

My Dear Parishioners:

Suppose you found out from incontrovertible evidence that a family member, classmate, dear friend or a neighbor was telling lies about you or spreading gossip about you within the community. What would you do? Confront them? Retaliate and try to get even with them? Seek revenge in the future? Take them to court and sue them for libel? I am sure the majority of us (including myself) would find it very difficult or even impossible to accept and put into action Jesus' words found in today's Gospel: "To you, who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Jesus sets a much higher standard of **love** for us than the world does. We are supposed to imitate Jesus' **love** for us. Jesus' **love** is a **love** that is **unconditional** and **unlimited**. In other words Jesus' radical command to: "Love your enemy, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you." precludes setting limits or conditions to **love**, which is a mode of **action** rather than an **emotion**. Being human we are tempted to avenge real or perceived wrongs or return to others evil for evil. We may even be tempted to take advantage of others for our own purposes. However if we are to be true followers of Jesus then we must put into practice Jesus' teaching on **love** which demands that we imitate Him in laying down our lives for others and forgiving others from the bottom of our heart. Is this easy-NO! But with God's amazing grace we will be empowered to do so. Today's readings give us proof of that.

Today's first reading is from the Book of Samuel. Young David and the Israelite King Saul are the leading characters in this heartbreaking story; a story of friendship, betrayal, misfortune, ambition, power, jealousy and deceit. David was a simple shepherd who killed Goliath, the great warrior champion of the Philistines who were the enemies of Israel. King Saul becomes jealous of David's rise to power and his great popularity among the Israelites. Saul was convinced that David would be a threat to his throne. Several times he tried to kill David. In spite of being exiled and hunted, David still loves Saul and never seeks to harm him. Three times David had the opportunity to kill Saul but he refuses to do so. In today's reading David sneaks into Saul's tent and finds him asleep. Saul's spear is stuck in the ground beside his head. David's nephew Abishai offers to kill

Saul with Saul's own spear but David commands him to leave Saul (the Lord's anointed one) in peace. David takes Saul's spear and a pitcher of water from beside Saul's head. David hopes that their absence will speak its own message.

David will not strike down the king anointed by God. David sensed a higher law of respect for Saul and chose **not** to harm him. David recognizes that he must leave Saul's fate up to God. Holding up Saul's spear, David declares his willingness to let God judge between them on the basis of justice and faithfulness. David puts aside vengeance, retaliation, and self-reliance. Saul will never do this. Saul remains puzzled by David's loyalty, attachment and his refusal to treat Saul as an enemy. The "great distance" between Saul and David is measured by their degree of their reliance on God.

Today's second reading is from St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. Continuing his discussion on the resurrection, Paul verifies the state of the resurrected body on the experience of Jesus. Paul insists that the resurrection will bring about a transformation of our body. Our risen body will be similar to Christ's risen body. In today's passage Paul takes up the two Creation Accounts (found in the Book of Genesis) and puts them against the background of the Hellenized Jewish thought. In this system, the "spiritual" comes first and the "physical" comes second. However, Paul understands both Accounts as relating to the same event. Speculative Jewish thinkers believed that the Last Adam (Jesus) would correspond to the First Adam. Paul, however, reverses the process since Jesus Christ is humanity as God intended it to be. Just as Christ shared the lot of the "man from earth," (the experience of death deriving from the fallen Adam) so humanity will also share the likeness of the "man from heaven," (the experience of the resurrection deriving from Jesus Christ).

Today's Gospel passage from St. Luke is a continuation of Jesus' "Sermon on the Plain." Some commentators see this passage as a profile of "**kingdom living**." Thus the challenges presented by Jesus in this passage presuppose that one has a **strong faith commitment** to the Kingdom of God. Piety and devotion are not mentioned but **strong** admonitions repudiating acts of retaliation, vengeance, retribution and actions done solely for personal advantage are

mentioned. Life in the Kingdom of God differs greatly from life in the world's kingdom.

In today's passage Jesus makes some profound statements which seem to come from another world. Jesus' words describe a world that is almost the exact opposite from the world we know and live in. Jesus first statement is about the demands of **love**. For Jesus **love** is far more than an emotion. Jesus makes that very clear when He admonishes His followers to **love** their enemies, and to do good to those who hate them. More challenging is the fact that Jesus expects His disciples to put this mandate into practice. The world, however, encourages conduct that is directly contrary to Jesus' **love** ethic.

