

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Believe it or not we are already celebrating Independence Day: Happy Fourth of July! We are halfway through 2021. Time is flying by. I'm beginning to get this sneaky feeling that time goes faster as we get older.

As we give some thought to this holiday celebrating our country's birthday, we are very much aware that we are celebrating the liberties we enjoy in our great country. We are also very much aware that as we celebrate freedoms, we also are aware that they are so easily taken for granted. It is necessary for us to give some serious considerations on the true understanding of freedom. It is easy to take freedom, our personal liberty for granted. We often get it confused with the notion of license, the growing attitude that we can do as we please. This is partly true but not the whole story. At the founding of our country our forefathers gave serious thought as well as making some serious sacrifices to overcome external subjugation of foreign governments. This was necessary for this budding country to be free to grow and flourish as a people and a country. They put their lives on the line so that we may enjoy the fruits of their sacrifice: freedom. Those who have made the sacrifice tend to have a greater appreciation. Sadly, the reality is that for those who make little or no sacrifice also have little or no appreciation. It is a rather simple fact of human nature. Thus, we have the duty to invest our time and reflections in serious consideration of the great sacrifice and gift we enjoy in our country: The God given gift of Freedom.

This past month I witness the marriages of two couples. Unfortunately, those were the only two weddings on the books for 2021. I really don't know what to think of that at this point, but it is what it is as they say. Nevertheless, as the couples choose their reading for the wedding liturgy they usually turn to the Book of Genesis: "In the beginning". I have often commented that I have continually found the beginning of Genesis inspiring. I never seem to exhaust the lessons that are deep within the text. The only limitation is my mind. Just the same I am often touched by the insights. This leads me to a completely different insight that has led me onto a different path. It is a path that has provided me a thought or two for Independence Day.

My thoughts come from the writings of Archbishop Fulton Sheen on freedom. Thus, let me quote the good Bishop at length.

"Way back in the agelessness of eternity, in that day that had neither beginning nor end, God was enjoying infinite communion with Truth and Love in the amiable society of the three Persons of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Wanting nothing for His perfection, desiring nothing for His happiness, needing nothing for the replenishing of His life, there was no need for God ever to go outside of Himself. If, therefore, He ever chose to create a world, it must have been not on account of need, nor duty, nor constraint, but only on account of love."

"Why then did God create a world? God created the world for something like the same reason that we find it hard to keep a secret! Good things are hard to keep to yourself. The rose is good and tells its secret in perfume. The sun is good and tells its secret in light and heat. Man is good and tells the secret of his goodness in the language of thought. But God is infinitely good and therefore infinitely loving. Why therefore could not He by a free impulsion of His love let love overflow and bring new worlds into being? God could not keep, as it were, the secret of His love, and the telling of it was creation..."

"Quite naturally the mind of that great Architect might have conceived ten thousand other possible worlds than this. This is not absolutely the best world that God could have made. But it is the

best world for the purpose that He had in mind in making it. Almighty God chose to make a universe in which not all creatures would be like sticks and stones, trees and beasts, each of which is impelled by a law of nature, or a law of instinct to a determined rigorous end, without the slightest enjoyment of freedom. He willed to place in paradise a creature made to His own image and likeness, but a creature different from all others, because endowed with that glorious gift of freedom, which is the power of saying "Yes" or "No," of choosing to sacrifice oneself to duty or duty to oneself, and forever remaining master and captain of ones' own fate and destiny. In other words, God willed to make a moral universe and the only condition upon which morality is possible is freedom."

In an interesting string of reason, Bishop Sheen came to the nub of freedom. The overflowing love of God is the source of Freedom. The result of the overflowing love of God is the moral universe in which that freedom has meaning. His reasoning is rather simple and direct.

Firstly, God exists from all eternity. God is perfect. God is complete. God lacks nothing. However, God is love. Therefore, since God does not need creation, all creation is a gracious overflowing of God's love. God cannot contain Himself as it were. Out of pure love God freely chose to create.

Secondly, in creation there are "sticks and stones, plants and animals" all of which follow the laws of nature and instinct: they have no freedom. They are incapable of knowing the goodness of God. They do not know the God who creates out of love.

