

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

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

February 2019

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Wash it Away...

One of the first things I was taught in Seminary was that, although we think we all have a pretty good grasp on it...we are not supposed to memorize the Mass.

At first, that seemed crazy to me—I had begun as an altar server when I was 4 years old, meaning when I entered seminary in 2004, I already had 18 years of assisting at Mass, every week, plus funerals, etc.

So, this article is about the first part of Mass I memorized (!!!). Actually, it was in response to a simple call by one of my seminary professors—make sure you memorize as much scripture as you can while you have the time.

I grew up in a parish that celebrated the Traditional Rite of the Mass, and when I went to seminary in Scranton, PA, the Cathedral parish there predominantly did the same. During the Offertory section of the Mass, the celebrant washes his hands, and the words are direct from scripture. From Psalm 26:6-12: "I wash my hands in innocence and go about your altar, O



Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving and telling all Your wondrous deeds. O Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells. Sweep me not away with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men, men in whose hands are evil devices and whose right hands are full of bribes. But as for me, I walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me. My foot stands on level ground; in the great congregation I will bless the Lord."

Having a priest for a dad (dad for a priest?!) made me think of these things at a young age. When we were part of Holy Saviour Parish in Union City, CT, maybe about 1990 or so, my older brother AJ and my dad got in an argument over AJ having to wash his hands for dinner. Dad won, of course, but AJ's big defense was that my dad's hands were always dirty because he had to wash them in the middle of Mass. Hey, he had 8 year-old me convinced!

In the Contemporary Rite of the Mass, the words for hand-washing are simpler: "Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin." This is quoted from Psalm 51:2, a verse that is also chanted during our funeral liturgy.

Back to my father...and any priest, really. Of course we wash our hands before we

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come out for Mass. But why in the middle, again?

I'll go through three reasons, so we can keep track: keeping with the Judeo-Christian practice, following Catholic/practical history, and for self/soul.

One of the rarely mentioned facets of our faith is that it isn't new; it is an evolution of Judaism. Christianity is the culmination of the desire of God's Chosen people—a Messiah, sent and received by God for all who believe.

With that necessity comes our practice. So, so much of what we do is Jewish in origin. From the basics of Mass (Recalling sinfulness, Scripture, interpretation of scripture, a sacrifice) to even how and what order these things are done to even kinda sorta how the inside of a church looks—strong, symbolic ties to Judaism.

In Exodus, 30:17-21, we have an explanation of how ritualistic cleansing came to be. Verse 19 states "with water Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet." and 21 says "They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die: it shall be a perpetual ordinance for them and for descendants throughout all generations."

From then, it became part of offering a sacrifice—before the sacrifice was offered, before the altar was approached, a ritualistic hand washing had to occur. In the Mass, this takes place shortly before the canon, making sure hands are clean for the Consecration.

Fr. Jason's Article (cont)

Second, we follow Catholic/practical history in this. Life is easy in 2019, with running water always available, with hand sanitizer never more than some kid's mother or aunt away. However, we know this wasn't always the case.

Imagine Mass a thousand years ago, in 1019, in a church across the pond, lit by candles and sunshine. Soap was...you know...a little more rudimentary. Influenza was a borderline death sentence, immunization was still 7+ decades away...so every little bit helped.

In the Roman Catholic Mass today, there is a procession of the gifts to the altar to begin the Offertory. This dates back to the 2nd Century, when still-illegal Christians held services in houses, caves, etc. It was often the host or hostess who

would bring up the bread and wine that they themselves prepared or acquired, offering prayers (of the faithful/intercessions) as well.

Historically, that is beautiful. It speaks to the earthly being offered on the altar by those not-in-Holy-Orders to become something divine; to become Christ's Body and Blood. Practically, and unfortunately, it allowed a few bad apples to "mess things up" for the celebrant. This led to a period where the ritualistic cleansing became much more deliberate

Third point, the washing is for the celebrant's soul. A priest cannot impart a sacrament to himself. If this *were* the case, there'd be a priest offering himself God's forgiveness every time he mis-stepped...or worse, as we can imagine.

