



# ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

June 24, 2018 - Nativity of St. John the Baptist

## dear Padre

### Parish Office:

Phone: 756-2356

Fax: 756-2099

Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00am - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Email: [stromuald@bbtel.com](mailto:stromuald@bbtel.com)

[www.stromuald.org](http://www.stromuald.org)

### Pastoral Staff:

*Pastor*, Father Tony Jones

Email: [tony.jones@pastoral.org](mailto:tony.jones@pastoral.org)

*Deacon*, Tony Anthony

*Administrative Asst*, Jane Haynes

*CRE: Adult*, Rosa Hockenberry

*CRE: RCIA*, Marie Rose

*CRE: 7-12*, Gayle Poole

*CRE: K-6*, Kim Brumfield

### Pastoral Council:

Dana Bland, Kevin Oelze,

Janet Bland, Danny O'Reilly

Chris Brumfield, Don Payne,

Gera Jarboe, Gail Pollock

Harry Mattingly, Pam Pollock

Joellen McGary, Mark Rhodes

### St. Romuald

#### Interparochial School:

Phone: 756-5504

[www.stromualdschool.org](http://www.stromualdschool.org)

Principal, Rob Cox

#### School Board

#### Representatives:

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

***We are told that we are baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection, and that baptism is necessary for our salvation. But why was Jesus baptized?***

Jesus was not baptized in the Jordan River for the same reasons we are baptized today. Exactly why Jesus received baptism is known to him alone. Your question will be one that goes into the "everything you wanted to ask Jesus when you meet him in heaven" category. But scholars studying this question have reasonable assumptions about why Jesus requested baptism.

When Jesus requested baptism from John, he wanted to demonstrate that he identified with his people's search for God. Scholars speculate that after years of performing the duties of home and the carpenter's trade, Jesus had become increasingly conscious of his life's mission. It was time to seize the moment and begin his ministry. John balked, thinking he should be accepting baptism from Jesus—the long-awaited one. But Jesus prevailed, and a voice from heaven ratified his action. "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

After Jesus' baptism, John's mission was accomplished. Jesus took center stage. Identifying with his people's sinfulness, Jesus allowed himself to be baptized to demonstrate his solidarity with the people, signaling the beginning of the Messianic Age that John had promised.

We know the rest of the story. Later, Jesus would commission his apostles to baptize all nations. This would be a baptism of water and the Spirit, signifying that the baptized had found Jesus and were living in forgiveness and freedom.

[Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org](mailto:Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org)



# Masses for the Week

June 25th - July 1st

Tues	1:00 pm	Jerry Schlesinger Fam. (Extended Care)
Wed	5:00 pm	Sandy Priest
Thurs	9:30 am	Louise Kennedy (KH) (Medco)
Fri	<b>8:00 am</b>	Casey Mattingly
Sat	5:00 pm	Joe Paul Flood (PF)
Sun	7:00 am	Darcy Satterly (CS)
	10:00 am	Joe Nimmo & Britt G (MN)

# Stewardship of Finance

## Last Sunday's Collection

Sunday Collection.....	\$5,667.00
Children.....	\$0.00
Building Fund.....	\$5.00
Loose Change for the Poor.....	\$87.00
Funeral Meal.....	\$205.00

## Parish Financial Summary

July-April, 2018

<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$504,300</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$461,200</b>
	<b>\$ 43,100</b>

**Thank you for your financial stewardship!**

# Worship and Sacrament

**Anointing of the Sick:** Anointing of the Sick is celebrated with the parish community every first Wednesday at 5:00 pm Mass. Yet, anytime, anointing is available for illness, preparation for surgery or for recovery, by calling Fr Brian.

**Baptism:** Congratulations on the birth of your child! Your Church Family is excited about your family growing and our family growing! We look forward to celebrating your child's baptism! Preparation for new parents or those new to the parish is held by appointment. Call Fr Brian.

**Marriage:** Congratulations on your engagement! Your Church Family wishes to help you fully prepare spiritually and walk with you into this lifetime commitment to each other. In order to allow sufficient time, couples must contact the parish office at least 6 months before the anticipated wedding date.

**Confession/Reconciliation:** Every Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm; every Saturday 4:00-5:00 pm, every first Saturday after 8:00 am Mass, or anytime by simply asking or calling Fr Brian for appointment.

