

My Dear Parishioners,

There is a story about a little girl who was frightened one night during a horrific thunderstorm. Terrified, the girl called out from her room, "Mommy, I'm scared." Her mother, not wanting to get out of bed, called back: "Don't worry dear. God loves you and He will take care of you." There was a moment of silence. The little girl then called back, "I know God loves me but right now I need somebody with skin on."

The little girl needed the physical assurance of someone she could see and actually touch. Jesus knew that His disciples would need some assurance that God the Father had not abandoned Him or them when His approaching suffering and death occurred. And so Jesus' Transfiguration was a gift to the disciples to prepare them for the ordeal of His death. It was meant to strengthen their faith on the day of His trial and suffering so that remembering His glory on the mountainside they could endure His death with hope for His resurrection. Jesus wanted to share with His disciples a glimpse of His divinity. Today's Feast of the Transfiguration captures a glimpse of Jesus' divinity which He shared with them. It also reveals to us what we are destined to become in Him. Jesus' Transfiguration shows us just how perfect we can become by remaining united to Him.

Our first reading is from the Book of the prophet Daniel. The author of this book lived during the time when the Greek Empire dominated and ruled most of the known world. The Greeks forced everyone to follow their pagan religion. If someone refused they were put to death. The Book of Daniel was written during the persecution of the Jews during the reign of King Antiochus IV Epiphanes around the year 165 B.C. The Jewish people were suffering and they were called to live up to their faith; even to the point of death. The author of Daniel tried to offer the Jewish people some **hope** by offering to them pious thoughts regarding their fate. Would the forces of evil have the upper hand **or** would God's Chosen People's faith finally triumph? In answer to this question, the author describes in chapter 7 a vision of four beasts which refer respectively to the pagan empires surrounding Israel-the neo-Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians and the Greeks (Daniel 7:2-7).

The "little horn" (Daniel 7:8) refers to King Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

In today's passage the author has a more awesome and assuring vision of the heavenly court. In this vision God is identified as the Anointed One. This title expresses God's **eternal existence**, unlike

the limited and transitory kingdoms of earthly powers. The "brilliant white" associated with God expresses the absolute purity of the **divine** that contrasts with the earthiness of the beasts. The fire expresses the **purifying judgment** in store for the wayward world. The heavenly court awaits the arrival of the one who will replace the kings of the earth. One like a **Son of Man** draws near on the clouds of heaven. This is an image evoking **light** and **benevolence** which is so different from the beasts that emerge from the sea. This welcome figure (**Son of Man**) will eventually reign over all nations. With this king there will be a promise of lasting **peace** and everlasting **joy**.

Our second reading is from the Second Letter of St. Peter. Writing perhaps as late as 125 A.D. the author of Second Peter appeals from Rome to his audience in the area of northern Asia Minor. Certain members of the Christian community there were disparaging belief in the Parousia (Jesus' Second Coming). In today's passage the author assures the community of the reliability of the apostolic doctrine. The "coming in power" is the Parousia. However, its reality does not rest on myth but on the testimony of those who witnessed Jesus "in power." The community is to regard this prophetic message as a lamp which will sustain them until the Parousia takes place.

The story describing the event of the Feast of the Transfiguration is taken from Matthew's Gospel. Matthew has Jesus refer to the narrative as a "vision." The purpose of this "vision" is to identify Jesus as the **Son of God** as well as to show that He is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets.

As today's gospel passage begins Jesus is at a particular point in His ministry when He was feeling very discouraged. He wondered whether or not He would achieve His mission on earth. And so He decided to climb a mountain (a place often identified with divine manifestations) to pray to His Father for guidance and support. In a moment of intense prayer His Father communicates with Jesus in a special way. For Jesus a light goes on as He realizes that His passion and death would actually fulfill His mission and He would be exonerated in His Resurrection. The Father assured Jesus that He would be with Him as he struggled with the cross.

The actual event of Jesus' Transfiguration is described sparsely. The mountain is not identified. Jesus' disciples Peter, James and John accompany Him up the mountain. These three disciples were with Jesus at all the major moments of His ministry.

Among His apostles they were considered His inner circle. Jesus is “transfigured” before them. The process is described in terms of His face shining like the sun and His clothing becoming white as light. Theologically, this process of the vision gives Jesus’ disciples a glimpse of who Jesus really is in terms of His divine nature. This knowledge will only become known after Jesus has been raised from the dead in His Resurrection.

