

My Dear Parishioners,

When we gather together each week to celebrate the memory of Jesus we help each other by our very presence at Holy Mass. Our presence at Mass is an act of **faith** and a sharing in the worshipping community. Our **faith** gives us a sense of belonging to a large community. When we believe, we belong. When we gather together we believe together. As Catholics the principal object of our faith is belief in Jesus our Lord. Although we are many in number we share our common belief and trust in Him. But the community of faith can never be a substitute for individual faith. As the author W. H. Auden once said: "The relation of faith between subject and object is unique in every case. Hundreds may believe, but each has to believe by himself."

Nobody can do our believing for us. Some people will believe in anything because their belief costs them nothing. You can add random lists to their creeds and they will smile and nod in agreement (not because they have faith) but because they have become accustomed to defending themselves against facing the complexity of the real. They do not travel on their belief. Their commitment ends with their ready assent. This is not the innocence of simplicity. It is the disguise adopted by those who do not care **what** they believe in. As long as they are numbered among the believers they are content.

Our Scripture readings for today are about the **faith experiences** of Jesus' disciples and their practice of **sharing that faith** with the wider community.

Today's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles (sometimes called the "Gospel of the Spirit") speaks of the believing community established by Jesus' victory over sin and death. The cultured ancient Greeks who read this passage might have been aware of the ideal form of communal sharing found in Plato's **Republic**. The Jews of that time who read it would hearken to Moses' foretelling of the ideal community of God (**Deuteronomy 15:4**). In Acts, Luke provides a general picture of the first Christian community. This picture clearly displays a people committed to standards that go beyond this world. The Christian community is responsive to the gift of the Spirit they all received from the Risen Jesus through the ministry of the apostles. Luke mentions that the

first Christian believing community was of **one heart** and **one mind**. This unity of purpose distinguishes them from other groups depicted in Acts who are not nearly so united in their thinking or motives. The community's principal values were unity in mind (**faith**) and heart (**love**), the sharing of possessions (**detachment** from earthly possessions), and apostolic zeal (their **witness** to the Gospel). Unity of mind and heart characterizes the Greek concept of friendship and sharing of possessions is a Jewish value. Thus the early Christian community espoused values from both cultures and they lived an ideal way of life that was attainable through the grace of Jesus' Resurrection.

The author of First John (a member of the Johannine circle) writes a tract to be used by the members of his community around 100 A.D. His audience consists principally of pagan converts who are experiencing internal problems with living the Christian life. Today's section of the tract is a testimony to Trinitarian **faith**. It describes God as the One who begets (the Father); it identifies Jesus as the Son of God; and it credits the Spirit as the one who testifies to the triumph of Jesus' death and resurrection. It also sketches the way believers participate in this Trinitarian reality. Jesus alone shares in God's own nature and thereby can refashion women and men into children of God. It is through **faith** in Jesus that believers can participate in the Trinity, do God's will and conquer evil.

Today's Gospel from St. John focuses on three events that took place after Jesus had been raised from the dead. The first event is Jesus appearing to His frightened disciples and granting them His **peace**. The second event is Jesus commissioning His disciples with the **Gift** of the **Holy Spirit** empowering them to continue His work on the earth. The third event is the appearance of Jesus to the apostle Thomas. All three events manifest Jesus in His **new life** as the Risen Lord.

The appearance of the Risen Jesus to the disciples in today's Gospel passage reveals the praxis for believing in the Resurrection and living the **new life** of the Resurrection. It begins with getting rid of fear. The disciples were afraid that what happened to Jesus (crucifixion) would happen to them. They secured themselves behind locked doors. The darkness

of the evening and the locked doors of the place both highlight the degree to which the disciples' lives are enshrouded by fear. But Jesus emerges from the darkness and penetrates the locked room to demonstrate the futility of fear. The same divine force that causes the stone at the tomb to roll away permits Jesus to pass through human obstacles and defenses. Three times Jesus says: "Peace be with you." His words invite His disciples to embrace Divine Providence. Jesus then breathes on them the power of the Holy Spirit and sends them forth to become the instruments of God's forgiveness and mercy. The disciples breathe in and the Spirit becomes part of them. However one of their number is missing: the apostle Thomas.

When Thomas arrives to hear the disciple's story, he refuses to believe them. Thomas is part of the apostolic group but he is also a distinct independent self. He cannot be loyal to the group while being disloyal to his own inner self. For Thomas honesty is more important than loyalty so he refused to become part of this company of believers. It is not enough for him to shelter in a **faith** that he cannot credit for himself. He may want to believe, he may yearn to accept as true what the others say, but his wish cannot struggle into personal **faith**. Doubt cannot be transformed into **faith** simply by willing it. For Thomas it is more important **what** he is asked to believe in, than belonging to the company of believers.

