

November 2009

Our Parish News

St. Mary's Church and Sacred Heart Church

Thanksgiving must be more about what it means than what we eat.

Most everyone looks forward to the Thanksgiving holiday, some because it represents a few days off and others because we get to enjoy a special meal with family, relatives, and friends. I have often wondered if we would be willing to give up those two days of Thanksgiving to know that others who are starving in other places throughout the world had enough for only a few days? Would it be more beneficial, fulfilling, or enriching to us if we could share our bounty with others?

I remember when I about sixteen that my Mom gave me a plate of food for a man in our town who had no one to spend Thanksgiving with. Unfortunately he did, but he was not invited to be with his extended family because of, well, a falling out or other issues from the past which may have made him unwelcome by some family members. We all should look forward to holidays with others but most of all those holidays were set aside for a Christian purpose, to Thank God.

It is a good thing when we join in helping others celebrate Thanksgiving by helping provide what they may lack. It is also necessary for us to invite and lead others in giving thanks to God.

Shouldn't our Thanksgiving Day begin with giving thanks to the founder of the feast, God? While other Christian churches do not always have services on Thanksgiving, the Catholic Church has always celebrated the Eucharist, which means "Thanksgiving" on Thanksgiving Day.

Food, football, and all the other enjoyable aspects of such a holiday deserve recognitions, but what of our recognition of God? For some families a special meal prayer precedes everything. When you belong to a large family which continues to grow it becomes almost a race to get everything ready and keep it hot. The preparations put into the feast are

truly unbelievable and we should be grateful. Wouldn't it be bad manners to not recognize the cooks and those who offer us such a grand meal? Maybe we should look at the Eucharist in even a more humble and grateful manner. When we join together before God we recognize not only our immediate family but our oneness in the Body of Christ and our eternal family.

As I celebrate the Eucharist (Thanksgiving) Mass this year I am given the chance to again offer something for the man I brought the meal to so many years ago. Maybe he will ask God to give me something I need more than food as we celebrate the Eucharist?

The holidays are often difficult for those who have experienced the death of a loved one. While we miss the immediate presence of relatives who have passed from this life, we should be thankful for the celebration of the Mass when we are able to join with them in praising, giving thanks, and asking God not only for our needs but the needs of all. Maybe looking forward to the Thanksgiving holiday should be more about what it means than what we eat. If we could approach it so, maybe we would find blessings that give us more than just two days off from work.

My hope and prayer for each of you this Thanksgiving holiday is that your time together may be special beyond belief and blessed more than your can imagine.

Thankful for all God has given us.

Fr. Joe

Praying for others is our duty, our privilege, while teaching us charity

One of the most common things I hear daily, are requests from people to pray for them or their loved ones. It seems we all know we need to hold others up in prayer before God in their journey of faith and even after they have passed from this life. It is an act of charity to pray for the dead and we should encourage our family members, especially teach our children, to do so for our loved ones even years after their passing from this life.

God's love and mercy should not be taken for granted, presumed, this does not mean we doubt God's promises to us in baptism or as members of his body. Sacred scripture and the early church tradition show that we as a community of faith have always recognized the value of praying for others. St. Paul exhorted early communities to pray for not only for those in authority and positions of leadership but patiently for those weaker in faith or fallen away from the practice of their faith. Such prayer is called "**Intercessory prayer**" and we practice it not only in our daily prayer but especially at every Mass.

Intercessory prayer is what we ask of Mary the Mother of God when we pray the rosary which helps us meditate upon the mysteries of Christ Our Lord's life or when we ask saints or angels for special aid. God of course is the one prayer is directed toward ultimately, it is just that we know we can ask for the help of those closest to God and who also hold a special care about our needs. It is kind of like our asking our Mom for something knowing that she influences our Dad's willingness to favor our requests.

Why do we pray for the dead? Well I think it plainly shows that we care about them and still consider our relationship with them and their happiness as part of our desire. We are called to love as God loves, which means we never quit we always want others to be as close to God as possible. In the Gospels Jesus heard the requests of those who wanted life for their loved ones, why would we doubt God's willingness to hear our requests, prayers, for those who await his justice, mercy, and eternal life?

As we approach the feasts of All Saints (Oct 31) and All Souls (Nov 1) I would like to encourage us to make a special effort to pray for others and especially those who have died. We ask God's peace and joy for all, especially those most in need of God's

mercy.

Halloween should be more about saints than about witches, monsters, and ghosts. You and I have a responsibility to pray for others, wouldn't it be nice if we spend as much time doing that as decorating and trick or treating?

I invite you again to consider giving time to prayer in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. As we pray for others we should also be thankful for those who have gone before in faith, let us lift up our prayer for them because they gave us more than we often realize. Let us teach the next generation to pray for others as well and then we can hope they will pray for us one day when we need it in a special way.

Praying for you and those we love.

Fr. Joe



Thursday, November 26

Thanksgiving Day

8:00 am Mass at St. Mary's Church

11:30 am Mass at Sacred Heart

The parish office will be closed on Thursday & Friday, November 26 & 27 in honor of the holiday. There will be no Mass or Service on Friday.

St. Mary's Parish Council
Summary of October 19, 2009 Meeting

Financial: Some recent expenses have included the *Why Catholic?* program fee and a new vacuum cleaner.

Maintenance: The stainless steel cross has been installed on the front of the carport with lighting soon to be installed. Windows on the north end of the building are to be painted & caulked. Upper parking lot will be sealed before winter.

Education: The Why Catholic groups, RCIA & PSR classes are all going well. The 9th & 10th grade class will be putting together food baskets for needy families at Thanksgiving.

Additional lectors and greeters are needed.

The parish facilities use policy will be updated to include a fee for cleaning.

