

My Dear Parishioners,

Rejoice Ephrata! **Rejoice** Denver! **Rejoice** Akron! **Rejoice** Reinholds! **Rejoice** Adamstown! **Rejoice** Brownstown! **Rejoice** Lititz! **Rejoice** Clay! **Rejoice** Reamstown and **Rejoice** Parishioners of O.M.P.H. Today is the Sunday traditionally known as **Laetare Sunday**; based on the antiphon which proclaims: “**Laetare Jerusalem**” or “**Rejoice, Jerusalem.**” Today we temporarily take a break from the somberness of the Lenten season in order to celebrate the redemption in which our penitence ultimately rests. Today the Church invites us to reflect on God’s love and to be **joyful** because of His great love for us. The Church invites us in the middle of this penitential season to **rejoice**. Why? Because God loves each and every one of us so much that He gives us His only Son Jesus. Today we are invited to say **yes** to **God’s love** and **respond** to **His love**.

Our readings for this Fourth Sunday of Lent remind us that we should **rejoice** because our God is always with us; in good times and in bad. Our God is a God of mercy, who through His only-begotten Son Jesus, has delivered us from darkness and given us eternal life. Our God is a God of life and restoration. Our God seeks not our punishment or humiliation but rather our healing and reconciliation with Him and with one another. Our God is not the God of condemnation and destruction but rather the God of compassion and forgiveness. Our God is neither detached from us nor from the universe He set into motion. Our God is not about death but rather He is about life. He is the Father of creation who constantly seeks to create and nurture life. He seeks to heal the wounded and broken-hearted. Our God lifts up those who have fallen down or have been pushed aside.

Our First Reading from the Second Book of Chronicles is quite poignant as it describes how (despite the sinfulness of the kings, religious leaders and the people of the kingdom of Judah) God is moved to compassion and remains loyal to His people and even offers them every incentive to return to the “path of life.”

In today’s reading the Chronicler notes the sinfulness of King Zedekiah (597-586 B.C.) and the Israelites. Consequently the Temple became polluted. However, out of compassion for both the Israelites and the Temple, God sent His prophets but they were subject to persistent ridicule. Not only did the King

and the Israelites ignore the prophets they actively derided them. Because of this callous contempt, the avenging anger of God was unleashed as God used the Chaldeans (neo-Babylonians) as the instruments of His wrath. The demise of the monarchy, the collapse of the temple system of worship, and the deportation of the people into Babylonian Captivity was the inevitable consequences of Israel’s hardhearted obstinacy. But the future did not lack hope. In 538 BC God moved the Persian King Cyrus to allow the Israelites to return to Jerusalem and begin the reconstruction of the Temple.

Today’s Second Reading (from the Letter to the Ephesians) inspires hope for those who, like the ancient Israelites, have grown indifferent to God and neglected His grace. St. Paul reminds us that our transgressions are ultimately overcome by God’s **mercy** and **love**. Like our First Reading, this passage states that the survival of God’s covenanted people is due solely to a free act of God’s grace. The author of Ephesians attributes salvation to God’s great love for His people. It is indeed a love which moves God to give. Consequently God brings to life, raises up, and enthrones humans-but in each instance, together with Christ. Unable to save ourselves we receive our salvation as a pure gift from God. When we were dead in sin God made us alive in Christ. Why? Not because we deserve it but rather because God is rich in mercy and He intimately loves us.

The context for today’s Gospel passage has Jesus explaining to Nicodemus the necessity of a “new birth” from above. Needless to say, Nicodemus cannot grasp what Jesus is saying and he is totally confused.

In today’s Gospel scene the Pharisee Nicodemus talks to Jesus about God. Nicodemus has arrived under the cover of darkness and he misunderstands what the Light of the world (Jesus) is saying to him. This gives Jesus the opportunity to clarify His meaning. Jesus declares: “God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.” God’s supreme gift (Jesus) was given out of love; not out of any desire to humiliate the world. God is **not** interested in condemning the world. Therefore God has provided everything possible to save the world because of His great love for the world. Our Good News is that God seeks not to condemn us but rather God saves us. God never condemns anyone.

It is we who condemn ourselves if we fail to accept Jesus and receive Him into our lives with faith.