Later on in the Gospel we learn that Thomas does come to believe in the Risen Jesus in the same way as the other disciples (when he sees and touches the Lord for himself.) Thomas then declares that the Risen Jesus is God. His profession of **faith** outstrips that of the other disciples. He stands for all those who have not seen the Lord but are asked to believe in Him: "Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe."

**Faith** is one of the principal gifts of the Spirit. It is also a form of life that has to be nurtured, helped in growing, and loved into maturity. **Faith** is a life and like any life it can wither if forgotten or overlooked. **Faith** can die from a lifetime's neglect. We need to pray about our **faith**, think about our **faith**, and live the life of our **faith**. **Faith** demands that we be active. That does not mean that we will never have

doubts. Like Thomas if we care about **what** we believe in, that care in time will bring us into the presence of the living Lord. Have a blessed and **faith-filled** week.

Love & Prayers,

Fr. John

P.S. Today we celebrate **Divine Mercy Sunday**. We celebrate the fact that our loving God shows **mercy** to all those who love Him and obey His word.



#### ✦DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Please join us in a celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday on **Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 3 PM** in the Church. Fr. Pat will lead us in praying of the Divine Mercy Chaplet and share some highlights with us about the gift of God's Mercy.

#### 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.**

#### 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. Our Parish assessment goal for the 2018-19 fiscal year is **\$101, 300**. As of March 26<sup>h</sup> **301 households** have pledged **\$75,107.09** and we have collected **\$52,091.59**. There are **1368 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

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

The Diocese of Harrisburg is committed to the safety of children. We take very seriously the protection of youth in all Church related activities and programs. We are working to make the Catholic Church one of the safest institutions in the country.

To report the suspected abuse of a minor you must notify both law enforcement and the Church. First, call the PA Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-932-0313. To report suspected abuse of a minor by a Church official, employee or volunteer, no matter when it happened, call the diocesan toll free hotline at 1 (800) 626-1608. In the Diocese of Harrisburg we:

- Have zero tolerance for anyone who is guilty of even one instance of abuse.
- Offer opportunities to help victims to heal.
- Screen all employees and volunteers before they can begin service.
- Educate our youth on how to stay safe.
- Train employees and volunteers on how to recognize and report abuse.
- Disclose all allegations to local civil authorities.
- Exceed State and national requirements.
- Undergo an annual independent audit of our procedures.

To learn more about what you can do to prevent abuse, how to report abuse, assistance available to victims and Youth Protection efforts of the Diocese, please visit: [www.hbgdiocese.org/safeyouth](http://www.hbgdiocese.org/safeyouth).

**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 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)

**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, April 9, Annunciation of the Lord**

7:00 †Richard Dean  
9:00 †John Gill

**Tuesday, April 10**

7:00 †Bill Hecker  
9:00 †Michael LaScala

**Wednesday, April 11, St. Stanislaus, Bishop & Martyr**

7:00 †Richard Dean  
9:00 †Anthony Colatta

**Thursday, April 12**

7:00 †Charles & Joan Tucker  
9:00 Special Intention

**Friday, April 13, St. Martin I, Pope & Martyr**

7:00 †Steve Lehmier  
9:00 †George & Mary Bakajza

**Saturday, April 14**

9:00 †Roy Dunlap  
5:00 †John & Helen Phillips

**Sunday, April 15, Divine Mercy Sunday**

7:30 For the Parishioners  
9:00 †Alexandra Pierce  
11:00 †Maria Mannino

**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.

**April 2:** Margaret Gardner, Jane Muldowney, Brenda Crawford, Jennifer Ranker, Janet Tomko, Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Michael Lillis, Richard Warner, Tonya Stoner, Kevin Kaiser, Jody Shimp, Joe Ferrara, Anna Leshner, Pat Frey, Florence Windish, Gloria Reynolds. Anna Mae Finkey, Susan Buchler, Danny McGuire, William Oktela, and Gloria Reynolds.

**CHURCH  SUPPORT**

Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
3-25-18	\$13,434.26	\$14,950.00	(\$1,515.74)
YTD	Amount	YTD Needed	Difference
3-25-18	\$527,621.95	\$ 583,050.00	(\$55,428.05)

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED  
SACRAMENT**

Jesus always held on to his peace. That's because the peace that Jesus had was not about things going his way. His peace was about knowing that his Father was always with him and that God would always be faithful to his promises.