Celebrating Mass is such a privilege, the words of scripture used (at either Mass) resound with the unworthiness that is felt. It is a call to God to have mercy on the priest's soul on that moment, to be mindful and tolerant of his sinful nature...all while offering the perfect sacrifice on the altar. It is a personal and selfish (the good selfish) penitential prayer, meant for the priest.

When Jesus is approached in Mark 7:1-37 about the disciples not washing, he speaks to the point that purity, and the desire for it, must come from within. That if the soul is soiled, no amount of empty ritual will clean it.

That is everything, isn't it? I'll continue next month with an explanation and/or history of what we do at St. Mary's.

Fr. Jason

Various Announcements

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD

We welcomed Prime Bishop Anthony Mikovsky to St. Mary's to be our Celebrant of Holy Mass and to impart the offices of Acolyte & Sub-Deacon to Cleric Jim Ploskonka. We were blessed by his presence and as well as that of his wife, Carol. A write-up and pictures will be in the next newsletter.

WHAT'S A SUBDEACON?

"Cleric" Jim should now be addressed "Sub-Deacon Jim." This is an interim title and office, as he is still preparing in his diaconate studies. You'll now see Sub-Deacon Jim assisting at Mass on "the other" side at times, in addition to still turning pages. He will begin his preaching ministry shortly, first at services during Lent.

THANK YOU!

To all the people who helped out at last Sunday's brunch after Mass. I could not begin to remember all the names of the people who cooked, baked, served, and cleaned up. I can just say thank you for being there. It was a great success with lots of com-

plements; I guess it does take a village...or at least a church...Again, thank you, and congratulations to Sub-Deacon Jim Ploskonka. Vice-Chair Steve "The Wafflemaker" Fesz. PS: Looking forward to the Easter bonnets...

BLESSING OF THROATS

Took place last Sunday after our 10am Holy Mass. With the protection of St. Blaise, perhaps your cheering for your pastor's favorite football team last Sunday was doubly loud.

LONGHORN FUNDRAISER

St. Mary's is having a restaurant fundraiser at Longhorn Steakhouse on Rockside Road in Independence on Tuesday, February 19 from noon-9pm. 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. This is an easy fundraiser that has been very beneficial to us. The flyer is the last page included in this newsletter—take it with you to the restaurant on that day. Extra flyers are available at church—be sure to let your friends know—the more peo-

ple who use a flyer that day, the better!

PAĆZKI TIME!

For the third year in a row, we are doing a pączki fundraiser- Flyers are available – Orders can be made for a dozen (\$20) or a half (\$10) with notations how to pick your flavors. Pick up is fat Tuesday, March 5 from 7-9am or 4:30-7pm,

HOLY HOTCAKES DINNER

Takes place from 5-7pm on Tuesday, March 5th and feature unlimited pancakes and sausage, juices and coffee. Look for advertisement around the church and in the newsletter. Rudy's pączki will be available for individual sale or by pre-order.

MISSION & EVANGELISM WORKSHOP

Takes place March 29-31 at Holy Trinity Parish in Plantsville, CT. Info is posted on the bulletin board- transportation may be provided.

SCHEDULING MASSES

Happy New Year! As the New Year has arrived, please be aware that Masses are open to be scheduled for 2019. Some dates have been filled, so if there is a date you normally keep, please make sure to inform Fr. Jason in person, via email, or by phone.

Hygiene Kits

One of the neat things that has become a regular, near-annual activity at St. Mary's is the construction and donation of hygiene kits to the needy in the Cleveland area.

All year long, we ask for donations of travel or individually sized hygiene items, which are collected until we have enough to make a sizable donation. We then package them together as a shower kit, replete with a washcloth, soap, shampoo, and then a toothbrush and paste. They are then brought over to the Malachi Center, located near downtown Cleveland.

This year, we gathered to do this as a parish Love of God Sodality and the Mission

Team. Everything began with Holy Mass that was celebrated in loving memory of the departed sisters of the Sodality. The name of each departed member was read off during the prayers of the faithful. Following Mass, a delicious breakfast was ready to fuel everyone for the work ahead.

Though the donation was dropped off, we begin the cycle anew: please continue to make like Robin Hood when you visit a hotel, knowing we will pay it forward!



Epiphany, Installation, Potluck, Oh My!

