

My Dear Parishioners,

In 1849 many people living in the United States thought they knew what they were **searching** for and **desiring** in life. Gold had been discovered in California. Some ranchers, farmers and city-folk made a frenzied dash on horses and in wagons across the country in an effort to be among the first to harvest a crop of the newly discovered treasure. A wheat farmer in Kansas (not content with the golden grain he had harvested year after year on his small farm) could think of almost nothing other than leaving his farm and family in search of fortune. His wife was frantic since the couple had four young children to care for. And besides she doubted that the adventure that her husband ardently yearned for could ever be successful. Reluctantly the farmer gave in to his wife's wishes and remained home.

One night in a dream the farmer saw himself locked in a room filled with gold from the floor all the way up to the ceiling. After enthusiastically and gleefully running the golden nuggets through his hands for hours he realized he was suddenly hungry. When he looked for something to eat he only found the golden nuggets. He called out to his wife, hoping to be comforted by the warmth of her love but there was only the coldness of the metal nuggets. He longed to look into the sparkling eyes of his children but the only sparkle he saw was that of his lifeless riches. Suddenly he awoke from his dream and realized what he **really** wanted in life. In a moment's reflection he realized what his **true values** were and how they were **already present** in his simple life. He realized his **true riches** were right under his nose in his midst: the love and support of a wife and family.

Today's readings challenge us to pursue the **treasures** and **riches** that give **real meaning** and **purpose** to our lives. Our readings encourage us to ask: "What are the practical values in our lives? What are our ambitions and goals? What do we **really want** in life?" Our readings challenge us to pursue the most **precious** thing in our world- the **reign of God**. Our readings also remind us that we should strive always to embrace those principles which alone can give direction to our lives. The greatest principle that will give direction to our lives is our detachment from worldly things and our **attachment to Jesus**.

Only in Jesus will we discover and find the true **treasures** of wisdom, joy, hope, and love. Only in attaching ourselves to Jesus will we discover the true meaning and purpose of life.

In today's first reading from the First Book of Kings we encounter a learned person who initially made the right choices for the **reign of God**: Solomon who succeeded his father David as king of Israel. In today's passage Solomon arrives at the great sacred place in Gibeon to pray and make a sacrifice to God before he begins his reign. After falling asleep God speaks to Solomon in a dream and offers to grant the king whatever gift he requests. In his dream Solomon speaks of the inadequacy he feels in succeeding his father David. Solomon is young and inexperienced and the responsibility of choosing between right and wrong concerns him greatly. Therefore Solomon asks God to give him the gift of an "understanding heart." In other words He asks for **wisdom**: the ability to judge well and fairly. Solomon wanted to be able to discern the ways of God. King Solomon could have asked for the gifts desired by most earthly rulers: wealth, long life, power but instead he asked for the gift of **wisdom**. He wanted this gift not so that he could sit comfortably in his palace pondering the verities of the universe but rather he desired **wisdom** so he could govern and rule his people properly. Because he made the right request of God, Solomon is granted a **wisdom** surpassing that of anyone before or after him.

In Romans 8: 28-30 (today's second reading) Paul offers another reason why Christians can remain hopeful in the midst of their suffering since God stands behind everything that happens to them. As St. Paul states: "For those who love God, everything works for their spiritual good." The basis for our faith is that all that comes from God is good and all things work for good for those who love God. Therefore a vital part of true **wisdom** is to rely on God, to place ourselves in His hands, to pray for His help and to acknowledge all good gifts come from Him. St. Paul then enumerates the five stages of salvation history which affect Christians as a whole: foreknowing, predestining calling, justifying, and glorifying. According to this plan Christians gradually share in Jesus' Risen Life and so conform themselves more and more to His image. Their union

with Jesus not only makes them right with God now but it even gives a foretaste of future glory.

Today's Gospel passage from St. Matthew finishes up Jesus' discourse on the Kingdom of God in several parables. The first two parables- "the buried treasure and the pearl" stress the immense value of the kingdom and the radical commitment to it. The parable of "the net" deals with the issue of tolerance of good and evil within the kingdom until the final judgment when there will be separation: the good rewarded and the evil punished. The final parable of "the learned scribe" is Jesus' description of the ideal Christian.

Jesus' first parable is about a "buried treasure." A buried treasure was not uncommon in ancient Palestine since there were no banks or safe deposit boxes. The only safe way to hide valuables was to bury them. When people died or were forced to flee from their land, treasures were frequently forgotten or lost. If later uncovered the treasures belonged to whoever owned the land. In Jesus' parable the finder does not tell the owner of the field about the discovered treasure. Instead he purchases the land first in order to get the treasure. Jesus' point is that the chance of a lifetime is to discover the Kingdom of God (which one should pursue at any price.) The Kingdom of God as announced by Jesus is that priceless treasure that people should seek and give up all they own to possess it. There is urgency to all this because the presupposition is that such an opportunity will never come again.

