

# FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

From the Pastor's Desk

This weekend we welcome Bishop Robert Brennan to our Catholic Community as he will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation for our young adults. For the last several years we have joined together with St. Thomas for the Sacrament of Confirmation. So, we welcome their young adults as we move to understanding ourselves as the Catholic Community of Zanesville. Unfortunately, last year we were unable to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation because of the pandemic. This year's class will be joined with several of last year's class for this celebration. Joyfully we will have close to fifty to receive the sacrament. Our thoughtful prayers and best wishes are with our young adults as they prepare themselves for the reception of this important Sacrament. The Mass for the Celebration of Confirmation will take place today (Sunday) at 1:00 in the afternoon.

On the topic of sacraments, next weekend we will be celebrating First Communion for our second-grade students. This is also an important moment in the life of the parish as we welcome more members at the Eucharistic Table of the Lord. We pray for them that their innocent hearts remain open to the great love of God as they receive the Body of Christ. The Mass for First Communion will be Saturday Morning May 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am.

Now to the matter at hand, a thought crossed my mind last Tuesday while praying Morning Prayer. The morning prayer of the church for Tuesday included as usual a couple Psalms and this day a prayerful canticle from the Book of Daniel. Two lines from Morning Prayer caught my attention and gave me an idea about the importance of the Holy Spirit in our lives and my hope for our young adults who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We need the Holy Spirit when we pray. This is particularly important when as we pray with the Sacred Scriptures. The simple reason for this is that it is the Holy Spirit who inspired the authors of the Scriptures. It is also that same Holy Spirit we receive in Baptism and in Confirmation who unites us with the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is present in all the sacraments because they are encounters Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the bond (truth and love) we have with Jesus Christ. Fearing that I may get too far off the point, I want to focus on the dynamic of the Holy Spirit dwelling within and inspiring us. How do we see the indwelling of the Holy Spirit working in this way?

The Canticle from the Book of Daniel chapter 3 was from the prayer of Azariah who was thrown into the fiery furnace. The back story for this episode is about Daniel and his companions who refused to offer incense and worship the god of King Nebuchadnezzar. As punishment for their refusal he had the three young companions bound with chains and thrown into the white-hot furnace. Granted it is a very unnerving story. The miraculous event in the story happened as the three young men began to sing the praises of God as they walked around in the furnace unbound. This great miracle obviously shocked the king.

We find this story inspiring in terms of the faithfulness and courage of the three companions of Daniel. However, it is important to consider the greater background of Daniel and his companions. The companions of Daniel were faithful to God throughout their service to the king. They were charged with the service of the royal household. They remained faithful to God and were proven to be the best of all the household servants. As companions they mutually supported each other. They prayed together and humbly observed the Law of the Lord. In a word they had a firm foundation in their Jewish faith. We can say that their faithfulness and worship of God was their default button: all

of which was inspired by the Holy Spirit. This was the lens through which they viewed and understood the world. It is also through this lens that we take note of the prayer of Azariah. The praise of God flowed naturally: it was so ingrained in him. In his prayer he also referred to their history going back to Abraham and how God had made a solemn promise to Abraham and has always remained faithful. The three companions were part of this larger story. This history was a source of encouragement for them and was necessary to recall especially during this time of crisis: the movement of the Spirit.

How did the companions of Daniel face their impending torture and execution? They had a relationship with God. They had the mutual support of each other (community). They were deeply rooted in a greater story or Tradition. In the Spirit they could do nothing else but praise God, even in the midst of the furnace. The Holy Spirit was in their heart, mind and soul.

On the flip side of this coin there was a very short verse from Psalm 101 prayed just before the canticle from Daniel. The few words in the middle of the Psalm give another insight; "*The man who slanders his neighbor in secret I will bring to silence.*" What caught my attention is the sin of "*slandering in secret*"; to oneself or secretly with another. O the things we do in "secret"! This secret chatter easily becomes a bad habit that trains and forms the mind and heart in a wicked way. What we do in secret has a way of training our minds and hearts for good or for ill. This slandering in secret is the opposite to the companions of Daniel. It is more likely that such a person would not be able to withstand the mandate of King Nebuchadnezzar. If per chance he was put to torture and the threat of death he would most like find himself spewing all kinds of vulgarities: the fallen default button of his life. He would have nothing else to offer. It should also be noted that the Holy Spirit has no place in such a fallen state.

