world. The Word challenges us to live ethically bringing the goodness of God into the world. It is a Word that gathers us together in humility and forgiveness. It is a word that helps us set our eyes on the fullness of the Kingdom coming at the end of time.

The miracles performed by Jesus are signs of the presence of the kingdom. All creation, as we read in the beginning of Genesis, comes about when God speaks the Word and creation comes to be. Humanity and all creation are damaged by the sin of Adam and Eve. Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, through whom all things came to be, has come to restore and heal God's creation. Miracles are signs of the restoration of creation which will be in its fullness at the end of time. The kingdom of heaven is here now. However, we await its fullness at the final coming of the Lord Jesus Christ the King of Creation.

The kingdom of heaven is present here and now. It is only when Jesus comes again that the full splendor of the kingdom will be revealed. This event will conclude with the final judgment, when Jesus will grant eternal life in the kingdom to his faithful followers. Thus we get to the point from today's passage from Matthew. As we await the full splendor of the kingdom we have to live in the here and now in a manner worthy of the kingdom.

Here is the manner of our lives. The kingdom of heaven is God's way of ordering things. Jesus' own life in his preaching and manner of life gives us a very good idea of what this kingdom would look like in this world. The characteristics are those of the "fruits of the Holy Spirit". In this sinful world we see patience, forgiveness, nonviolence, generosity, compassion, joy, unity and harmony to name just a few. These are telltale signs of the kingdom of heaven is present in the world. It is not perfect, but it all points to the ultimate fulfillment at the end of time.

When we speak of the kingdom of heaven, we are not speaking of one kingdom among many others. It is not a kingdom in conflict with others. It is a kingdom that is welcomed which enhances our world no matter what kingdom appears to be in charge. The kingdom of heaven, because of its characteristic signs should be welcomed by all people. Who would not want greater patience, peace, harmony, generosity, kindness etc.? These are genuinely good human traits. They are good for humanity. They are good for all societies and human persons.

Yet we look at our world and see that these wonderful characteristics are lacking in so many ways. We live in an imperfect world that is touched by sin.

Our gospel passage for today from Matthew chapter 21 gives us an insight into a couple aspects that prevent the kingdom from being manifested in this world. As told in the parable of the Marriage Feast, we find the Master (God) who has a marriage feast prepared for his invited guests. God offers us heaven and invites us to join him in this heavenly banquet. "Who wants to go to heaven?" We respond "Yes". But we have so many other things that we would rather think about and do, so we just say yes and don't give it a second thought. When the time comes to attend the banquet, we are not prepared scramble about pursuing something else. The marriage feast will be filled in with others who, though not invited and had no idea that there was a feast being prepared, will graciously accept and attend.

Jesus warned the Scribes, Pharisees, Chief Priests and Elders, who know of the feast and invitation who have not taken it seriously. They were told that those who did not know of the feast nor were invited like they were, the tax collectors and prostitutes, will enter the kingdom before they do. The thought here is that we are invited. We need to keep the invitation in our mind and live in a manner that reflects that we have taken God's invitation to heart. We do not know the time when the invitation will come, the moment of our death, yet we need to be living in a manner that we want to go to the feast: heaven.

The one individual, who entered but did not have a wedding garment and was kicked out of the feast, is a cause for our reflection. He was not prepared. We could say that he did not live in a manner worthy of the invitation. When invited nothing changed about his manner. This is the one who did things in his own way. I will go to the marriage feast on my terms. I will not change anything about myself. The garment that he wore was that of his worldly life. It is the garment of the sinful self. Long story made short; he did not want to change anything about himself. His remained unchanged by the invitation of God. There was no thankful or respectful expression in the man for the Master and his son.

"*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*" Ultimately the manner of our lives is to live God's will not our will. We enter the kingdom of heaven on God's terms. These terms are about our goodness. Jesus reminds us that the desire of God is that all should be saved and come to the marriage feast. The marriage feast is heaven. The invitation, which we have received as followers of Jesus, is not to be ignored or rejected. It must be cherished in our minds and hearts. The invitation and the feast are real and are freely given. It is not forced upon any of us. Our response must be freely given. Our response needs to be reflected in the manner of our lives with thankfulness and joy. Living God's will is an act of trust that God has our best interests at heart. Living God's will is living in the kingdom of heaven here and now with our hearts set on the fullness of the kingdom at the end of time.

Have a blessed week.
Father Ralko

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

Church Support

October 4, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$13,672.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$9,783.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	\$1,855.00
Weekly surplus	\$2,923.00

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

*The altar flowers this weekend are in memory
of the wedding anniversary of*



Gene & Marilou (Tice) Ehleiter

Youth Ministry News:

Catalyst Nights – Students grades 7-12 are invited to a Catalyst Night at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in the activity center on Sunday, October 11th at 6:00 p.m. The evening is led by the National Evangelization Team (NET), college age missionaries. The night includes dinner, presentations, games, skits, prayer, friends and fun. The event is free, and registration is encouraged. Parents can register their students at the door or download the registration form found at <https://stnickparish.org/get-the-latest>

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Mt. Olive Cemetery has a part time position available. Duties would include mowing, weed eating, helping to open and close graves, help pouring footers for headstones and snow removal. If interested, please call the Parish Office at 453-0597.

“MONTH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY”

Please join St. Nicholas parishioners before each Mass during the month of October to pray the Rosary. Come 20 minutes early to Mass to pray!! There will be packets with a rosary and pamphlet on 'How to Pray the Rosary' in each pew. They are free to take, as all are encouraged to pray the Rosary daily. (replaces the current announcement)

SEPTEMBER BOOSTER MANIA WINNERS

\$25- Chris Nash, Charlie White, Dee Ginikos, Jen Middaugh, Mary Ann Nash and Karen Millward

ROSARY RALLY 2020

Come and join us for the celebration of “Our Lady of Fatima’s apparitions” to be held **Sunday Oct. 11** from 1:30p.m.-3:30 p.m. in front of the Muskingum County Courthouse esplanade. Please be there between 1:00-1:30. Bring your rosaries and a chair. For further information, please contact: Patty Schmutz at 452-3369, Carol Fluharty at 704-6477 or Margaret Kronenbitter at 221-0813.