On Sunday, January 6, the Solemnity of the Epiphany of Our Lord, we celebrated a number of things here at St. Mary's.

First, as Fr. Jason pointed out in his sermon—the revelation of the Christ Child to those who weren't among God's "Chosen People:" a major point in what would be his redemptive story.

Second, we blessed chalk and incense that would be used in the upcoming home blessings and throughout the year. Holy Water would later be blessed as well.

Third, the Parish Committee was installed for the 2019 year. They were elected at a meeting in December.

As our parish custom has recently been as well, we celebrated the day with just one Mass at 10am, followed by a Potluck in the downstairs hall. There, on the 12th Day of Christmas, Father Jason and Elaine Ploskonka, our parish chairperson, welcomed everyone with the blessed oplatki before they ap-

proached the tables that contained everyone's delicious food. Our entertainment consisted of the baby races between Max and Brady, as they wound their way through the tables, stealing canes and knocking over water bottles.



2019 Parish Annual Meeting

The Parish Annual Meeting of St. Mary's took place on Sunday, January 27 after 9am Mass. The 11am Mass, as custom, was canceled for the day.

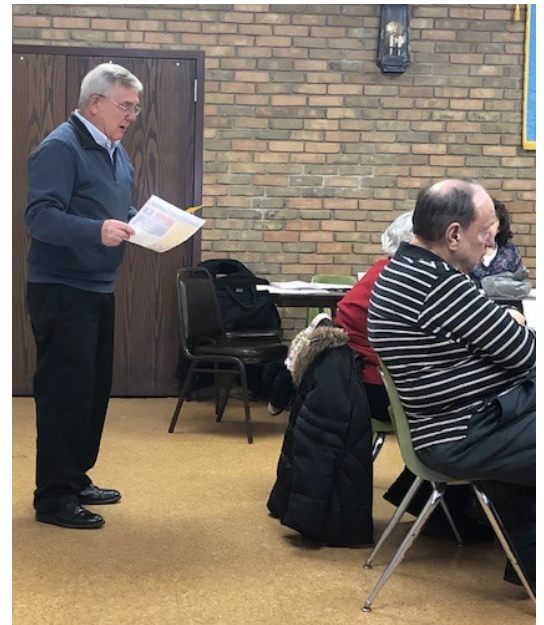
Before the meeting began, we were treated to a variety of foods to munch on, from donuts to cold cuts. It was a long-standing tradition of the parish to have a big, full breakfast to get ready for the Annual Meeting.

Once satiated, our meeting began with prayer by Father Jason. Our Parish Chair, Elaine Ploskonka, offered opening remarks and appointed marshals. The agenda, minutes from our last Annual Meeting as well as our Semi-Annual Meeting were approved, and reports were given. Father Jason's report in-

cluded the parish statistics and goals for 2019. Other reports included the Financial, auditor, building & grounds, and organizational reports. Copies are available by request in the Board Room.

Old business and a review of 2018 took place, and Cleric Jim Ploskonka presented the budget for 2019 to the parish. As is practice, this budget was previously presented to the parish committee, who then fine-tuned it to present to the entire parish. Our 2019 year of activities was proposed, and after some announcements and adjournment, we offered prayer to conclude our meeting, all in less than two hours!

Our Annual Meeting is the highest governing body of our parish, and the decisions are binding to what we do in the year. All input was appreciated!



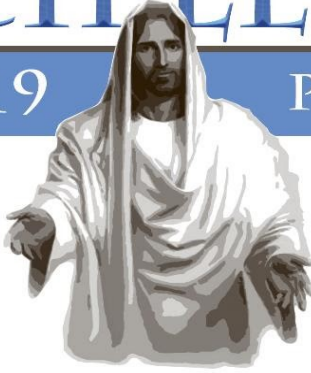
Annual Meeting Sunday



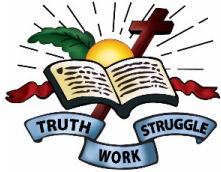
PNCC Future Directions Update

DISCIPLESHIP

2019 PNCC



February 1, 2019



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

As we begin this second month of Discipleship: 2019 we focus on teaching by example. We, as disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, continue to learn from His example in our reading and hearing of the Sacred Scriptures. How Jesus lived. What He taught. As His disciples today we need to teach others by example – teach them about the one that teaches us. It is not by forcing or guiltting someone into following Christ but rather by the way we chose to live – showing Jesus living in and through us – in a nutshell being Jesus to others!

