

My Dear Parishioners,

Life begins in **loss**. In the act of birth we were pushed out from the secure warm womb of our mother and then dragged helpless into the big world of watching adults. Disconnected from our mother we screamed and protested as we were held upside down in the hands of a stranger who slapped us on our bottom. Some welcome! Our new separateness was frightening. Even though we were returned to our mother's loving arms we inhabited a space that was different. To gain a place in the new world, we first had to lose our place in the old one. The act of birth is inseparable from the pain of letting go. That was our first education about **loss**.

When we think about **loss** we usually have in mind the **loss** of some loved one thru death. But the experience of **loss** plays a larger part in our lives than we might think. We **lose** not only by someone's death but by leaving and being left, by letting go and moving on, by relinquishing our false dreams. Throughout our lives we have to face a whole series of **necessary losses**: people, relationships and attachments we have to give up if we are to grow. Our gradual development is marked by renunciation. It is only through **losses** that we learn to change and adapt and make new gains. No pain, no gain!

As we grow older we have to let go of our youthful good looks, our perfect vision, our skinny waistlines, our health, our earnestness to save the world, our unreal expectations of others, and our naïve belief in the progress of humanity. The time comes when we have to let go of life itself and that final act can be as painful a leave-taking as the act of birth. But in the midst of this litany of **loss** there can be new growth and new life. As Jesus says in today's Gospel: "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit."

Today's first reading is from the Book of the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah was quite familiar with **loss** and the hardships of speaking up for God. His book is filled with personal reflections on the sufferings and **losses** he endured as a spokesman for God's truth. However in today's reading we hear how Jeremiah looks to a much brighter future.

God had made a covenant with the Israelites at Mt. Sinai. God remained loyal to that covenant but the Israelites did not. The Israelites consistent failure to observe the covenant and remain loyal to God ultimately led to the collapse of their kingdom and their eventual enslavement. They failed to be faithful in keeping the covenant but God **always** remained

faithful to the covenant with them. In today's passage Jeremiah looks ahead to the coming days when God will establish a "new covenant" with the children of Israel. The Old Covenant was written on stone. The incentive for loyalty thus came from outside. The New Covenant will be written on the hearts of God's people. Motivation to remain loyal to this covenant will come from within. Loyalty to the covenant will no longer be secured by mere instruction. In the future later generations of Israelites will be inspired by the ideal character of the previous generation.

Today's Gospel passage is part of the final section of John 12 which concludes the first half of his Gospel. This section is often referred to as "the Book of Signs." Today's passage takes place at Passover time when Jewish pilgrims came to Jerusalem to celebrate this special feast. Passover was universally considered the most important feast of the year. One of the three pilgrimage feasts (along with Pentecost and Tabernacles) it was a time when all Jews in reasonable proximity to Jerusalem were required to attend Temple services. John mentions that during this special time some Greeks came to see Jesus. These Greeks may have been proselytes, people seriously thinking of converting to Judaism or they may have been merchants trying to profit from the vast throng of tourists who had flocked to Jerusalem with money to celebrate the high holy days. This mention of Greeks suggests the inclusion of the Gentile world in the salvation brought by Jesus. Jesus replies to their approach with an announcement: "His hour has come!" This is both the hour of His glorification and the hour He dreads- His crucifixion. The relationship between Jesus' anguish and His exaltation is demonstrated through the image of the "grain of wheat that must die if it is to rise". At this Passover feast the sacrificial lamb will be Jesus Himself. The time has come for Jesus when there is no more time. He must face the **loss** of freedom, the **loss** of friends, the **loss** of support and the **loss** of His own life.

In today's Gospel passage we also see how Jesus is fully aware that the pain He must suffer and the **loss** of His life cannot be avoided if His Father's name is to be glorified. There is going to be gain from His pain; there is going to be glory from the way of the cross. His pain and the losing of His life is a necessary **loss**. His pain will still be acute; the **loss** will still be crushing. But the Father's solidarity with His Son Jesus will keep Him going to the very end.

Jesus' **loss** is our gain! His radical act of self-forgetfulness stands at the center of the Christian story. Jesus is the "grain of wheat that died in order to bear much fruit". That is why the Cross has such a

position of prominence whenever Christians gather. The great **loss** of Jesus' life has become in time the ground of our hope. It points us beyond the reality of suffering to the reality of Easter joy. Jesus' message for us today is the same as that of all Lent: the way to glory (for Jesus and for us) is death to self. Through death will come resurrection. At times we may think of Jesus' resurrection as a reward for undergoing death on the cross, and that eternal life (that is, the highest quality of life) comes **after** death. The truth is that eternal life comes **through** death; death to self and it begins **now**. Have a blessed week.