Moses and Elijah are depicted as being present in the vision that the disciples were witnessing. Moses traditionally represented the Law (Torah) and Elijah represents the Old Testament prophets. In the vision Moses and Elijah are conversing with Jesus who is understood to be the **fulfillment** of the Law and prophets. Peter does not understand what was going on and asks Jesus if he should build three tents: one each for Jesus, Moses and Elijah. While Peter is still speaking, a cloud overshadows them and a voice is heard coming from the cloud: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.” This is the apex of the vision since the Father’s voice **identifies** Jesus as His Son. The disciples’ response is fear and immediately they prostrate themselves before Jesus. But Jesus consoles them and encourages them **not** to be afraid. Then Jesus instructs them not to say anything about what they have seen and heard since the vision they witnessed could not be appropriately understood until after His Resurrection.

We all need the assurance that Jesus is present in our midst and that He is **always** with us as we face the storms and crosses in our lives. Maybe we do not need physical assurances (like the little girl frightened by the storm in the beginning of my reflection) but we do need Jesus’ love, help and support as we journey in our life of faith. I am sure that all of us have had moments when we felt Jesus’s presence, closeness and love especially in key moments of our lives. Today’s Feast of the Transfiguration gives us the reassurance that Jesus is **always** with us. This Feast also reminds us that just as though the Transfiguration was a prelude to Jesus’ Resurrection so too it is a prelude to our own resurrection. Jesus’ Transfiguration assures us of His divinity and reminds us what is in store for us in the future if and when we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Have a blessed week.
Love & prayers,
Fr. John

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, August 7, St. Sixtus and Companions and St. Cajetan

7:00 †Bill Hecker

Tuesday, August 8, St. Dominic

7:00 †Joseph Berta

Wednesday, August 9, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross

7:00 †Bill Hecker

9:00 †Bill Hecker

Thursday, August 10, St. Lawrence

7:00 †Bill Hecker

Friday, August 11, St. Clare

7:00 †Anita Meletics

Saturday, August 12, St. Jane Frances de Chantal

9:00 †Bill Hecker

5:00 †John & Helen Phillips

Sunday, August 13, 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30 For the Parishioners

9:00 †Josh Shaver

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 16: Sue Beuhler, Elsie Becker, Scott Peters.

July 30: Janet Eberly

August 6: Melissa Kurtz, Janet Tomko, Elizabeth & Jack Farnquist Sr., Jean Givler, Abigail Lowe-Critchfield, Richard Warner, Brendan Holbritten, Anthony Tassa, John Griffis, Duane Hartman, Byron Gift, and Jack McGowan, Declan Morgan, and Phyllis Schmook, Sandy Kurz.



CHURCH  SUPPORT

Date	Amount	Needed	Difference
7-30-17	\$12,029.90	\$14,950.00	(\$2,920.10)
YTD	Amount	YTD Need	Difference
7-30-17	\$65,066.59	\$74,750.00	(\$9,683.41)

Going on vacation? Please use online giving to catch up on offertory contributions. Go to 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.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

We approach growing in our faith as something we have to do. We say, "I need to be more kind and generous to people. I need to get to Mass more often." To a certain extent, this is true. Growing in faith does require a change in the way we think and act. But that is only part of it. There is another side to the equation—God's side. We need his grace. And that grace can move mountains! At the transfiguration, Jesus, the divine Son of God, wanted to give his disciples a glimpse of his glory before he entered into his passion. He wanted to help them grow in their faith, just as he wants to help us. The mystics of the Church, saints like Bernard of Clairvaux, Catherine of Siena, and Teresa of Ávila, remind us that words fail when we perceive even the slightest glimpse of the glory of God. Just as Peter rattled on excitedly, we can find ourselves reaching for the right words to describe what God's presence feels like. But that's okay. Our actions—the witness of our peace and our joy—can speak much louder than our words.

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.

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.

COME AND SEE

Maybe the Spirit is tugging at you to come into the Catholic Church. Come, experience God's Grace together with others in the The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. The RCIA is a process which helps a person figure out what God is saying to him or her at this point in life. The emphasis is on personal reflection and prayer in community. Where is God leading all of us?

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

No prior registration is required. For further information call 657-4804 ext. 304 or email: tribunal@hbgdiocese.org



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: _____

OMPHALUMNI

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.