Jesus' statement: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" is another version of the Golden Rule. By its nature, **love** stretches our level of acceptance. Gospel living does not advocate mutual admiration societies as the standard for **loving** one another. The real test of living in God's kingdom is found in concrete examples of **loving** one's enemies and doing good to them (turning the other cheek, giving to those who ask from you, etc.). Luke captures Jesus's sentiment in his statement: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."

Jesus' final statement: "Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven," stresses the emphasis on acceptance and forgiveness of others. Jesus is very much aware how difficult it is to avoid judging others. Jesus realizes that **forgiveness** is by no means an easy virtue. However Jesus stresses the importance for the need for **forgiveness** in His statement: "For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you." That measure is made in concrete actions. Our actions in the world will set the standard for how God will assess us in the end.

Jesus does **not** ask us to "fall in **love**" with our enemies. That would be unrealistic. However Jesus challenges us to be determined about our enemy's welfare, to be gracious, and to refuse to pay back violence with violence. Hatred can only be defeated by **love**. Injury can only be healed by **forgiveness**. Evil can only be controlled by **goodness**. This may not reflect conventional wisdom but it is Jesus' wisdom in action.

As His followers, Jesus expects us to share the gifts of His **love** and **mercy** that He has given to us

.Jesus expects us to break the cycle of hatred, vengeance, and fear. Only in seeing the griefs and disappointments of those we **love** (and those we find **difficult** to **love**) can we begin to move beyond feelings of bitterness and the demands of retribution. At the heart of Jesus' Gospel message is **our** greater understanding of the impact of **our** own actions in seeking the greater good of the communities that we live in. The faithful disciple of Jesus seeks to break that destructive rut of hatred and distrust by taking that formidable first step to **love**, to **trust**, to **heal** and to be **reconciled** with those whom we are separated. Have a blessed week.

Love & prayers,
Fr. John

A Monthly Pocket Prayer for February

Keep this little prayer in your pocket and say, to help get you through each and every day.

Blessed Mother,

Now that the need is at the greatest and the powers of darkness, seem to have free reign.

We come to you with childlike confidence and implore your help and powerful protection.

Preserve us in the Love of your son Jesus and protect us from the wickedness and evil in this life and Guide us Safely to the Heart of God.
Amen.

FORMED

ACCESS CATHOLIC FAITH ON THE GO

As we prepare for the Lenten and Easter Seasons I would like to make you aware of the many excellent Catholic programs that are available to you for **free** thru our parish program FORMED. Lenten and Easter movies, video studies, inspiring talks, audiobooks, testimonies and e-books are available for your spiritual enrichment. Lenten programs such as **Forgiven**, **Presence**, and the **Footprints of God: Jesus** are now available to you to ensure that this Lent and Easter will be a truly rewarding spiritual journey for you and your family. New books written by notable Catholic authors Dr. Scott Hahn, Dr. Edward Sri, Paul McCuskey, and Jennifer Fulwiler are now available for you and your family's Catholic faith development. To access these Lenten and Easter programs and other amazing Catholic materials simply visit **omph.formed.org** and click "**Register**" and enter your name, email address and desired password. You will then be ready to access all the inspiring and engaging Catholic content on **FORMED**. Enjoy and God bless. Fr. John

2019 DIOCESAN ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

The **2019 Diocesan Annual Campaign**, previously known as the **Bishop's Lenten Appeal**, will begin in a few weeks with the in-pew solicitation. The theme for this year is **Faith Forward**. During these challenging times, our faith is central to who we are. Like the Disciples, we are called to remain **faithful**, demonstrate our **commitment** to our **faith** by word and deed, and spread Good News. You will be receiving a letter from Bishop Gainer asking for your support. I have pledged to Bishop Gainer my assistance in achieving our Parish goal. As you prayerfully consider your support of both our Parish goal and the overall Diocesan goal, I hope you will join me in supporting these important ministries and services that the Diocese provides to our Parish, parishioners, and community. By our collective efforts from parishioners and parishes throughout the Diocese, a multitude of programs and ministries are offered to those in need. We are relying on your generous support to insure that these programs and ministries continue. Bishop Gainer and I thank you in advance for your loyal and steadfast support.

Monies collected by our Parish support the programs and ministries that are Diocesan led, Parish implemented and Parishioner supported. **No funds given to the Diocesan Annual Campaign are directed to the Survivors Compensation Fund or legal fees.** Any funds collected in excess of our Parish goal will be returned to our Parish Savings Account. Thank you and God bless.

