

# St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

A PARISH OF THE WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

**February 2018**

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## Reacting to Life

Although my beloved Patriots lost the Super Bowl earlier this month, this year's NFL season featured one of my favorite recent unimportant subplots—letting the players dance!

I always thought the suppression of human emotion was silly: we are taught from a young age to "be ourselves" to "express ourselves" and to enjoy life. So many positive messages...and then once we get to a certain point, we are expected to stop.

Sure, some of that is when adolescence crosses into adulthood...but we pay a mighty dollar (happily, whether we realize it or not) to watch these guys play a kid's game. We also pay a mighty dollar to play armchair quarterback..."He should have passed it to #81! My dog coulda caught that!"

I always thought it was silly to expect a player, who just did the one single thing he trains his whole life for (scoring a touchdown) simply giving the football to a referee and act like he's been there before. "But that is what Jim Brown/Herschel Walker/Otto



Graham/etc. did...." The truth about that is...not nearly as many people cared about football back then! And, ironically, the people saying "act like you've been there" are the same people who tear down a small portion of their city at any sign of their team's success. I don't have the degree in Sociology to get anywhere near that phenomena!

I play in a low-level recreation basketball league. I'm 35, got a belly, and play with guys that are nearly half my age. We recently won our league championship...and it was nearly joyless. I couldn't believe it! Not that I expected to have TV cameras around and that we'd do team snow angels at half-court, but one of my teammates

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refused to even smile...weird!

As our Lord and Savior took on his earthly mission, he did a lot of amazing things...things that were never seen before, and things were kinda sorta done by guys with sketch plans. This often left reactions mixed to what he was doing before them. I want to take a quick walk through the reactions of crowds to Jesus' ministry:

Luke 4:16-30 speaks right away of what happened in his hometown of Nazareth. The reaction was...mixed. "All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said; 'Is this not Joseph's son?' But after further teaching, verse 28 says "After hearing this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage." I recalled this passage when I went to celebrate my First Mass at my home parish in Nazar...uh, Westfield.



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### Fr. Jason's Article (Cont)

In the Gospel of Matthew, 4:25, after witnessing Jesus heal, preach and minister, "Great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan." This reaction was curious observation...the same way we do when we see something unique.

In the second chapter of Mark's Gospel, we hear the miracle of the healing of the paralytic. After healing the man lowered through the roof (because the crowds were too large to get through the door) the crowds reacted "so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying,

'We have never seen anything like this!"

Finally, in John's Gospel, one more reaction. After raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44), scripture tells of two distinct reactions. From John 11:45-47- "Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, "What are we to do?"

4 Gospels, 4 reactions. The first was bemusement, amazed the carpenter's son could speak so well...followed by rage. The second

was to simply follow, to watch, to see more. The third was amazement and glorification of God. And the fourth was divided: people believed in him...or people couldn't make heads-or-tails with what he was or what was going on.

The ministry of Jesus was tough, because each person, each crowd reacted wildly different. He preached the real Word of God and ministered justly and with love...and the results were so mixed, from desire to follow to a desire to kill.

May we appreciate the patience of our Lord in maneuvering through the odd human nature....and still coming out of it as our Savior.

Fr. Jason

### Various Announcements

#### Paczki Time!

For the second year in a row, we are doing a paczki fundraiser- Place your order by Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> for pickup on Fat Tuesday, February 13 from 7-9am or 4:30-7pm. These are delicious Rudy's paczki and you'll avoid the lines at their place by getting them here. Order forms are available in the Fellowship Hall or Board Room.

#### Holy Hotcakes Dinner

For a second year in a row, we will be having an all-you-can-eat pancake & sausage dinner on Fat Tuesday. It will take place at from 5-7pm on Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup> and feature unlimited pancakes along with sausage, juices and coffee. Rudy's paczki will be available for individual sale or by pre-order.

#### 2018 General Synod

The 2018 General Synod of the PNCC takes place October 1-3, 2018 at Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, IL. We will be having a short meeting after the 9am Mass on February 11 to elect our two dele-

gates. Delegates must be a member for over 2 years and in good standing within the parish. For more info, see Fr. Jason. .