WE NEED ACCOMPANISTS



The OMPH Music Ministry is in need of some more pianists and organists to play at the weekend Masses. You can do as little as 1 Mass per month or as many as 1 every week. You'll be scheduled according to your availability and preferences. There is a small group of singers who can sing with you and song suggestions and sheet music are provided. The music ministry is a great way to meet other parishioners and to become more involved in our faith community. If you are willing to share your talent, please call or email Jill McGowan at 717-336-5578 or jmcgowan333@yahoo.com.



JR. HIGH YOUTH RALLY 10.15.2017

This Year's Theme: "ON MISSION"

Please Save The Date

Attention All Families Of Students

Entering 6th Grade This The Fall:

On Sunday, October 15th Lancaster Catholic High School Will Host The 5th Annual I AM Rally.

All OMPH 6th Grade Students Will Be Expected

To Attend The Rally Including RE Students, OMPH School Students, And Home School Students. There Will Be No 6th Grade RE Classes That Week So That All 6th Grade RE Students Can Attend The Rally.

Please Note: Any Seventh Or Eighth Grade Student Who Was Unable To Attend Last Year's Rally Is Expected To Attend This Year's Rally.

YEARLINGS

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

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS 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 or contact Rob Williams, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 657-4804 or at rwilliams@hbgdiocese.org.

Black Catholic Apostolate Summer Picnic - The Black Catholic Apostolate invites all African-American, African & Afro-Caribbean Catholics in our diocese to a picnic that will be held on **Sunday, August 27** at noon at the **River Front Pavilion on City Island, Harrisburg**. Meat and drinks will be provided. Those attending are asked to bring a favorite covered dish or dessert to share. Also bring your favorite games to play. For additional information and to RSVP, please contact Gwen Summers at 236-4310 or gsummers@hbgdiocese.org

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Women of the Diocese of Harrisburg, please mark your calendar for the 3rd 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 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! For answers to your questions call Kelly at 738-4517.

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 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 experiences 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 or call the school office at 738-2414 for further information. **Find us on Facebook** at OMPH Ephrata!

RESPECT LIFE

Abortion Facts

* A full 64% of all abortions are forced *Murder is the leading cause of death among pregnant women.

* 65% of women suffer numerous symptoms of post-traumatic stress after having an abortion.

* Suicide rates are 6 to 7 times higher among women who have had abortions.

* The reasons women give for having abortions are shocking: pressured by their mothers, fear of being kicked out of their homes, the fathers opposed to having children, persuasion of the abortion center, and they had no other options.

In Pennsylvania, forced abortions are against the law. It is illegal in Pa for anyone to threaten, demand, force, of coerce any woman or girl into having an abortion. This includes husbands, boyfriends, relatives, employers, doctors, teachers- anyone. Parents or guardians cannot force or pressure a woman to have an abortion, even if she is incapacitated or a minor.

From the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation.
See www.paprolife.org Andrea Ostrowski



Religious Education Corner:

The Late Tuition Rate Is Now In Effect!

New Registration Forms (Pale 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.

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 Pink Registration Papers Found In The Narthex Of The Church On The Small Blue Table And Return Them To The RE Office.

Every Year the Religious Education Program is in need of Catechists, Aides, and Occasional Substitutes for the up-coming Religious Education year.

There are three different grade levels in which to volunteer and they are as follows:

- Primary Grades: 1st – 3rd
- Intermediate Grades: 4th – 6th
- Junior High Grades: 7th & 8th

There are two different Sessions in which to volunteer and they are as follows:
Sunday Session: 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM
Monday Session: 5:30 PM – 6:45 PM
Please contact Kelly Lawrence in the Religious Education Office if you are interested in volunteering for the up-coming RE Year. Thanks!

Attention: OMPH School Families!

It's *Back to School Time!* The family *Back to School Information Packet* will be available at your parish on the weekends of August 12th-13th and August 19th-20th. Included will be all school emergency information forms and affirmation/permission forms to be completed at the opening of the new school year. All registered school families are asked to please pick up your envelope in the church lobby after any Mass. If you are unable to get your envelope at this time, they will be available in the school office from August 22nd to 24th between 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM. The school newsletter, calendars, lunch menu and informational sheets will be emailed to families in mid-August. Thank you!