

My Dear Parishioners,

Mary and John have been happily married for twenty years. It hasn't been bliss all the way but they have become the best of friends in their struggle to live a genuine married life together with their three children. One evening John is having a drink with an old friend Robert who was the Best Man at Mary and John's wedding. As they exchanged notes and quips on married life John tells Robert how he has loved Mary from the very first moment he set his eyes on her. Robert contradicts John as he says: "But John you have forgotten that I introduced you to Mary. Remember? You saw and heard her the very first time at a party I was giving and when you heard her high pitch voice and her rambling you said that whoever would marry her would be marrying an annoying squeaky Chatter-box!"

Which of them is right? Robert remembers the event as it was then but John remembers it as **something more**— a **special** event/moment that led to where he is **now**. Since John is so much in love **now** he takes that love back in time and invests the past with a new significance. His loving relationship with Mary **now** affects the way he remembers and perceives their beginnings. John gives their first meeting/encounter a significance it never had at the time because he reads it in the light of his present love. John's love for Mary actually changes the past.

Because we do change, we review our past differently. We keep re-interpreting the past in the light of what is going on **now** in our lives. What appeared to be a mountain at that time turns out to be a mole-hill. What appeared to be a chance encounter becomes the most important and significant meeting/event of our lives. Often the **meaning** of an experience is unclear at the time of the experience. We often have to wait for the **meaning** and only then we can understand. This is so clear and evident in today's Scripture readings.

Our first reading is from the Acts of the Apostles. In this passage Peter speaks with conviction about his belief in Jesus and His Resurrection. It is hard to imagine that this is the same Peter who denied any knowledge of Jesus months earlier. This profound change results from

Peter's encounter with the Risen Jesus which included the 40 days of instruction Peter and the other the disciples received from Jesus. This instruction included details concerning and referring to Jesus within the Psalms and how He fulfilled dramatically the Psalms. The impact of those instructions is clearly evident in today's reading as Peter (filled with the Holy Spirit) addresses those gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Pentecost feast.

Peter first reviews for his audience familiar details about Jesus. Many of them had witnessed the miracles (signs and wonders) Jesus worked during His time among them. Such deeds were invitations to believe in Jesus but they did not accept the invitation and ultimately went as far as calling for Jesus' death. However, God's plan of salvation could not be undone by such limited human choices God is a most provident God. Even this heinous act of the Jews was part of the divine plan. Death was not the final act; it was the setting for resurrection. Death did not interfere with God's plan as Jesus rose from the dead. To support his argumentation Peter cites Psalm 16: 8-11. David (considered the author of the psalm) speaks of a descendant of his who would not be abandoned to the netherworld or undergo corruption. Jesus' Resurrection fulfilled David's prophecy. And so Psalm 16 becomes an example of Christian exegesis in the light of Jesus' Resurrection.

In the section of Peter's First Letter (today's second reading) the author exhorts his audience to live lives befitting their baptism and subsequent calling. Since God is their Father they are to comport themselves as exemplary children and conduct themselves with **reverence** toward Him. The liberation from their former way of life did not involve a monetary transaction but rather the very life of God's Son. Jesus is the spotless lamb; the new sacrifice of the new Passover. This liberation is not a chance occurrence. It was part of God's plan from the beginning. Jesus shed His precious blood and redeemed us from eternal death. Therefore the faith and hope of the author's audience must focus on the Father, who realized all this by raising His Son and bestowing glory upon Him.

Today's Gospel from St. Luke is probably the greatest of the post-Easter accounts of encounters with the Risen Jesus. The story of the Risen Jesus appearing to two of His disciples on the way to Emmaus has been a favorite for Christians for centuries since it is the best developed of all the Gospel appearance stories. The drama evolves around the tension of whether or not the disciples will recognize the Risen Lord in their very midst. The drama dramatically moves from sorrowful imperceptions, through joyful recognition, to an eager and urgent proclamation that the Risen Jesus is truly alive.

Two disciples (Cleopas and a companion) are struggling to make sense of a recent event: Jesus' tragic death. They leave Jerusalem downcast and discouraged because of their disappointment that Jesus their hope had been crucified—the end of their dream, they thought. Despite the fact that Jesus had three times predicted His passion, death and resurrection they never thought for a moment that Jesus might have risen. Not even the testimony of the women who reported an empty grave on Easter morning or confirmation of the accuracy of their claim by the Apostles gave them pause to believe or hope that Jesus might have risen. Their departure from Jerusalem was a clear indication they believed it was all over.

On their journey home to Emmaus they meet a stranger and they share their story of disappointment with Him. (The stranger is actually the Risen Jesus but they do not recognize Him.) They tell the stranger that Jesus (the one they had hoped would set Israel free) is now dead. In their story it becomes ever so clear that they cannot hold two things together: their hope in Jesus and His death. Jesus' death cancels out their hope so they now feel helpless and hopeless. The two disciples cannot understand how His death can be understood as anything more than a tragic end to a life of promise. Like most people they believe that if you haven't achieved what you set out to do before your death then you will never achieve it in death itself. When you are dead it is too late for everything. Death is the end of the road of promise. And so the disciples mourn not only Jesus' death but the death of their relationship with Him.