St. John's Gospel passage also reminds us that although the world was created good, it often stands in opposition to God. Consequently the world is in need of being saved. God's love for the world is so deep that nothing is spared for its salvation, not even God's only Son, Jesus. Jesus is the very embodiment of the Father's love for the world since He is the embodiment of the Father's gift to the world. Jesus is the true light of the world, He is the light by which we can see and judge things correctly. Those who choose and live in His teachings will have everlasting life. Those who do not believe or live in Jesus choose to remain in eternal darkness. Have a blessed and **joyful** week.

Love & Prayers,
Fr. John

LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE

We invite everyone to attend our Annual Parish Lenten Service on Wednesday, March 21st at 7 P.M. There will be numerous priests present to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you. Come out and experience God's love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness in this joyful Sacrament. Fr. John

EASTER TRIDUUM

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil/Mass constitute the Easter Triduum. **These are the 3 highest holy days in the Catholic calendar.** We urge every parishioner, wherever you may be on these days, to attend the main service on each day: Mass on Holy Thursday, the Good Friday Liturgy Service (commemorating Jesus' death), and the Easter Vigil and Mass (celebrating redemption and resurrection).



HOLY THURSDAY - MARCH 29

Tenebrae 9:00 AM
The Lord's Supper Mass 7:00



GOOD FRIDAY - MARCH 30

Tenebrae 9 AM
Liturgy of the Passion 3 PM
Stations of the Cross 7PM



HOLY SATURDAY - MARCH 31

Tenebrae 9:00 AM
Easter Basket Blessing Tradition 11 AM
Easter Vigil Mass 8:00 PM

EASTER SUNDAY - APRIL 1

7:30, 9:00, 11:00

THE ANNIVERSARY OF OUR DIOCESE

PART II. by FATHER EDWARD QUINLAN

Pastoral care for Catholics settling in the original 13 colonies was first entrusted to Jesuit priests from England and later some from Germany. Parishes and missions were under the supervision of the Diocese of London as these were English colonies. With the end of the Revolutionary War and our official separation from England, as memorialized in the Treaty of Paris in 1783, the time was ripe for the formal foundation of the Church in our new country. Pope Pius VI in 1790 will create the Diocese of Baltimore and appointed Father John Carroll as the first bishop. The diocese included all of the United States at the time. The new diocese was estimated by Bishop Carroll to have 25,000 Catholics and he had 25 priests to serve them. The US population was about 4 million at that time.

The new country was open for business and by 1830 began to grow rapidly. Immigration was slow at first then significantly increased in the 1830's. Many Germans were among those arriving in this wave. By 1845 large numbers of Irish were coming to the US to flee starvation in their native land. With succeeding decades the new arrivals were coming from central and southern Europe as well. This was significantly increasing the Catholic population in the country.

By 1808 Pope Pius VII creates Baltimore as an Archdiocese, dividing it to form the dioceses of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown (Ky). Philadelphia at this time encompasses the whole

state of Pennsylvania. Our central Pennsylvania homeland is part of this early diocese, and we are blessed to be able to account as one of our bishops, Saint John Neumann. By way of note, his relics are encased in our main altar. In time, the state will see other dioceses created from the western counties, Pittsburgh (1843) and Erie (1853).

On March 3, 1868 Pope Pius IX will direct that the dioceses of Scranton and Harrisburg be created from the territory of Philadelphia. A young priest, assigned as the rector of the minor seminary in Philadelphia, will be appointed as the first Bishop of Harrisburg, Father Jeremiah Shanahan.

**Lenten Appeal
2018-19 Bishop's Annual Lenten Appeal
"LOVE MADE VISIBLE."**

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am ever so grateful for the generous gifts of prayer, talents and treasure that you have shared with our O.M.P.H. Parish Family all these years. We are fortunate that so many of our Parishioners have responded with such **generosity** to the needs of our Community and our Diocese.

I am asking you to consider making a **gift** to our 2018-19 Bishop's Annual Lenten Appeal. The ministries and agencies whose operational needs are funded by our Bishop's Annual Lenten Appeal serve thousands of our brothers and sisters throughout our Parish, Diocese, and south central Pennsylvania. **Our Parish** benefits **directly** from Bishop Gainer's Lenten Appeal through assistance in areas such as Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Catholic School Education, Marriage and Family Life Programs, Religious Education, Prison Ministry, Ministry to Persons with Disabilities, Catholic Charities and our Benevolent Society.