Fr. John

MARRIAGE ANNULMENTS

The Tribunal of the Diocese of Harrisburg will be giving 2 presentations within the diocese concerning marriage, divorce and annulment according to Church teaching. These presentations will be helpful for divorced Catholics; those divorced who wish to marry Catholics, those parish leaders involved in the RCIA process and any others who may have a vested interest because of family or friends.

March 25 Diocesan Conference Center, 7 PM

No prior registration is required. For further information, please call 717-657-4804, extension 304, or email: tribunal@hbgdiocese.org

BLESSING OF CHILDREN



Lord, our God, out of the speech of little children, You have fashioned a hymn of praise. Look with kindness on these children whom the faith of the Church commends to Your tender care. Your Son, born of the Virgin Mary, gladly welcomed little children. He took them in His arms, blessed them and held them up as an example for all. We pray that You, Father, will also send Your blessing on them so that they may grow in Christian maturity and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's witnesses in the world, spreading and defending the faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We welcome these recently Baptized children into our Catholic Family: Lily Elizabeth Graybill, Cameron Reynold Haeusler, Jackson Blake Berry, Lydia Marie Pannebecker, Joseph Michael Hoover, Adaline Rose Rinnier, Aubree Faith Garman, Gilberto Lopez Colon, Yamilka Lopez Cotto & Yabriel Cotto Colon.

Ben & Pat Dangelo

MUSIC IN THE PARISH ACCOMPANISTS NEEDED

The OMPH Music Ministry is in need of an accompanist, preferably piano or organ, for the Adult Choir. Practice is only once a week (Tuesdays from 7-8 pm) and we sing at 1 or 2 Masses per month. The music ministry is a great way to meet other parishioners and to become more involved in our faith community. If you are willing to share your talent, please call or email Jill McGowan at 717-336-5578 or jmcgowan333@yahoo.com.



YOUTH CHOIR NEEDS YOU



Our Youth Choir is currently taking a short break while we find someone to take over directing duties. If you love music and want to help inspire the children of our parish, this is a great opportunity. Music is a wonderful way to get kids more involved in Mass. This position does require clearances but I will happily help you get them if you are interested. Please contact Jill McGowan at 717-336-5578 or jmcgowan333@yahoo.com.

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, February 25

- 7:00 The Leshner Family
- 9:00 †James Leshner

Tuesday, February 26

- 7:00 Vocations to Religious Life
- 9:00 †Ray Delisso

Wednesday, 27

- 7:00 †For those grieving the loss of a loved one
- 9:00 Ben & Pat Dangelo 50th Anniversary

Thursday, February 28

- 7:00 †Deceased Redemptorists
- 9:00 †Vocations to Redemptorists

Friday, March 1

- 7:00 †Rose & Thomas McLoughlin
- 9:00 †Jeanette Reinl

Saturday, March 2

- 9:00 †Cooney & McLoughlin Families
- 5:00 †Paul & Anna Kwaitkowski

Sunday, March 3, 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 7:30 For the Parishioners
- 9:00 †Ronyah L. Colatta
- 11:00 Dresch Family

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED
SACRAMENT**

To the best of your ability, put aside harsh judgments and condemning thoughts. If not for the other person's sake, then for your own sake. Try to rise above the realm of judgment, where everyone gets what's coming to them—because everyone in that realm will be judged harshly. Even you. Instead, step into the realm of God's mercy. Move into the realm where everyone is invited to forgiveness and treated with love, dignity, and generosity. Even you. Give the gift of forgiveness, and it will be given to you. Give the gift of a second chance—or a third or fourth or hundredth—and it will be given to you. Give the gift of the benefit of the doubt, and it will be given to you. Even if you don't want to give, do it anyway. Jesus commands it, and he promises eternal rewards to those who do.

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 an *increase in the prayer life of our parish.*

CHURCH SUPPORT

Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
2-17-19	\$	\$14,300.00	(\$)
YTD	Amount	YTD Needed	Difference
2-17-19	\$	\$00.00	(\$)

YOUTH GROUP



News from Radiate Youth Group: Our Youth Group has been running the OMPH coffee and doughnut corner the first Sunday of each month during the school year. All teens in the parish, grades 7-12, are welcome to join us to help serve in this way. It's also a great way to get service hours needed for Confirmation students. We are blessed to be able to serve the parish. Also, starting this Spring, Radiate Youth Group will be taking over the care of the flower garden at the OMPH Memorial Monument in Cedar Hill Cemetery. It's a great way for us to give back to the parish for all their generosity in the past years with monetary support towards our Steubenville trips. God bless! **In His Service, Denise Ives**

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.

