

My Dear Parishioners,

A man said to a marriage counselor: “My wife and I just don’t have the same feelings for each other as we used to have. I guess I just don’t **love** her anymore and she doesn’t **love** me. What can I do?”

The counselor asked, “The feeling isn’t there anymore?”

“That’s right,” the man affirmed. He continued, “And we have four children we’re really concerned about. What do you suggest?”

The counselor simple replied: “**Love her!**”

The man countered, “You don’t understand. The feeling of **love** just isn’t there!”

The counselor replied, “Then **love her!** If the feeling isn’t there, that is a good reason to **love her.**”

The man then asked, “But how do you **love** when you don’t **love**?”

The counselor responded: “My friend, **love** is a verb. **Love** (the feeling”) is the fruit of **love** the verb. So I suggest that you **love her**. Serve her. Sacrifice. Listen to her. Empathize. Respect her. Embrace her. Appreciate her. Affirm her. Forgive her. Are you willing to do all that?”

“**Love**” is a four-letter word, written about in the world’s greatest literature and songs, spoken often by people, and yet it can be difficult. To quote the author Dostoevsky, **love** is “as hard as hell.” Part of the explanation for **love** being viewed as being so hard and difficult can be found in Jesus’ farewell address to His apostles in today’s Gospel. If we **love** we will try at least to obey the commands and wishes of our beloved. That thought applies to our relations with God and with our relations with others. Today’s Scripture readings challenge and encourage us to **love** God and others by surrendering our own desires and wishes and accepting and obeying God’s and other’s.

Today’s first reading from the Acts of the Apostles follows the stories of the martyr Stephan who had been put to death for his faith and Saul who was carrying out his campaign of persecution against the Church in Jerusalem. Because of Saul’s persecution Christian believers scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria. But contrary to the

expectations of aggressive opponents the Church did not weaken but actually grew stronger. In today’s passage the Apostle Philip set off on a one-man mission to preach about Jesus to the Samaritans. The reception Philip receives in Samaria is remarkable, especially given the unwelcome response to Jesus by the Samaritans in the Gospel (Lk. 9:53). The Jewish Christians thought that salvation was only for them. Philip’s mission to the Samaritans is the first crossing into the non-Jewish world, indicating that God’s gift of salvation is not merited by race, prior religious commitment, or deserving deeds. This transformation is yet one more sign of God’s Spirit at work.

Since Philip **loved** enough to sacrifice himself for God, people crippled of mind and bodies were cured. More importantly because of Philip’s ministry the people of Samaria were able to receive the Holy Spirit. Unclean spirits were subject to Philip’s word and they protested in loud voices as they did when confronted by Jesus (Lk. 4:33). It is all that they can do because they are no match for the saving power of the Gospel. Philip’s word also brought healing to those physically paralyzed. Such healings also hint at the spiritual paralysis that kept so many others from progressing along the journey of faith. Today’s passage moves from the reception of the God’s word by the Samaritans to their reception of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles in Jerusalem send Peter and John to help formally incorporate the Samaritan converts into the Church. Peter and John impose their hands upon the Samaritans; a symbol which they understood as of conveying God’s power. The Catholic Church still uses that potent symbol at the celebration of the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and priestly ordination. The imposition of hands still symbolizes the giving and receiving of the Holy Spirit.

Today’s excerpt from the First Letter of Peter (second reading) stresses the essential dimensions of Christian commitment by highlighting the cost of **loving** and **living virtuously**. The author addresses his letter to Christian converts who are suffering for their beliefs as a minority in a pagan society. The author tells his audience that their conduct should be such that their persecutor will be put to shame. When questioned about the nature of their Christian vocation they should be ready and

willing to offer a defense which expresses the very core of that vocation (their status as God's people). If they should have to suffer then it should be because of good, not evil. They are to give witness to their **love** of God by living lives of gentleness and respect. They are to look to Jesus as their model while suffering through their sufferings and difficulties.

Today's Gospel passage comes from the Last Supper scene just before Jesus and His apostles leave the Upper Room and go to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. The Apostles are dispirited at the thought of Jesus leaving them so Jesus tries to console them. In His farewell discourse Jesus informs His apostles how He will provide for them after He has physically departed. The basic presupposition is that the apostles will remain faithful to Jesus' commandments. To belong to Jesus means to be faithful to His word. The dynamic goes like this: "To **love** Jesus is to keep His commandments and to keep His commandments is to **love** Him."

