

My Dear Parishioners,

If we were going to give a name to the Sixth Sunday in the Easter Season, we might call it “**Love Sunday**.” All of our readings for today resound with the word- **love**: God the Father’s **love** for Jesus, Jesus’ **love** for the Father, and the Father’s and Jesus’ **love** for us and their desire that we **love** them in return.

It is easy to **love** people in the abstract. In the classic words of Lucy (from the comic strip **Peanuts**): “I love mankind; it’s people that I can’t stand.” It is easy to love our family members, neighbors, classmates and co-workers when they never disappoint us or mess up our plans. It is easy to love them when they do not challenge our comfort zone. It is easy to love them when they give us whatever we want or desire. However, on this “**Love Sunday**” our Scripture readings command us to love one another with no qualifications, conditions or limitations. Our readings challenge us to love one another without judgment, measurements, or expectations of a return. Our readings demand that we should love one another; even the undeserving, the mean-spirited, the ungrateful, and the unreasonable.

Today’s first reading from the Acts of the Apostles records a giant step for Jesus’ apostles in fulfilling His command to love all by bringing His message of peace and justice to the ends of the earth. Today’s story of the centurion Cornelius is not just another conversion story. Rather, it is the conclusion of one of the first dilemmas facing the early Church. That dilemma being whether a Gentile (pagan) could become a Christian without first accepting Judaism.

The first Christians were all Jewish. Jesus Himself had been brought up in the Jewish religion and the apostles were converts from Judaism. The Jewish understanding was that God gave His blessings and privileges to them alone and other nations were outside that pale. No Jew would have a Gentile for a house guest or be the house guest of a Gentile. Despite that background Peter entered the house of Cornelius, a man who was devoted to God but nevertheless a Gentile. Peter then had a vision in which he saw that it was God’s will that the Gospel (despite its Jewish origin) should be shared with everyone. After Cornelius met Peter, he fell on his knees and bowed to him. Peter, duly embarrassed, helped Cornelius to his

feet and reminded him that he (Peter) was merely a human being. Then Peter begins to preach to Cornelius and his family about the **Divine Love** in the form of the Holy Spirit that “falls upon” them. Thus Peter becomes the first Christian to accept Cornelius, a non-Jew for baptism. In doing so Peter proclaims the message that God’s love in Jesus is meant for all people.

The teaching about **love** is the heart of the message of today’s second reading from the First Letter of John. The author of First John enunciates the truth that **God is love**. God’s overwhelming love for humans is the basis for Christian love. Several dimensions of this reality are examined: Love is of God; love begets others of God; it is revealed in the salvation realized through the sacrifice of Jesus. The most startling statement about love is simply: **God is love**. This **Divine love** is the fundamental reality of our faith. The love described here is neither exemplary piety nor altruistic concern for others. Actually, there is nothing merely human about it. It is Divine in its origin and only those who have been begotten of God can have a share in it. God’s love is not an abstract quality. God’s love becomes a concrete reality in the Incarnation. God begins with a gratuitous love, a love that shows its depth in the self-giving of His Son for all. The outcome of this self-giving is life for all. In return the Christian disciple is to love everyone.

Today’s passage from St. John’s Gospel is one of the best-known discourses on **love**. It is one of the clearest expressions of God’s desire and love for us. It expresses God’s great love that yearns for intimate communion with us. Today’s passage is a continuation of last Sunday’s Gospel passage about the vine and the branches. It gives the way in which the branches can receive life from the vine and in which the branches can remain alive, grow, and be fruitful: that is, to remain in Jesus’ love. This we can do by keeping Jesus’ commandments, just as He has kept His Father’s commandments. The result of following His advice will be joy. That too is new. It is Jesus’ unique joy that will come our way, more fulfilling than any other and with new completeness.

Jesus’ unique command is that we love one another as He has loved us. Jesus then expounds on the type of love it should be. It should be a love that

shows itself in action and sacrifice, even to the point of laying down one's life for a friend. Feelings and emotions are not enough. Words are an inadequate substitute. Real love calls for drastic action: good deeds and self-sacrifice. The love that Jesus requires of us is an active love, reaching out to others: God to Jesus, Jesus to His disciples, and the disciples to one another.