2020 ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH BAZAAR

The parish bazaar for 2020 is cancelled. We hope to see everyone in 2021.

Interested in learning more about the Catholic Faith?

The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) is a great opportunity to discern God's call and mission for our lives, and an opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith. Persons who attend RCIA include current Catholics who desire to go deeper into their faith, spouses of Catholics who want to learn more about what the church teaches, and inquirers who are just curious; as well as those who have made that decision to join the church. All are welcome! CLASSES ARE HELD ON WEDNESDAYS AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE PARISH OFFICE. If you would like to join us, please call the office (740) 453-0597, ext. 14. (replaces the current announcement)

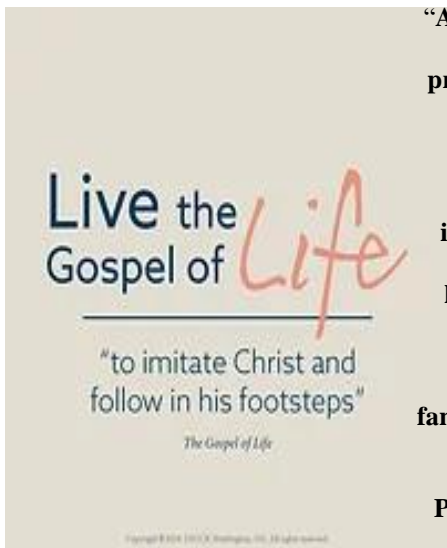
Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) is a Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition program for men and women who experienced the trauma of being raised in an alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional home. It is a safe place to learn how alcoholism and other family dysfunction affected the past, how it influences the present, and how to heal the wounds for a better future. Meetings will be held in the Saint Nicholas Church Social Hall (Church Basement) Wednesdays, beginning October 14th, at 7:00 p.m. Please use the Silliman Street door. Meetings are expected to last no more than one hour, and masks are required. Contact James Sullivan for more Information at (740) 670 –2959.

Jubilee of Anniversaries Celebrates Marriages with Mass on October 25, 2020 -- Couples celebrating their 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, 55th, 60th (and every year thereafter) anniversaries in 2020 are invited to the annual Jubilee of Anniversaries in honor of their marriages! Bishop Robert Brennan will celebrate Mass at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, October 25, at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Westerville. The Jubilee Mass will also be livestreamed for couples who prefer to attend virtually. All registered couples, whether attending or not, will receive a personalized certificate. Couples who R.S.V.P. by Wednesday, October 14, will be included in the Mass worship aid and The Catholic Times. Visit columbuscatholic.org/marriage-enrichment.

Building a Culture of Life Series is October, Respect Life Month. Join us for an extraordinary virtual series. Topics include Raising the Next Pro-Life Generation, Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service, Making End of Life Decisions, and a Respect Life Mass celebrated by Bishop Brennan. Sponsored by the diocesan Office for Social Concerns, Marriage & Family Life Office, and Greater Columbus Right to Life. No Cost. To register and for speaker details go to www.bclclife.

“My God will supply whatever you need...” - Philippians 4:19

28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



"A great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world. Through special initiatives and in daily prayer, may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family and from the heart of every believer."

Pope Saint John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae*, 100

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. 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 something prevents 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.

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.

Please join us each Monday at The St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. as we gather to pray the Rosary asking Our Lady's Intercession for the many needs of our nation, community, and parish.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, October 12

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Rita Greiner*, Church
2:00 p.m., Rosary: Parish Office

TUESDAY, October 13

9:00 a.m., Mass: *St. Thomas Intention*, Church
[*St. Nicholas Intention, Lois Shiplett*]

WEDNESDAY, October 14, St. Callistus, I, pope

9:00 a.m., School Mass: *Mary Lou Wagner, birthday*, Church
7:00 p.m., RCIA: Parish Office
7:00 p.m., Adult Children of Alcoholics: Church Basement

THURSDAY, October 15, St. Teresa of Jesus

8:00 a.m., Mass: *St. Thomas Intention*, Church

FRIDAY, October 16, St. Hedwig

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Agnes Jalbrzikowski*, Church

28th Sunday of Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, October 17, St. Ignatius of Antioch

11:00 a.m. & 4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: *L/D members of the Harsh & Schmutz Families*, Church

SUNDAY, October 18

8:15 a.m., Mass: *St. Nicholas Parishioners*, Church
9:15 a.m., Sunday School: Parish Office
10:45 a.m., Mass: *Bill Sullivan Sr., birthday*, Church
2:00 p.m., 2020 Confirmation Students Reboot Class: Parish Office

Readings for Week of October 12

Mon.	Gal 4:22-24, 26-27, 31-5:1	Lk 11:29-32
Tues.	Gal 5:1-6	Lk 11:37-41
Wed	Gal 5:18-25	Lk 11:42-46
Thurs.	Eph 1:1-10	Lk 11:47-54
Fri.	Eph 1:11-14	Lk 12:1-7
Sat.	Eph 1:15-23	Lk 12:8-12
Sun	Is 45:1, 4-6	Mt 22:15-21

Cantor Schedule Oct. 17 & 18: (29th Sun. in Ord. Time)

5:15 Choir-Kevin McCarthy
8:15 Janet Moses
10:45 Sr. Bernadette Selinsky
***Rosary before Mass