



October 3, 2021

October is Respect Life month. This year we recall that in just two years we will be observing the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. This year we also acknowledge the 25th

anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II's encyclical letter "The Gospel of Life." At the time of the writing of the "Gospel of Life" there was the notion that abortion and the related life issues would quietly fade into history. With the writing of the encyclical letter the Holy Father kept those issues in the mainstream of moral debate. Those issues have not faded away since they have found a home and gained acceptance in some countries. Abortion, euthanasia, physician assisted suicide, etc. have quietly slipped into acceptance in spite of opposition. In our country we still have resistance. Just the same, the battle has risen to a higher level with the arguments against becoming stronger and better articulated. With greater appeal to "science" that we hear so much about these days, it is science that validates the physical reality of the evil of abortion. The killing of an unborn human life.

The Pope addressed his encyclical letter to "all people of good will." In so doing he suggests that the debate about abortion and the related life issues, are not about some secular doctrine or policy choices. Rather the debate is about what it means to be human and to confront the continuous attacks upon human dignity. In so doing the Holy Father's hopes were for the Church's witness to be welcomed by non-Catholics and those who do not adhere to the Judeo-Christian moral tradition. The letter had the intention of giving authentic witness to the world about the dignity of human life at all stages.

At the very center of our faith is Jesus Christ, obviously. It is just as obvious that we must let this sink into our minds and hearts as we take the mystery of the Incarnation seriously. In taking on human flesh; God dwelling among us, and sacrificing his very life for our redemption, Jesus Christ reveals and elevates the profound dignity of every human person. This God-given dignity does not change with our stage of life, abilities, level of independence, or any other varying circumstance. In fact, our dignity is rooted in the permanent fact that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, created to share in the very life of God himself. As JP II states in his letter, the human person is a "*manifestation of God in the world, a sign of his presence, a trace of his glory*" (pp 34). It is our witness that we reflect this truth in how we act and how we treat one another. This too is revealed to us in the perfect presence of God in the world, the incarnation; Jesus Christ. His life and his example are the model to which we give witness.

From this we believe that laws which permit or legalize the killing of innocent human beings are unjust, invalid and devoid of moral authority. In this same letter, public officials responsible for such laws are challenged not to claim the need to separate their private conscience from their public actions, nor can they plead the pressure of public opinion. We only need to take notice of the army of saints within our tradition who have given witness and sacrifice their lives rather than compromise their consciences. A great example is St. Thomas More who stated that any lawmaker who does not follow his conscience leads his people/country astray. St. Thomas More was beheaded for not compromising his conscience.

Pope John Paul II, on this point, had an extended reflection on the connection between the moral law and the civil law. He sharply challenges public officials who say that whatever their conscientious convictions, they have no right to "impose their

values" on others. This he contends is an abdication of personal and public responsibility. In a democracy, officials are elected to exercise their best judgement, including their best moral judgment. Apart from the Holy Father's observation, the mere statement of *not imposing* "their values" on others is in fact a value statement that is being imposed on others! It is a self-contradiction.

In addition, the encyclical points out that international organizations, as well as some governments and foundations, are actively promoting a "culture of death" that, by pitting the strong against the weak and by turning crimes into "rights" would have us "*revert to a state of barbarism which one hoped had been left behind forever.*" Again, with a keen eye, the Holy Father pointed out a violation against the dignity of the human person with pitting the strong and powerful against the weak. In a sinful world the weak and innocent always suffer the most at the hands of the strong and powerful. This is inhumane. As such a secular humanism has failed.

In writing to "all people of good will" St. John Paul II proposes a new humanism at the service of the whole human community; the strong/powerful and the weak/vulnerable alike. This humanism finds its fullest expression in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, encompassing the entirety of humanity in all times and places. In this way the "Gospel of Life" addresses all the life issues, not just abortion.