**Visitation of the Sick:** Please notify Father or the office upon admission of a family member into nursing homes or hospital. Often we rely upon word from the family about illnesses of a member. Please call.

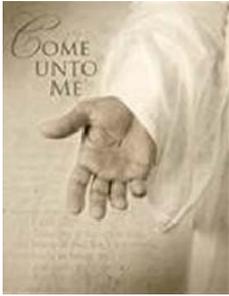
**RCIA:** Interested in the Catholic Faith? The RCIA process is a "spiritual journey" that fully initiates those who are not baptized or who have baptism from another tradition and wish to join fully the Catholic Church. Classes are offered through the year culminating at Easter! Please call the office for details!

**Membership in the Parish:** Welcome to all new families or persons moving into our parish. We are glad that you are joining the parish community. We want to visit with you and help you settle into the church. Please register in the parish office as soon as possible.

# Ministers of the Liturgy - June 30th & July 1st

	Eucharistic Ministers	Lectors	Ushers	Servers	Rosary Leaders	Music Ministers
5:00 pm	Mitzi Mattingly Bryan O'Reilly	Stefan Cesarz Dayle Riley	C-Eric Barr* C-Evan Barr S-Jamie Barr S-Harry Mattingly	Benjamin Barr Cameron Geeding	Dayle Riley	Pippa
7:00 am	Shirley Bland Faye Glasscock	Cathy Lewis	C-Bryce Glasscock* C-D.J. Glasscock S-Kenny Glasscock S-Tim Glasscock	Andrew Carwile Luke Carwile	Margie Wethington	Pippa
10:00 am	Mona Hinton Sandra Hinton Lisa Kennedy Sandy Horsley	Jessica Phillips Danny Shain	C-Ethan O'Donoghue* C-Ron O'Donoghue S-Greg Hinton S-Mack Mattingly	Ava Phillips Will Lewis	Susan Arnold	P.J./Choir Cantor: Carlos
Radio Minister: Chuck Robbins		Children's Liturgy: NO CHILDREN'S LITURGY				

# Parish News and Events



**Let nothing prevent you from the Journey of Faith!!** If you or someone you know is interested in knowing more about the Catholic faith or becoming a Catholic, please call the parish office 270-756-2356 or contact Fr. Tony, Marie Rose, Deacon Tony. **We will walk with you!**



**It is never too late to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation!!** Are you a high school student or adult *who faithfully attends Mass*, but has never received the Sacrament of Confirmation? We welcome the opportunity to help you prepare to receive that sacrament! Please call the parish office 270-756-2356 or contact Fr. Tony, Marie Rose, Deacon Tony.

**Family Movie Night** - "Samson"...chosen, betrayed, redeemed! Samson, empowered by God with supernatural strength, endangers his own destiny with unwise choices that leads to betrayal by a temptress and a wicked prince. When Samson calls on God, once again, he turns his imprisonment and blindness into a final victory for his own life." Join us on Saturday, June 23rd at 6:15 pm for a night of good old family movie entertainment. Popcorn and a drink are always served, bring some friends.

**Wedding:** Mark Bennett and Betty Phillips Wedding, June 30, 2:00 pm at St. Romuald Church

Thank You!!! Thanks to everyone who helped to make our picnic such a success. You worked hard and everyone had a great time.

A special thank you to Rudy Brumfield and Whitney Roach who helped take down booths and clean up on Monday.

Raffle Winners:

\$1,000	Karen Sturgeon
\$500	Johnny Vessels
\$400	Mary Goff
\$250	Rick Taylor
\$250	Betty Payne
\$100 Savings Account	Shirley Winchell
\$50 Gift Card	Kathryn Ahlborn

We took in a total amount of \$26,987.93, before expenses. A profit report will be published as soon as all the expenses are in.



This morning for 3 hours this wonderful group of St Romuald Confirmation students gave their time to prepare the front yard for our Church Picnic. Countless trips from the Parish Hall & gym carrying tables, prizes, drinks, cakes, jars, signs & games plus filling balloons with air. We even had a few extra helpers. Thank you also to Pamela Keenan Pollock & Ben Aldridge who aren't in the photo. Can't imagine how long it would have taken without all their help!

