

My Dear Parishioners,

**Hope** looks for the good in people instead of harping on the worse. **Hope** opens doors where despair closes them. **Hope** discovers what can be done instead of grumbling about what cannot be done. **Hope** regards difficulties and problems (small or large) as opportunities for personal growth. **Hope** cherishes no illusions but does not yield to cynicism. **Hope** enables us to set big goals for ourselves but isn't frustrated by small or temporary setbacks. **Hope** puts up with modest gains realizing that "the longest journey starts with one step." **Hope** accepts misunderstandings as the price for serving the greater good of others. **Hope** is a good loser because it has the divine assurance of final victory!

Today's readings present to us the necessity of the virtue of **hope** in our lives. We are reminded that there is always **hope** for us to transform ourselves according to the mind of God and that **we** may be called to help others transform their lives. We may think it is unlikely that God is calling "little us" to anything important. But today's readings shows the great irony in God sending a good but reluctant Jew (Jonah) to pagan Ninevites, a Pharisaical Rabbi (Paul) to the Gentiles for whom he initially had contempt, and simple fishermen (Simon, Andrew, James and John) to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Two constant themes that are present in the Scriptures are: with God there is **always hope** and that God often selects the "unlikeliest" in order that He may show that great things which can't be accomplished in so-called "ordinary" people by nature can be done by the wonderful power of His grace. Both themes are present in today's readings.

Our first reading is from the book of Jonah which is an unusual story of **hope** and **conversion**. Nineveh was Israel's mortal enemy and it was also a symbol for wickedness in the ancient world. God calls Jonah to be His prophet and sends him to preach a message of **hope** to the Ninevites and call them to **repentance**. Jonah was reluctant to do God's work and revolted against God's wishes. Jonah was afraid that the Ninevites would actually listen to his preaching, repent and thereby find favor with God. That was the last thing he wanted to happen so Jonah tried to run away from God. He boarded a ship; was

tossed overboard into the deep and turbulent sea and eventually was swallowed by a huge fish. God commanded the fish to spew Jonah upon the shore. That was God's way of saying to Jonah, "Now will you please go and preach to the Ninevites whom I happen to love." This time Jonah listens to God and does His work by preaching His message of **hope** and **repentance** to the Ninevites. The people heeded the message of Jonah, proclaimed a fast and put on the garments of penance.

The book of Jonah (like the parables of Jesus) has a very important lesson to teach all of us. Jonah represents those people who are petty, selfish and who do not want to share anything with others. Jonah is symbolic of those who hate other people, hold grudges and resentment, and refuse to be reconciled with their enemies, even though they expect God to forgive their sins. Jonah represents those people who do not understand the fact that God is compassionate, forgiving, merciful and generous. God shares His divine compassion with all. God is forgiving while we tend to refuse to be reconciled with those who hurt us. God is generous while we tend to be selfish and self-centered.

The story of Jonah holds out **hope** for all of us. In the story everyone repents- Jonah and the people of Nineveh. The good news is that no one is tied to a planned fate; no one is doomed to embrace disaster. By choosing to **repent** we can change our lives. **Repentance** is good news because it means that nothing is settled; nothing is sealed. Punishment that has been planned can always be cancelled. Things **can** change and we can begin again.

In today's section of First Corinthians Paul replies to those who were seeking a change of marital status: the married becoming single, the single becoming married, the engaged foregoing spiritual marriage (the practice of celibacy). Both Paul and the Corinthians accepted the imminence of Jesus' Parousia (Second Coming). Paul uses this conviction to prepare the Corinthians for that day when everything will change. In view of this, the married should act like the single, the sorrowing like merrymakers, the merrymakers like the sorrowing, etc. Therefore the Corinthians should not worry about getting involved in a change of marital status. Rather

the **hope** of the permanence of Jesus' Parousia should lead them to correct the impermanence of their present situation.