Whereas the buried treasure was found accidentally, the "pearl" in Jesus' second parable was found after a lifetime of diligent search. In the ancient world pearls were special, not only for their uniqueness and beauty, but they could demand fantastic prices bringing great joy to their owner. In Jesus' parable the merchant is searching for the finest pearl he can lay his hands on. When he discovers it he knows what to do: sell everything he owns so that he can possess the pearl that is without peer. The cost has been everything but when he owns that perfect pearl his search has ended. Jesus' point is to discover the Kingdom of God is to discover the most precious thing in the world. To discover God's Kingdom is to experience the joy of sharing God's presence.

Jesus' parable of "the net" is similar to His parable of "the wheat and weeds." The net is the Kingdom of God which is open to **all** (good and evil) with the hope and expectation that the evil will repent and turn good. But in the event they fail to reform their lives at the end of time they will be punished and the good rewarded. In this parable Jesus compares God's Kingdom to a fishing net which threw into the lake collects all sort of things as it does not discriminate. When the fishermen bring in the net they make an assessment of what is worthwhile and what is not. They keep the suitable fish and discard the rest. Jesus' point is that in God's Kingdom there are both good and evil people. The solution is simple: tolerance of both good and evil until the end-God's Judgment Day. If one is in right relationship with God they will gain eternal life.

In Jesus' last parable He refers to the scribes by name: "Every scribe who is learned is like the head of a household who can draw from his storeroom the new and the old." This parable is addressed to the scribes who were present in His midst **and** for everyone who wishes to be Jesus' disciple. Jesus warns the scribes and His followers that if they wish to enter the Kingdom of God they must know how to draw upon the new revelation of Jesus as well as the ancient teachings and traditions of the law and the prophets. In effect Jesus is telling everyone that there is not only continuity between His teachings and Old Testament revelation but that He and His teachings **are** the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies and expectations. In other words the **truth** and **wisdom** of Jesus' teachings is rooted in rich tradition transcends its original setting, and serves as a foundation for embracing the future. Listening and following to Jesus' teachings will lead and bring one to eternal life.

The search for the **treasures** that give meaning or purpose to our lives begins with understanding first the real value of what we desire and then the investment of our time and energy. Sometimes we are surprised at the "treasure" we take for granted or the "pearl" that is right in our midst. The real **riches** of our lives are right under our noses: the God who loves us unconditionally, the people we share life with, and the opportunities we face each day to exercise the values of Jesus. None of this

might appear glittery but it is in the heart of the ordinary that we discover what we are looking for. As King Solomon understood in asking God for wisdom and “an understanding heart,” the **treasures** of lasting value are the things of God: the love of family and friends, the support found in being part of a Church community, and the sense of joy and fulfillment found in serving and giving for the sake of others. In order to attain such **treasure** may we possess the grace of the Gospel speculator: **grace** that transcends logic, efficiency, and self-interest and **grace** that sees beyond things of this world to gain the **riches** of God: love, mercy and peace. Have a blessed week!

Love & prayers,

Fr. John

### **FEAST of ST. ALPHONSUS**

On Tuesday August 1<sup>st</sup> we celebrate the Feast of St. Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Redemptorists. Please join us at the 7AM mass to thank God for the ministry of the Redemptorists in our parish and their ministry throughout the world. Also please pray that more young men would consider joining the Redemptorists. Thank you, Fr. John



### **MASS INTENTIONS**

**Monday, July 31, St. Ignatius of Loyola, Priest**

7:00 †Sidney Mash

**Tuesday, August 1, St. Alphonsus Liguori, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**

7:00 †Elizabeth Ganter

**Wednesday, August 2, St. Eusebius of Vercelli, Bishop; St. Peter Julian Eymard, Priest**

7:00 †Brad Roda

9:00 †Leslie Eisenbise

**Thursday, August 3**

7:00 †Special Intention

**Friday, August 4, St. John Vianney, Priest**

7:00 †Mary Ganter

**Saturday, August 5, Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major**

9:00 †Bill Hecker

5:00 †Nina Tollis

**Sunday, August 6, The Transfiguration of the Lord**

7:30 For the Parishioners

9:00 †Sam & Stella Kadingo

11:00 †Joe Purvis

### **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.

#### **July 2:**

Melissa Kurtz, Janet Tomko, Elizabeth & Jack Farnquist Sr., Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Richard Warner, Brendan Holbriter, Anthony Tassa, John Griffis, Duane Hartman, Byron Gift, and Jack McGowan, Declan Morgan, and Phyllis Schmook.