## This Week at St. Romuald

Mon	1:00 pm	Blue Army Rosary
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon
Tues	1:00 pm	Mass (Extended Care)
	4:00 pm	Rosary
Wed	4:00 pm	Picnic Meeting
	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Mass
Thur	9:30 am	Mass (Medco)
	5:00 pm	VBS Meeting
Fri	8:00 am	Mass
Sat	2:00 pm	Mark Bennett/ Betty Phillips Wedding
Upcoming		
July 9-12		Vacation Bible School

# Around and About

## Why Join Knights of Columbus **LEAD WITH FAITH**

Deepen your faith. As a member of the Knights of Columbus you have access to a wealth of spiritual resources to help you become a better Catholic man, husband and father. As a member you get:

Access to [Knights.net](http://Knights.net)

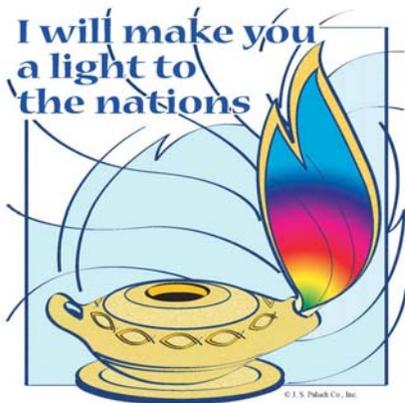
Subscription to Columbia, our flagship monthly magazine

Prayer and faith formation resources to help you grow in Catholic masculine spirituality

**BECOME A KNIGHT**

Contact Pat O'Reilly @617-0754 or go online to [KofC.org/JoinUs](http://KofC.org/JoinUs)

**Marriage Help** – Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi) has helped thousands of couples who are disillusioned or even experiencing misery in their marriage. This program can help you too. For confidential information about or to register for the August program beginning with a weekend on Aug 17, 2018, call the Family Life office at 270-683-1545, or visit the web site at [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org)



**BRANSON "SHOWTIME" FEATURING GARY LEWIS & THE PLAYBOYS!** 4 days/ Aug 29-Sept 1, 2018. 6 Shows & Nine Meals included- \$799.00 per person. This trip will be sure to bring out the oldies but goodies memories with six of the best shows: Rick Thomas Illusionist, Titanic, Showboat Branson Belle Southern Gospel Cruise, Hot Rod n High Heels, Clay Cooper and the fabulous Gary Lewis. Bus will leave from Owensboro, second pick up based on traveler's locations. **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Faith in Travel 270-389-1002** or e-mail [sophiajourneys@gmail.com](mailto:sophiajourneys@gmail.com). Deposit due by June 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Al-Anon Meeting:** Mondays 7:00 pm St Romuald Parish Hall. Come find support and understanding to recover a sense of serenity in your life.

**Abortion Update:** Last week 77 women went into EMW Clinic for abortions at 2nd and Market Street in Louisville. **Please pray to end abortion.**

**Pray to end abortion:** Join other Catholics and those from other faiths that gather each Saturday at 2nd and Market in Louisville from 7:00-8:00 am (EST) to pray for families entering the abortion clinic. Many children have been saved and mothers spared future grief by this prayer action and support. With God, all things are possible! Archbishop Kurtz is known to show up and pray with everyone too!

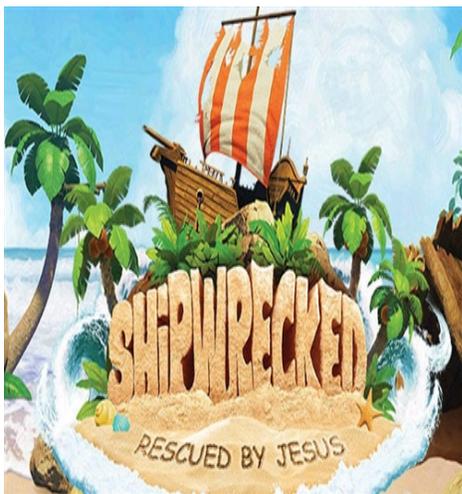
## **Outstanding Teacher of the Year**

Nominate a Catholic school teacher to receive the Outstanding Teacher of the Year award through the Catholic Schools Office and the Principals Association. Visit [owensborodiocese.org/educator-award](http://owensborodiocese.org/educator-award) <<https://owensborodiocese.org/educator-award/>> for complete details and an online nomination form. Deadline to submit a nomination is July 1, 2018.