During this month our Holy Church is calling us to take a look at our lives and find a way we can role model the life of Christian discipleship – being Jesus to others. A great way to do this is living the Virtues. Living a virtuous life, we know is living in a good and righteous way. The seven Heavenly Virtues are Faith, Hope, Charity Fortitude, Justice, Temperance and Prudence. How do we live these virtues on a daily basis? Which can we enhance during this month and teach others by our example – just as Jesus teaches us by His example?

Remember St. Paul's words to the Colossians (3:12-14): *As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*

This month it is suggested that we organize and attend some type of informal, faith-based discussion gathering for adults within our parish or cluster of parishes. This idea (which originated from one of the Synod discussion groups) is to use some form of "contemporary ministry" to accomplish the goal of "Increased spirituality through a welcoming church family that, through worship of God, will bring us closer together." Some suggestions for what this setting might be are: Soup, Sandwich, and Sermon; Wine and Spirits; Potluck Dinner and Discussion; Book Club and Bubbly....and you get the idea.

As some may shy away from either organizing or attending something like this – something that might take us out of our usual comfort zone, below are some suggestions to consider and will hopefully help you to say YES to trying to hold a gathering as we are all called to Discipleship: 2019:

1-Prevent the thought of trying something new from overwhelming you or others in your parish by focusing on just doing this ONCE to begin with. Don't worry about building out a whole schedule for these gatherings. Just plan the first one and then see what happens. Build from there.

2-TRY IT one time. To try just once should be the universal theme whenever we are presented with something different or new. How many times have we attempted to get a child to try a new food, or convinced our spouse to try a new restaurant? This is no different. No one is asking for a lifetime commitment of your Friday evenings here...just one.

3-Construct a setting that can help people to visualize that this will be something different and not the same old same old, we've tried this before, been there done that, church thing. If you can, create a casual setting in your church hall using comfortable chairs, accent tables, an area rug, plants and flowers or

PNCC Future Directions Update (continued)

whatever you have available, to coincide with when you introduce the idea of this gathering. Let people see that the setting will be something different and more relaxed.

4-Gather input from the adults in your parish about when to have this gathering and what the format might be. Introduce a short survey one Sunday and ask the adults to complete the anonymous survey during coffee hour. Use this information to help determine the best date/time for your first event, asking just a few simple questions, such as:

Will you attend the Wine and Spirits, faith-based discussion gathering? Y/N

If yes, which of the following dates/times work best for you? Give two to three specific options and then include an "other" option and let them fill in the blank.

If you will not attend, can you provide some insight as to why not? For example, work schedule, no transportation, on vacation.

Do you have any suggestions for this type of gathering?

5-If childcare may be an issue in getting some of the adults in your parish to commit to even one time, consider having the kids come along and they can watch a movie together in another room. Naturally this is all dependent upon the age of the children and what resources are available, but the message here is to try and find a solution that will work for everyone for this one time.

6-Once a date and time is finalized, continue to promote this event. Email the parishioners with friendly reminders as the event approaches. Send out a postcard reminder such as a "Save the Date" kind of thing. Make a big deal about this gathering, reminding people how important their participation is.

7-If you are from one of our smaller parishes, try coordinating something with nearby PNCC parishes or at a Seniorate level if that works.

Reach out to the Future Direction sub-committee if you have questions or need more information on how to organize an informal, faith-based discussion. Send your email to futuredirection@pncc.org

Please keep these church-wide undertakings 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.

Remember as our Lord taught us by His example, may we, as His disciple today, teach others by the way that we live our lives – showing them Jesus.

