

## PASTOR'S DESK

### Mary, Mother of All

When you hear that this is the feast of Mary, the Mother of God, what is the first image that comes into your head? Was it that Christmas image of Mary holding the baby Jesus contentedly on her lap—with Mary looking unbelievably calm and placid?

We have to remind ourselves that Jesus didn't stay on Mary's lap forever. Many of our Mary images may not be helpful to us as we mature. We need more authentic images to revitalize our prayer. But we don't find all the details we need in the Scriptures. So we have to use our imaginations to picture Mary as the mother of Jesus as a toddler, a teen, and an unpredictable 20-something. In short—*his entire life*.

How must Mary have felt as Jesus began to upset the religious authorities. Even though Mary had seen angels, and knew God's presence and love first-hand, she was a human mother who suffered intensely at simply "not knowing" how it would end. It appeared to end at the cross—which is where we see Mary standing, simply accepting the reality of the crucified, dead body of her beloved Son, Jesus.

Many of us have had to stand at the bedside or grave of a beloved one, and were speechless with grief and a lack of understanding—"why did this have to happen?" We wish we could solve all problems. But Mary couldn't solve Jesus' problems—she was called to be a presence and a witness of hope in God's ultimate love.

Maybe we, too, need to simply stand in silence with Mary at the worst crosses of our lives, "pondering all these things" in our hearts.

Go in peace to love and serve our God!

*Fr. Rick Niebending, C.P.P.S.*

## ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH - MINSTER, OHIO

January 1, 2012

Daily Masses and Intentions

**Monday** *St. Basil, St. Gregory*

8:00 a.m. Communion Service

**Tuesday** *The Most Holy Name of Jesus*

8:00 a.m. Special Intention

**Wednesday** *St. Elizabeth*

8:00 a.m. Norb Ripploh

**Thursday** *St. John*

8:00 a.m. Special Intention

**Friday** *St. Andre*

8:00 a.m. Arnold Knueve family

1:30 p.m. Bill Ripploh

**Saturday**

8:00 a.m. Communion Service

5:00 p.m. For the Parish

**Sunday**

8:00 a.m. All Souls

10:00 a.m. Fred Schmitmeyer

11:30 a.m.

~Ministries below for the coming week ~

### Eucharistic Ministers:

**Saturday 5:00 p.m. :** J. Werling, M. Rutschilling,  
B. Conkle, J. Oldiges, J. Beckman, E. Belcher,  
K. Osterfeld

**Sunday 8:00 a.m. :** J. Winner, M. Timmerman,  
T. Clune, G. Meiring, K. Thieman, M. Baumer,  
T. Bertke

**10:00 a.m. :** \*J. & T. Brown, J. Ripploh, S. Siegel,  
G. Boeke, K. Brackman, J. Dwenger, D. Grieshop

**11:30 a.m. :** S. Belcher, B. Boeke, L. Goodwin,  
K. Frimel, MA Weiskittel, P. Kinsella, M. Meyer

### Lectors:

**Saturday 5:00 p.m. :** N. Jay

**Sunday 8:00 a.m. :** H. Butler

**10:00 a.m.:** E. Belcher

**11:30 a.m.:** P. D. Blanco

### Babysitting:

**Notice:** E. Pack, S. Brandewie,  
W. Kogge, J. Collins, K. Phlipot,  
K. Bornhorst, T. Kogge,  
E. Cavanaugh, K. Fischer

### Servers:

**Wed. 8:00 a.m.:** C. Jutte,  
A. Kitzmiller

**Sat. 5:00 p.m. :** T. Conkle,  
A. & J. Niemeyer

**Sun. 8:00 a.m.** J. & Jr. Nixon,  
P. Dues

**10:00 a.m.** P. Falk, R. Frick,  
I. Gibson

**11:30 a.m.** P. & F. Purdy,  
W. Hegemann



## **CLUSTER ANNOUNCEMENTS - cont'd**

**CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT (3<sup>rd</sup> in a series):** There are a limited number of ornaments still available. You can view the ornament in the glass cases at the entrances of St. Augustine Church. Contact: Betty at 419-628-3243, Dorothy at 419-628-2827 or Ann at 419-628-2504.