Our Parish assessment goal for the 2018-19 fiscal year is **\$101, 300**. Your prayers and generous financial support will assist us in reaching our goal. I am **confident** that each of us will give all that we can to help us reach our goal and support the mission of our Church. Please give **prayerful consideration** to what you can contribute to this year's Appeal and please respond by making a pledge of support. Pledge envelopes will be mailed to you or you can pick them up in the Church narthex or at the Parish Office. Remember, all **gifts** that **exceed** our assessment goal will be **returned** to our Parish and placed in our Parish Savings Account.

May you and your loved ones be abundantly blessed by our God for your continued commitment and sacrifices to Our Mother of Perpetual Help Parish and to our Diocese of Harrisburg. Be assured of my prayers, blessings and love.

Sincerely in Christ,
Fr. John

A LENT TO REMEMBER

A Lenten Encounter with Mercy

Join us for a 4-week video-based study based on **formed.org** featuring the Augustine Institute original productions Symbolon and Forgiven. The Transforming Power of Confession. A Lent to Remember is a beautiful presentation of the transforming power of mercy in the Sacrament of Confession. No matter what you have done, no matter how long you have been away, Jesus is waiting for you with open arms this Lent!

Week Four: 3-5-18 to 3-11-18

Symbolon: The Paschal Mystery

Bonus Episode: For Children

For Children: How to Make a Good Confession

NOT ON FORMED YET?

EASY AND FREE TO REGISTER!

1. Go to www.formed.org Parish Code **4BGYH2** and click "register"
2. Enter your name, email address, and desired password
3. Use the Symbolon and Forgiven Leader Guides for discussion

KITCHEN HELP WANTED



We are in need of good cooks for *St. Clements Rectory*. If you are interested in a full or part time position cooking for 10-15 priests, brothers and guests at the parish rectory, please call *Kevin* at 717-359-4541. We would love to speak to those willing to provide fresh and nutritious meals and *serve with a smile*.

**TEACHING POSITION OPEN
AT OMPH SCHOOL**

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School in Ephrata, PA is seeking a **fifth grade** teacher for the **2018-19** school year. Interested candidates must be a **practicing Catholic** holding a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree and PA Instructional I teaching certificate. Applicants **must** complete the online **Youth Protection Program of the Harrisburg Diocese** and **provide current clearances (PS State Police, Child Abuse Clearance**

and FBI Fingerprinting) along with employment information compliant with **Pennsylvania Act 168 Regulations**. Benefits include medical coverage, dental plan, life insurance policy and 401K plan. For more information please contact Rev. John McLoughlin, C.Ss.R. (Pastor) at (717) 733-9641 or e-mail: johnmack57@hotmail.com



Monday, March 12

7:00 Tom & Mary Lehmeir
9:00 †Maria Mannino

Tuesday, March 13

7:00 Tom & Mary Lehmeir
9:00 Chip McCarthy

Wednesday, March 14

7:00 †Deacon Bob Robertson
9:00 Tom & Mary Lehmeir

Thursday, March 15

7:00 †Clara Welsh
9:00 Paul Anthony

Friday, March 16

7:00 †Curran Family
9:00 †Maria Mannino

Saturday, March 17

9:00 Sue Bemis
5:00 †John & Helen Phillips

Sunday, March 18, 5th Sunday of Lent

7:30 For the Parishioners
9:00 †Maria Mannino
11:00 †Francis Keating

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.

February 25: Margaret Gardner, Jane Muldowney, Brenda Crawford, Stephen Stanavage, Jennifer Ranker, Janet Tomko, Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-

Critchfield, Michael Lillis, Richard Warner, Jim Lehmier, Tonya Stoner, Kevin Kaiser, Jody Shimp, Joe Ferrara, Anna Leshner, Pat Frey, Florence Windish.

March 4: Anna Mae Finkey, Susan Buchler.

CHURCH SUPPORT

Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
3-4-18	\$15,722.34	\$14,950.00	(\$772.34)
YTD	Amount	YTD Needed	Difference
3-4-18	\$483,748.00	\$538,200.00	(\$54,452.00)

SECOND COLLECTION: Next Sunday, March 18 is for CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Paul isn't referring to individual acts of kindness or service here and there. He is speaking about a way of life. He is telling us that we, who were saved by grace, must respond to God's gracious gift. And the best and only response we can have to this gracious gift from God is to try to be just as gracious as he is by doing charitable works of service for people in need.