**July 16:** Sue Beuhler, Elsie Becker, Scott Peters.

**July 30:** Janet Eberly

### **ALTAR SERVER TRAINING**



Any girl or boy in grades fourth and up that would like to become an altar server should contact Ben Hoover at 808-1115. We will start training in August and will get them on the schedule that comes out in September.

## ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Jesus describes the kingdom as something extraordinary that is “hidden in plain sight.” In truth, the kingdom can be found anywhere because it is God himself. It’s his love and his presence made manifest among us. So wherever love is, that’s where the kingdom is.

You can also touch the kingdom as you go about your business in the world. A coworker gets cancer and receives an outpouring of support. One of your children is troubled, and you rush to their side. A neighbor’s spouse dies, and you help the community organize meals. Every time you overlook someone’s faults or say encouraging and grateful words to someone, you are both discovering and bringing forth God’s kingdom, his presence in ordinary places. You are also discovering that these “outbreaks” of the kingdom are more valuable to God than any buried treasure.

Although the treasures of heaven cannot be bought with dollars, you can “buy that field” every time you offer your love to God and his people.

### 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 Bill Hecker.



[Going on vacation? Please use online giving to catch up on offertory contributions. Go to \[www.omph.org\]\(http://www.omph.org\) and click on the Online Giving link it’s quick and easy! Your support during the summer months helps sustain our parish.](#)

### MARRIAGE ANNULMENTS

The Tribunal of the Diocese of Harrisburg will be giving 3 presentations within the diocese concerning marriage, divorce and annulment according to the Church teaching. These presentations will be helpful for divorced Catholics, those divorced who wish to marry Catholics, those parish leaders involved in the RCIA process and any others who may have a vested interest because of family or friends.

September 11 – Cardinal Keeler Center, Harrisburg  
7 PM

September 14 – St. Joseph, Hanover, 7 PM

September 25 – St. Philip, Millersville 7 PM

[www.omph.org](http://www.omph.org) (Church & School)

No prior registration is required. For further information call 657-4804 ext. 304 or email: [tribunal@hbgediocee.org](mailto:tribunal@hbgediocee.org)



### Religious Education Corner:

#### **The Regular Tuition Rate Is Now In Effect!**

New Registration Forms (Blue) Can Be Found In The Narthex Of The Church  
On The Small Blue Table.

#### **The New Registration Forms should be used if:**

Your Oldest Child Is Entering Into Public First Grade For The 2017/2018 School Year.

Your Child Is In Grades 1-8 And Does Not Attend Catholic School.

You Are New To The Parish And Your Child Is In Grades 1-8.

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We Are Also Running Our Kindergarten Home-Study Program Again For The 2017/2018 RE Year.

This Program Is Intended For Families Whose Oldest Child Will Be Attending Public Kindergarten This Year.

To Register For This Program Please Complete The

## RCIA News

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process whereby adults enter the Catholic Church.

The goal of RCIA is the preparation of adults who wish to enter the Roman Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. You will learn about beliefs, practices and truths of our Catholic faith with a focus on spiritual growth.

### Classes Start

Monday, September 11 at 7 PM

If you would like to attend or would like more information please contact or call Linda at 733-2676.

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

1. Were you ever baptized? Yes No
2. If baptized in what denomination:

\_\_\_\_\_

### HELP WANTED



OMPH Church cleaners are looking for a couple of volunteers to clean the windows in the doors to the church. If interested call Sandra at

733-9453.

### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



St. Joseph's Parish, Lancaster is seeking a PT (20-25hrs. /wk.) Administrative Assistant to provide support to the Parish staff. Associate's Degree, or the equivalent of 2 years College Credits

and 3 years' experience as an Administrative Assistant or related work experience preferred. Proficiency in Microsoft Office is necessary. Self-motivated, team player and active participation in the Roman Catholic Church are musts. Submit resume to St. Joseph Parish, c/o Personnel Coordinator, 440 St. Joseph Street, Lancaster, PA 17603; or email to [leetrish@aol.com](mailto:leetrish@aol.com) no later than August 4, 2017.

Becky Langan  
Administrative Assistant  
397-6921 x221  
[becky@stjosephslanc.com](mailto:becky@stjosephslanc.com)

### OMPH ALUMNI



We will be having a school reunion Saturday, September 16 in the gym for anyone in the classes of 1960-2009. This is a 21 and over event. Flyers are available in the narthex.