Today's Gospel gives us the Markan version of the call of the first disciples. It begins with a very important and bold statement by Jesus that is considered by Scripture scholars to be **the** programmatic statement of the entire Gospel. That means that this statement is the whole Gospel condensed into one verse. Jesus inaugurates His ministry with this bold statement: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mk. 1:15) This is an extraordinary time, the time of fulfillment of all expectations. In Jesus, the new age has begun and the kingdom has finally dawned. Jesus then invites his audience to change their lives radically: "**Repent**" and put their trust in the Good News of salvation which comes only through Him.

Jesus' statement is followed by an account of His call of the fishermen Simon, Andrew, James and John. Jesus walks up to two boats, summons the men in those boats to follow Him and begin fishing for people. Simon, Andrew, James and John immediately drop their nets and follow Jesus. Notice that they were "ordinary people": people doing their day's work-fishing. They turned to Jesus, placed their **hope** in Him, and from that day forward their lives were never the same. The abruptness with which these men leave their familiar lives and all of the relationships and obligations associated with them is a final indication of the radical nature of life in the kingdom of God.

In a Jewish culture ruled by honor and shame these four men should never have abandoned their boats and their father's fishing business. There was too much at stake for them to abandon their boats and follow a stranger who claims to fish for people. These men are not portrayed as having known Jesus before this nor have they heard him say anything except the invitation to follow Him. We would be hard-pressed to explain why they would do such a thing. So why would they follow Jesus? According to Mark, it was Jesus' magnetic presence and words that moved these men to abandon everything and follow Him. It was not about

knowledge or persuasive teaching but rather it was simply about the **person** of Jesus. Their response to Jesus' call to become His disciples was truly a **new way** of living in this world. Discipleship is a true faith response to the **person** of Jesus.

Christ entrusts to each one of us the work of discipleship: to extend, regardless of our own circumstances, the love of God to all; to proclaim, in our own homes and communities, the compassion, the forgiveness, the justice and mercy of the Gospel; to take on God's work of reconciliation and forgiveness among all His sons and daughters; and to be a sign of **hope** for others. To follow Christ means "abandoning our nets" of self-interest, prejudices, grudges, resentments and embracing the needs of others. Jesus calls us to follow Him along the difficult path of humility and selflessness. If we are going to accept His call to be "fishers of men and women" we have to be willing to cast our nets into the waters that are deep and turbulent, waters that we do not know, and into waters that threaten the safety and security of our own little world. Have a blessed and **hopeful** week.

Love & prayers,

Fr. John

P.S. Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> has been designated by the United States Bishops as the National Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. Let us all take some time to pray for Unborn Children and pray for the end of abortion in our country.

**DAILY MASS:** In the event of bad weather during the week, *if school is cancelled, know that Mass also is cancelled.* If school is delayed, then we will only have a 9 o'clock Mass but please use your judgment whether or not to attempt to attend.





**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, January 22, World Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children**

7:00 For all those attending the March for Life

9:00 †Jack Lewis

**Tuesday, January 23, St. Vincent; St Marianne Cope**

7:00 †Ethel Ross

9:00 †Elaine Darden

**Wednesday, January 24, St. Francis de Sales**

7:00 †Donald Leffler

9:00 Intentions in the Prayer Box

**Thursday, January 25, The Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle**

7:00 †Dick Wager

9:00 †Souls in Purgatory

**Friday, January 26, SS. Timothy & Titus**

7:00 †Louis Chabot Sr.

9:00 †Anna O'Reilly

**Saturday, January 27, St. Angela Merici**

9:00 †Alice Borst

5:00 †John & Helen Phillips

**Sunday, January 28, Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

7:30 For the Parishioners

9:00 Benefactors of OMPH School

11:00 †Alexander C. Rend

**IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS**

We will be publishing the names of your dear loved ones who are seriously ill or injured. After the period of one month their names will be removed. For example, names announced in the bulletin the third week of the month will be removed the third week of the following month. If at that time prayers are still needed, please feel free to contact the parish office, and we will be more than happy to re-publish your loved one's name.