Fr. Paul Bryan CSSR, Margaret Gardner, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Michael Lillis, Richard Warner, Anna Leshner, Florence Windish, Gloria Reynolds, Patrick Michael Ward, Carlos Luciano Sr., Gerald Gigliotti, Francis Gatti, Antonia Scribani, Jean Mash, John Mento, Joe Lewis, Joe Ferrara, Joan Dever, Alicia Craig, Robert Bevans, Chris Hohowski, and Jody Shimp, Kathy Snyder, Jennifer Ranker, Jean Mack, and Lori Ritz.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY FOOD BANK



Have you ever looked at the food bank crate in the narthex as you walk into mass on the weekend? The crate is ALWAYS overflowing with non-perishables donated by YOU, the OMPH parishioners.

We are extremely humbled by the unending support of our parish in our quest to help those struggling in Northern Lancaster County. So, THANK YOU!

Our food bank is open on Wednesday evenings from 5-6:30 pm on the grounds of St Clement Mission House. If you know of any local families who can use help with food, please send them to one of our distributions to see if they qualify. **Any parishioner who needs help with food is welcome at any time without any need for financial qualification.**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Corner:

**Our RE Class Schedule For The Remainder
Of February And The Month Of March**

Is As Follows:

Sunday, February 24th – RE Classes Resume

***Family Religious Education Session On Lent For All
First – Seventh Grade Families. One Parent Is
Expected To Attend This Session Along With His
Or Her Child(ren) As This Is A Family Session.
Please See The Additional Information Distributed
On Sunday, February 3rd.***

Sunday, March 3rd – RE Classes In Session

Sunday, March 10th – RE Classes In Session

Sunday, March 17th – RE Classes In Session

Sunday, March 24th – RE Classes In Session

FAITH'S HEALING POWER

The Knights of Columbus Council 4191 are pleased to welcome Jennifer Hubbard, whose life was forever changed on the day of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Newtown, CT. On December 14, 2012, Jennifer was the parent of two children in that

school, 8 year old Frederick, and 6 year old Catherine. Catherine was one of twenty 1st graders and six adults who lost their lives that day.

Jennifer shares a message about the mercy and hope that God provides even in the face of unimaginable life events. You will learn how she turned to her faith to find peace and found that God provided the answers that she needed.

Jennifer is a contributing writer for the Magnificat magazine and founder of the Catherine Violet Hubbard Foundation, an animal sanctuary.

Jennifer will be speaking at OMPH Church, located at 320 Church Avenue, Ephrata, PA on **Friday, March 8 beginning at 7 PM**. A free-will offering will be taken up to cover some of the expenses. We look forward to seeing you and your friends, to start the Lenten season by benefitting from this wonderful message.

SAVE THE DATE

OMPH CYO *Athletic Association* will be having a Designer Bag Bingo on Saturday, **April 27** 1-4pm.
Ticket Price \$25

ALTAR SERVERS NEEDED!!

Any girl or boy in grades fourth and up that would like to become an altar server should contact Ben Hoover at 717-808-1115. This is a great way for RE and LCHS students to achieve required service hours. There is a commitment involved with being an altar server, but the schedule can be planned around sports, work and any other activities if known in advance. Training will begin in April and the new schedule will come out in May.



TEXT-TO-GIVE SECOND COLLECTION CODES

Second collection text-to-give is easy! Just text the amount you would like to give followed by the "code word" for each specific collection. For example, "10 flowers", makes a gift of 10 dollars towards our flower collection. Each week before a second collection, the "code word" will appear in the bulletin for your convenience.

The code words for the next few weeks:

<u>Collection Name</u>	<u>Collection Date</u>	<u>Code Word for Text-To-Give</u>
Initial	No date	initial

Reminder the Text-To-Give phone # is **717-401-4159**.

SAVE THE DATE

OMPH School's Benefit Golf Tournament

It's time to Par-Tee at OMPH's 27th Annual Golf Tournament! **Our Mother of Perpetual Help School** is hosting its **27th Annual Benefit Golf Tournament** on **Wednesday, May 8, 2019** at Honeybrook Golf Club, 1422 Cambridge Road, Honey Brook, Pennsylvania. The cost for the Tournament is \$90.00 and includes greens fee, cart, range balls, contests, prizes, thank you gift, light breakfast, lunch, beverages and the **satisfaction of knowing that you helped OMPH School**. while having fun! Don't miss Fr. John's last Golf Par-Tee for OMPH School!