Will you be a high school sophomore, junior or senior next year?  
Do you hear Jesus' call to love? Do you want to lead change for good?  
Do you want to make lifelong friends?  
If so, then **Brescia University's**

**"Living & Leading with Love" (L<sup>3</sup>)  
High School Youth Theology Institute, is for you!**

Generously funded by the Lilly Endowment.  
For more information or to **apply now** go to [www.brescia.edu/L3](http://www.brescia.edu/L3)  
Or contact Dr. Emily DeMoor at 270-686-4229  
[emily.demoor@brescia.edu](mailto:emily.demoor@brescia.edu)



**St. Romuald VBS  
"Shipwrecked—Rescued by  
Jesus"**

**July 9th—11th (Monday-  
Wednesday 6:00-8:30PM)  
July 12th (Thursday-VBS &  
Water Fun/BBQ on the Hill 6:00-  
8:30PM)  
July 14th (Saturday—Closing  
Mass & Pool Party)**

Registration Paperwork is at the Church Office. If you haven't registered your child you need to do so ASAP!

Age Groups—4 years old through completed 4th grade

**VOLUNTEERS**—We welcome teenagers and adults to help with our VBS fun! All adults must be up to date on their Safe Environment. If you aren't sure, please contact Kim 945-2787 or the Church office at 756-2356.

We ALWAYS have fun and a faith-filled week with LOTS of kids! Please register your child!

If anyone has any questions, please contact Kim at 945-2787!

## Readings for the Week

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday: 2 Kgs 17:5-8, 13-15a, 18; Ps 60:3-5, 12-13; Mt 7:1-5
- Tuesday: 2 Kgs 19:9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36; Ps 48:2-4, 10-11; Mt 7:6, 12-14
- Wednesday: 2 Kgs 22:8-13; 23:1-3; Ps 119:33-37, 40; Mt 7:15-20
- Thursday: 2 Kgs 24:8-17; Ps 79:1b-5, 8, 9; Mt 7:21-29
- Friday: Acts 12:1-11; Ps 34:2-9; 2 Tm 4:6-8, 17-18; Mt 16:13-19
- Saturday: Lam 2:2, 10-14, 18-19; Ps 74:1b-7, 20-21; Mt 8:15-17
- Sunday: Wis 1:13-15; 2:23-24; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13; 2 Cor 8:7, 9, 13-15; Mk 5:21-43 [5:21-24, 35b-43]

### Made For More Summer Camp for High School Men June 24-27, 2018

For young men entering their freshman year to graduating seniors) "The world offers you comfort. But you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness" -Pope Benedict XVI

What are you supposed to do with your life? What does God want you to do with your life? This camp is for young men (high school) who have the courage to begin asking those questions and who want to give their lives to the One who first gave His life for us. Made for More is about giving your life to God. This is a camp for men who refuse to settle for anything less than the greatness to which God calls us. While attending this camp, participate in all the activities Gasper River Retreat Center has to offer: Zip-line, Low elements, Vertical playground, Giant swing, Jacob's Ladder, and much more. Scholarships are available for those who need assistance. Register at [gasperriverretreatcenter.org](http://gasperriverretreatcenter.org). Contact the Vocations Office: 270-683-1545, [owensborovocations.com](http://owensborovocations.com), [jason.mcclure@pastoral.org](mailto:jason.mcclure@pastoral.org), for more information.