Love & prayers,  
Fr. John

### **LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE**

We invite everyone to attend our Annual Parish Lenten Service on Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 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

### **\$ 1,000 SCHOLARSHIP**

The Harrisburg Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a Catholic Senior Girl for her freshman year at an accredited college, university, or trade school. Applicants must be sponsored by a Mother or Grandmother/Guardian who is a member of a Parish Council of Catholic Women, is a resident of the Harrisburg Diocese, and must meet all conditions established by the Scholarship committee. Anyone interested in applying should contact your Parish CCW President for an application or Joyce Scott, Scholarship Chair, 717-737-0927 or email to: [joynbob10@aol.com](mailto:joynbob10@aol.com). **The application deadline is Ma**

### **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 III. by FATHER EDWARD QUINLAN

What did the diocese look like in 1868? At the young age of 34 the newly consecrated Bishop Jeremiah J. Shanahan arrived in Harrisburg to take up his responsibilities for a sprawling diocese covering 18 counties in central Pennsylvania. (In 1901 three counties; Center, Clinton and Fulton were ceded to help form the Diocese of Altoona leaving the current 15.) There were about 25,000 Catholics in the diocese. There were 19 parishes with resident pastors and 34 missions and stations. Some 7 parochial schools and one academy with a total enrollment of 955 students. Faculties consisted of 13 Religious and 10 lay teachers.

The staff of the brand new diocese consisted of 19 diocesan priests, 3 Jesuits and 18 religious sisters from the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

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

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

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, our 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 Programs, Prison Ministry, Ministry to Persons with Disabilities, Catholic Charities and our Parish Benevolent Society.

Our Parish assessment goal for the 2018-19 fiscal year is **\$101, 300**. As of March 15<sup>th</sup> **269 households** have pledged **\$60,357.09** and we have collected **\$39,126.59**. There are **1268 households** registered in our Parish. I hope and pray that **every household** will contribute to our appeal, enabling us to reach our goal and support the mission of our Church. 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

**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

**PRINCIPAL POSITION  
AT OMPH SCHOOL**

The Diocese of Harrisburg Catholic Schools Department has announced a Principal Opening for the 2018 – 2019 school year: for:

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School, Ephrata ([www.omph.org](http://www.omph.org));

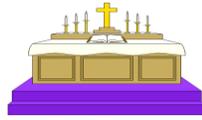
**Qualifications:** Practicing, knowledgeable Catholic; Thorough understanding of Catholic School Philosophy; Commitment to modeling the values of Catholic Educational Leadership; PA Administrators Certificate (or in process); Catechetical Certification (or in process) and 5 years teaching experience. For more information see the Employment listings on the Diocese of Harrisburg website: [www.hbgdiocese.org](http://www.hbgdiocese.org).

Send resume and letter of interest by March 31, 2018 to: Livia Riley, Superintendent of Schools; Diocese of Harrisburg; 4800 Union Deposit Road; Harrisburg, PA 17111-3710 or by email: [lriley@hbgdiocese.org](mailto:lriley@hbgdiocese.org).

**MENS RETREAT  
NEUMANN UNIVERSITY**

Join other men from OMPH on **June 23-24** at Neumann University, Aston PA. Something new for **ALL MEN!** The weekend includes enriching talks, fellowship, food, prayer, and a fun game of football. Men, what will your Legacy be? Come and find out! **Call Vince Mento at 610-420-2781**

3-11-18	\$502,194.12	\$553,150.00	(\$50,955.88)
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**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, March 19**

- 7:00     ✠Helen Dean
- 9:00     ✠Intention of the donor

**Tuesday, March 20**

- 7:00     ✠Intention of the donor
- 9:00     ✠Intention of the donor

**Wednesday, March 21**

- 7:00     ✠Intention of the donor
- 9:00     ✠Edward Brady

**Thursday, March 22**

- 7:00     ✠Intention of the donor
- 9:00     ✠Estrella Villanueva

**Friday, March 23**

- 7:00     ✠Intention of the donor
- 9:00     ✠Maria Mannino

**Saturday, March 24**

- 9:00     ✠Intentions in the Prayer Box
- 5:00     ✠Luther Shimp

**Sunday, March 25, Palm Sunday**

- 7:30     For the Parishioners
- 9:00     ✠Melissa Kurtz
- 11:00    Dan Gibbons

**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.

**March 18:** Margaret Gardner, Jane Muldowney, Brenda Crawford, 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.



Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
3-11-18	\$18,446.12	\$14,950.00	(\$3,496.12)
YTD	Amount	YTD Needed	Difference

**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 John & Helen Phillips.

**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**

**Easter bulletin will be sent on 23 March.** If you have announcement you want in either of these bulletins, please send them *now*.

