

16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

July 18, 2021

From the Pastor's Desk

In our Gospel passage for today Jesus says to his disciples to "*Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.*" For the most part when we get a chance to get away, we usually do not necessarily go to a deserted place. In fact, if we get a chance to go on vacation we go to places where people gather and excitement is to be found. Then again, as we get older, we tend to find a quiet place to relax and recharge. When speaking to his disciples, Jesus invites them to come to a *deserted place*. It is a place where they can get away from their busy ministry just to be alone with him. We call it a retreat or a time "in the desert". Every once in a while, it is good to just be alone with the Lord. As a priest I find this to be a wonderful invitation. It is a wonderful invitation but it is not easy to find that time. Nevertheless, it is a necessary part of the mission since it keeps one focused on Jesus Christ and Christian living.

I think it is very important for all of us to find some time in a deserted place, to be alone with the Lord. We live in a very busy world with numerous stresses, difficulties and challenges. At times this world can be overwhelming. As a Catholic Christian people, we will find this life additionally difficult if we do not have a growing relationship with the Lord. We need quiet time to be alone with him. This is our quiet time of prayer and reflection. It is a sad observation to see people, who should be people of faith, finding themselves lost in this world. They are like what Jesus has said to his disciples... "*Sheep without a shepherd.*" Somehow, usually by neglect, they have lost sight of their shepherd and lost their way and purpose in life.

I have been contemplating this for a long time, especially over the last year. It is not a big secret that we have had some challenging times along with several funerals. Every Sunday I observe several people at mass who have experienced a great loss in their lives. I am particularly touched by those who have suffered greatly because a loved one died from an accident, an overdose or suicide. Jesus' words ring loud and clear... "*Come away to a deserted place and rest a while.*" We have come to this place to pray and rest in Jesus.

It has become commonplace to have news articles telling us that we have an ongoing opioid addiction crisis in Ohio that includes our area. Over the years we have been informed of news reports of celebrities who have overdosed on opiates. We are shocked and disheartened by these reports. We find such reports confusing since many of these people seem to have good and fulfilling lives. However, there is something important that is missing in their lives. If only these poor people would have heard the invitation of Jesus... "*Come away to a deserted place and rest a while.*"?

This invitation sounds a bit empty and a little too late. However, if we notice, this passage from the Gospel of Mark takes place early in Jesus' ministry (Chapter 6). As we read last Sunday, the Apostles were sent out two-by-two to preach repentance and declare the Kingdom of God is at hand. Upon their return (today's reading) they gathered together with Jesus to report all that they had done and taught. Instead of letting them make their reports Jesus invites them to *come away to a deserted place*. How can we read and understand this?

It appears that it does not matter if they were successful or not, they had to put first things first: *come away to a deserted place* with Jesus. At this point it does not matter if they were successful or a failure, the important thing is for them at this point is to "*Come away to a deserted place and rest a while.*" They need to spend

private time with Jesus first.

Why is this important? I would consider two things. If the Apostles faced failure, they would need some time quiet time to think it over. They need reassurance about their relationship with Jesus. With him they will find encouragement and reassurance. The mission is only their first. There will be others and they will improve. But now, they would need to reaffirm their relationship with Jesus and his message.

Secondly, if they are successful, they could be tempted to think it was all their efforts that brought about a successful mission. Success is a source of temptation questioning who is at the center of the mission: the self or Christ. Both success and failure can be an occasion of temptation for separating themselves from Jesus. What is most important is their relationship with Jesus. Their first "mission trip" cannot determine future successes or failures. In a way, Jesus is taking success and failure off the table. Do not worry about success or failure; life is filled with both in the future. The important thing is their relationship with Jesus.

The relationship with Jesus is like all friendships. All relationships grow during times of rest or leisure. It is during times of rest that we truly think and act spontaneously. When people work on their relationships, they are focused on working it and at times overwork it. In times of rest, the relationship is just there, at rest if you will, and it spontaneously opens up.