January 7: Maria Mannino, Margaret Gardner, Jane Muldowney, Brenda Crawford, Stephen Stanavage, Jennifer Ranker, Melissa Kurtz, Janet Tomko, Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Michael Lillis,

Richard Warner, Jim Lehmier, Tonya Stoner, Kevin Kaiser, Jody Shimp.



14 January: Declan Morgan, Anna Lesher

**CHURCH SUPPORT**

Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
1-7-18	\$13,441.30	\$14,950.00	(\$1,508.70)
YTD	Amount	YTD Needed	Difference
1-7-18	\$379,759.01	\$418,600.00	(\$38,840.99)

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Our decision to follow Jesus is never a onetime choice. Second, our decision to help other people follow Jesus is never a onetime choice. If Peter and Andrew said yes at a moment's notice, their commitment to Jesus needed to grow. If it didn't, they would have eventually left Jesus.



The same is true for us. No matter how mature our yes is, the Holy Spirit wants to take it to a deeper level. He wants to help us mature in our commitment to him so that we can know him better and become more effective servants of his kingdom. Jesus is calling you to follow him today. He is asking you to keep evangelizing people with love and compassion. It's a challenging call, but you don't have to do it alone. Jesus has all the grace you need.

**SANCTUARY LAMP**

You may have the Sanctuary Lamp burn for a sick or deceased loved one for a donation of \$5 to defray the cost of the candles. This week the candle burns for the Gertrude Gurt.

**RADIATE YOUTH GROUP**

Radiate Youth Group will be meeting on Sunday, February 4th, at 5:30 pm in the church for a short prayer service, followed by an ice cream social in the Bernadine Center. Grades 7-12 are welcome to join us. Bring a friend! It is encouraged for all youth who are registered for Steubenville conference this summer, to attend this meeting. We will be doing some planning on the group t-shirt designs for the

trip. Hope to see you all there. Any parishioners who care to join us for the prayer service are also welcome. God bless you all! In His Service, Denise Ives

### BENEVOLENT SOCIETY



We are constantly reevaluating our needs at the OMPH Community Food Bank run by our parish Benevolent Society. We are currently in need of Peanut butter, jelly, boxed dinners, egg noodles, & tuna. Please place items in the food bank crate in the narthex of the church. We are amazed and thankful by the support of our parishioners.

### HORSE RACING, FUN AND FOOD



Join the Knights of Columbus for their K of C Derby, Saturday, **January 27<sup>th</sup>**. The evening will consist of 11 exciting horse races with pari-mutuel betting, door prizes, food and beverages. Tickets are \$20 and include a chance to win \$50 in one race and a chance to win up to \$1000 in Race 11. Doors open at 6 PM and post time for the first race will be 7 PM. For tickets or further information contact Ben Hoover at 808-1115 or email at [hooverben4@gmail.com](mailto:hooverben4@gmail.com).

### LANCASTER CATHOLIC NEWS

#### LANCASTER CATHOLIC ACTIVITIES FAIR

Lancaster Catholic will be hosting an Activities Fair on **Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 PM**. All aspects of Lancaster Catholic's culture will be highlighted, from the Fine and Performing Arts department to the vast options of clubs including Mini-Thon and Respect Life to Athletics and Campus Ministry.

### ONE LUCKY FAMILY

One lucky family that is looking to join the Lancaster Catholic community for the 2018-2019 school year, by attending the Activities Fair, will be awarded one year's paid tuition upon completion of their application. For more information about the day or the admissions process, please contact Kyla Hockey at [khockley@lchsyes.org](mailto:khockley@lchsyes.org).