**MARIA STEIN OF THE HOLY RELICS:** St. Peregrine Cancer Prayer Service for those who have cancer or who care for them. Sun. Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Winter Blues? Saints Inspiring Hope: Day of reflection for those who are feeling blue and need a lift. Sat. Jan. 28 9:00 am – 2:30 pm. Contact info: 419-925-4532 a.mcguire@MariaSteinShrine.org

**WINTER WINE TASTING** Open House will be held at St. Anthony Parish House Fri. Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> from 7 – 10:00 p.m. Featured will be the Versailles Winery and 'wines from local vines'. Wine samples, gourmet appetizers and desserts, Coffee and Tea Bar will be included. Ticket (\$15.00 each) sales end Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>. Contact Nikki at 419-942-7958 or Julie at 419-942-1497 for more information or by e-mail. ([mmlink@bright.net](mailto:mmlink@bright.net) or [jjnmuhl@bright.net](mailto:jjnmuhl@bright.net)).

**EUCHARISTIC ADORATION** is held on Mondays in St. Augustine Church. Opening begins at 9:00 a.m. and closing is 9:00 p.m. The Schoenstatt members will be leading the Rosary on Monday, January 2, 2012.

**MEN'S FELLOWSHIP PRAYER GROUP** meets at 7:30 am in the rectory basement on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month. New members and walk-ins are always welcome. For more information call Jeff Stammen at 419-628-3889 or email: [stammenjl@nktelco.net](mailto:stammenjl@nktelco.net)

**MEALS MINISTRY** provides meals for those in our community who may need some help. For more information contact Sandy: 419-628-3136, Betty: 419-628-3242, Monica: 419-628-4053.

**TRAVELING:** ...Visit [www.masstimes.org](http://www.masstimes.org) to find a nearby church and Mass times. Wishing everyone safe travels this holiday season.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS ST. AUGUSTINE CHURCH**

**COLLECTION** for the week of December 25, 2011. **Your generosity is always appreciated!**  
Christmas: \$36,823.60 Loose: \$4306.00 Envelopes returned: 485 Children: \$62.00  
Retirement Fund: \$25.00 Direct Deposit for December: \$13,220.00 from 116 parishioners

**THE BELOW THE FLOOR COMMITTEE** would like to thank everyone who has donated to the Fund Drive. If you have not yet donated, you can still take advantage of donating for a year end tax deduction. These donations will only be used for capital improvements of the Church.

**VFW MEETING** at the Minster Legion Hall will be on Tuesday, January 3, 2012. Lunch at 6:30 p.m. and meeting to follow.

## **SOMETHING TO CONSIDER...**

**When considering your contributions to St. Augustine/St. Joseph,** parishioners may want to look at the option of donating appreciated shares of stock, especially as we begin formal fundraising for air conditioning at St Augustine Church.

With better performance in the markets through most of 2010, this may be a more attractive option then in the past few years and carries many benefits:

- You receive credit for a charitable contribution for the full value of the stock contributed at the date of donation.
- Donors incur no tax for any increase or gain in stock value from the date of purchase through date of donation.
- We are able to coordinate the transfer of stock (or mutual fund shares) directly with your individual broker or financial advisor (with your permission.)
- You provide much needed assistance to your Parish Community.

If you have any questions about this topic, please feel free to contact Steve Eiting at Minster Bank at 419-628-2351

## PARISH CENTER NEWS

### **PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

*Lord, help us to reach outside ourselves, to be extra conscious of the young who ache to feel connected to you and to your people. Help us to welcome as you welcome, not just with "hello" but also rather with a true and authentic sense of welcome that honors, reveres, and recognizes that you are within us, in all things, in all people. Help us to see you in them. Bless these new beginnings with your abiding presence, Lord, so that we might know we do not face the future alone. Bless the youth, whose lives belong to tomorrow. Gather the young; the old, and us together so that we might walk in faith, hope and charity into the new world that opens before us, so full of promise, so full of You!*

### **ADULT FAITH FORMATION**

With a new year upon us, a concerted effort will be made to emphasize Adult Faith Formation.