#### Longhorn Restaurant Fundraiser

St. Mary's is having a lunch-to-dinner fundraiser at Longhorn Steakhouse on Rockside Road in Independence on Monday, February 26 from noon-6pm. We will have flyers printed and distributed here at church and online. The parish will receive 10% of the total of all checks that are accompanied by the flyer. Share with your friends! This is an easy fundraiser that has been very beneficial to us in the past.

#### Pick a Number!

St. Mary's is running a "Pick a Number" Fundraiser that is featured in the foyer as soon as you walk in through the glass doors. It is designed to replenish the Improvement Fund...but also to give you a chance to win something. The details are printed out in a sheet next to the big board - please consider making a donation... and good luck!

#### Bible Study

A new section of Bible Study will begin shortly. If you have been unsure about joining us in the past, now is a good time to hop in. We will be studying "Jesus' Final Week" a guided study that will bring us to Easter. Our first meeting will be on Thursday, February 15, and then we will meet on our normal 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday schedule: February 28, March 14, and March 28.

#### Music Scholarship Sunday

Information for scholarships from the National United Choirs is available by seeing the forms posted on the bulletin board or by talking to Chris Paulus or Cleric Ploskonka or visiting online at nucmusicscholarship.weebly.com.

#### Winter Clothing Drive

Thanks to all who donated towards the United YMSofR clothing drive. Once again, we finished with the most clothes collected in the entire PNCC with nearly 1100 unique pieces of clothing, including 90(!!!) coats! What a privilege to have parishioners and friends assist in being a community asset.

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### Roland's Baptism

Once again, we were treated to a Baptism of a new Christian at St. Mary's. On Saturday, January 27, young Roland Michael Ploskonka was baptized into the faith by Father Jason Soltysiak, assisted by Roland's grandfather, Cleric James Ploskonka.

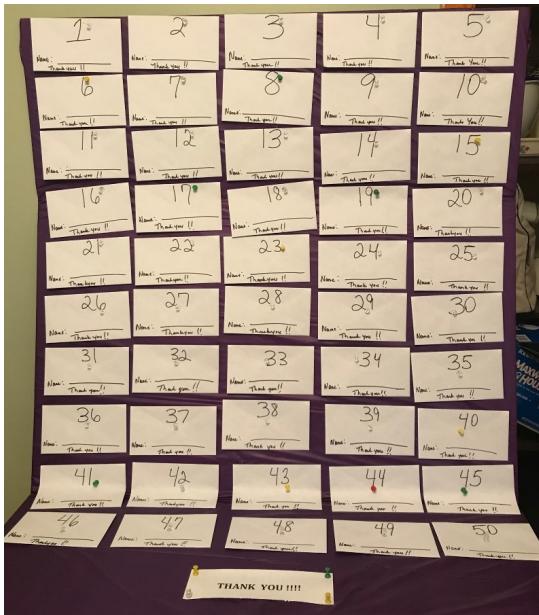
Roland, the son of Mitch and Sarah Plos-

konka, was a good boy who barely let out a sniffle during the service. His god-parents are Demi Paulus and Wesley East.



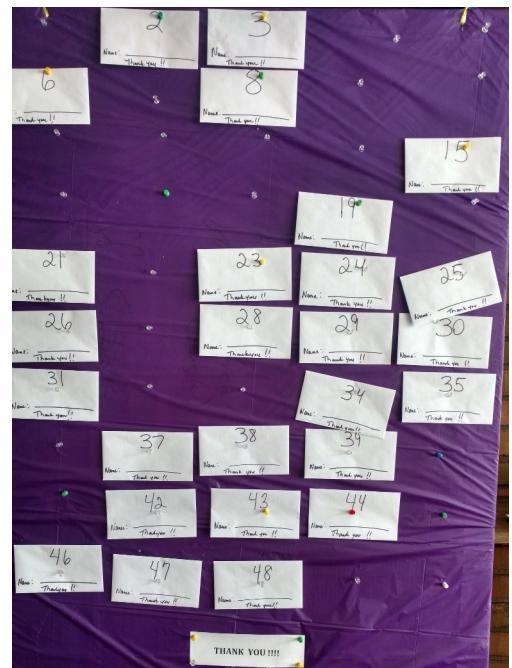
### Pick a Winner, any Winner!