More information can be found on our Facebook page: OMPH Reunion or by calling Lauren (DePaul) Caramenico (Class of '94) at 314-1806.

### 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 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!

## CRUSADERS YOUTH SOCCER TEAMS

Do you have a son or daughter between the ages of 5 and 15? Does your child like to be active, learn, make new friends and have fun in a Christian atmosphere? Then sign up for Crusaders Fall Soccer! We invite every level of recreational player to participate - U6 through U15. Program is open to any youth attending Catholic elementary school or registered in religious education at a Lancaster County parish. **Register on-line at [CYAAathletics.org](http://CYAAathletics.org) through August 6<sup>th</sup>.** Cost is \$45/per child for grades Pre-K – 2 and \$50 for grades 3 - 8. If you have any questions, please contact Scott McCuen (League Director - CYAA Soccer Program) at [cyaasoccer@comcast.net](mailto:cyaasoccer@comcast.net) or call 419-6985.

## DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG CHARISMATIC DAY OF RENEWAL

*“The Holy Spirit – Fountain of Grace”*



On **Saturday, September 16**, a 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Day of Renewal will be held at the Cardinal Keeler Center, 4800 Union Deposit Road in Harrisburg. This special event celebrating the 50th anniversary of Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church will take place from 8am to 4pm and the keynote speaker will be Rev. William “Bill” Cosgrove, a 12-year service team member for the Charismatic Renewal and current Liaison for the Charismatic Renewal under Timothy Cardinal Dolan in the Diocese of New York. For 32 years, Fr. Bill has been an active member of the International Fraternity of Priests, one of a number of priest support groups that is a strong advocate of priestly fraternity. Fr. Bill is also an active member of the Clarkstown Ethics Board, New City Rotary and the Clarkstown Ecumenical Clergy Association.



The \$20 program cost includes lunch, if registered by September 5. (Same day registration will be available at the door, but lunch will not be included). Checks can be made payable to “Diocese of Harrisburg”. To register online or for additional information go to: [www.aliveinthepirit.net](http://www.aliveinthepirit.net) or [www.hbgdiocese.org/renewal](http://www.hbgdiocese.org/renewal) or call Mary Ann: 564-7709 (Please do not call the Diocesan Office.)

## WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Women of the Diocese of Harrisburg, please mark your calendar for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Diocesan Women's Conference, on Saturday, **October 14, at Bishop McDevitt High School.**

**Theme: “Lead All Souls to Heaven”: Mary's Message to Us from Fatima.**

**Keynote Speaker:** Award winning Catholic author and noted speaker, Susan Brinkmann.

The Women's Conference includes 36 workshops from a blue-ribbon list of speakers, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with the Rosary and Benediction, opportunity for Confession available, beautiful music, good food, a wide variety of exhibitors, and celebration of Mass by Bishop Ronald W. Gainer. Conference information, including Online Registration, is currently available at [www.hbgdiocese.org/women](http://www.hbgdiocese.org/women) Registration brochures for paper registration are also available at parishes and online. Last year we had more than 800 women attend this conference. This year we are hoping for 1,000+ women. Thank you!

## YEARLINGS

We will meet for lunch on August 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:30, Lititz Family Cupboard, 12 Newport Road, Lititz. If you need a ride call Gloria at 738-9098.

## RESPECT LIFE

Prayer for the Baptism of Aborted Babies  
Heavenly Father, Your love is eternal. In Your ocean of love, You saved the world through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Now look at Your only Son on the Cross Who is constantly bleeding for love of His people, and forgive Your world. Purify and baptize aborted children with the Precious Blood and water from the Sacred Side of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Who hung dead on the Cross for their salvation; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. May they, through the holy death of Jesus Christ, gain everlasting life, through His wounds be healed and through His Precious Blood be freed, there to rejoice with the saints in heaven. Amen. from the Association of the Precious Blood  
<http://www.preciousbloodinternational.com>

## MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD

In conjunction with Pope Francis and the 2018 Synod of Bishops on the topic of *Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment*, the Diocese of Harrisburg is surveying youth and young adults (ages 15 – 39). Both those who identify as Catholic and those who do not are encouraged to complete an online survey at. The results will be used to answer questions of the Synod of Bishops and to better serve youth and young adults within our diocese. To participate please visit [www.hbgdiocese.org/synod2018](http://www.hbgdiocese.org/synod2018) or contact Rob Williams, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 657-4804 or at [rwilliams@hbgdiocese.org](mailto:rwilliams@hbgdiocese.org).