Third, God chose to create a creature in His image and likeness, different from the others, one who could know of the goodness of God. This creature is one who is able to distinguish between good and evil. This creature has the gracious gift of freedom: the ability to say "Yes" or "No". Since creation was the result of God's freedom to create, the human being created in the image and likeness of God also shares in this freedom. Human beings are not robots. Since it is in love that God freely created the universe revealing his goodness, so too the human person, out of love (not selfishness) is to freely choose and bring forth goodness. Freedom is not intended to be a selfish gift. The opposite, using one's freedom for selfish pursuits is a misuse of freedom. It leads to wickedness.

Out of love and respect for the human being God willed to create a moral universe. In this moral universe God gave the human being the gracious gift of freedom. Freedom, properly understood, is about choosing goodness. It is an invitation to grow in the likeness of God. To act in love; freely bringing the goodness of God to the world through our lives. Without the love of God, we will misuse our God-given freedom. We will be selfish with it. This misuse is sin. Our freedom is necessary in discerning between good and evil, and choosing the good.

Freedom's origin is in the Love of God. God desires for us to know of his goodness and to grow in that goodness. The result of this is our goodness which is to be shared with others.

The duty of our government is to protect our God-given freedom. Government cannot give us freedom. That comes from God. A government that does not respect human freedom is an oppressive government. On this Independence Day we recall the sacrifices so many made in liberating our country, and others, from those who oppress. Dictatorships and oppressors do not love and respect people, thus they do not respect their God-given freedom as human beings.

Just the same, our God-given-freedom comes with responsibility. Our responsibility is oriented toward growing in goodness and not evil. We are responsible for our freely chosen actions. Freedom is for authentic good. The greatest good that we

are to freely choose is to know, love and serve God in this world, that we may share the greatest Good, union with God in Heaven (free from all evil, sin and death.).

God does not force us to love Him or serve Him in this life. We must freely choose to do that. It is God's great love, however, that so moves us to freely choose God and his goodness. Freedom finds its origin in God's love. May we use our God-given freedom wisely. On this Independence Day, we thank God for the freedom he has blessed us with as well as our country that protects our God-given freedom.

Happy Fourth of July and have a blessed holiday.
Father Ralko



**Happy 4th of July-
The parish office is closed July 5th**

Men of the East Traveling Holy Hour

St. Edwards Catholic Church 785 Newark Granville Rd., Granville, OH 43023 will host the Men of the East for a traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration on **Thursday, July 8th** starting at 7:00 pm in the Church. All Men of the twelve-parish consortium are invited and encouraged to participate in these once-monthly Holy Hours.

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

Kevin Dooley will hold a **Protecting God's Children** class on **Monday, July 12th at 6:00 p.m.** The class will be held at the St. Nicholas Parish office, upper level. This class is mandatory for adults age 18 and up who would like to volunteer in any capacity at Bishop Fenwick School, Bishop Rosecrans High School or St. Nicholas Parish, including Vacation Bible School. Please register in advance at www.virtus.org.

**This week we pray Week II of the
Liturgy of the Hours.**

Church Support

June 27, 2021

OFFERTORY	\$8004.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$4,115.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
deficit this week	\$(2,745.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

*We pray for those who have died recently:
John W. Wagner and Antonina Dabbay*

*We welcome into the church the recently baptized:
Holden Michael Heagen,
son of Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Heagen*

The Catholic Schools of Zanesville

Our School Lunch Summer program is open from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. every Wednesday. This program is Free and open to all students 18 and under. Drive up and go style lunches.

Jr. Bishops Soccer Camp July 19,20 and 21, 2021 5:30-7:00 p.m. at Rosecrans High School, ages Kindergarten - 8th Grade Cost \$35.00 Contact Hugh Maxwell at 740-319-4764.

Daughters of Isabella - All women ages 16 and up are invited to join us on Tuesday, July 13th at 6:00 p.m. in the parish office. Please join us as we work to build community in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church through unity, friendship and charity.