OMPH SCHOOL'S LOTTERY CALENDAR RAFFLE

The OMPH School Development Department and PTO are excited to announce a new and exciting Fundraiser - The May 2019 Lottery Calendar! Purchase a raffle ticket for \$10 and if your ticket number comes out straight on the Pennsylvania Lottery Pick 3 Evening Drawing in May, you win the amount marked on the calendar for that day. Tickets can be purchased through any OMPH School family, after masses in February in the Narthex or in the Parish Office, or in person at the school office. Sales end April 24th.

LCHS NEWS

On Saturday, **April 6**, from 6-11 pm Lancaster Catholic will celebrate its 5th Annual Purple & Gold Gala at the Lancaster Country Club. This is Lancaster Catholic's biggest fundraiser event and there will be live and silent auctions in addition to great company and excellent food.

This year, we will celebrate The Saint John Paul II Excellence Award Winners, Father Allan Wolfe and Marilyn Berger '50. These remarkable individuals have made a difference in the lives of Catholic High students through their hard work and dedication to their professions.

All are welcome to attend! Tickets are on-sale now and can be found at www.lchsyes.org. Questions? Please contact Lori Wagner, Special Events Coordinator, at 717-509-0313.

Outstanding Professional Achievement

Joseph E. Besecker '75
Beth Ellen DiPaolo '83
Lisa Senkowski Murphy '78
Service to Humanity
Shannon Hickey Lapp '08

Service to Humanity and Service to LCHS

Dr. J. Albert Schulz '56
Service to Catholic Education
Mary F. Schreiner '59

Join us on Saturday, April 13, 2019 starting at 11:00 a.m. for brunch at the Hamilton Club, to celebrate this year's honorees. If you are interested in purchasing tickets for \$30 per person, please contact Lori Wagner, Special Events Coordinator, lwagner@lchsyes.org or call the Advancement Office at (717) 509-0313 by April 3.



The Faculty of OMPH extends congratulations to graduates of OMPH School and members of OMPH Parish who were recognized for their outstanding academic achievement at LCHS. We are very proud of our students who received honors for the second quarter of the 2018-2019 academic year.

Distinguished Honors: Alexis Baker, Ella Cassidy, Kevin Draeger, Caroline Erb, Jacob Fertal, Erin Haldeman, Adeline Hibshman, Rachel Houser, Johann Imperial, Daniel Leonard, Ava McTamney-Prexta, Riley Smith, Anthony Sivillo, Isabelle Titzer and Camille Zapata

Honor Roll: Michael Brezina, Michael Burns, Cecilia Deel, Maria DeTrempe, Daniel Duchesneau, Mathias Hummer, Emma Kirchner, Colin McCullough, Jake Mercer, Alexis Pickel, Maxine Rann and Lizbeth Stephan

website at www.omph.org, call the school office at 717-738-2414, or find us on Facebook at OMPH-EPHRATA!

Ella Cassidy was also recognized as a “Student of the 2nd Quarter”

Our Mother of Perpetual Help Catholic School
Registration

Tuition Assistance Deadline – March 15th



Families registering at OMPH School for the 2019-2020 school year are advised the deadline to apply for tuition assistance scholarships for the upcoming school year is March 15th. Funds are available through the Diocese of Harrisburg’s Neumann Scholarship Foundation, funded through Pennsylvania’s Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, and the George and Mary Kremer Foundations. FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment is used to conduct the financial needs analysis and tax credit program eligibility verification.

The Preschool program, for children who are 3 and 4 years old by September 1st, provides developmentally appropriate activities in a Catholic environment. It also offers an extended day program including lunch. Our full day Kindergarten program, for children who are 5 years old by September 1st, provides daily instruction in Religion along with skill development in Language Arts and Math, and special classes in Spanish, computer, art, music, library and physical education. Students in grades 1 through 8 experience an education rich in STEM learning noted for academic excellence in an environment which reinforces our Catholic identity. An on-site afterschool program is available for all students in Preschool through 8th grade.

Come see why so many families choose OMPH Catholic School for their children! Please call the School Office if you have questions regarding financial assistance or the schedule a personal tour. To learn more about our school, please visit our