The **love** that Jesus demands of His followers is simple and profound. He asks each of us to love one another as He loved us: to put ourselves second for the sake of others, to seek our joy in bringing joy to others, and to honor and cherish others simply because they are like us, daughters and sons of God. Loving as Jesus has loved us begins by putting aside our own hopes and wants and recognizing the hopes and wants of others. Loving like Jesus means caring for and about others with humility and understanding, regardless of the sacrifice demanded of us. Loving like Jesus means we readily make the first move to forgive and to heal, no matter how undeserving. Let us all try this week to love others as Jesus loves us. Have a blessed week.

Love & Prayers,

Fr. John

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 April 25th 346 households have pledged **\$90,732.10** and we have collected **\$66,228.09**. There are **1368 households** registered in our Parish. We still need **\$10,568.00** to accomplish our goal. 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. Fr. John

HEALING MASS

Today, Sunday, May 6th Fr. John will celebrate a Mass with the **Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick** at **1 PM** in our Church. We invite all parishioners and their family members who are afflicted by illness and all our beloved **elderly** to attend this special Eucharistic celebration. Come and receive Jesus' healing power and love.

FEAST of the ASCENSION of the LORD

The Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord will be celebrated on **Thursday, May 10th** and this feast is a **Holy Day of Obligation**. The Vigil Mass for this Feast will be celebrated on **Wednesday, May 9th** at **7PM**. The Feast Day Masses will be celebrated on **May 10th** at **7AM, 9AM and 7PM**.

PARISH EDUCATION COLLECTION

A Second Collection will be taken up at all the masses next weekend, May 12-13. This collection is our Annual Parish Education Collection and funds collected support our Parish School, Parish Religious Education Program (CCD) and Adult Education Programs. Thank you, Fr. John

KITCHEN HELP WANTED

We are in need of good cooks for *St. Clements Rectory*. If you are interested in a part time position cooking for 10-15 priests, brothers and guests at the parish rectory, please call *Kim at 717-733-6596 ext. 111*. We would love to speak to those willing to provide fresh and nutritious meals and *serve with a smile*.

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, May 7

7:00 †Andy Zipfel
9:00 †Melissa Kurtz

Tuesday May 8

7:00 †Deceased members of the Leffler
Family
9:00 †Dorothy Fisher

Wednesday, May 9

7:00 †Bill & Mary Peffley
9:00 †Lou Leone
7:00 For our parish priests

Thursday, May 10, ASCENSION THURSDAY

7:00 †Janet Tomko
9:00 †Andy Zipfel
7:00 †Joseph Meletics

Friday, May 11

7:00 †John Nathaniel
9:00 †Catherine King

Saturday, May 12

9:00 †Andy Zipfel
5:00 †Andy Zipfel

Sunday, May 13, 7th Sunday of Easter

7:30 For the Parishioners
9:00 †Maria Mannino
11:00 †Jean Gould

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, Brenda Crawford, Jennifer Ranker, Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Michael Lillis, Richard Warner, Tonya Stoner, Kevin Kaiser, Jody Shimp, Joe Ferrara, Anna Leshner, Florence Windish, Gloria Reynolds, Anna Mae Finkey, Susan Buchler, Danny McGuire, William Oktela, Bill Garcedau, Gloria Reynolds, Tracy Yeakel, Paula Karem, Greg Garred, Carolann Capizzi, and, Byron Gift.



Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
4-29-18	\$11,708.66	\$14,950.00	\$3,241.34
YTD	Amount	YTD Needed	Difference
4-29-18	\$597,866.29	\$657,800.00	(\$59,933.71)

CATHOLIC HOME MISSIONS APPEAL

Thank you for your generous support of last week's Catholic Home Missions Appeal. Your contributions will help strengthen the Church at home and ensure that the Gospel is spread across the United States.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Peter preaches to Cornelius and his household, but God breaks the rules. The Holy Spirit comes upon these Gentiles, and they begin speaking in tongues. They didn't have to repent, convert, or be baptized; the Spirit just fell. Only then did Peter baptize them.