### Religious Education Corner:

**Our RE Class Schedule For The Remainder Of January And The Month Of February Is As Follows:**

**Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup> – RE Classes Resume**

**Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session**

**Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session From 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM This Week Only**

**Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session**

**Second Weather Make-Up Class If Needed Otherwise**

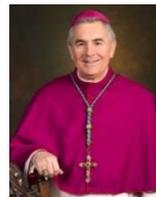
**Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup> – NO RE Classes**

### OPPORTUNITIES

The Diocesan Institute schedule of Winter/Spring adult education offerings is now available. Visit [www.hbgdiocese.org/institute](http://www.hbgdiocese.org/institute) to access the schedule and registration information. Courses and sessions are available via live webinar, allowing you to participate remotely, and recordings of sessions enable you to access formation at your convenience. Contact Ryan Bolster at [rbolster@hbgdiocese.org](mailto:rbolster@hbgdiocese.org) or (717) 657-4804, ext. 225 for information.

### NURSERY VOLUNTEERS AND COORDINATOR NEEDED

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OMP Church Nursery is need of adult volunteers the 9:00 Mass on Sundays. Volunteers are needed for mass a month or as little as times a year. The Nursery is also looking for a new coordinator, who would schedule volunteers and help maintain the nursery. If you are interested in volunteering or coordinating please call Laura Kauffman at (717) 575-8221 or

email [omphnursery@yahoo.com](mailto:omphnursery@yahoo.com) to get more information.

### ANNUAL SANCTITY OF LIFE MASS

January 22, 2018

The Lancaster Region Order of Malta invitation for you participation in this Liturgy. A free will offering will benefit "A Women's Concern."



Host Bishop & Concelebrant is Most Rev. Ronald Gainer, Diocese of Harrisburg, and the Celebrant and Homilist will be the Most Rev. William E. Lori, S.T.D. Archdiocese of Baltimore.

**St. Joseph's Church** on Cabbage Hill in Lancaster will be our location again this year with **Mass starting at 7 PM**. We will be providing offsite parking with shuttle bus service to and from St. Joseph's for you convenience. **Contact Gerry Ganse 717-577-2735 for shuttle information.**

### OMPH COMMUNITY MEALS FOR 2018



As we start another new year, we would like to thank all of our Community Meal Volunteers for saying yes and making a commitment to lend a hand for our 2017 meals. You all did an outstanding job. We welcomed and served a lot of hungry people and it couldn't have been done without your commitment and support. Please save these dates for our new Community Meals for 2018. They are as follows:

1. **May 31, 2018** at *First United Methodist Church*, Ephrata. 68 N. Church Street, Ephrata.
2. **June 7, 2018** at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 167 East Main Street in Ephrata.
3. **October 11, 2018** at Bethany United Church of Christ 140 East Main Street, Ephrata, PA.

It has been a blessing and a privilege to have worked with such a great group of folks. We are look forward to working with you again this year. Thank you for serving our God, our church and our community. Until we see each other again; May God bless you and give you peace.

### ONE DAY OF GIVING

On **Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>**, OMPH will provide opportunities for students, faculty, staff, families, and businesses throughout our community to participate in the **ONE DAY OF GIVING**. This is an online event being held across the nation by NCEA to raise much needed funds for Catholic education. **Please see our website <https://www.omph.org/omph-school-overview> or Facebook page ON JANUARY 30<sup>TH</sup> for the link in which to donate to OMPH School.** Remember, it's not how much you give, but that you give to the Annual Appeal on this One Day of Giving. Any questions, please contact Jeanne McAleer, Development Director, OMPH School at 717-738-2414 or [jmcaleer@omph.org](mailto:jmcaleer@omph.org).



### LANCASTERCATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ONE DAY OF GIVING

Save the Date! **On Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>**, Catholic High will provide opportunities for students, faculty, staff, families and businesses throughout the community to participate in the One Day of Giving.

Every dollar raised will go directly to the students that are attending LCHS. You get to make an impact in the lives of these students by helping to provide them a well-rounded and God-filled education. With each contribution, the next generation of cross-bearers, critical thinkers, community leaders and global citizens is empowered by you: parents, alumni, family and friends.