God's **love** enables Jesus to promise to give His disciples "another Advocate." The better term is probably the Greek term "Paraclete" which literally means "one called in to help." Jesus said "another" because He Himself was an Advocate. However, Jesus would soon no longer be physically present with His followers. This other Advocate would continue Jesus' work and ministry. The word advocate comes from legal language and carries a wide range of implications: exhort, encourage, comfort, console, call upon for help, appeal. In modern terms this connotes a combination of intercessor, witness for the accused, defense attorney, best friend, healer, and comforter in distress. The Advocate that Jesus is speaking about functions as the Holy Spirit. Jesus describes the Advocate as the "Spirit of truth". Jesus Himself is describes as "the truth" so the Advocate would continue Jesus's work as the revelation of God.

Jesus also promises His disciples that He will **not** leave His disciples as orphans. In ancient times when a religious and spiritual leader died his followers regarded themselves as orphans because they were bereft of their leader, guide and spiritual father. By sending the Advocate to replace Himself Jesus fulfills His promise not to leave His followers

orphans. Jesus also assures and promises His disciples that He will return at some point in the future. This gives an eschatological tone to Jesus' promise as it focuses on a future reality. At that time the disciples will be able to realize the fullness of revelation wherein the Father, Jesus, and the disciples will be interrelated in a divine mutuality. This kind of mutual **love** among the Father, Jesus, and the disciples can be realized at least partially in the here and now. With this mutual **love** as a foundation upon which the disciples will carry out Jesus' work and ministry (plus the sending of the Advocate to assist them) the disciples are firmly set to continue on when Jesus returns to the Father. The disciple's success will now depend on their faithfulness in living their lives of **love**.

Our world needs the discipline of **love** and the **life** of the Spirit as much as did the disciples to whom Jesus spoke, the Samaritans Philip taught, and the converts to whom Peter wrote. There are many painful lives affected by broken relationships, shattered dreams, disappointments, physical, mental, spiritual ills, and torturing guilt. We must let such people know that they need not be alone in their pain. In the face of a contrary world that wants us to take the easy way of keeping quiet and making no waves, we need the Holy Spirit. Let us not be faint-hearted in receiving the Spirit and in communicating Him to others by the witness of our lives. Let us witness to God's **love** in our lives by sharing our **love** with others. Have a blessed week.

Love & prayers,  
Fr. John

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH**

I want to express my appreciation and gratitude to all of our wonderful parishioners who helped in the celebration of my 25<sup>th</sup> Priesthood Jubilee. Thank you for your most generous gifts and most importantly thank you for your prayers, love and support. A special word of thanks to the Knights of Columbus, the Ladies Auxiliary, Weiser's Markets, Ensinger's Printing Service, Melissa's Cookies, OMPH School Community, and our Parish Council Members. God bless you.

Love and prayers, Fr. John

**John 13:15**

We began our Annual Diocesan Lenten Appeal on March 12<sup>th</sup>. Our Parish assessment figure for this year is **\$104,900**. As of May 15<sup>th</sup> **372** families/households have pledged **\$101,044.76** and we have collected **\$75,874.54**. I want to express my appreciation and gratitude and say **Thank you** to those who have already made pledges and have given to the appeal.

As you can see we are **\$3,855.24** short of our goal. According to our recent Parish Census there are approximately 1200 families/households in our community. I humbly ask and pray that those who have **not** made a pledge as of yet will kindly consider doing so. This way we will be able to make our assessment. You do **not** have to pay off your pledge all at once. You can pay it off weekly or monthly. If you need a Pledge Envelop you may pick one up in the Parish Office or in the Church narthex.

The funds collected for the Lenten Appeal help support the numerous Pastoral, Charitable, Educational, and Spiritual Programs in our diocese. Please note that funds collected during this year's Appeal that surpass our Parish assessment figure will be returned to us and placed in our Parish Saving's Account. Likewise, if we do not meet our assessment figure, funds will be taken out of our Savings Account to make up the difference. May God bless you and your loved ones for your kindness, generosity and support of this year's appeal.

Gratefully,  
Fr. John

**K.O.F.C. BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN**



The Knights of Columbus will be launching their Baby Bottle Campaign this weekend to benefit our pro-life initiatives. We will be distributing baby bottles after all Masses. We ask that anyone taking a bottle fill it with loose change, cash, or checks between now and Father's Day.