### Celebration

#### ANNIVERSARIES:

Wayne & Martha Cashen, June 25th, 52 Years

Mike & Tara Hinton, June 25th, 25 Years

## PRAYER REQUESTS

### We Pray For:

Gilbert Abel, Frank Adkins, Charles Alloway, Keith Androski, Frank Baker, Baby Barr, Roy Bennett, Pat Bland, Debbie Bowlds, Becky Brown, Ava Bruner, Juanita Burch, Kathy Burns, Mike Clark, Anna Carrico, Ashley Carwile, Donnie Claycomb, Debbie Dubree, Davye Duggins, Sammy Duggins, Glenda Farris, Tessa Farris, Bonnie Gail Fentress, Ginny Flood, Linda Flood, Don Ford, Dorothy Greenwell, Linda Greenwood, Austin Harris, JoAnn Henning, Patricia Miller Henning, Joe Hess, Kitty Himmelhaver, Bill Hinton, Jacqueline Huddleston, Mary Hurt, Robert Jackey, Alfred Jarboe, Joe Jarboe, Virginia Jeffries, Mary Ann Johnson, Ashley Jones, Louise Kennedy, **Daniel Lewis**, Rebecca Logsdon, Mary Ann Flood Lynch, Jimmy Mattingly, Walter Manning, Bevan Michael Miller, Joe Miller, Richard Miller, Anna Christine Mundt, Eddie O'Bryan, Joe Oelze, Patsy Oelze, Janet O'Reilly, Peggy Phillips, Bobby Potts, Joan & Tom Powers, Marilyn Preher, Joe Priest, Mary Jo Rankin, Rita Roach, Kimberly Rolan, Suzanne Rose, Darcy Satterly, Max Sharp, Bob Smith, Deborah Sue Stevens, Pam Sturgeon, Adalee Taul, Gina Thornsberrry, Rufus Tivitt, Raymond Wethington, Diane Whitney, **Darrell Whitfill**, Leona Whitworth, **Bobbi Wilson**, Shirley Winchell, Tom Winchell, Anne Wolfe. **Serving in the Armed Forces:** Mandie Adams, Kevin Arnold, Fred Barham, Austin Brown, Timothy Cashen, Ryan Critchelow, Cody Garst, Parker Findlay, James Hanor, Christian Hansen, Jack Hayes, James Howard, Charles Kuhlman, Bradford O'Reilly, Jordan Pate, Lane D. Taul, Liana Tindle, Chase Upchurch, Garrett Wadsworth



**Young Adult Retreat Day:** Saturday, July 28, 2018, from 9:30 am to 7:30 pm at St. Joseph Monastery, 8564 Crisp Road, Whitesville, KY. Ages 18– 30ish. Cost \$25, Lunch and dinner provided. You may register at [owensborodiocese.org/young-adult-retreatday/](http://owensborodiocese.org/young-adult-retreatday/)



We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of David Severs (brother of Larry Severs). You are in our thoughts and prayers.

The new flags flying over the Veterans Memorial were donated by Don & Tina Payne in memory of Tom Vanhooser, Otto Kuebler, Charles Vanhooser, Bernard Payne, Maurice Payne, Leo

**St. Vincent de Paul** is in need of volunteers. If you would like to volunteer for a few hours a week, please call Wayne Cashen at 270-945-7319 or any member .



"Behold, one is coming after me; I am not worthy to unfasten the sandals of his feet."  
—Acts 13:25

## PRAYER AND SPIRITUALITY



GOSPEL MEDITATION June 24, 2018

The Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

Tiny fingers and toes. A little yawn. A loud cry. An infant wrapped in swaddling clothes. "What will this child be?" It is a question every parent asks time and time again. As first steps are taken, as personalities emerge, as a child shows interest in reading or drawing or climbing, the question is on our lips. "What will this child be?" This question is asked as John the Baptist is born. Will he be a priest like his father? Does his strange, unexpected name signal a departure from that inheritance? Could Elizabeth and Zechariah ever have predicted what would be? Under the tutelage of his priestly father, John "became strong in spirit." As an adult, John would retreat into the desert to preach repentance. He would attract a large following and eventually attract the attention of the rulers of the day. He would point out the adulterous ways of King Herod and would find himself in prison. Eventually, he would be beheaded. But today, he is a child, an infant newly born.

On this special feast, we're reminded of the great humility required of parents. The character formation, the discipline and encouragement, the violin lessons and soccer practices? every parental effort is subjected to the decisions of the child themselves. Even children on a sure track by high school graduation transform under life's circumstances. Entrusting our children to God can be incredibly intimidating. "What will this child be," especially when that transformation lies outside of my control? John the Baptist's story might not have ended as his parents imagined. But he is celebrated as the greatest of the prophets, as the one who prepared the way for the Messiah. Here is the hope of all Christian parents -- that our children would be raised in such a way that when people meet them, they meet Jesus Christ.



**Sunday, Jun 24, 2018**

**SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST**

**Discovering the mystery of you**

Each newborn child is a mystery about to unfold in the world. Always there is the potential for joy and pain, great good or tremendous misery. A good bit of what the child becomes is contained in the context of the family: its resources, stability, and capacity to nurture. Parents and children together become what they would never have been without the challenge and the privilege of their relationship. John might never have become the Baptist without Elizabeth and Zechariah. What parts of yourself do you owe to those who took that journey of trust with you?