What's the point to this story? God likes to stretch the way we think. He stretched Cornelius and Peter while they were at prayer, and the same can happen with us. He stretched everyone again while Peter was preaching, and he stretched the whole Church when Peter explained to the other apostles what had happened.

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 Missionary Sisters of St. Benedict.

A total of 15 weeks are available your intentions.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY



While we greatly appreciate each and every donation, below are some do's and don'ts for food bank donations:

DO: if you are buying more than one item, consider buying all of the same item. It is easier for volunteers sorting if we receive 6 cans of tomato soup rather than one can of tomato, one can of chicken noodle, etc.

DO: Buy nonperishable items you regularly serve to your family.

DON'T: donate any items that are opened, dented, leaking, or expired. Unfortunately, we cannot use these items and take up valuable volunteer hours sorting and discarding unusable items.

Currently, our food bank is in need of instant mashed potatoes, noodles, and any canned vegetables. Nonperishable food items can be placed in the food bank crate in the narthex of the church.

As always, we are humbled by our parishioners continued generosity!

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



Religious Education Corner:

The Religious Education Program Would Like To Thank The Following Parishioners For Serving As Catechists/Aides For The 2017/2018 RE Year.

Ben Dangelo	Theresa Novotnak
Denise Duchesneau	Mary Pentz
Robyn Hunter	Shereen Rann
Donna Kelly	Kim Shirker
Tim Lawrence	Matt Shirker
Mary Jo Maggio	Walter Stahl
Lori McCormack	Steve Wissler
Jill McGowan	Gail Zimnoch

Please Look For Registrations Forms For The 2018/2019 RE Year Towards The End Of May Beginning Of June. Please Stay Tuned To The Bulletin For More Details Regarding Registration.

OMPH RE Not Only Need's Our Mother's Perpetual Help, But Your Help As Well!

Please Consider Joining The Exciting Adventure Of Passing On Our Wonderful Catholic Faith To The Next Generation By Assisting The RE Program As A Catechist, Aide Or Occasional Substitute.

Please Contact Kelly Lawrence In The Religious Education Office If You Are Interested In Volunteering For The 2018/2019 RE Year. Thanks!

Please Note: All RE Program Volunteers Must Have Their Required Diocesan Clearances Which Can Be

LIGHTHOUSE CATHOLIC MEDIA

Check out the selection of pamphlets, books, audio CD's in the display, especially new ones about Divine Mercy. They make great First Holy Communion gifts! The talks are perfect for listening in the car, whether you are running errands or going on a long drive. Thank you for your generous donations supporting this ministry. Andrea Ostrowski

YEARLINGS

We will meet for lunch 11:30 at Hershey Farm Restaurant, 240 Hartman Bridge Road (897) Anyone needing a ride call Gloria at 717-738-9098. All seniors are invited to join us for lunch.

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
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. 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! Please feel free to share and contact the Development Office with any questions.

RESPECT LIFE

In May, the month dedicated to the Blessed Mother and to the rosary, offer your daily rosary for the intention that no babies be slaughtered by abortion that day. The rosary, after the mass, is the most powerful weapon. Let us truly wage war against the demons and the evil one by praying steadfastly and fervently for protection of the most innocent.

There is no question that abortion is the work of Satan, who kills, steals and destroys. Former Satanist Zachary King describes how abortion is part of the Satanic rituals, often at regular abortion facilities. This is a spiritual battle, which must be fought with spiritual weapons like prayer and fasting.

King also recommends exorcism prayers and masses in front of clinics, with Eucharist processions using the image Our Lady of Guadalupe. May Mary, our Mother, bless our prayers and multiply them, as she will crush the serpent's head. The ultimate victory is assured. May our prayers hasten that victory!

See Zachary King's website:

<http://www.allsaintsministry.org> or <https://www.lifesi-tenews.com/opinion/former-satanist-i-performed-satanic-rituals-inside-abortion-clinics> Andrea

Ostrowski

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NEEDED GOLFERS AND SPONSORS

For Our Mother of Perpetual Help School 26th 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