As we celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation this weekend for our young adults we reflect on the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit: Knowledge, Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Piety and Fear of the Lord. We cannot know and understand the ways of our faith without the Gifts of the Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit as we read the Scriptures seeking to know God as God reveals Himself in His Holy Word: and perfectly in the Word made Flesh. The Holy Spirit is necessary for us to understand the Mysteries of our Faith: i.e. the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the Eucharist and so much more. The Holy Spirit is necessary for insights into our faith supporting the courage we need to live the faith. The Holy Spirit is necessary to unite us in the Church as we pray and mutually support each other in the faith.

I am reminded of Daniel and his companions. They are a model of the Church. They prayed together. They supported and encouraged each other. They also recalled (counsel) their long history in a covenant relationship with God. They were part of a long Tradition of Faith and found strength to live a life worthy of the gift preserved through the heroes of their people.

In a roundabout way this is all a reflection on the life of the Church today. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. The Holy Spirit, who overshadowed Mary at the incarnation, is the same Holy Spirit who overshadowed the Apostles at the birth of the Church on Pentecost. The Holy Spirit overshadows us to this day. The Holy Spirit is necessary for us to know God the Father perfectly revealed in Jesus Christ. We need the Holy Spirit for remembering and understanding the mysteries of the Faith. We cannot properly pray without the Holy Spirit inspiring us to greater reverence for God and the courage to live the faith in this world. As Church, we need the Holy Spirit for our friendship

with each other; our mutual support and encouragement. The Holy Spirit will always lead us to praise God in good times and in bad. The Holy Spirit will never lead us in the way of wickedness.

In times of trial we want to respond graciously. We do not want to react with anything wicked or destructive. To live graciously, we need an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ. At the heart of this relationship is the Holy Spirit.

Congratulations to our Confirmation Class and have a blessed week.

Father Ralko



**Real Presence, Real Future reflections: As the Father Loves Us**

**Deacon Steve Petrill, St. Joan of Arc Parish**

“Jesus said to his disciples: ‘As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.’” Christ reaches out to us as friends, inviting us to remain, to dwell, in His love. We draw close to God by loving our neighbor as Christ loves us: through self-sacrifice, trust in God, and fully giving of ourselves. We cannot do this alone. Individually and as Church, we are brought into the life of God, healed, nourished, and sustained by Christ’s real presence. In the same way Christ is with us, we are called to be truly present to one another.

Please visit [www.RealPresenceRealFuture.org](http://www.RealPresenceRealFuture.org) to learn more about how we are growing together in the life of faith and discipleship in the Diocese of Columbus.

**MOTHER’S DAY TRIBUTE**

**The Muskingum Valley Right to Life will once again, be sponsoring a full-page Mother’s Day tribute ad in the Times Recorder on May 9. For this we will be collecting names, along with a \$3.00 donation, at all masses this weekend from all who wish to honor mother(s), both living and deceased, on their special day.**

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

**Church Support**

April 25, 2021	
OFFERTORY	\$6,358.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$2,469.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly deficit	\$(4,391.00)

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

**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, May 2nd 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. This is a joint, St. Thomas and St. Nicholas youth event and all teens grades 7-12 regardless of affiliation are invited. Parents are welcome!

**FIRST COMMUNION PRACTICE WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, MAY 7TH AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CHURCH. STUDENTS MAKING THEIR FIRST COMMUNION ON SATURDAY, MAY 8TH ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND.**

**MEN OF THE EAST**

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church, 58 Granville St, Newark, OH 43055 will host the Men of The East for a traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration with Reflection on Thursday, May 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. All men of the twelve-parish consortium are invited and encouraged to participate in these once a month Holy Hours.



