

THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord. With this feast we recall and celebrate Jesus ascending to the right hand of the Father. Jesus Christ returns to the Father with his *resurrected and glorified* human body. Jesus Christ has his *resurrected and glorified* human body forever. Faithfully following Jesus Christ, being reconfigured to Christ in this life, we are assured of what is in store for us in the glorious resurrection. Where Jesus has gone, we hope to follow.

This is a very important point that needs to be made: God created us Body and Soul. Many people have the dualistic view of life expressed as the *Spirit is good and the Body is bad*. Part of this idea comes from the ancient philosophies of individuals like Plato who considered the body, because of its imperfections, was a *prison for the human spirit*. Plato considered eternal life happens when the spirit is released from the prison of the body. A modern-day expression of this idea is when someone claims to be a *spiritual* person. Such individuals do not believe in organized religion or a church. They deny the physical manifestation of the spiritual life: the Christian Community; the Body of Christ. There is a part of truth here but not the whole truth. It is true that we have a spiritual life, but that is not the whole story. We are called to holiness while we live in the body. Spirituality is a means to holiness which is expressed through the body. Holiness transforms both body and soul. There has to be an outward physical manifestation of holiness. This is virtuous living. In part this is the theology of the Incarnation. In reality we are not destined to live in eternity as spiritual beings. We are not angels, nor are we intended to be angels. We are human beings, created in the *Image and Likeness of God*, with a body and a soul. This is what we are: beings with a body and a soul. Salvation and eternal life are for both body and soul. "*We believe in the resurrection of the body*" as we say in our creed. The teaching on the Ascension of the Lord is a revelation and an affirmation of the Resurrection of the body and soul. It reveals the ultimate goodness and final destination of both the body and the soul: together and glorified in heaven. Jesus Christ came to save us body and soul. It is an affirmation of who we are as God's beloved human beings created in His image and likeness.

This year's Bishop's Annual Appeal is underway. The theme for the 2021 appeal is, "*Living the Joy of the Gospel*." Please prayerfully consider a gift in support of the Appeal which makes possible many ministries and programs that benefit so many in our diocese. Your gift to the 2021 Bishop's Annual Appeal is vital to the success of this diocesan wide campaign. Thank you to all those families that have made a gift or pledge this year and in the past years. If you have not yet made your gift to this year's appeal, please consider doing so in the days ahead. Remember your gift will help to continue vital work and the various ministries and services that reach so many in need. Please pray for the success of the Appeal and remember no amount of giving is too small.

When we consider our financial gift to the diocese, we offer it as a sacrifice to God and for our neighbor. All of our acts of charity are to be understood as responses for the many gifts and blessings in our lives from God first and foremost. Everything belongs to God in the first place. All that we have is indeed a gift from God. When we make an offering to God, we are merely sharing what God has blessed us with in the first place. As we make our offering to God, God returns our gift and multiplies our blessings abundantly. Consider the miracle of Jesus feeding the 5000 with five barley loaves and two fish recorded in all the Gospels. As you consider your gift for this year's appeal, please think of your generous gift combined with the generosity of others

that will enable the Bishop to continue his ministry throughout the diocese.

The Bishop's Annual Appeal extends the loving arms of the Church to the 23 counties that comprise the Diocese of Columbus. Your gift helps the Church in Columbus provide many services throughout the diocese, such as the promotion of vocations and seminarian formation, sacramental preparation programs, emergency repairs to parishes and schools, tuition assistance, care and assistance to those living in poverty and have more needs of which we are mostly unaware. For these and other areas of concern we are asked to step up. These ministries and the assistance they provide are extremely important to the lives of many of our brothers and sisters throughout the diocese. Lastly, the Bishop's Appeal is also important for financially maintaining the work of the Chancery and Diocesan Offices.

As your Pastor, I believe that we will be able to do our fair share to help the Diocese of Columbus in this important matter. Again, I remind you that envelopes for the appeal can be found in the pews. I encourage everyone to take an envelope, fill it in and make a gift (pledge) to the Diocese. It is important that a greater number of parishioners take part in this appeal. I am well aware of the many demands placed upon all of us financially. Nevertheless, we are to be good caretakers of the many gifts God has given to us. As stewards we are to be generous to those in need. The needs of the diocese are just as important as the needs we have in our parish when it comes to our daily operations and activities. Just as we are the parish of St. Nicholas, we are also the people of the Diocese of Columbus. We have to be good stewards of our parish and our diocese. I am also very much aware that many of our parishioners have tight budgets. God bless you. However, it is precisely during these times we are not to cut back on our acts of Charity. When times are difficult, they are also times for greater faith and charity. It is during the difficult times that our faith and generosity are particularly important. Faithfulness and generosity do not manifest themselves during good and easy times since they are not challenged. So, please do whatever you can for the appeal.

This year I would consider it a particular challenge for our parish to *increase our parish participation in the Bishop's Annual Appeal*. We need to increase the number of families participating in this year's appeal. For those who participated in last year's appeal, which was a good response considering the pandemic, I ask that you repeat what you did last year. For those who have not participated I strongly encourage you make a gift/pledge this year. No amount is too small. Participation is important. Let me stress that the important goal for us is to increase the number of participating parishioners. With very little effort we can do this. I also believe that if we increase the number of participating families, we will be able to hit our parish target.