The peace that God offers us is rooted in knowing that we are loved by him, forgiven by him, and saved by him. So when things are going your way, be sure to remain peaceful by thanking God for all of your blessings. And when you are feeling angry, resentful, or bitter, take those feelings to the Lord and ask him to help you.

**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 Ron Barranco



**BENEVOLENT SOCIETY**

The OMPH Benevolent Society's community food bank is in need of: Instant mashed potatoes, canned fruit, spaghetti sauce, and canned vegetables: corn, peas, green beans, carrots, mixed vegetables. Please place these items in the food bank crate in the narthex of the church. The underserved families in our community served by our food bank appreciate your donations!

**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 RESCUES**. 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.

**OMPH CYO ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**

**2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL DESIGNER BAG BINGO**

\$20 Ticket Price - 20 Bingo Games Raffles, Special Bingo Games Food and Drinks for Sale  
**Saturday 4/28/18**

**YEARLINGS NEWS**

The April Luncheon will be held at Hoss's 100 Airport Rd. in Lititz on **April 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:30**. ALL ARE WELCOME! Call Gloria at 738-9098 for reservations.

**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.)

**THERE ARE 13 SEATS AVAILABLE.**

The Museum of the Bible is in Washington D.C. and 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**

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

**RADIATE YOUTH GROUP**

News from Radiate Youth Group: Our next youth group meeting is **Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup> from 3-5:30**. **Have your teen bring \$5 to meeting to participate in going bowling at Dutch Lanes.** Prayer service to follow game. If they need a ride or someone to sit

with, please contact me at 717-989-8900. Thanks! God bless! In His Service, Denise Ives

**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 PM**, at Good Shepherd Parish in Camp Hill. Bishop Ronald W. Gainer will be the celebrant. To receive an invitation, please contact your parish office.



**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CORNER:**

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

- Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes Resume**
- Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup> – RE Classes In Session**
- Last RE Classes Of The Year**
- Sunday, April 22<sup>m</sup> – RE Classes In Session**

**THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
MISSIONARY SISTERS OF ST. BENEDICT**



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

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.**

**LCHS SPRING MUSICAL**

"Crazy For You" is a romantic comedy musical and is this year's Lancaster Catholic High School's Musical. "Crazy For You" will be hitting the Old Main Auditorium stage on April 26th-28th at 7:30 PM and **April 29<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM. Tickets are \$17** for reserved seating, \$15 for adult and \$7 for students. Please contact Tony Brill at **717-509-0310** for more information.

**RESPECT LIFE**

**DIVINE MERCY AT WORK**

Today is Divine Mercy Sunday with the most amazing promises attached to our going to Confession and receiving Holy Communion! Jesus promised "a complete forgiveness of sins and punishment." That's huge!

Jesus also said "On that day [Divine Mercy Sunday] the very depths of my tender mercy are opened. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach my fount of mercy." To be able to receive this mercy, one needs to go to Confession before or on the feast and be in the state of grace (no mortal sin) and receive Holy Communion with the intention of obtaining the promised grace.

When we think about this great grace in relation to the grave sins that deal with life and sexuality, this grace takes on an even more amazing dimension. The killing of pre-born babies is known to be a grave evil.

Many women who have had abortions feel that they can't be forgiven. Today Our Lord calls them to His infinite mercy. Yet all the sins dealing with our sexuality are grave, and as such carry a weight of punishment with them. Our Lord promises to take that weight away today with the most amazing mercy. Take advantage of this mercy!

Think about those sins most minimized by our society. Are there some that need your repentance? Have you

used contraception, in any form? Have you encouraged someone to get an abortion? Have you materially cooperated in any way- driven to clinics, paid for abortions or sterilizations? Have you been silent and not tried to discourage someone from an abortion or sterilization? Have you condoned sexual Immorality-before marriage or as adultery? Have you used someone for you own pleasure? Have you used pornography or turned a blind eye to someone else's use? Have you been closed to new life?

Divine Mercy proclaims the longing of Our Lord to forgive us and offers forgiveness of sins and punishment. Let us embrace it!

Andrea Ostrowski

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

## 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 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.

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!

### NEEDED GOLFERS AND SPONSORS



For Our Mother of Perpetual Help School 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Benefit **Golf Tournament** **May 9** at Honeybrook Golf Club Enjoy a fun filled day of golf at a first class course. Prizes and contests including a chance to win a trip for two to the 2019

Super Bowl or \$15,000 cash.

A single golfer is only \$90 and includes golf at Honeybrook Golf Course, cart, range balls, contests, prizes, light breakfast, grilled lunch and refreshments.

Advertising through sponsorship reaches members of surrounding business communities as well as school families and friends and is available by contacting the School Development Office at 717-738-2414.