John Mahan agreed to assist Fr. Joe with a budget committee.

Fr. Joe is investigating the possibility of upgrading the restrooms to include wheelchair accessibility.

Coming in 2010:

Trivia Night is January 16. More information coming soon!

A Parish Picnic will be planned for spring or summer.



Welcome to St. Mary's Parish

Kathy Muir
Joseph Sherman

A Deacon's Reflection -- Deacon Pat Keefe

We may all be at different places in our *Why Catholic?* journey, but what follows is some reflections on some of the early material.

Session one we looked at the Beatitudes. We are all called to be Beatitude people. It is through living the Beatitudes that we transform our thinking and our actions to reflect the life of Jesus.

We were introduced to the *Catechism*, and how it reflects the Church's teachings on morality. In exploring the *Catechism* we have experience the depth and beauty of our Catholic faith and Catholic teaching.

Along the way we are learning to share our faith and the richness of our personal experiences of Christ in our lives. We are learning to apply the gospel to our daily actions and appreciate the experience of others.

In session two we talked of freedom and how it carries with it responsibility for all our actions. We

were asked to look at who and why we love. To seek healing in our personal relationships and to try and respond to the gospel in our daily lives.

In session three we talked of the development of our conscience. To seek what God and the church teaches rather than what we see and feel in our culture.

In session four we looked at the Cardinal and Theological virtues. Knowing the history and development of the virtues gives us insight into historical tradition of the teachings of our faith.

We have been given a tremendous personal and communal opportunity to grow both spiritually and in knowledge of our faith. Let us pray for each other as we move forward with *Why Catholic?* May we encourage those who have not been in the program to join in the Spring. I am looking forward to the retreat so that we may share with those in different groups what we have learned and how we have grown.

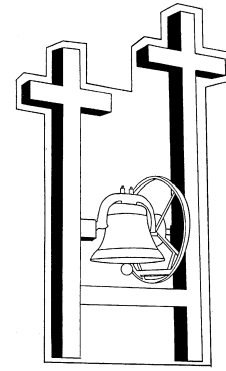
St. Mary's Church

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Sacred Heart Church

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Parish Office

Open Monday - Thursday
8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Closed Fridays

(417) 256-2556 office (417) 256-9251 fax

Parish Staff

Fr. Joe Weidenbenner, Pastor
Deacon Patrick Keefe, Pastoral Associate
Patti Sexton, Administrative Assistant

Scripture Readings for November 2009

1	All Saints Rv 7:2-4, 9-14; Ps 24:1-4ab, 5-6; 1 Jn 3:1-3; Mt 5:1-12a	16	1 Mc 1:10-15, 41-43, 54-57, 62-63; Ps 119: 53, 61, 134, 150, 155, 158; Lk 18:35-43
2	All Souls Wis 3:1-9; Ps 23:1-6; Rom 5:5-11 or 6:3-9; Jn 6:37- 40	17	2 Mc 6:18-31; Ps 3:2-7; Lk 19:1-10
3	Rom 12:5-16a; Ps 131:1-3; Lk 14:15-24	18	2 Mc 7:1, 20-31; Ps 17:1, 5-6, 8, 15; Lk 19:11-28
4	Rom 13:8-10; Ps 112:1-2, 4-5, 9; Lk 14:25-33	19	1 Mc 2:15-29; Ps 50:1-2; 5-6, 14-15; Lk 19:41-44
5	Rom 14:7-12; Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14; Lk 15:1-10	20	1 Mc 4:36-37, 52-59; 1 Chr 29:10-12; Lk 19:45-48
6	Rom 15:14-21; Ps 98:1-4; Lk 16:1-8	21	1 Mc 6:1-13; Ps 9:2-4, 6, 16, 19; Lk 20:27-40
7	Rom 16:3-9, 16, 22-27; Ps 145:2-5, 10-11; Lk 16:9-15	22	Christ the King Dn 7:13-14; Ps 93:1-2, 5; Rv 1:5-8; Jn 18:33b-37
8	Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time 1 Kgs 17:10-16; Ps 146:7-10; Heb 9:24-28; Mk 12:38-44 or 12:41-44	23	Dn 1:1-6, 8-20; Dn 3:52-56; Lk 21:1-4
9	Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; 1 Cor 3:9c-11, 16-17; Jn 2:13-22	24	Dn 2:31-45; Dn 3:57-61; Lk 21:5-11
10	Wis 2:23—3:9; Ps 34:2-3, 16-19; Lk 17:7-10	25	Dn 5:1-6, 13-14, 16-17, 23-28; Dn 3:62-67; Lk 21:12-19
11	Wis 6:1-11; Ps 82:3-4, 6-7; Lk 17:11-19	26	Dn 6:12-28; Dn 3:68-74; Lk 21:20-28
12	Wis 7:22b-8:1; Ps 119:89-91, 130, 135, 175: Lk 17:20-25		[<i>Thanksgiving</i> Sir 50:22-24; Ps 138:1-5; 1 Cor 1:3-9; Lk 17:11-19]
13	Wis 13:1-9; Ps 19:2-5; Lk 17:26-37	27	Dn 7:2-14; Dn 3:75-81; Lk 21:29-33
14	Wis 18:17-16; 19:6-9; Ps 105:2-3, 36-37, 42-43; Lk 18:1-8	28	Dn 7:15-27; Dn 3:82-87; Lk 21:34-36
15	Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time Dn 12:1-3; Ps 16:5, 8-11; Heb 10:11-14, 18; Mk 13:24-32	29	First Sunday of Advent Jer 33:14-16; Ps 25:4-5, 8-10, 14; 1 Thes 3:12—4:2; Lk 21:25-28, 34-36
		30	Rom 10:9-18; Ps 19:8-11; Mt 4:18-22