St. Mary's is running a "Pick a Number!" fundraiser, with the goal of sustaining our Improvement Fund.



As you can see in the "before" picture and the picture as of February 10, many of the envelopes have been chosen. Here is how it works: you pick a number and put the corresponding donation amount into the envelope with your name. When all the numbers are picked, a pre-determined amount of people will win. It is done in shifts of ten: smallest prizes for those who made donations \$1-\$10, and larger prizes for those who donated all the way up to \$50.

Prizes will be awarded in just a few weeks—Sunday, March 4...or sooner, if we sell out. Make sure to make your donation today...and good luck!



## PNCC Future Directions Update

February 1, 2018

Dear Bishops, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, Deacons and Faithful of our Holy Church,

As we continue this Year of the Family across our Holy Polish National Catholic Church we focus this month on Unconditional Family Love. A special thanks to Rev. Fr. Scott Lill for preparing the message this month.

The family was the crowning accomplishment of God's initial work of Creation. In creating man and women, the Lord established the family as the foundation of all human society, and He endowed it with a profound dignity that far surpassed that of all other creatures. Bearing his own image and likeness and being commissioned together to rule and serve the rest of creation, that first family, however, cooperatively chose to disobey God's command and strayed from the path of righteousness, thus incurring the consequences of sin, many of the worst of which are glaringly demonstrated today in the collective brokenness of families.

But God did not give up on the family! To the contrary, it was through the cooperation of a particular family—the Holy Family of Nazareth—that God enacted his plan for our Salvation. God redeemed the family unit by becoming a member of one and, in doing so, elevated it to a graced status far greater than it had had in the beginning and bestowing on it a new and exalted mission. Just as the Holy Family was the instrument by which our Redeemer entered the world and was prepared for his saving mission, so now for Christians, each family is the instrument for the sanctification of its members, who all recognize that they have a need for something that none of the others can provide and a destiny that reaches beyond the bounds of their earthly union. In truth, the family is the first means we are given to help us get to heaven. Therefore, every aspect of family life must focus on this. It is within this context that any consideration of unconditional family love must be considered.

Many people think that unconditional love means that family members must accept and support whatever the others choose to do. If what we have already stated is true, however, then this clearly cannot be the case.

Unconditional love between family members does *not* mean that I must stand idly by as you are tempted to sin or start becoming enamored by the ways of the fallen world. It does *not* mean that I will passively allow you to turn your back on the Gospel of Jesus and the teachings of his Church to wander off into the fog of falsehood. It does *not* mean that I am bound to let you walk away from God and his Church by straying into a life of habitual sin. It does *not* mean that I must remain silent should you, even unknowingly or under the power of some external influence, forsake your baptismal dignity. In truth, none of this would be love at all.

Unconditional family love *does* mean that I will willingly overlook your imperfections even as I continue to challenge you to grow in holiness a little more each day. It *does* mean that I will always forgive your sinful failings from yesterday while helping you repent today and calling you to even greater virtue tomorrow. It *does* mean that I will always seek you when you go astray and do my best to gently lead you back to God in the Church, reminding you that you are a child of the Eternal Father, a living temple of the Holy Spirit and an heir to the Kingdom of Heaven through Jesus.