The Holy Father's letter is also pastoral. The Holy Father is firm in his teaching about the sins against life, however, there is also a plea for pastoral compassion. In his letter, St. John Paul II directly addressed women who have had abortions. He was particularly sensitive to the pressures and personal circumstances that pressured a woman's decision. While procuring or performing an abortion incurs excommunication, the *purpose* of excommunication is conversion and reconciliation with the Church. There is always forgiveness and the grace to begin anew, and he urges such women to redeem their experience by becoming leaders in the defense of the unborn and other vulnerable human beings. Their prayers and support in the pro-life movements are of great value in healing the soul; theirs and others as well.

There is a sober reminder in the Holy Father's letter. Our world is marked by not only the moral conflict between the "culture of death" and the "culture of life," but in general we are in a time of moral conflicts on many levels. The battle between good and evil, virtue and vice, and holiness and sin remain a part of human life on this side of the grave. The debate about abortion, the related life issues and all moral issues for that matter, is in fact a debate about what makes and keeps life human.

In our country the one thing that we value is our freedom. Pro-abortion groups proclaim freedom for women. Many things promise to make us free. The freedom promised by abortion is presented as something desirable that will lead to a happy and free life. The reality is that evil/sin is always seductive. Otherwise, why would anyone ever make such a choice for evil. Our lives and the freedoms we enjoy must be based on moral truth. Freedom divorced from moral truth is the death of freedom. Sin always enslaves.

We have God's word that life will ultimately prevail. This is revealed and proclaimed by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. With a critical eye we read the signs of the times and see that the culture of death appears to be gaining in places. Thus, this is the time of faith. With this realization we renew and commit ourselves to the Gospel of Life.

Let us pray for a greater respect for the God-given gift of life.

Father Ralko

Diocese of Columbus News. This morning (Wednesday) it was announced that Bishop Robert J. Brennan was appointed the new bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. Bishop Brennan will continue to administer our diocese until his installation in Brooklyn on November 30. We thank him for his energetic leadership in our diocese and wish him the best with our prayers.



"The loveliest masterpiece of the heart of God is the heart of a mother."

St. Therese of the Child Jesus

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

Church Support

September 2021	
OFFERTORY	\$50,731.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(3,225.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(12,700.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(2,500.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$32,306.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(34,500.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(5,500.00)
Other Income	\$6,000.00
	\$(1,694.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

Would you like to learn more about the Catholic Faith? RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) meets Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Office located at 955 E. Main Street. The meetings are open to anyone who desires to learn more about the Catholic faith. Join us as we study the Catechism of the Catholic Church and how living a life of faith can help us find our way in today's world. Please call (740) 453-0597 ext. 14 to pre-register or for more information.

CATALYST NIGHT All students grades 7-12 are invited to a Catalyst Night at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in the activity center on Sunday, October 10th 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. This is a joint event for all the Catholic Churches in Muskingum County.

ROSARY RALLY 2020

Come and join us for the celebration of "Our Lady of Fatima's apparitions" to be held **Sunday Oct. 17** 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.

We Need Your Help!

What: A National Prayer Chain to raise public awareness and to lift our concerns to God about abortion.
When: Sunday, October 3rd, 2;15 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
Where: We will line the streets of Maple Ave. Parking and sign pickup at Dr. Kevin Colopy's parking lot (across from Taco Bell).
Who: This event is sponsored by Muskingum Valley Right to Life

For more information call: 740-221-9997
"Could you not pray with us for one hour?"
Please come line the streets and pray with us, publicly for life -while we still have the freedom to do so.

If we say we are Pro-life and if we are not actively doing something then we are part of the problem.



Real Presence, Real Future reflections: Humility and Collaboration

Joseph Zaino, St. Margaret of

Cortona Parish & RPRF Commission Member:

Humility allows us to fully love one another. No greater act of humility is possible than Jesus becoming man. Jesus calls married couples to emulate His humility. When two people become one, God calls them to put aside their personal egos to be one each other. This very special call to marital collaboration is a shining example of how we can be collaborative in life, including our Diocesan Real Presence, Real Future initiative. Today, let us pray that as this initiative progresses, we will be inspired to be of one mind and one heart in the Lord as we work together.