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 Discipleship: 2019

Develop and emphasize Discipleship throughout 2019

Special Masses

Create a Business Free Zone

Adult Continuing Education

Social Media Presence

Two Days of Spiritual Retreat

Complete Six Community Service Projects



February Days of Note



February Birthdays

- 2nd – Mrs. Andrea Grmovsek
- 3rd – Carole D'Arcy
- 4th – Paul Wankowski
- 7th – Louise Cygan
– Claire Hunek
- 8th – Pollyanna Gajda
- 11th – Teresa Kasperczyk
- 13th – Matthew Moritz
- 16th – Owen Arnold
- 18th – Karen Bedocs
- 22nd – Amy Dreger
- 23rd – Joyce Knapp
- 25th – Fr. Greg Gronn
- 28th – Helen Budney
Tom Putynski



February Anniversaries

- 2nd – Bill & Joan Kastak

When I Say, "I am a Christian"

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not shouting, "I've been saved!"
I'm whispering, "I get lost!"
That's why I chose this way".

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I don't speak with human pride
I'm confessing that I stumble –
Needing God to be my guide

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not trying to be strong
I'm professing that I'm weak
And pray for strength to carry on.

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not bragging of success
I'm admitting that I've failed
And cannot ever pay the debt.

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I don't think I know it all
I submit to my confusion
Asking humbly to be taught.

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I'm not claiming to be perfect
My flaws are all too visible
But God believes I'm worth it.

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I still feel the sting of pain
I have my share of heartache,
Which is why I seek His name.

When I say, "I am a Christian"
I do not wish to judge
I have no authority...
I only know I'm loved

Our Prayer List

Please pray for these St. Mary's parishioners:

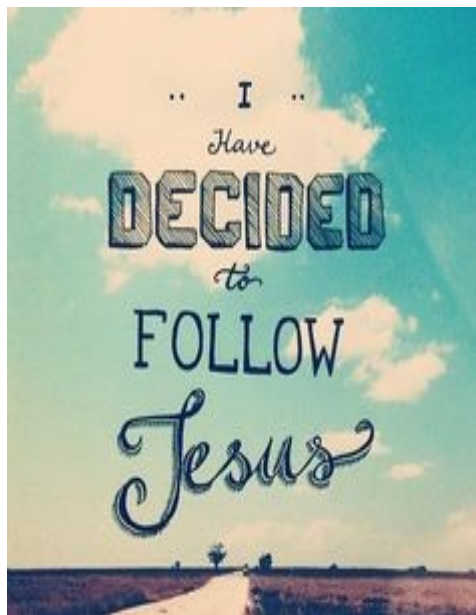
Bill & Pat Glatzer	Barbara Baranowski
Bill & Joan Kastak	Anna Dawidziuk
Craig Atherton	John Spilka
Johanna Markiewicz	Mary Ann Loschelder
Ralph & June Zaun	Len Pryer
Marty Bengela	Tom Putynski
Polly Gajda	Millie Dominik
Kathleen Beres	Louise Cygan
Helen Budney	Bruno Tracy
Chester & Ann Warzala	Tom Petrie
Amy Dreger	Patti Dotson
Halina Dreger	Jack Spilka

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	Rhonda Smith
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 Dzurhoff	Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak
Cherise Pacanovsky	Jane Hunter
Dennis Thome	The Finnie Family
Carlene Fliss	Jim Fliss Jr.
John Michalczyk	Bill Hinton
Nan Cramer	Rose Petrosky
Bp. John Mack	David Vaden
Bp. John Swantek	Jeannie Bartko Muran
Mary Cawley	Edna Samelson
Anthony Soltysiak	Geri S.
Wanda Heffner	Loretta Baldwin
Donna Kidd	Paulette Lilli
Muffie B.	Nancy Jablonowski
Marilyn Girard	Courtney Austin
Stephanie Milla	Rich Dombrowski
Shannon Alberino	Jayden Pieciak
Jeremy Steinbrick	Katie Stallbaum
Marcia Klein	Julia Badarzynski
George & Linda Makovicka	Julie L.
Kelly B	Barbara B.
Michael McGivern	Sylvia Kowalski

WE ALSO REMEMBER

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



by Carol Wimmer

Visit us online at
www.stmaryspncc.org

RAISING THE STEAKS



DINING FOR DOLLARS

At LongHorn Steakhouse®, we're proud that fundraising is such a huge part of our community involvement.

Join us 2/19/2019, as we partner with St. Mary's Church through the Dining for Dollars program. Bring your voucher in between the hours of 12 pm and 9 pm and LongHorn Steakhouse® will donate 10% of your check to St. Mary's Church.



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