The Apostles need to know that it is Jesus' message, his words that are proclaimed. It is Jesus who gives them authority over unclean spirits and to preach. It is all about Jesus. Thus, it is very important for them to be close to Jesus. They need to "*Come away to a deserted place and rest a while.*" The Apostles will find in their relationship with Jesus the power and authority for their missionary tasks. However, we know the rest of the story. The Apostles will face greater challenges in their relationship with Jesus. We know that when Jesus was arrested after the Last Supper, they all ran! Talk about a failure. But on the positive side, they stayed together and went back to the upper room. In this great crisis they stuck together because of their relationship with Jesus. They needed each other; especially in their fear.

Life is very difficult. That is a universal truth. In the midst of this worldly difficulty, we have the extra weight of living a Christian life in this flawed world. We are very much like the Apostles who were sent into a sinful world. We have to give witness to Jesus Christ in a world that does not welcome the Lord. Thus, we need a strong relationship with the Lord. Without this relationship we will hesitate as Christians or even abandon the faith altogether.

Yes, we do need to work at it. But there is an irony here. Our relationship with the Lord grows strong when we rest in the Lord. It is then that the Lord and His Word settles in our hearts and minds. So, it is necessary for us to "*Come away to a deserted place and rest a while.*"

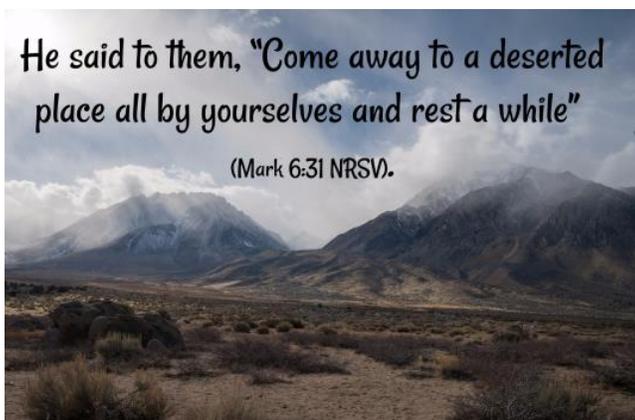
We do this as we come to Church. When we enter the Church, we enter into a different sort of place as we leave behind the secular world with its own challenges. As we gather as the community of faith, we realize that we are here to pray knowing that we do not face life alone. Like the Apostles we gather together with Jesus. This is where we rest with the Lord.

God provides what we need to grow in goodness and holiness: grace. We are aware of our successes and failures; then we let them go. We consider those who have wandered away from the Lord and pray for their return to the Lord. In our relationship with the Lord, we know what they are missing. So, we pray. This is our duty. We have come together to pray as we thank God and seek God's grace to fill all hearts with his loving presence. Our

relationship with Jesus Christ gives us hope. That is what is most important.

As a Catholic Christian people, we know we have the sacraments of the Church. These are encounters with Jesus Christ. It is especially important for us after we have received Christ in the Eucharist to “Come away to a deserted place and rest a while.” Immediately after receiving the Eucharist is a wonderful time for us to spend quiet time with Jesus. This is a great grace given to us to grow in our relationship with Christ. It is during this time that our successes and failures do not matter. Only one thing matters at this time: the time we spend resting with the Lord.

Have a wonderful week
Father Ralko



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

Church Support

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| July 11, 2021 | |
| OFFERTORY | \$12,002.00 |
| Diocesan Tax | \$(770.00) |
| Fenwick Subsidy | \$(2,635.00) |
| Rosecrans subsidy | \$(485.00) |
| Available for Parish Operations | \$8,113.00 |
| Parish Operating Expenses | \$(7,825.00) |
| Religious Education Expenses | \$(890.00) |
| Other Income | \$1,855.00 |
| | \$1,253.00 |

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

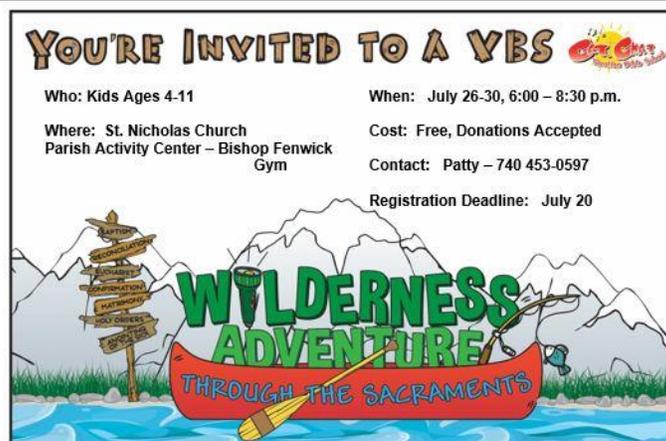
The Catholic Schools of Zanesville

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.