Each family member must have a humble awareness of the mission entrusted to them by God Himself when they became members of that family. Each must be willing to embrace their unique roles therein, while also looking at the others—spouse to spouse, parent to child and even child to parent—and promising this:

*I will always love you enough to willingly lay down my life for your good despite your sinfulness. I will always love you enough to push you to become a more authentic and faithful Disciple of our Lord and to open yourself to the transforming power of God's grace, even when you don't feel like it. I will always love you enough to challenge you to work on becoming a radiant icon of the living God for the whole world to see, even when you don't exactly look the part. Pushing you a little closer to Heaven each and every day, I will always love you with unconditional love as it is understood in the light of the Gospel. In short, I will always love you like Jesus loves you.*



### PNCC Future Directions Update (continued)

**PNCC Future Direction** is now on Facebook! Like us and follow our updates on Facebook too. If you know of parishioners or friends who are not a part of our monthly email updates – please have them email us at [FutureDirection@pncc.org](mailto:FutureDirection@pncc.org) to become a part of this important effort for our Holy Church. Please keep this church-wide undertaking in your daily prayers – asking God to bless this work and allow it to bear fruit for the building of His Kingdom through our Holy Church.

As we begin this Holy Year of the Family may we look to the example of the Holy Family and put God's will first in our lives. May God bless you and your family as we begin this new Year in our Lord 2018.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

#### **PNCC Supreme Council Future Direction Committee**

Most Rev. Anthony A. Mikovsky, *Prime Bishop*  
Very Rev. Robert M. Nemkovich Jr., *Chairman*

We continue to implement the five themes the Synod determined for our future direction:

Growth and Membership

Increase Spirituality

Lifelong Learning

Sacred Vocations

Community Involvement and Presence

Action Plan for PNCC Parishes in 2018: The Year of the Family

1. Greater Understanding of Church Solemnities: Humble Shepherds
2. Two Days of Retreat: Lent and Advent
3. Complete at least five community service projects
4. Implementing the Year of the Family Component
5. Implement Lay Ministry Program in PNCC
6. Move forward with PNCC Office of News & Media Relations
7. Create a PNCC Future Direction Facebook Page
8. Constant Prayer for our October 2018 General Synod

Unconditional love  
doesn't mean you  
have to  
unconditionally  
accept bad  
behaviors.

### Parish Event Notes

In the month of January, St. Mary's did host two traditional January events. Unfortunately, they were so enjoyable and the focus was on the task-at-hand that we are at a loss for pictures!

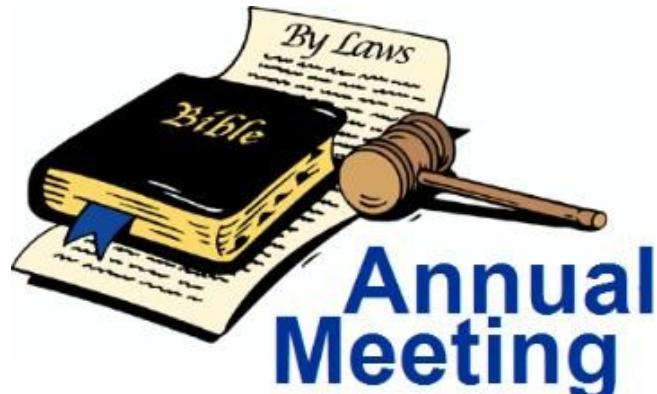
The first was our Parish Christmas Dinner, which for the last number of years has been a Potluck

at the conclusion of a combined 10am Holy Mass on Sunday, January 7. The meal began with prayer and everyone received blessed oplatek from the pastor and the parish chairperson before chowing down.

The second was the parish annual meeting, which took place on Sunday, January 28 after 9am Holy Mass.

There, we discussed the matters at hand for the

2018 year including approving a budget, workers' salaries, fundraisers, reports of organizations, and everything in between. Thanks to all for attending both events!



