

JMJ

Dear Parishioners,

What happens in Baptism? What do we hope for from Baptism? You have given a response on the threshold of this Chapel: We hope for eternal life for our children. This is the purpose of Baptism. But how can it be obtained? How can Baptism offer eternal life? What is eternal life? In simpler words, we might say: we hope for a good life, the true life, for these children of ours; and also for happiness in a future that is still unknown. We are unable to guarantee this gift for the entire span of the unknown future, so we turn to the Lord to obtain this gift from him.

We can give two replies to the question, "How will this happen?" This is the first one: through Baptism each child is inserted into a gathering of friends who never abandon him in life or in death because these companions are God's family, which in itself bears the promise of eternity. No one of us knows what will happen on our planet, on our European Continent, in the next 50, 60 or 70 years. But we can be sure of one thing: God's family will always be present and those who belong to this family will never be alone. They will always be able to fall back on the steadfast friendship of the One who is life.

And, thus, we have arrived at the second answer. This family of God, this gathering of friends is eternal, because it is communion with the One who conquered death and holds in his hand the keys of life. Belonging to this circle, to God's family, means being in communion with Christ, who is life and gives eternal love beyond death.

Now, after the blessing of the water, a second dialogue of great importance will follow. This is its content: Baptism, as we have seen, is a gift; the gift of life. But a gift must be accepted, it must be lived. A gift of friendship implies a "yes" to the friend and a "no" to all that is incompatible with this friendship, to all that is incompatible with the life of God's family, with true life in Christ. Consequently, in this second dialogue, three "no's" and three "yes's" are spoken. We say "no" and renounce temptation, sin and the devil. We know these things well but perhaps, precisely because we have heard them too often, the words may not mean much to us.

In the ancient Church these "no's" were summed up in a phrase that was easy to understand for the people of that time: they renounced, they said, the "pompa diabuli", that is, the promise of life in abundance, of that apparent life that seemed to come from the pagan world, from its permissiveness, from its way of living as one pleased. It was therefore "no" to a culture of what seemed to be an abundance of life, to what in fact was an "anticulture" of death. It was "no" to those spectacles in which death, cruelty and violence had become an entertainment.

This "pompa diabuli", this "anticulture" of death was a corruption of joy, it was love of deceit and fraud and the abuse of the body as a commodity and a trade. And if we think about it now, we can say that also in our time we need to say "no" to the widely prevalent culture of death.

It is an "anticulture" manifested, for example, in drugs, in the flight from reality to what is illusory, to a false happiness expressed in deceit, fraud, injustice and contempt for others, for solidarity, and for responsibility for the poor and the suffering; it is expressed in a sexuality that becomes sheer irresponsible enjoyment, that makes the human person into a "thing", so to speak, no longer considered a person who deserves personal love which requires fidelity, but who becomes a commodity, a mere object.

We might also say that the Face of God, the content of this culture of life, the content of our great "yes", is expressed in the Ten Commandments, which are not a pack of prohibitions, of "no's", but actually present a great vision of life. They are a "yes" to a God who gives meaning to life (the first three Commandments); a "yes" to the family (Fourth Commandment); a "yes" to life (Fifth Commandment); a "yes" to responsible love (Sixth Commandment); a "yes" to solidarity, to social responsibility, to justice (Seventh Commandment); a "yes" to the truth (Eighth Commandment); a "yes" to respect for others and for their belongings (Ninth and 10th Commandments). It is a "yes" to the challenge of really living life, of saying "no" to the attack of death that presents itself under the guise of life; and it is a "yes" to the great gift of true life that became present on the Face of Christ, who gives Himself to us in Baptism and subsequently in the Eucharist.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Father Newcomb

Holy Hour will resume tomorrow, January 11th in the Chapel.
Confessions will be heard from 5:30pm until 6:15pm.
Adoration will be from 5:30 pm until 6:30pm



Little Lambs will be taking Little Caesar Pizza orders in the narthex the weekend of January 23rd/24th.

The Cardinal's Appeal is still ongoing. Our goal is \$34,500. We have received pledges totaling \$19,080 from 97 donors. You can visit Cardinalsappeal.org. All donations can be mailed directly to :The Cardinal's Appeal PO Box 4020 NY, NY 10261. Our Parish # is 518.

St. Mary's Food Pantry is still available to all in our local and area communities. The next date will be Friday, January 22nd from 10am until noon. If you or anyone you know is in need of food, please have them come during those times.

Court Madonna's 21 Club tickets are now available. They are \$20/ea and benefit local scholarships. Drawing is on April 13th. There will be 20 \$50 winners and 1 \$1,000 winner. Tickets available at the parish office or contact Debbie 239-3560, Helen 856-0987, or Sue 858-5991.

The Knights of Columbus, Council #471 will have a Tic-Toc fundraiser on Saturday, February 13th from 1pm-4pm. Raffle tickets are \$20 with \$2,000 in cash prizes. For more information or to purchase a ticket call Warren Ponds 914-443-3475 or the hall at 845-856-4084.

We now have a section of St. Mary's Cemetery with new graves available. The following is the fee schedule to obtain the *Right to Burial*:

Single Depth \$1000

Double Depth \$1300

For more information, call Gina at the parish Office (845) 856-8212.

Monday- Friday 9:30am until 3pm.
(845) 856-8212

Payment plans are available.

With the bad weather approaching we ask that if you plan on visiting the cemetery, do so after it is cleared. We have had instances of people getting stuck in our cemetery and making it difficult for us to clear the roads within the cemetery.

Also, as a reminder, personal effects including but not limited to solar lights, figurines, etc., are not allowed. Anyone who would like a copy of the bylaws is welcome to stop by the parish office or call and we will gladly email you a copy.

Announced Masses

Monday, January 11
9:00am Jean & Dick Van Sickle, by Sheila Connelly Volker

Tuesday, January 12
9:00am Anthony Gomez, by Kevin Smith

Wednesday, January 13 (Hilary, bishop & doctor of the Church)
9:00am Edward Chuckran, by Catherine Westfall & family
Ralph Marino, by Deacon Rich & Joanne Marino

Thursday, January 14
9:00am Edward Chuckran, by Mark, Jean, & Michael Fox
Christopher Marion, III, by Toni Marion

Saturday, January 16
4:00pm Willard Dixon Morrison, by Patrick Leap

Sunday, January 17
8:30am Sr. Fanny Boursiguot, by the Gordon family
11:30am The parishioners of St. Mary's

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Debi Cotugno, Michael Bello, Michael Barnes, William Lincoln, Jeannine Lincoln, James Lincoln, Charles Hildebrandt, Maureen Hildebrandt, Walter Szpakowicz, Aedan Roach, Robin Radzikowski, James Roach, John F Flynn, Jr., Catherine Simons, Michael Medaglia, Robert Witherow, Allen Lynch, Enid Decker, Jackie Mundy, Allan Garcia, Eric Hildebrandt, Stephen A. Odrechowski, Eva Scopino, Jan Kaminski, Leticia Nuestro, Christina Nuestro, Catherine Scopino, Amelia Quinn, Tonya Addy, Jackie Hamilton, Brandon Ulrichs, Helen Eckes, Gloria Hicks, Stephanie Gaide, Elizabeth Startup Jones, Donald Wolff, Carmen Ramos, Jose Brito, Wayne DeMarco, Camille Balsamello, Emogene Bloomer, Michael D'Alto, Cheryl Lovelace, and Jackie Hamilton.

The Christmas collection was \$15,962.

The collection for December 26th//27th was \$7,415.

The collection for January 2nd/3rd was \$4,362.
Thank you for your continued generosity.