#### Donors are Matching Your Gift

Thanks to some very generous benefactors, the contributions we receive on January 30th will be matched dollar for dollar! So when you give online on your contribution will be **doubled!**

#### The Goal? 100% Participation

Lancaster Catholic is asking for 100% participation from its alumni, families, students and classes. Remember, it's not how much you give, but *that* you give to the Annual Fund on this One Day of Giving.

#### Sponsors of the Day:

Throughout the One Day of Giving, generous sponsors have donated items to be raffled off at various points. To be entered into the raffles, all you need to do is donate! If you want to become a sponsor, please contact Joe Sahd at [717.509.0313](tel:717.509.0313) (ext. 206) or [jsahd@lchsves.org](mailto:jsahd@lchsves.org).

Please add the clip art you have been using. If you are able to forward it to me I will add it each week

### OMPH SCHOOL 2018-19 REGISTRATION

Selection of your child's school is among the most important choices you will make. OMPH School partners with parents in providing a faith-based education for the children of our parish. We have a strong tradition of academic excellence, but more importantly, the gospel message and spirit of Catholicism permeate the school day. Our children are blessed to have daily interaction with the Redemptorist Fathers serving our parish.

Registration is now open to all parish families **for Preschool through Grade 8 for the 2018-2019** school year. The Preschool program, for children who are 3 and 4 years old by September 1st, provides developmentally appropriate activities in a Catholic environment and offers a Munch Bunch school lunch program. **Our full day Kindergarten program, for children who are 5 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>**, provides daily Religion class along with skill development in Language Arts and Math and special classes in computer, library, physical education, art, and music. Students in grades 1 through 8 experience an education noted for academic excellence in an environment which reinforces our Catholic identity. An on-site after school program is available for all students in Preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Interested parish families are encouraged to

**register by February 1<sup>st</sup>; registration will then open to non-parishioners.**

Please join us on **Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>** as we celebrate the gift of Catholic education in our parish at the 9 AM Mass. Following the liturgy, there will be an Open House and the opportunity to meet the faculty and visit the school. You can also schedule a personal tour of the school for any day, at your convenience, by contacting the Development Office.

To learn more about our school, please visit our website at [www.omph.org](http://www.omph.org) or call the school office at 738-2414 for further information. Find us on Facebook at OMPH-Ephrata! Financial aid is available to qualifying families.

### DISCERNMENT RETREAT

Friday, **January 26** (6 PM) to **Sunday, January 28** (1 PM)

Villa Maria House of Studies (IHM Motherhouse), Immaculata, PA. Young women (18-35) are invited to join us for this retreat which focuses on the IHM Charism and the importance of listening to God's call and discovering the many ways that God speaks to us. Time will be included for personal and communal prayer as well as the opportunity to interact with the sisters in Formation. ([Contact: ihmvoc@aol.com](mailto:ihmvoc@aol.com) or [610-889-1553](tel:610-889-1553))

### ABORTION CLINICS CONTINUE TO CLOSE

In a year that abortion businesses attempted to expand in America, the actual number of abortion facilities decreased. In all, 49 abortion facilities - 35 surgical and 14 medication only clinics - closed or halted abortion services. Only eight new surgical abortion facilities were opened, along with eleven new medication abortion facilities. In 2017, there are 704 abortion facilities remaining in the U.S. Of these, 490 offer surgical abortions, often along with medication abortions.

There are 214 facilities that offer only medication abortions. These encouraging statistics and more were verified through an annual survey of abortion facilities conducted by Operation Rescue staff, this year with the assistance of Abortion Free New Mexico.

"We rejoice that the abortion cartel is imploding and closing down. We are making progress. But they are not going down without a fight," said Troy Newman founder of Operation Rescue. "We continue to work

and pray that we will soon see an end to abortion in our nation."

[www.operationrescue.org](http://www.operationrescue.org)

Andrea Ostrowski