**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.

**PEANUT BUTTER EGGS**

Psst!!! They go quick!!! Get them while you can!!!! The Knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary's 5th Annual Peanut Butter Egg Sale made with Dark or Milk Wilbur Chocolates. Each box will contain 12- 1/2oz. Peanut Butter Eggs for only \$9.00. Eggs will be available after all masses on March 24 and 25th. Don't miss out on these fabulous eggs. Any questions you may contact Rita Pfautz at [733-9247](tel:733-9247)

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 14<sup>th</sup>**. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact **Rita Pfautz at 717-341-1211** or email at [ritapfautz@yahoo.com](mailto:ritapfautz@yahoo.com)

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



**RESPECT LIFE  
SHOCKING NUMBERS**

Every year 56 million people die in the world ... from all causes. In addition to those, **another** 56 million die from abortion worldwide. We lose the same number of babies every year as from all other causes of death in the world combined. Lord help us!

From Ash Wednesday until today, **196** babies have been spared from abortion, through prayer and public witness outside of abortion clinics around the world. And those are only the ones known for sure. Many women don't keep their appointments or drive right by when people are praying outside of a clinic.



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CORNER:**

**This Week's Corporal Work of Mercy**

**Visit The Imprisoned:**

Donate Bibles, Rosaries or other religious items to a local prison.

Get involved with an organization that helps the children of prisoners.

Write to someone you may know who is incarcerated.

**This Week's Spiritual Work of Mercy**

**Bear Wrongs Patiently:**

Pray for someone who irritates you.

Pray for patience when dealing with difficult people and/or situations.

Show patience in your interactions with others.

**Our RE Class Schedule For The Remainder Of The RE Year Is As Follows:**

**Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session**

**Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session**

**Happy Easter!**

**Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup> – NO RE Classes**

**Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes Resume**

**Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session**

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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 24<sup>th</sup> 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

"O, God, you formed us in our mother's womb and planned a unique and special life and purpose for each of us, and we do thank you. Grant that we may pray and work for an end to abortion, especially in these 40 days, so that no unborn baby you have made may fail to achieve your divine intention for him or her because of intentional abortion." Rev. Ben Sheldon from [www.40daysforlife.com](http://www.40daysforlife.com) Andrea Ostrowski

**WERE YOU MARRIED IN 1968?**



In honor of your 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, there will be a special Mass and reception on Sunday, July 8, at 2 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.

**THE 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
MISSIONARY SISTERS OF ST. BENEDICT**



**FESTIVE MASS AND DINNER  
SATURDAY, APRIL 21 AT 5PM**

During the First World War, Sister Jadwiga Jozefa Kulesza saw destruction, the tormented people and the many children left orphan. So under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit she set out to found a group of like minded women using the spirituality of St. Benedict. Thus The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St. Benedict was approved on June 24, 1917.

During the following years the Sisters and their orphan children had many struggles with the Bolsheviks. The Second World War bringing much more ferocity and hardship for the Sisters and their children and the many others affected by the cruelty and suffering of war.

By the grace of God, and their persistence and after a hundred years, the Sisters continue their caring, educational, pastoral, and missionary work in the Church. They have gone from the Ukraine and Poland to Brazil, the United States, Libya, Ecuador.

They now give thanks to God who was with them in such difficult times and invite you to join with them and Mother Superior Mary Marcellina from Poland on **Saturday, on April 21 at the 5PM Mass** and to share a Festive Polish Dinner with them afterwards.

*That we may prepare well, we ask you to kindly sign your family name and the number attending on the sheets in the lobby or call the parish office at 717 733 6596 by the end of this week.*

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2018**



Mark your calendars and save the date for this year's **Vacation Bible School July 16-20, 2018!** At this year's VBS our kids will get Shipwrecked and discover how JESUS RESUCES. As we gear up for this great week we are looking for a few more adult volunteers to make it an amazing week for the kids. If you are interested in helping out please contact Laura Kauffman at (717) 575-8221.

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 REGISTRATION  
OR 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 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 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 25<sup>th</sup>!**

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!