The RHS Class of 1971 is gathering at the St. Nicholas Festival on **Friday, August 6**. Come join in the fun! For questions or more information please call Mary Maxwell at 305-395-0704.

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 – WILDERNESS ADVENTURE

Through the Sacraments **Registration is now open!** Registration 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: The Word of God Alfred Akainyah, St. Anthony Parish & RPRF Commission Member

In today’s Gospel, the 12 go out in pairs to spread the Good News. When they return, Jesus gathers them to a place of rest to lift their Spirits, but the people of the area arrive, hungry for the Good News, believing, that a word from God exceeds every need and raises anyone willing to believe above their circumstances!

We too, with *Real Presence, Real Future*, are called and entreated to bring the Good News to others in our words and deeds. We should have time for others and be open to unexpected demands, for this is the true meaning of discipleship.

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.

Pre-Jordan Class – Tuesday, July 20th at 7:00 p.m.

Parents are required and sponsors encouraged to attend a baptismal preparation class (Pre-Jordan). Due to Vacation Bible School, this month’s class will be held on Tuesday, July 20th. Please pre-register by calling (740)453-0597 ext. 14 or e-mail: pboggs@stnickparish.org.

June Booster Mania Winners

\$50- David & Lynda Sutton and Bernie Kuhn
\$25- Linda Grieves, Tori Martin, Jason Paul, Pamela Schoeppner, Kay Dozer, Jerry Wolfe, Donna Middaugh, Roger Snider and Pete Dinan

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.

“He said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” Mark 6:31

16TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

PARISH LIBRARY: The parish office is home to many “good reads”. Parishioners may borrow books throughout the year. Can’t find what you are looking for anywhere else? Maybe we have it in our library. The library is open Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday’s from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Other times by appointment.

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 19

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|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Mon. | Ex 14:5-18 | Mt 12:38-42 |
| Tues. | Ex 14:21-15:1 | Mt 12:46-50 |
| Wed | Ex 16:1-5, 9-15 | Mt 13:1-9 |
| Thurs. | Sg 3:1-4a | Jn 20:1-2, 11-18 |
| Fri. | Ex 20:1-17 | Mt 13:18-23 |
| Sat. | Ex 24:3-8 | Mt 13:24-30 |
| Sun | 2 Kgs 4:42-44 | Jn 6:1-15 |

What’s Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, July 19

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Sandy Young, Church*

TUESDAY, July 20, St. Apollinaris

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

10:00 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office Upper Level

7:00 p.m., Pre-Jordan, Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, July 21, St. Lawrence of Brindisi

9:00 a.m., Mass: *Dorothy Krebs, Church*

THURSDAY, July 22, St. Mary Magdalene

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

FRIDAY, July 23, St. Bridget

8:00 a.m., Mass: *Mary Dozer, Church*

17TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SATURDAY, July 24, St. Sharbel Makluf

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

5:15 p.m., Mass: *Jonathan Meddaugh, Church*

SUNDAY, July 25

8:15 a.m., Mass: *L/D Members of the Knights of Columbus, Msgr. Dury Council #505, Church*

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

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

Please arrange a substitute if you are unavailable for your scheduled time.

July 25, 2020

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, July 24@ 5:15 p.m.

Cantor: Sandy Black

Lector: Tom Pitcock

Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Laurie Harmon

Eucharistic Ministers: Margaret Kronenbitter, Josh Wright

Sunday, July 25 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Kerby Staker

Lector: Patti Logan

Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Jim Hillis

Eucharistic Ministers: Sue Hillis, Daniel Sylvester

Sunday, July 25 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Lucille Morosco

Lectors: Diane Hoffer

Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Claire Tiberio

Eucharistic Ministers: Tim Hoffer, Jim McKee