

St Paul Catholic Church

PARISH NEWSLETTER

April 2016



Journey to Easter Joy!

IN THIS ISSUE

- Pastor's Pen
Page 2
- Respect Life Ministry
Page 3
- Parish Happenings
Page 4 & 5
- Men's Group /
Beautiful Mercy
Page 6
- SWAG
Page 7





Happy Easter! No, really – Happy Easter!!

Sherry Weddell, in her book *Forming Intentional Disciples*, cites a 2010 Barna Group religion survey that purported to show that only 37% of Catholics knew that Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus. I am sure there just has to be some fine print there – whenever I read of heart-stopping poll results like this I always wonder how the question was posed; I've already been surveyed in polls where none of the choices offered was completely correct! But in any case, granting for the moment that there is any Catholic on the face of the planet who does not know what Easter celebrates, that's one person too many. As St. Paul told the Corinthians, our whole faith hangs from this truth, that on the first Easter, God raised Jesus from the dead – if that is not true, he noted, then nothing else is true either, our entire faith is in vain (1Cor 15:14). This is the foundation of everything.



Ah, but the equally rock-bottom important realization that many people seem to be a little hazy about is that Easter does not just mean something happened to Jesus back 2000 years ago – Easter / the resurrection means that Jesus is alive and with us now! Thanks to Easter, he is as much a part of our life as the air we breathe or the gravity that keeps us upright. When I was stationed at St. Stephen parish on the East Side of Toledo, I learned that it's a Hungarian tradition to end Mass on Easter with a solemn, joyful procession all around the church with the Blessed Sacrament to finally reposing it in the tabernacle, because, as they explained, that is how the risen Jesus is present with us today. They are 100% correct about that, of course, and I've always thought that was a beautiful custom, but it's not limited to the Eucharist by any means. Now that he is liberated of the limitations of space and time, Jesus is *intimior intimo meo*, as St. Augustine put it – he, the one who loves me beyond words to tell, and whom I love with all my heart, is closer to me than my own heart, closer to me than I am to myself. I can have a personal relationship with him deeper and more real than with any other person, no matter how close I may be to them.

But wait – there's more! There is still another whole dimension of our celebration – Easter is the celebration of our resurrection to new life with Jesus. Because Easter is the vindication by God of Jesus's claim. He told us that if we do our Father's will, no matter what, then we will triumph over evil. The disciples couldn't quite believe that, and when it came time to put that truth to the test, they ran away. As so often, Peter represented them all – despite all his noisy boasting at the Last Supper (Mk 14:29, 31) that he would be faithful no matter what. In point of fact, when push came to shove, rather than deny himself, he denied Jesus, and the final picture we have of him is sobbing. He wanted to save his life, and that's all he ended up with- one sorry, circumscribed material life. Meanwhile, Jesus was faithful, and he was raised up to a life unimaginable. He was right.

So, when, as Paul insists, we are baptized, we are baptized into Christ's death; if we are united with him in a death like his, then just as certainly we shall also be raised to a like resurrection (Rom 6:5). Paul's word for "united" there actually means "grown together into one organism." By being faithful to the Father's will, we undergo crucifixion right along with him, with the certainty then, thanks to Easter, that the rest of Jesus's experience will be ours as well – we too are guaranteed to rise to a life unimaginable; we cannot be defeated!

Easter is emphatically NOT just the commemoration of some past event in the life of Jesus. It's about our whole life in hope, with him, now and forever.

HAPPY EASTER!!!

Mgr. Ken



EVERY LIFE
IS WORTH LIVING



Respect Life Ministry

St. Paul parish has established a Respect Life Ministry. We have long been a parish that recognizes and is concerned with the issue of life, not only for the unborn but also for all, from conception to natural death. Last November, several parishioners met with Peter Range, Diocesan Respect Life Coordinator, and began creating a more definitive and concrete mission to proclaim the worth and dignity of every human being.

Before I share our ministry hopes and efforts, I would like to take a moment to do a little imagining. I would like you to place yourself in this scene: you are home alone when someone tries to break into your home. Your initial response is fear and helplessness at not being able to defend or protect yourself and your home. You quickly call 911 and then your neighbors. Help becomes a possibility and with that possibility comes hope!

While our personal safety or homes may not be in harm's way, we all are still in need of hope - hope that our world is a safe place, a place which respects the life and dignity of every person. Looking within the cultural patterns of our time, this hope can be hard to find. As Christians we are now more than ever called to be counter-cultural. We must come together in a real and effective way to actively promote life and fight against the evils that threaten our Christian values.

The Respect Life Ministry has identified goals that will help us fight this battle.

1. The need for our parish to engage in heartfelt and humble prayer for the Lord's guidance in how we can make effective change. Team members and all parishioners are asked to offer part of their routine prayer life for the Holy Spirit's guidance to advance the mission of Respect for all Life. This could be done by offering a Mass, prayer in the Adoration Chapel, a rosary, fasting, Divine Mercy Chaplet, etc.