Our Current parish census, which we have painstakingly updated, consists of 609 families. Last year out of those families we had 154 families/individuals participate in last year's appeal. Our parish target was \$79,000. The total pledges made totaled \$46,375. Not bad for 25% of the families participating, especially during the pandemic. Even though we had a relatively small percentage of families who participated we do appreciate those who have made a gift/pledge. We need to encourage the remaining 75%.

That being said I would like to see our parish increase and maybe double the number of families/individuals participating in this year's BAA. Again, I think we can do this without much difficulty. It would be great if we had 50% participation; even better still if it were greater.

So, give it a thought, seriously. I will give an update next week. Thank You. Have a Blessed Week. Father Ralko

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



Church Support

May 9 2021	
OFFERTORY	\$7,458.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$3,569.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	\$1,855.00
Weekly surplus	\$(3,291.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

Pre-Jordan Class

Pre-Jordan class for May is **Tuesday, May 25 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Parish Office building. The Class is for parents and sponsors of infants and small children who are to be baptized. Please call 453-0597 to register for the class.

Saint Nicholas Religious Education needs volunteer teachers and substitute teachers. The 2021/2022 school year begins **Sunday, September 12, 2021**. Classes will be held in the Bishop Fenwick School building "at the top of the hill". If this is something you feel you would like to do please call 740-319-2170 and talk with Suzanne or Kevin Dooley. Thank you!

Several in the Zanesville area have received e-mails from someone pretending to be Fr. Ralko. The messages ask for help and also ask that you not call as Fr. Ralko is either in a meeting or unavailable. The next message is a request for the purchase of gift cards. **PLEASE KNOW THAT FR. RALKO WOULD NEVER SEND A TEXT OR AN E-MAIL ASKING FOR GIFT CARDS.**



Your gift to the 2021 Bishop's Annual Appeal is vital to the success of this diocesan wide campaign. We are off to a good start toward our parish goal of \$81,795. Thank you to all those families

that have made a gift or pledge. If you have not yet made your gift to this year's appeal, please consider doing so in the days ahead. Your gift will help to continue the vital work of the various ministries and services that reach so many in need. Please pray for the success of the Appeal and remember no amount of giving is too small.

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.

Congratulations to those who made their
First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 8.
May Jesus stay close to your hearts as you receive
Him each weekend at Mass!

Graham Thomas Arnold	Sydney Marie Larson
Paul Benjamin Barnes	Camryn Ann Mattingly
Lily Claire Bernath	Keigen Patrick McGovern
Blaise Michael Buchanan	Lucas Allen Moyer
Madison Marie Denny	Molly Antoinette Palandrani
Sophie Layne Dosh	Eli Michael Patterson
Noah Ray Fandrey	Florence Madaline Patterson
Campbell Thomas Fitz	Alicia Marie Pitcock
Wyatt Lee Haswell	Quinn Danielle Snider
Xavier Damian Jones	Oliver Huckaby Walker

A special collection for the **Catholic Communication Campaign** (CCC) will be held this weekend, May 15 & 16. The CCC helps spread the Good News to you – and focuses on current and new ways to communicate Jesus' gospel message, making it available to both our faithful and those seeking the faith. The CCC supports both diocesan and national communication efforts -- providing news, discussions, special events, and programs on numerous communication platforms. Please be generous in the collection and support this critical work!



Real Presence, Real Future reflections: To Be the Message
Alfred Akainyah, St. Anthony Parish & RPRF
Commission Member

In today's gospel, Jesus gives the disciples the authority to go into the world and preach the Gospel to all people. People's lives, lives that God cares about, are at stake. We should let our lives be the message we communicate, for we can only be true disciples of Christ if only we live the Gospel in our lives. This is also the goal of our *Real Presence, Real Future* campaign. On this day of Christ's elevation to Heaven, the same is being asked of us: to become missionary disciples of our Lord and His church.

To read more about how we are growing together in the life of faith and discipleship in the Diocese of Columbus, visit www.RealPresenceRealFuture.org.

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! **Volunteers are needed to lead the Rosary. Please call the parish office to sign up to lead the Rosary.**

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

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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. 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.



What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, May 17

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Howard Miller, anniversary, Church*

2:00 p.m., Rosary: *Parish Office*

7:00 p.m., Mercy Bible Study, *Parish Office*

TUESDAY, May 18, St. John I, Pope

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

WEDNESDAY, May 19

9:00 a.m., School Mass: *Michael L. Wilson, anniversary, Church*

THURSDAY, May 20, St. Berardine of Siena

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

7:00 p.m., Adult Children of Alcoholics Meeting, *Church Basement*

FRIDAY, May 21, St. Christopher Magallanes

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Reg Gear, birthday, Church*

PENTECOST SUNDAY

SATURDAY, May 22, St. Rita of Cascia

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

5:15 p.m., Mass: *John Petho, Church*

SUNDAY, May 23

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

10:45 a.m., Mass: *Fern Cherrington, birthday, Church*

Readings for Week of May 17

Mon.	Acts 19:1-8	Jn 16:29-33
Tues.	Acts 20:17-27	Jn 17:1-11a
Wed	Acts 20:28-38	Jn 17:11b-19
Thurs.	Acts 22:30, 23:6-11	Jn 17:20-26
Fri.	Acts 25:13b- 21	Jn 21:15-19
Sat.	Acts 28:16-20, 30-31	Jn 21:20-25
Sun	Acts 2:1-11	Jn 20:19-23

Cantor Schedule

Pentecost Sunday

May 22 5:15 p.m. Laura DeCoy

May 23 8:15 a.m. Kerby Staker

10:45 a.m. Kevin McCarthy