**We will be collecting the bottles on Father's Day weekend in the narthex.** The Knights are able to cover all cost of fundraising thru their other fundraising events, so 100% of your donations will be given to our own parish Respect Life Committee, as well as Mom's House in Lancaster. Mom's House offers single parents, facing an unplanned pregnancy, with a viable, practical alternative to the despair of abortion. Thank you in advance for your support.



This weekend there will be a Second Collection taken up to support the United States National Shrine of The Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.

**MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, May 22, St. Rita of Cascia, Religious**

7:00     ✦ Horace Shirker  
9:00     ✦ Katie Hall

**Tuesday, May 23**

7:00     ✦ Abellard Magliore  
9:00     ✦ Stella Clay

**Wednesday, May 24**

**7:00**     ✦ Intentions in the Prayer Box  
9:00     ✦ Paul Anthony  
7:00     ✦ John Lantrip

**Thursday, May 25, Ascension of the Lord**

7:00     ✦ Mary Scornaienchi  
9:00     ✦ Carmella Uter  
7:00     ✦ Charles Anthony

**Friday, May 26, St. Philip Neri, Priest**

7:00     ✦ Carmella Uter  
9:00     ✦ Mike Kizeik

**Saturday, May 27, St. Augustine of Canterbury**

9:00     Jackie McCarthy  
5:00     ✦ Richard Dieckhaus

**Sunday, May 28, 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter**

7:30     For the Parishioners  
9:00     ✦ Regina Puschauer  
11:00    ✦ Rita Huiser

**IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS**

We will be publishing the names of your dear loved ones who are seriously ill or injured. *We will keep them in the bulletin for one month.* 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.

**May 7:** Melissa Kurtz, Byron Gift, Janet Tomko  
Alex Masluk, Elizabeth Farnquist

**April 30:** Anthony Tassa, John Griffis, Jean Givler,  
Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Richard Warner, Brendan  
Holbritter.

**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 William Hugenbruch

**CHURCH  SUPPORT**

| Date    | Amount       | Needed       | Difference    |
|---------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 5-21-17 | \$12,921.05  | \$14,326.00  | (\$1,404.95)  |
| YTD     | Amount       | YTD Need     | Difference    |
| 5-21-17 | \$644,108.33 | \$658,996.00 | (\$14,887.67) |

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

Evil spirits are real, and they are most effective when we are indifferent to them.

There are real-life situations of people who are possessed by evil spirits through witchcraft, curses, and the like. These people need the help of an exorcist. But those are rare cases. For the rest of us, Satan tends to harass us, not possess us. He whispers thoughts that tempt us to be negative, resentful, or self-condemning. We may think these thoughts come from ourselves, and partly they do. But at the same time, they are fostered by Satan's negative accusations.

So what can you do? First, have faith that the Holy Spirit is in you, helping you fight Satan's temptations. Second, pray. Hold on to the words of the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Then, pay attention to what is going on in your heart. Look for signs of how the temptation is diminishing. Rejoice in even the smallest sign of freedom!

**ATTENTION MUSICIANS**



The OMPH Music Ministry invites you to share your musical talents with our parish family. We always welcome new singers, guitarists, pianists, organists, etc. The music ministry is a great way to meet other parishioners and to become more involved in our faith community. If you are interested in learning more about the many different opportunities we have available, I'd be happy to discuss details with you. Just email me, Jill McGowan, at [jmcgowan333@yahoo.com](mailto:jmcgowan333@yahoo.com)



Religious Education Corner:

**The Religious Education Program Would  
Like Congratulate All 2017 Graduates!**

**Please Look For RE Registrations Forms For The  
2017/2018 RE Year Towards The End Of May  
Beginning Of June. Please Stay Tuned To The  
Bulletin For More Details Regarding Registration.**

Andrea Ostrowski



Don't forget to SAVE THE DATE for OMPH VBS! Join us at Maker Fun Factory **July 9 – 13** from 5:45 to 8:20 PM. Look for volunteer sign up in the hallway in the upcoming weeks. Call Carolyn at 799-8222 with any questions. See you there!!