## February Days of Note



### February Birthdays

- |      |                        |
|------|------------------------|
| 2nd  | – Mrs. Andrea Grmovsek |
| 3rd  | – Carole D'Arcy        |
| 4th  | – Paul Wankowski       |
| 7th  | – Louise Cygan         |
| 8th  | – Claire Hunek         |
| 11th | – Pollyanna Gajda      |
| 13th | – Teresa Kasperczyk    |
| 18th | – Matthew Moritz       |
| 22nd | – Karen Bedocs         |
| 23rd | – Amy Dreger           |
| 25th | – Joyce Knapp          |
| 28th | – Fr. Greg Gronn       |
|      | – Helen Budney         |
|      | Tom Putynski           |



### February Anniversaries

- |     |                      |
|-----|----------------------|
| 2nd | – Bill & Joan Kastak |
|-----|----------------------|



## "Ash Wednesday"

### I

Shut out the light or let it filter through  
These frowning aisles as penitentially  
As though it walked in sackcloth.  
Let it be  
Laid at the feet of all that ever grew  
Twisted and false, like this rococo shrine  
Where cupids smirk from candy clouds and where  
The Lord, with polished nails and perfumed hair,  
Performs a parody of the divine.  
The candles hiss; the organ-pedals storm;  
Writhing and dark, the columns leave the earth  
To find a lonelier and darker height.  
The church grows dingy while the human swarm  
Struggles against the impenitent body's mirth.  
Ashes to ashes. . . . Go. . . . Shut out the light.

### II

And so the light runs laughing from the town,  
Pulling the sun with him along the roads  
That shed their muddy rivers as he goads  
Each blade of grass the ice had flattened down.  
At every empty bush he stops to fling  
Handfuls of birds with green and yellow throats;  
While even the hens, uncertain of their notes,  
Stir rusty vowels in attempts to sing.  
He daubs the chestnut-tips with sudden reds  
And throws an olive blush on naked hills  
That hoped, somehow, to keep themselves in white.  
Who calls for sackcloth now? He leaps and spreads  
A carnival of color, gladly spills His blood: the resurrection—and the light.

--Louis Untermeyer--

## Our Prayer List

Please pray for these St. Mary's parishioners:

Bill & Pat Glatzer	Barbara Baranowski
Bill & Joan Kastak	Anna Dawidziuk
Craig Atherton	John Spilka
Johanna Markiewicz	Mary Ann Loschelder
Ralph & June Zaun	Len Pryer
Marty Bengela	Gerald Beres
Elaine Rzonca	Frank Dominik
Kathleen Beres	Louise Cygan
Chester & Helen Budney	Bruno Tracy
Chester & Ann Warzala	Tom Petrie
Gail Perz	Amy Dreger
Polly Gajda	

Please pray for our family and friends:

Wanda Clark	Beth Chihill
Michael Cosevin	Helen Cummings
Laina Dachtal	Sharon Seitz
Jay Grabowsky	Pam Chesar
Cecelia Hall	Caroline Kunes
Mark & Kim Andreas	Thomas Lill
John & Anne Nemetz	Bea Miskow
Rose Neyman	Carol Boesch
Joanie True	Daniel Rinella
Fr. Tom Sheha	Fr. Sr. Gus Sicard
Gracie Pijor	Ben Soltesy
Pam Tropiano	Linda Vect
Dennis and Sue Vect	Marcus Vaughn, Jr.
Bryson Dzuroff	Al Tomasello
Cherise Pacanovsky	Jane Hunter
Dennis Thome	The Finnie Family
Carlene Fliss	Jim Fliss Jr.
Duda Family	Daniel Morgan
Nan Cramer	Bp. Stanley Bilinski
Bp. John Mack	David Vaden
Bp. John Swantek	Jeannie Bartko Muran
Mary Cawley	Edna Samelson
Kim Blaha	Geri S.
Wanda Heffner	Larry Bernacki
Donna Kidd	Colleen Howard
Muffie B.	Nancy Jablonowski
Marilyn Girard	Larry Hoekstra
Stephanie Milla	Rich Dombrowski
Shannon Alberino	Jayden Pieciak
Jeremy Steinbrick	Coleen Fisteck
Marcia Klein	Mike Sikut
George & Linda Makovicka	

Those in nursing homes or assisted living:  
Gene Mora

WE ALSO REMEMBER  
ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY  
ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN  
Bless them, O Lord.

Visit us online at  
[www.stmaryspncc.org](http://www.stmaryspncc.org)