“Living the Joy of the Gospel,” the theme of the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, inspires us, as people of faith, to share joyfully the Good News of Christ to those who most need to feel His love. Works of kindness and assistance, sometimes in the smallest way, can bring about a profound change in a person’s life. Through the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, we have an opportunity to bring about a positive change in the lives of many of God’s people. Through your generosity, you are supporting the various ministries and programs that are vital in spreading His love. Next week is Commitment Weekend for the Appeal, at which time you can make your gift or pledge. Our parish has been asked to raise \$81,795.00. We can accomplish this if, after prayerful consideration, everyone gives what they can. Any amount raised over our goal will be returned to our parish to be used for our particular needs.

**PRAY THE ROSARY!**

“The Rosary is a powerful weapon to put the demons to flight and to keep oneself from sin...If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, and in your country, assemble each evening to recite the Rosary. Let not even one day pass without saying it, no matter how burdened you may be with many cares and labors.” ~Pope Pius XI

During the month of May, the Rosary will be prayed as a community before the Saturday 5:15 p.m. Mass and the Sunday 8:15 a.m. Mass and the 10:45 a.m. Please join us!

**All are welcome to pray the Rosary on Monday’s in the Chapel in the Parish Office at 2:00 p.m.**

# FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**Eucharistic Adoration:** ‘Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament [Jesus present in the consecrated Host] is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us.’ Saint Alphonsus Liguori. This is a great devotion for families, marrieds, singles, young and old alike. All are encouraged to participate in Eucharistic Adoration on Friday, May 7th (First Friday). Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will begin immediately after the 8:00 a.m. Mass and will end at 4:00 p.m. Faithful adorers are essential and needed as Christ exposed in the Monstrance must never be left alone. No less than two people per hour are needed to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament, in prayer and devotion. Please contact the parish office to sign up for your hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. (740) 453-0597 ext. 14 or pboggs@stnickparish.org.

### 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 or the many needs of our nation, community, and parish.*

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address \_\_\_\_\_

## *What’s Happening in Our Parish*

### MONDAY, May 3, SS Philip and James

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Sherry McElfresh, Church*  
2:00 p.m., *Rosary: Parish Office*  
7:00 p.m., *Mercy Bible Study, Parish Office*

### TUESDAY, May 4

9:00 a.m., Mass: *St. Thomas Intention, Church*

### WEDNESDAY, May 5

9:00 a.m., School Mass: *Langdon Thomas, Church*

### THURSDAY, May 6

8:00 a.m., Mass: *St. Thomas Intention, Church*  
7:00 p.m., *Adult Children of Alcoholics Meeting, Church Basement*

### FRIDAY, May 7

8:00 a.m., Mass: *John & Dorothy Walker, Church*  
8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.: *Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Church*

## *6th Sunday of Easter*

### SATURDAY, May 8

4:15 p.m. p.m.-4:45 p.m., *Confessions, Church*  
5:15 p.m., Mass: *Sandy Young, Church*

### SUNDAY, May 9

8:15 a.m., Mass: *St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church*  
9:15 a.m., *Sunday School, Parish Office*  
10:45 a.m., Mass: *Dee Joseph, Church*

## *Readings for Week of May 3*

Mon. . . . .	1 Cor 15:1-8	Jn 14:6-14
Tues. . . . .	Acts 14:19-28	Jn 14:27-31a
Wed . . . . .	Acts 15:1-6	Jn 15:1-8
Thurs. . . . .	Acts 15:7-21	Jn 15:9-11
Fri. . . . .	Acts 15:22-31	Jn 15:12-17
Sat. . . . .	Acts 16:1-10	Jn 15:18-21
Sun . . . . .	Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48	Jn 15:9-17

### **Cantor Schedule**

First Holy Communion  
May 8 11:00 a.m. Kevin McCarthy  
  
6<sup>TH</sup> Sunday of Easter  
May 8 5:15 p.m. Sandy Black  
May 9 8:15 a.m. Laura DeCoy  
10:45 a.m. Sister Bernadette