Paul goes so far as to say that our charitable works are "prepared in advance" by God. In other words, we may think that our desire to reach out to someone in distress arose in our minds by itself when it actually came from the Holy Spirit. God has put a desire for charitable works on everyone's heart. But all too often people believe they are too busy to help. Or they believe their help won't make much of a difference. The sad result is that there are still many people who are not getting the help they 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 Jose Bobby Malibago.

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.

BULLETIN DEADLINES

The Palm Sunday Bulletin will be sent to the printer on 16 March and the Easter bulletin will be sent on 23 March.

LEGION OF MARY

The Annual Acies Ceremony will be held at noon on Saturday, March 24 at Holy Trinity Church 409 Cherry St. Columbia. Fr. Steve Kelly will speak. A light luncheon to follow. Need a ride? Call Mary at 484-706-0627 or Susan at 717-203-1070.



YEARLINGS

We will meet for lunch this Tuesday, March 13 at the Brickerville House, 2 East 28th Division Hwy. in Lititz. All seniors are invited to join us for lunch. Please call Gloria 717-738-9098.



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
CORNER:**

This Week's Corporal Work of Mercy

Care For The Sick:

Make a meal for a friend/neighbor who has a family member with a chronic health condition.

Visit with an elderly neighbor, friend or family member.

Volunteer to help at a local nursing home.

This Week's Spiritual Work of Mercy

Forgive Offenses:

Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet for someone who has wronged you.

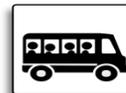
Let go of grudges.

ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

Spring and Easter are just around the corner. Time for bringing families together, sharing stories and the joy of Easter egg hunts!!! The Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary will again be helping to organize the OMPH Easter egg hunt, and would like to thank everyone for previous candy donations, and plastic eggs. So gather the family and come on out and enjoy another family fun event! The Easter Egg hunt will be held rain or shine on Saturday, March 24th Promptly at 1 pm in the Field of Dreams - behind OMPH. If it rains, or too cold the egg hunt will be held indoors, at the Father Jackson Center (OMPH Gym). Ages for the Easter Egg hunters are 0-10. This is a great family tradition for children.

We are in need of donations of plastic eggs, and candy for the egg hunt. A donation box will be in the church narthex. Please contact, Sherri Schlotterer at 717.951.6473 if you have any questions. Hope to see you there!!
The Ladies Auxiliary

THE MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE



On **Saturday 12 May** we will depart at 7 AM (OMPH side parking lot) Return approximately 6 PM (leaving DC at 3 PM) **COST \$47, NON-REFUNDABLE** (this includes driver tip.)

THE BUS IS FILLING UP WE ONLY HAVE 29 SEATS AVAILABLE.

The Museum of the Bible is a museum in Washington D.C. which documents the narrative, history and impact of the Bible. *The museum opened on November 17, 2017.* There are 2 places to eat on the premises and a gift shop we will receive **20% off purchases at the gift shop.**

The last day to reserve and pay for your seat is **April 14th**. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact **Rita Pfautz at 717-341-1211** or email at ritapfautz@yahoo.com

Check out the museum website, *you'll be glad you did.*
<https://www.museumofthebible.org/>



RESPECT LIFE

One root cause of abortion is a lack of understanding of the sacredness of the marital embrace. The physical

act of union is meant to be within the sacred bond of marriage- because a baby is the natural and beautiful result. When people engage in physical acts without the marriage commitment, they often find themselves in "crisis" when a baby is conceived. So one way to eradicate abortion is to strike at the root cause, and promote chastity.

Chastity is a commitment to purity and fidelity no matter what your state in life, whether married, single, or consecrated. Chastity reminds us of the deeper meaning of sexuality. Many in society treat people like animals and detach the "marital act" from the reverence it deserves. Only with chastity properly formed can we become people of honor, integrity and justice.

See the following website for a free e-book called Theology of the Body for Families and Single People, plus Family Chastity Formation. <http://www.familyprayernight.org/tob-pdf/TheologyOfTheBodyForFamilies.pdf>

Andrea Ostrowski

WERE YOU MARRIED IN 1968?