With that being said, the need for an Adult Faith Formation Team is crucial to the success of Adult Faith Formation. The involvement of/the ownership of as many people as possible is recognized as key to successful planning and implementation of vision/goals. Peter Senge in *The Fifth Discipline* talks about two kinds of visions:

- A **sowed vision** is one developed by only one person. One person's vision is foisted on others. People are not invested. In this reality, when there's any difficulty, they will abandon the vision.
- A **shared vision** is collaborative. People work together to come to the vision, so they are committed. They will fight to the death to accomplish the vision.

For this reason, the *National Directory for Catechesis* strongly encourages committees for the purpose of the writing of catechetical plans/visions so people are working together; that there's a place for all voices at the table.

We're not asking anyone to "fight to the death" to accomplish our goal for Adult Faith Formation, but we are asking for committed adults to help us. If you're interested in learning about the "Nuts and Bolts" of our team, come and join us on:

ADULT FAITH FORMATION TEAM INFORMATIONAL MEETING –  
Monday, January 16 at 7:30 pm in the Parish Center.

### **HIGH SCHOOL**

2 SOPHOMORE CATECHISTS NEEDED!

Please see below!

#### **MAKE-UP WORK**

**To freshman, junior and senior students:** If you have missed up to 5 classes, you have the option to complete make-up work to receive a complete for your religious education grade. The choice is yours! Call the Parish Center 628-3434 to arrange for make-up work!

#### **HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY**

The high school bible study will meet on Sunday, January 8 at 7 pm in the Parish Center.

## PARISH CENTER NEWS, cont'd

### WINTER SESSION

Classes resume for the winter session next Sunday, January 8 at **9:45 a.m.** All catechists are asked to attend a gathering in the Parish Center at 9:00 a.m. on Jan. 9.

Listed below are the high school classes for the winter session and instructors:

- **FRESHMAN: SACRAMENTS – LIVING OUR FAITH**

Instructors: Shelley Hogenkamp, Julie Hegemann, and Stacie Lamm

This course discusses the seven sacraments with attention to both historical context and current liturgical practice. It furthers students' understanding, ownership, and appreciation of the sacraments as ritual experiences that witness to their faith commitment.

- **SOPHOMORE: FAITH – DEVELOPING AN ADULT SPIRITUALITY**

Instructors: Lisa Heid, *TWO CATECHISTS ARE NEEDED!*

The unit helps students examine what they believe about God and the Church, why they believe this, and how they can best live according to their faith. We will also incorporate a look at cultural influence within Catholicism. This includes a field trip to St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church in Dayton noting the African-American influence followed by trip to Temple Beth Or Synagogue with a presentation from their Rabbi referencing the Judaic influence within Catholicism.

- **JUNIOR: CHRISTIAN MORALITY**

Instructors: Renee Arnold and Ken Wuebker

Christian Morality is a rich course that gives young people a solid grounding in the foundations of Christian morality to add to what they have already received in their family and in their faith community. In the moral life, our heart tells us we want to learn to dance the right way, God's way. We have to use our head to learn the meaning of the commandments, which are the basic steps. We listen to the Beatitudes, which are the music that makes the steps come alive. But to best practice the moral life, we have to tap into the gifts God has placed within each one of us: virtues, forgiveness, and grace.

- **SENIOR: COMMITMENTS**

Instructor: Chris Niekamp

All the religion classes in the world are pointless if students do not gain the skills they need to live out their faith as responsible adults. High school students are challenged to begin to find their place in the world and integrate their faith with real-life choices. Students will examine their vocational calling. This is in response to our changing times and society in which young adults often delay long-term choices.