2. To educate ourselves on political issues as our duty and responsibility to fight our current cultural trends. We plan to promote and distribute USCCB materials on Faithful Citizenship especially in this year of a presidential election. We hope to educate ourselves on negotiable and non-negotiable political issues and vote accordingly.

3. To promote conversion of heart. To help all parishioners grow in their call of discipleship and to become aware of what it means to advance the Kingdom of God and Life in our domain of influence. In doing this we support one another in our faith lives.

As we do these things, in reality we are carrying out our parish mission: *To celebrate our Catholic faith* by prayer and action, *To Share the Good News* of Christ and His doctrine, and *To Serve the needs of others* in support of all life. If you feel the Lord is calling you to help this effort and work, please contact a member of the Respect Life Ministry. We have a small beginning, but with God's help, some determination and lots of prayer, it is possible to join in what St. John Paul II asked of the Church, "What is urgently called for is a general mobilization of consciences and united ethical effort to activate a great campaign in support of life. All together, we must build a new culture of Life."

Mary Mother of God and St. John Paul II, pray for us.

~ Bev Reichert



Parish Happenings



Palm Sunday
Processions



PRS students and their families made Lenten prayer chains for offering up prayer during Lent. Students were encouraged to also write a family prayer to share during the Lenten season.



PSR students attended a special retreat day at the parish on Holy Thursday. They listened to the gospel story of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and experienced having their own feet washed by others.



After receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time, children of St. Mary and St. Paul parishes each lit a candle as a sign of receiving the light of Christ.



Confirmation Retreat

The eighth grade Norwalk Catholic School and PSR students and sponsors gathered together to grow in deeper relationships with Jesus Christ at the Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue.

The candidates and sponsors listened to various community members and high school students who shared witness talks about their faith journeys. After these talks, the candidates and sponsors answered various questions about their own faith journeys. This allowed the sponsors time to lead the candidates in discussions on Catholicism and for the candidates to ask more personal questions about their faith.

The day allowed for fellowship between the PSR and NCS junior high candidates and their sponsors through a shared communal breakfast and lunch. The candidates had time to explore the Shrine while completing a scavenger hunt, looking for answers about practicing their faith. While on the hunt, the candidates had to answer questions about the Stations of the Cross, parts of the Mass, and more. At the close of the retreat, all of the sponsors and candidates received a blessing with a relic of the Holy Cross. The candidates are looking forward to their Confirmation, which will take place on April 2 at Rosary Cathedral in Toledo. ~ Mrs. Ericsson

“Our Saturday morning group helps me to be better prepared to hear the gospel on Sunday. It is encouraging to discuss the gospel with other men who are facing the same challenges that I am.”

- Chris

“The Men’s Gospel Study has shown me a much deeper understanding of the Bible, with incredible insight from Msgr. Ken and the entire group!” - Steve

MEN'S GROUP

The Saturday morning Men’s Gospel Study has been a ministry in the parish for approximately 6 1/2 years. It is a small fellowship group where the men of the parish are invited to get together to prepare for the upcoming weekend’s readings for Mass. We focus on each week’s gospel for a greater understanding of the reading itself, but more importantly, to seek its application for our daily lives. When attending in the group, you will not only become more focused and prepared for Mass, but also connect with and get to know other men of the parish. The group meets every Saturday at 8:00 am with the exception of the first Saturday of the month when we meet at 7:00 am due to 8:00 am Mass. This informal study is led by Msgr. Ken or Fr. Paul and is open to all men of the parish and surrounding parishes. No preparation is needed. Although you are welcome to bring your Bible, the readings for the weekend are preprinted and shared. You can participate to your comfort level. Some men actively participate in discussion and others are more comfortable just listening. If you’re interested in joining us, just stop in, or if you have any questions please feel free to contact Jim Walker (419-499-4008) or Msgr. Ken (419-668-6044). We hope to see you there!



BEAUTIFUL MERCY

As you already know, Pope Francis has given us the wonderful gift in naming this year “A Year of Mercy.” In light of this gift, St. Paul parish has been the recipient of another gift, the Dynamic Catholic book, *Beautiful Mercy*. This book is a compilation of reflections by 26 different authors on the seven corporal works of mercy and the seven spiritual works of mercy.

Each reflection offers simple and concrete examples of how ordinary people can perform extraordinary acts of love. Each act of mercy we share then gives witness to the power of God’s mercy.

“In the end, we all need God’s mercy. So, no matter who you are, no matter what you have been through, there is no better time than right now to rediscover the incredible power of God’s mercy. *Beautiful Mercy* is an invitation to rediscover God’s unconditional love so you can share it with others.”

Here’s what a few members of our Coffee and Conversation group, who are doing a book study on *Beautiful Mercy*, had to say about the book:

“The book helps me understand that mercy may come in many small everyday events, not in world-shaking contributions. Loving others, even those we don’t know, is mercy.” ~ Carl

“Beautiful Mercy is a compilation of 26 authors who wrote short chapters about the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. What is so unique about each work of mercy is that we are learning what each of us can do in our own way—small though it may be—to convey mercy to those we meet along our journey in life.” ~ Karen



S.W.A.G.