Only after the disciples finish their story does the stranger begin His own. In what has been called

the most famous Bible lesson in history, Jesus patiently begins to unfold the meaning of Scripture for the two disciples. Jesus helps the disciples to see His life in terms of the Scripture and to uncover hidden dimensions of Scripture in terms of His life. In short Jesus used Old Testament passages to explain New Testament events. Through Scripture, Jesus opened the disciple's minds to the meaning of the Cross and the reality of His Resurrection. Jesus gives a wholly different interpretation of His death as something which was essentially for His glory. And so Jesus' death **was** the achievement of His mission—not the collapse of it.

As the stranger (Jesus) helps the disciples to make sense of the past in new light. They respond by inviting Him to stay with them. They have a meal together, **"breaking bread"**. The stranger gives Himself away to the disciples. He is the Risen Jesus and He leaves them with "hearts that burn and eyes that see". Not only does Jesus help them interpret the past in their new experience of Him as Lord but now He gives them a new future. They can now go on with their lives knowing that Jesus had risen from the dead. They can now share this story with others.

In their new experience of Jesus as Lord, the disciples' past is changed. They can now revisit the past with the **new light** and the **new love** that they have experienced. They take the light of Easter Sunday back to the darkness of Good Friday and everything looks different. Only the Risen Jesus makes sense of everything that went before. In His **word** and in the **"breaking of the bread"** the past is brought up to date. The past is now interpreted in the light of the great truth that Jesus is risen and He is Lord of all.

We all have our Emmaus-like experiences of fear, confusion, failure, discouragement, disappointment, dread, and worry. Jesus makes His presence known to us in His **Word** and in the **Eucharist**. Jesus makes Himself known in our midst in the loving support of family, friends, community and parish. Jesus is present in the **broken bread** of compassion we offer and receive from one another. Easter faith is to recognize the Risen Jesus in our midst: in our wanting to understand, in our struggle to make things right, and in our brokenness. As we continue to celebrate the magnificent Easter Event

may our hearts and spirits recognize Jesus among us in every moment of our lives; in both the dark terrifying nights and the bright promising mornings. Have a blessed week.

Love & prayers,

Fr. John

P.S. We congratulate 35 young parishioners who encountered Jesus in the **Eucharist** as they received **Holy Communion** for the very first time today at the 9AM and 11AM masses. May the Risen Jesus continue to bless you, your parents and your families and may you always appreciate the very special gift of the **Most Holy Eucharist**.

JUBILEE



There will be a celebration of Father John's 25th Ordination on **Saturday, May 13** in the Father Jackson center from 12:00-3:30. It is open to all who wish to attend.

There will be sign-up sheets in the narthex after all Masses. Please sign as soon as possible so we can have a count for the caterer. Due to the fact there will be adult beverages available, it will be open to those 21 years of age and over.

HEALING MASS

Next **Sunday May 7th** Fr John will celebrate Mass with the **Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick** at **2 PM**. We invite all of our parishioners who are afflicted by illness (whether in body, soul or spirit) and our beloved **elderly** to attend this special Eucharistic celebration Come out and receive Jesus' healing power and love.



Sacrament of Anointing

THANK YOU

I want to express my appreciation and gratitude to our **Knights of Columbus Father Daley Council #4191** for their generous donation of **\$1,000.00** and our **OMPH Athletic Association** for their generous donation of **\$200.00** which



Holy Family
Radio
AM 720 WHYF

Support the New Evangelization, enjoy a great meal and listen to a very special speaker. That is what is planned for **Friday, May 5** when Holy Family Radio, AM 720 WHYF presents Dr. Steven Smith of Mount St. Mary's Seminary. He will keynote the evening that will be emceed by Tom Russell of CBS 21 and Bishop Ronald

Gainer. Held at the Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey on Lindle Rd, Harrisburg, the fundraising dinner for the non-profit independent Catholic Radio Apostolate begins at 6 p.m. with dinner at 7 p.m. Cost is \$100 per person. Register on-line at www.720whyf.com or via mail: Holy Family Radio, PO Box 6028, Lancaster, PA 17607-6028. Smith is a popular Catholic speaker and author. His audio CD —“The Resurrection of Jesus: Fact or Fiction” has sold over 12,000 copies. He has appeared on the EWTN TV program, The Journey Home.



MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, May 1, St. Joseph the Worker

7:00 †Robert W. Henry
9:00 †Joe Fitzgerald

Tuesday, May 2, St. Athanasius, Bishop

7:00 †Brad Roda
9:00 †Donald Nolan

Wednesday, May 3, Sts. Philip and James, Apostles

7:00 †Benny Luciano
9:00 †Leonard Riley

Thursday, May 4, National Day of Prayer

7:00 †Mary Muscavage
9:00 †Maria Camerino

Friday, May 5

7:00 Sagine Magloire
9:00 †Jim Mondo

Saturday, May 6, First Saturday

9:00 †Isabella Crowther
5:00 †Leah Zechman

Sunday, May 7, Fourth Sunday of Easter

7:30 For the Parishioners
9:00 †Judy Kiick
11:00 †Maria Camerino

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.

April 9: Alex Masluk, Mary Kay Guthrie, Elizabeth Farnquist

April 23: Jennifer Ranker

April 30: Anthony Tass, 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 Leonie Family.

CHURCH  SUPPORT

| Date | Amount | Needed | Difference |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 4-23-17 | \$14,177.52 | \$14,326.00 | (\$ 148.48) |
| YTD | Amount | YTD Need | Difference |

| | | | |
|---------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 4-23-17 | \$602,703.53 | \$616,018.00 | (\$13,314.47) |
|---------|--------------|--------------|---------------|

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT



As many times as we hear the Scriptures read at Mass, it's good to be reminded that they aren't just words on a page. As St. Paul taught, they are "living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword." Inspired by God, they are filled with his presence. They have the Spirit's own power to bring us his wisdom, peace, and joy. *All it takes is listening with faith.* Cleopas and his friend had to walk a long way with Jesus before they recognized him, and sometimes we do too. So be patient with yourself. Imagine that you can hear Jesus speaking to you. Put aside distractions, and listen for what he may want to say to you personally.



RESPECT LIFE

DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Nearly \$400 million of taxpayer money goes to Planned Parenthood, an organization that is killing babies, selling their body parts, and has engaged in other criminal activity, like aiding pimps get abortions for underage girls.

Government money makes up 43% of Planned Parenthood's total revenue. This money can be redirected to community health centers that outnumber Planned Parenthood by 20 to one, and that don't kill babies.

Consider also that the average salary for a PP Affiliate CEO is between \$238,000 and \$389,000, with Cecile Richards, PP's boss, making \$957,952. Our taxes are funding these incredible salaries. (fromstopp.org)

Contact your Senators and Representatives and encourage them to defund Planned Parenthood. Pray for the conversion of all involved in the destruction of the innocent babies.

Andrea Ostrowski

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.

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

Wyomissing Restaurant & Bakery
YEARLINGS LUNCHEON
Keep the date, **Tuesday, May 9th** for lunch at Wyomissing Restaurant, 1245 Penn Avenue, Wyomissing Avenue. We will car pool from the church parking lot at 11 AM. Please call Mary Burkholder 733-4989 if you plan to attend. Thank You.



Religious Education Corner:

Congratulations To The 35 Children Who Will Receive Jesus In Holy Communion For The First Time Sunday, April 30th At Either The 9:00 AM Mass Or The 11:00 AM Mass!

Our RE Mass Schedule For The Remainder Of The Year Is As Follows:



OMPH ALUMNI

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 FOR 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 experience an education noted for academic excellence in an environment which reinforces our Catholic identity. An on-site after school program is also available.



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.

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!

TEACHING POSITION OPEN AT OMPH SCHOOL

OMPH School is seeking a first grade teacher for the 2017-2018 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 Diocese of Harrisburg and provide current clearances (PA 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 further information please contact Principal Margaret Gardner, at 738-2414; mgardner@omph.org

Development Office at 738-2414 for more information.

CERTIFIED MATH TEACHER

LCHS is seeking a full time math teacher for the 2017-18 academic year. Interested applicants should submit all materials by June 2. Visit www.lchsyes.org/apps/jobs for qualifications, required materials, and more information.

EASTERN EUROPEAN FOOD FESTIVAL

This 4th annual Food Festival will be held at 411 Crestmont Street, Reading PA from noon to 5 PM in the Slovak Catholic School Hall. Authentic Slovak-Polish-Ukrainian Foods & Delicacies to enjoy. Treat your sweet tooth to homemade pastries and baked goods. Enjoy a variety of ethnic beers in our beer garden. Eat in or take out (bring your own container.) For additional information contact: kathi@readingsokol.org

OMPH GOLF OUTING MAY 10TH

It's time for the OMPH School 25th Benefit Golf Tournament on **May 10 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 2018 Super Bowl or \$15,000.00 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 738-2414.



Not a Golfer? Can't take time off to participate in this year's 25th Annual Golf Tournament? There is another way to participate and support this important school fundraiser. We are in need of donations for door prize items, such as:

New Golf Equipment
Golf Day Spirit Basket
Sports Theme Basket

Sponsorships are still available. Golf Registration Deadline is May 3rd. What a great way to support the school while advertising for your business. Contact the