## **PARISH CENTER NEWS, cont'd**

### **GRADE SCHOOL**

#### **LITURGIES**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Wednesday, January 4  | 8 <sup>th</sup> grade students          |
| Wednesday, January 11 | Enrollment Mass – second grade students |
| Wednesday, January 18 | 6A - Therese Brown's class              |

#### **FIRST EUCHARIST**

- On Wednesday, January 4, a meeting for all students and parents involved in the First Eucharist program will take place in St. Augustine Church at 6:30 p.m. The evening's activities will conclude at approximately 7:45.
- On Wednesday, January 11, during the 8:00 a.m. Mass, each of the second grade students will be called signifying their enrollment in the sacramental program for First Eucharist. All parents are invited to attend.

#### **JUNIOR HIGH BIBLE STUDY**

The junior high bible study will meet on Sunday, January 8 at 7 pm in the Parish Center.

### **PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN**

#### **SCHEDULE**

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Sunday, January 8  | Classes resume during the 11:30 Mass in the Parish Center |
| Sunday, January 15 | Liturgy of the Word during the 11:30 Mass                 |

### **NCEA ACRE TESTING – FIFTH GRADE & FRESHMAN STUDENTS**

The week of January 9 through January 13, all fifth grade students and on Sunday, January 22 all freshman students will be given the National Catholic Education Association Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (NCEA ACRE) tests.

- The primary use of the results of the NCEA ACRE will be to study how our students as a whole responded to questions about the Church's teachings, and to gain portrait of their personal beliefs, attitudes, practices and perceptions. Once the results have been returned to us, we will make available a summary report and would be pleased to discuss the results with any interested parent upon request.

## **MASSES**

### **St Augustine Church**

**Saturday 5:00 p.m.**

**Sunday 8:00 a.m.**

**10:00 a.m.**

**11:30 a.m.**

### **St Joseph Church**

**8:45 a.m.**

## **THE CHRISTMAS SEASON**

**begins with the Vigil of Our Lord's  
Nativity**

**and ends with the celebration of the  
Baptism of the Lord,  
(Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>).**

~ Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God -  
January 1, 2012

**Reading I:** [Numbers 6: 22-27](#) The priestly benediction

- The Book of Numbers tells fragments of the story of the Hebrews' journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, events that happened in the 13th century B.C.
- In the early 6th century B.C., the descendants of those earlier settlers were invaded and defeated, and many were taken as captives to Babylon. Those sixty years are known as the Exile.
- When they finally got to return to their homeland, known then as Judah, their priests wanted to help restore the nation.
- One of their methods was to restore the people's more glorious history, so they retold a number of ancient stories from the time of Moses, producing what we now know as the Book of Numbers.

**Reading II:** [Galatians 4: 4-7](#) We are heirs through God.

- Among the Christians in Galatia, some were teaching that, in order to be saved, Christians still had to keep the Jewish law. Saint Paul argues against this.
- Salvation, Paul teaches, comes as an undeserved gift from God, which we accept by faith in Christ.
- Now ransomed from slavery, our position is the more favorable one of adopted children.

**Gospel:** [Luke 2: 16-21](#) The shepherds visit the child lying in a manger.

- Luke's original readers were Gentile.
- Saint Luke was not Jewish. He was Greek.
- He was a physician by profession.
- Luke's readers lived a generation or more after the Apostles, after the destruction of Jerusalem, and outside the Holy Land.

**Theme:** The child was lying in a manger ~Look into your life.~

**Question for adults:** How often do you treasure and ponder God's glorious creation?

**Question for children:** The word "ponder" means to think quietly and deeply about something. Take some time to ponder the message of the Gospel reading today.

**Activities of the week:**

- Give each child a small individual gift. When they ask why, tell them it is a gift of grace and unconditional love. Ask them to think about the love they feel, and have them evaluate whether or not they attach conditions to their love.
- Visit a feed and seed store or a farm. Find hay and animal smells for your family to experience. Then determine if that would be the setting you would expect for the King of kings to be born. How can your family learn to release expectations and have faith in the mystery God gives us so that we can build our faith?