For the past few months you may have noticed a little logo, **S.W.A.G.**, in our parish bulletin. S.W.A.G. stands for **Serve With a Gift**. This summer, on Sunday, August 7, we are asking all of you to help our parish by doing just that – serve with your gift. Each of us has been given some talent or gift by God. *What would happen if every one of us came together for one day and offered all of that talent for the good of our parish?*

For instance, maybe your family makes terrific peanut butter fudge. You could make 10 batches of fudge, sell it on August 7, and then give all of your proceeds from that sale back to the parish. Or maybe you have a talent in woodworking or art, or your group could organize a basketball game or face painting, or play music, or plan a children's activity or give a puppet show. Or maybe you make rosaries or build nativity sets. Or maybe you do cross-stitch, make kettle corn or know how to do a photo booth. The choices are only limited by your imagination! (However, there can be no alcohol.)

Here is a list of gifts being served so far:

Propane Powered Popcorn; Scrubs, Crocheted Dishcloths and Quilting; Peanut Butter Fudge; Wind Chimes; Lemonade; Hispanic Food and Music; Red Letter Roots Spelt Flour; Florals and Decorative Shelves; Face Painting; Tres Leches Cupcakes; Incredible Edibles; Card Games for Kids; Corny Snack Mix; Cross Stitch Bookmarks; Music by St. Paul High School Band; Metal Ornaments; Graces Tasty Treats

What do you need to do to participate? First, register soon! Forms are available in the church hallway. Prepare your activity or items for the day – bake, create, craft, etc. Then on Sunday, August 7, come out to the Norwalk Reservoir at 10:00 am to set up your space. Sales or activities can continue until 3:00 pm or until you have “sold out” or have completed the activity. At 4:00 pm, we will have our outdoor Parish Mass at the reservoir and we invite you to give back all of your proceeds during the Offertory.

The S.W.A.G. committee will take care of all publicity, map the spaces, and keep an updated list of all participants and what they are contributing (so we do not end up with 10 of the same thing). The committee also will take care of parking. The space set-up and money box are up to you. There is no charge for your space. This is not a flea market or garage sale. This is bringing that one really cool thing that you, your family or group do, and sharing it with the parish.

This day is to promote FUN and some FUNDS. It is about community-building and being living examples of our faith. It is a celebration of talents. We hope that you are inspired to join us and enjoy this one day, August 7, using our gifts to support our parish.

Please see the display in the church hallway for forms and additional information. If you have any questions, please call Val French at 419-706-3374.

One Day ~ Our Gifts ~ For the Parish

Parish Family BLESSINGS

New Members:

David Brady

Jason & Clara Brown
Son, Landon

Jaime & Sandra Deleon
Children, Anferni, Destiny & Jaime

Cory & Emma Frankboner
Son, Eli

Corinne Knittle

Robert & Linda Waner

Baptisms:

Gracie Anne, Daughter of
Mark Pace & Stephanie Arbelaez

Kylie Briane, Daughter of
Steven & Katherine Toney

Franklin Paul, Son of
Adam & Rebecca Rose

Addison Nicole, Marissa Nicole,
Tristan Patrick, Children of
Ryan & Sara McDonnell

Eli James, Son of
Cory & Emma Frankboner

Nathan Christopher, Son of
Kofi & Kimberly Hite

Gil Moses, Son of
Eric & Amy Mulvin

Emma Rose, Daughter of
Brian & Nichole Hance

Pearl Josephine, Daughter of
Brandon & Corrinne Ross

Deaths:

Marcella Acierto

Gerald Didion

Jose Hernandez

Joan Kramer

Gary Mayer

Margaret McDonald

Margaret Nickoli

Richard Wise

St. Paul Catholic Church

91 E. Main St

Norwalk, OH 44857

Phone: 419-668-6044

Fax: 419-663-5770

E-mail: lisah@stpaulchurch.org

NON PROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

NORWALK, OH

Permit No. 25

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

A Year of Thanks

by Marty Catalano

- April 13 - Thank you God, for the delicious smell
of sheets dried outside.
- 14 - Thank you God, for robins, racing a few steps,
then stopping to listen.
- 15 - Thank you God, for the touch of a hand
on a slumping shoulder.
- 16 - Thank you God, for the graceful hawk,
gliding effortlessly in the blue sky.
- 17 - Thank you God, for the audacity of the
dandelions sprouting up here and there in the lawn,
so yellow, so beautiful.
- 18 - Thank you God, for the peepers who puff out
their throats and sing their strange sounds
in the wet places in springtime.
- 19 - Thank you God, for the lacy look of the tulip tree,
just beginning to leaf out.
- 20 - Thank you God, for the smell of a greenhouse
and the warm, moist feel of the air.
- 21 - Thank you God, for the look of brown April earth,
newly turned over.
- 22 - Thank you God, for cows' eyes,
big and round and soft-looking.