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.



Daughters of Isabella Invites the Parish to Join Us on a Pilgrimage.

Tuesday October 12th join us as we travel to The Basilica of St. Mary of The Assumption located in Marietta Ohio. The pilgrimage includes a guided tour of the Basilica, access to the gift shop and Mass. Lunch on your own. Transportation is provided by Pioneer Trails. The bus leaves the St. Nicholas Church parking lot at 8:00 a.m. and returns by 4:00 p.m. The bus cost is \$20.00 per person. Please contact the parish office to reserve your seat.

Parish Breakfast – Breakfast returns Sunday, September 10th following the 8:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Mass. The breakfast is free. Donations are accepted.

"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



In honor of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, we will pray the Rosary in the church during the month of October before the weekend Masses. Rosaries can be found in the pews and are free to take.

27th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Cemetery Groundskeeper

Description: We are looking for an individual that understands the importance of a strong work ethic and is willing to work with a small team to accomplish the day-to-day operations at the cemetery.

Job duties include but are not limited to helping with funeral services and all phases of care for the cemetery grounds. This will include lawn care, snow removal, marker installation, and building maintenance. This is a part-time opening where work is performed year-round in all weather conditions. If you are looking to find a stable career that is year-round and has room for growth this is the job for you.

Requirements:

- Cemetery experience preferred, but not required
- Zero-turn mowers and lawn care equipment. Backhoe experience a plus.
- Ability to lift up to 50 lbs.
- Clean drug screening, driving record, and background check.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision.
- Some Saturday work at times will be required

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, October 4, St. Francis of Assisi

8:00 a.m., Mass: Shirley Knox, birthday, Irene Dillon, Church
2:00 p.m., Rosary, Parish Office Chapel

TUESDAY, October 5, Blessed Frances Xavier Seelos

9:00 a.m., Mass: St. Thomas Intention, Church
10:00 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office Upper Level

WEDNESDAY, October 6, St. Bruno

8:10 a.m., School Mass: Judy King, Church
7:00 p.m., RCIA, Parrish Office meeting room, upper level

THURSDAY, October 7, Our Lady of the Rosary

8:00 a.m., Mass: St. Thomas Intention, Church
7:00 p.m., Adult Children of Alcoholics Support Meeting, NO MEETING THIS WEEK

FRIDAY, October 8

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

28th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

SATURDAY, October 9, St. Denis

4:15 p.m. p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Joan Shaffer, Church

SUNDAY, October 10

8:15 a.m., Mass: Joe Nader, 90th birthday, Church
9:15 a.m., Sunday School, Bishop Fenwick School
10:45 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

Readings for Week of October 4

Monday	Jon 1:1-2:2, 11	Lk 10:25-37
Tuesday	Jon 3:1-10	Lk 10:38-42
Wednesday	Jon 4:1-11	Lk 11:1-4
Thursday	Mal 3:13-20b	Lk 11:5-13
Friday	Jl 1:13-15; 2:1-2	Lk 11:15-26
Saturday	Jl 4:12-21	Lk 11:27-28
Sunday	Wis 7:7-11	Mk 10:17-30

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE – October 9 & 10, 2021 – 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

	CANTORS	LECTORS	EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS
Saturday, October 9 5:15 p.m.	Laura DeCoy	Tom Pitcock	Coord: Dan Snider Charlotte Snider, Margaret Kronenbitter
Sunday, October 10 8:15 a.m.	Sandy Black	Bill Sullivan	Coord: Tammy Dovenbarger Dan Sylvester, Cheryl Sylvester
Sunday, October 10 10:45 a.m.	Kevin McCarthy	Susan Thompson	Coord: Claire Tiberio Gerald Tiberio, Diana Dunn
(Please arrange a substitute if you are unavailable for your scheduled time)			