St. Nicholas Parish Festival – August 6 & 7 Help St. Nicholas Church continue to be a light in the community. Volunteers are needed. Many hands make light work and there are many small ways you can help. To volunteer contact Kevin Jones (614) 561-6381 or kevin.jones@jonesschlaterflooring.com

Vacation Bible School–VOLUNTEERS, ages 12 and up, are needed to help with planning, decorating, and to work at Vacation Bible School. (Behind the scenes, planning, and the event itself) Actors are also needed for character acting and skits. **The next meeting is Tuesday, July 6th at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Office.** For more information call (740) 453-0597 ext. 14 or e-mail pboggs@stnickparish.org

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL –
WILDERNESS ADVENTURE**

Through the Sacraments. **Registration is now open!** Forms can be found near the entrances of the Church, on the parish website and in the parish office. Please register by July 20th. Questions? Please call the parish office at (740) 453-0597 ext. 14 or e-mail: pboggs@stnickparish.org.

**Real Presence, Real Future reflections: Hardness of Heart
Joseph Zaino, St. Margaret of Cortona Parish & RPRF
Commission Member:**

This Fourth of July let us celebrate the freedom of our country as well as the freedom God gives us to open our hearts to Himself and others. Each of us can harden our hearts in our own ways. Whether it be anger, jealousy, or stubbornness, God will do anything to replace these with His love. Today's readings see God sending Ezekiel, Jesus, and Paul to call each of us to replace any hardness of heart with His love. Let us all focus on two things today: America and praying to replace hardness of heart with God's love.

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.

Children's Bulletins are available near all the doors of the church. They are for use during and after Mass. Parents and grandparents are encouraged to take one for their children and grandchildren.

14TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Blood Drive sponsored by Park National Bank at Bishop Fenwick Elementary

Gym
1030 East Main St.
Zanesville, OH 43701

**Friday, July 16, 2021
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

To schedule an appointment, call 1-800-RED-Cross or visit
RedCrossBlood.org, sporsion code: PNB

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.

Readings for Week of July 5

Mon.	Gn 28:10-22a	Mt 9:18-26
Tues.	Gn 32:23-33	Mt 9:32-38
Wed	Gn 41:55-57; 42:5-7a, 17-24a	Mt 10:1-7
Thurs.	Gn 44:18-21, 23b-29; 45:1-5	Mt 10:7-15
Fri.	Gn 46:1-7, 28-30	Mt 10:16-23
Sat.	Gn 49:29-32; 50:15-26a	Mt 10:24-33
Sun	Am 7:12-15	Mk 6:7-13

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, July 5, St. Anthony Zaccaria
Parish Office Closed
8:00 a.m., Mass: Margaret Paul, Church

TUESDAY, July 6, St. Maria Gorreti
9:00 a.m., Mass: William Kohler, Sr., Church
10:00 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office
Upper Level
7:00 p.m., Vacation Bible School Volunteer Meeting –
Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, July 7
9:00 a.m., Mass: Langdon Thomas, Church
7:00 p.m., Mercy Bible Study

THURSDAY, July 8
8:00 a.m., Mass: L/D members of the Adell Evans Family,
Church

FRIDAY, July 9, St. Augustine Zhao Rong
8:00 a.m., Mass: William Kohler, Sr., Church

15TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SATURDAY, July 10
4:15 p.m. p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Janet Robinson., Church

SUNDAY, July 11
8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church
10:45 a.m., Mass: Paul Cherrington, anniversary, Church

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

It is your responsibility to find a substitute if needed.

July 11, 2020

15^h Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, July 10 @ 5:15 p.m.

Cantor: Kevin McCarthy
Lector: Rocky Rowe
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Laurie Harmon
Eucharistic Ministers: Margaret Kronenbitter

Sunday, July 11 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Janet Moses
Lector: Sue Hillis
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Phil Kocoloski
Eucharistic Ministers: Scott Peterson, Jim Hillis

Sunday, July 11 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Rachel Taylor
Lectors: Wendy Hart
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Tim Hoffer
Eucharistic Ministers: Karen Hardman, Tim Hoffer