In honor of your 50th Wedding Anniversary, there will be a special Mass and reception on Sunday, July 8, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at Good Shepherd Parish in Camp Hill. Bishop Ronald W. Gainer will be the celebrant. To receive an invitation, please contact your parish office.

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 18TH AT 11 AM



The Sunshine Club at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in New Holland would like to invite you to join us for a presentation by Brian Roche, Anchor/Consumer Investigator from

WGAL News 8.

Brian co-anchors New 8 at 5:30 each weekday and is also the 8 On Your Side consumer/investigative

reporter for News 8. Brian's work has been recognized by the Associated Press with the top honor for Enterprise Reporting in Pennsylvania and he's received several Emmy nominations. Brian has more than 30 years' experience as a broadcast journalist, anchor and producer. Brian's presentation will focus on the latest consumer news and warnings about scams and fraud.

There is no cost to attend this presentation but we do ask that you pre-register since space is limited. The meeting will be held in Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Center. The address is: 150 Water Street, New Holland, PA. All are welcome to attend! Please note Brian's presentation will begin at 11 am so we ask that you plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early.

If you plan to attend, please contact Joe Sullivan at 717-203-4110 or Barb Markham at 717-768-8757.

A WOMEN'S CONCERN

Please plan on joining us **Thursday, April 5th** for our **Annual Partners Dinner**. We are excited to welcome a panel of former abortion clinic workers (never before done!), as our speakers. Abby Johnson is joined by two women who have chosen to leave the abortion industry. One of these women worked in the infamous Kermit Gosnell abortion clinic and will be sharing how quitting her job brought redemption and hope to her life.

The event will take place at Calvary Church in Lancaster on **Thursday, April 5**, at 6:30PM. Tickets are complimentary; however a love offering will be taken to benefit A Woman's Concern.

Reservations are required by March 26 and can be made by visiting pregnancylancaster.com/events If you would like to be an event Sponsor please contact **Mary Ann Albertini at 717-394-1561 x 5**.

OMPH SCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR 2018-

19

WE ARE ENROLLING! 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 an after-care program. Our full day Kindergarten program, for children who are 5 years old by September 1st, 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 also available.

Come see why so many families choose OMPH Catholic School for their children! Personal tours can be scheduled by calling the Development Office at 717-738-2414. Financial aid is available to qualifying families through FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment. **The deadline to apply for financial aid is March 25th!**

To learn more about our school, please **visit our website** at www.omph.org or call the school office at 738-2414 for further information. **Find us on Facebook** at OMPH Ephrata!

HERSHEYPARKSM DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG

2018 Individual Ticket Order Form

The Diocese of Harrisburg is once again working with HersheyparkSM to offer tickets at a substantial discount, to parishioners and their families. If you would like to order tickets for the 2018 summer season (valid any public operating day), complete and submit this ORDER FORM along with full payment, checks made payable to your parish, by **Monday, April 30, 2018**

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____ _____
PRIMARY PHONE: _____

HersheyparkSM Announces Two New Water Attractions for 2018

THIS OFFER ENDS on Monday, April 30, 2018

Note: Tickets are valid any public day during the regular 2018 season. Take advantage of these early bird savings, NOW!

Breakers EdgeSM Water Coaster
The world's first HydroMAGNETIC water coaster with flying saucer turns and splash-filled hills.



Whitecap RacerSM

The world's longest mat racer with six side-by-side tunnels and two 360 degree loops.



Quantity	Type	Gate	YOUR Price	Savings	TOTAL
	ALL Ages (ages 3+)	\$ 67.80 <small>(Peak Season)</small>	\$ 34.85	48 % OFF Gate	\$
	Prepaid Meal Ticket: <small>Choose a meal at up to 20 food venues. All meals include entrée, side and Large Fountain Drink.</small>	Prepaid Meal Ticket <small>offers up to 30% OFF retail prices</small>	\$11.99	\$12.99 retail price	\$
	Snack Voucher	Prepaid Snack Voucher	\$3.25	Another great Way to SAVE!	\$
	Prepaid Parking Passes	\$15.00	\$7.50	50% OFF Parking	\$
ORDER GRAND TOTAL					\$

Parishes will receive tickets by Friday, May 25, 2018

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