TODAY'S READINGS: *Day: Isaiah 49:1-6; Acts 13:22-26; Luke 1:57-66, 80 (587). "All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, 'What, then, will this child be?'"*

**Monday, Jun 25, 2018**

**Judge not**

It's a well-known part of Christian faith that you shouldn't judge (though of course that hasn't stopped many Christians from doing just that!). Most people understand the command not to judge others as a moral issue: Unless you've never done anything deserving of judgment, don't dole it out to others. But it's also a theological issue—about God. Judgment belongs to God, so not judging becomes a matter of faith: If you believe in and respect God, then don't judge.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Kings 17:5-8, 13-15a, 18; Matthew 7:1-5 (371). "Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye."*

**Tuesday, Jun 26, 2018**

**Show yourself the door**

During a tour of San Francesco Basilica in Assisi, Italy, a friar took a group of pilgrims through the upper and lower churches and to the crypt where Saint Francis and his companions were buried. Throughout the tour he talked about the life of Francis and the architecture, art, and history connected to him. At the end the friar brought the group back to the upper church and showed them the stunning frescoes attributed to Giotto illustrating scenes from scripture and Francis' life. As he guided the group to the exit he explained that on this wall was the most important scene yet: the door! The exit, he said, is a reminder to go through the doors and spread the Good News to the whole world. Something to think about next time you exit a church!

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Kings 19:9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36; Matthew 7:6, 12-14 (372). "Enter through the narrow gate."*

**Wednesday, Jun 27, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH**

**The mother of all role models**

Bishop Cyril (c. 374-444) was a scholar and writer who promoted the use of the title *Theotokos* ("God-bearer") for Mary, the mother of Jesus. The Council of Ephesus in 431 approved the name, which is used to this day in the Eastern and Orthodox Catholic traditions. In the West, "Mother of God" is more common, but religious historian Jaroslav Pelikan offered a translation that comes closer to the original meaning: "The one who gives birth to the one who is God." However you choose to address the courageous woman who dared to say, "Thy will be done," you honor her most by responding in the

same way to God's invitation in your life.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Kings 22:8-13; 23:1-3; Matthew 7:15-20 (373). "Every good tree bears good fruit."*

**Thursday, Jun 28, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF IRENAEUS, BISHOP, MARTYR**

**Think before you act**

The church calendar identifies the second-century saint Irenaeus as a "bishop and martyr." He was certainly a bishop (of Lyons in France), but his martyrdom may be more legendary. He is remembered primarily, though, not for his death but for what he did in life. His era was a time when Christian doctrine was a boiling cauldron of sometimes wildly conflicting ideas, and it was not clear what would rise to the top. As a theologian, Irenaeus' efforts to defend what was emerging as orthodox dogma made him one of the first people to think about Christianity systematically. Irenaeus teaches us that before we condemn a position we should seek to understand it.

TODAY'S READINGS: *2 Kings 24:8-17; Matthew 7:21-29 (374). "The crowds were astonished at Jesus' teaching, for he taught them as one having authority."*

**Friday, Jun 29, 2018**

**SOLEMNITY OF PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES**

**Rock of ages**

The *pallium* is an ancient liturgical vestment worn only by the pope and a very few other high church officials on whom the pope bestows it as a symbol of the jurisdiction delegated to them. In honor of Saints Peter and Paul, today is the day of the liturgical year on which these officials receive this symbol of their office. In its current form it is a narrow band of white lamb's wool from sheep raised by Trappist monks, looped and draped over other liturgical vestments. The pallium is a reminder of the serious duty placed on the shoulders of the highest church leaders. Pray today that they may fulfill their offices wisely, faithfully, and with compassion.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Day: Acts 12:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18; Matthew 16:13-19 (591). "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church."*

**Saturday, Jun 30, 2018**

**MEMORIAL OF THE FIRST MARTYRS OF THE CHURCH IN ROME**

**Don't fan the flames**

In the summer of A.D. 64 a terrible fire swept through the city of Rome. Emperor Nero found himself both praised for his efforts to help the victims and also accused of setting the fire. To deflect the criticism, he blamed the city's Christian community, whom many Romans disliked already because they felt Christians set themselves apart from the rest of society. But Nero's move backfired, so to speak. The hideous executions he inflicted on Christians actually aroused the pity of many Romans. The victims continue to witness (*martyr* in Greek) both to the power of faith and to the dangers of prejudice and hate.

TODAY'S READINGS: *Lamentations 2:2, 10-14, 18-19; Matthew 8:5-17 (376). "They faint away like the wounded in the streets of the city."*

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