**VBS DONATIONS NEEDED**

We are currently taking donations for our parish Vacation bible school. Do you have an overflowing craft closet/room? We are looking for a lot of crafty items and they can be left overs/ scraps as well as other items that can be purchased. Stop by the VBS donation board in the narthex and grab a gear and help us GEAR UP for our Maker Fun Factory VBS in July. Please bring items with gear attached by June 1 so we can prepare. Call Carolyn at 799-8222 with any questions.

We are still taking volunteers if you are interested please call!! REGISTRATIONS will be available April 30...look for our Robot in the narthex!



**HERSHEY PARK TICKETS**

You may pick up your Hershey Park tickets in the parish office **Monday-Friday, from 9-4 PM.**

*SAVE THE DATE SCHOOL  
EVENTS*

Calling all OMPH alumni! Join us on **Saturday, September 16.** All classes welcome to celebrate the schools **60th year!** For more info find us on Facebook under OMPH reunion. Thank you! Lauren DePaul Caramenico.

**OMPH SCHOOL REGISTRATION 2017-18**



**WE ARE ENROLLING!** Registration is now open to all parish families for Preschool through Grade 8 for the 2017-2018 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 738-2414. 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!

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**CROSS COUNTRY**  
boys and girls who will be grades 7-12 in the fall and parents are invited to a no-obligation informational meeting for the fall 2017 LCHS junior high and high school cross country teams. The meeting will be held **today, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 5 PM** in the Lancaster Catholic High School cafeteria. Please contact Coach Simpson at [tsimpson@lchsyves.org](mailto:tsimpson@lchsyves.org) with questions.

The 2017 Purple & Gold Gala was a tremendous success. Thanks to our incredible donors, we raised over \$78,000 for our students!

Save the date April 7, 2018 for the Purple & Gold Gala, to be held at the Lancaster Country Club.

**SOME FOOD BANK NEEDS**



We are looking for some volunteers for our distributions. We have four groups of volunteers, one group for the first Wednesday, another for the second, etc.... If you can commit to attending our distribution the same week each month from 4:50 PM to 6:30 PM--we need you! Please email Bonnie Brown at [bjnb@ptd.net](mailto:bjnb@ptd.net).

Also, it seems that we have an abundance of a certain food item one week and the next week, it is empty! The OMPH benevolent society food bank is currently in need of: **instant potatoes corn and mac & cheese.** Thanks in advance; we are graciously humbled by your continued generosity.

**SENIORS 55 AND OLDER**

Would you enjoy a 5% discount on your car insurance for the next three years? Who wouldn't! Well, in Pennsylvania it is mandatory that if you take the AARP Smart Driving Course, the insurance company must give you a 5% discount. To get the discount, all you have to do is show up at the course, spend two four hour sessions and at the end you will get a completion certificate to give to your insurance company. **There are no tests. You cannot fail.** It is all in the classroom — **NO** on the road driving. The cost per person is \$15 for AARP Members and \$20 for non-members. If both husband and wife are



on the insurance policy, both must take the course. For example, if your insurance cost for the year is \$1000 you would get a \$50 Discount for each of the next three years. So, for an investment of \$15 or \$20 you would save \$150. If you are interested in saving some money and learning about ongoing changes in yourself, vehicles, the roads, the driving laws and refreshing your memory on some safety strategies you might have forgotten, call the number below to register. We are holding a 4 hour Refresher Course on **June 3 from 8- 12** noon and if we get enough people interested, we will hold an Eight-Hour course at OMPH for those taking the course for the first time. Please call the following phone number to register. Charlotte and Bob Galgon at 733-4369.

Philadelphia Phillies  
Pittsburgh Steelers  
Reading Phillies  
Royer's Flowers & Gifts  
Wild Wings & Pizza



**THANK YOU  
TO OUR GOLF SPONSORS**

OMPH School's Annual Golf Tournament was another success! Thank you to Honeybrook Golf, all of the golfers, and the volunteers, including our student ambassadors, for helping make this an enjoyable day for everyone! We would like to especially thank the following sponsors:

**Beverage Cart Sponsor**

Akron Mobile Homes

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Dever Family Dentistry  
Kemper Equipment  
Thomas Martin, Ret. Sgt., NYPD  
Performance Roofing Associates, Inc.  
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A. Anthony Kilkuskie Attorney-at-Law  
Margaret Gardner

**Club House Sponsors**

Eddie and Beth Coyle

**Gifts in Kind**

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Sean McAleer  
Pepperidge Farms, Inc.  
Philadelphia Flyers