

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

The glorious month of May is here again. Spring is at its height. First Holy Communions are being celebrated. And it is the month of Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother. This Sunday, we are having our May Procession after the 10:00am Mass and all parishioners are invited to attend. The procession will be led by the children who made their first Holy Communion on Saturday.

Another wonderful practice in honor of Mary that would be good to take up is the recitation of the *Angelus*. The *Angelus* is a combination of prayer antiphons and Hail Mary's in honor of the Incarnation of Christ and is reprinted on this page. The antiphons recall how the Angel (thus *Angelus*) appeared to Mary and announced that she would be the mother of our Savior. During the Middle Ages the custom developed of saying the *Angelus* prayers at three times during the day. This is why church bells, including ours, toll each day at 6am, 12 noon and 6pm. When people hear the bell ring, they are invited to pause from their work or leisure and say the prayers.

For over thirty years I've prayed the *Angelus* after making my Morning Offering while I'm getting ready for the day. Then the tolling of the bell reminds me to pray at noon and again at 6pm. Saying the *Angelus* each day is a wonderful way of remembering that we are always in the presence of God while honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary. Please try it. You'll like it and will grow closer to God as well.

With my prayers,
Fr. Conley

The Angelus

(Traditionally said at 6AM, Noon & 6PM)

"The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit."

(Hail Mary, full of grace...)

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

Be it done unto me according to your word."

(Hail Mary...)

"And the Word was made flesh.

And dwelt among us." (Hail Mary...)

"Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

**That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ."**

Pour forth we beg You, O Lord,

Your grace into our hearts: that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**POPE FRANCIS
ON THE CALL TO HOLINESS
IN TODAY'S WORLD**

Recently Pope Francis issued a letter to the Church on the call to holiness. We will be printing portions of it here for your edification. You can find the whole document on the Vatican's website.

19. A Christian cannot think of his or her mission on earth without seeing it as a path of holiness, for "this is the will of God, your sanctification" (*1 Thess 4:3*)... That mission has its fullest meaning in Christ, and can only be understood through him. At its core, holiness is experiencing, in union with Christ, the mysteries of his life. It consists in uniting ourselves to the Lord's death and resurrection in a unique and personal way, constantly dying and rising anew with him... In the end, it is Christ who loves in us, for holiness is nothing other than charity lived to the full... by the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole life on his... This is a powerful summons to all of us. You too need to see the entirety of your life as a mission. Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs that he gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make... Let yourself be transformed. Let yourself be renewed by the Spirit, so that this can happen... The Lord will bring it to fulfilment despite your mistakes and missteps, provided that you do not abandon the path of love, but remain ever open to his supernatural grace, which purifies and enlightens.

25. Just as you cannot understand Christ apart from the kingdom he came to bring, so, too, your personal mission is inseparable from the building of that kingdom: "Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (*Mt 6:33*). Your identification with Christ and his will involves a commitment to build with him that kingdom of love, justice and universal peace... You cannot grow in holiness without committing yourself, body and soul, to giving your best to this endeavor...

The presence of constantly new gadgets, the excitement of travel and an endless array of consumer goods at times leave no room for God's voice to be heard. We are overwhelmed by words, by superficial pleasures and by an increasing din, filled not by joy but rather by the discontent of those whose lives have lost meaning. How can we fail to realize the need to stop this rat race and to recover the personal space needed to carry on a heartfelt dialogue with God? Finding that space may prove painful, but it is always fruitful. Sooner or later, we have to face our true selves and let the Lord enter...

The same distractions that are omnipresent in today's world also make us tend to absolutize our free time, so that we can give ourselves over completely to the devices that provide us with entertainment or ephemeral pleasures. As a result, we come to resent our mission, our commitment grows slack, and our generous and ready spirit of service begins to flag. We need a spirit of

holiness capable of filling both our solitude and our service, our personal life and our evangelizing efforts, so that every moment can be an expression of self-sacrificing love in the Lord's eyes. In this way, every minute of our lives can be a step along the path to growth in holiness.

MORE ALIVE, MORE HUMAN

Do not be afraid of holiness. It will take away none of your energy, vitality or joy. On the contrary, you will become what the Father had in mind when he created you, and you will be faithful to your deepest self. To depend on God sets us free from every form of enslavement and leads us to recognize our great dignity... Do not be afraid to set your sights higher, to allow yourself to be loved and liberated by God. Do not be afraid to let yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit. Holiness does not make you less human, since it is an encounter between your weakness and the power of God's grace. For in the words of León Bloy, when all is said and done, "the only great tragedy in life, is not to become a saint."

"WELL-WISHERS-"We have been informed that we should replace the well system for the parish before it breaks. The current system is over fifty-years old. We would like to take care of this issue over the summer. In order to do so we will need to raise \$50,000 as a special fundraiser. This effort has been endorsed by both the Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils. The details of this effort will be shared with you as soon as possible.

THE TERMS OF TWO PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE EXPIRING IN JUNE

Two of these Council members, Barbara Gallagher and Carl Holmberg are running for re-election. So there will be one vacancy on the Council. If you are interested in serving on the Council please notify the chairman, Rudy Carrico, no later than this Monday, May 7. You may contact Rudy at RUDOLFACARRICOJRLAW@COMCAST.NET To be eligible to serve on the Parish Council one must be a registered parishioner who has received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. Also, if you are married, your marriage must be blessed by the Catholic Church.

NEW SERIES! THE WILD GOOSE: Discovering a Deeper Relationship with the Holy Spirit Twice a month on Thursday evenings from 6:30-8:45 in the hall. Dinner included. Cost is \$10. Join fellow parishioners for learning, discussion, prayer & praise about the Holy Spirit! Sessions begin on May 10 and continue on 5/24, 6/13, 6/27, 7/12, 7/26, 8/10, 8/24. It doesn't matter if you can't attend every session. Each night will have its own graces. You can sign up in the foyer or by contacting Fr. Conley at 301-870-2220 ext 13 or frconley@comcast.net

THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD WILL BE CELEBRATED NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 13TH.

RELIGIOUS GOODS STORE NEEDS HELP

We need some help to work after the 12 PM Mass. Please call Ellen Walls at 301- 579-2557 or Fay Adriani at 301-645-3531.

PROJECT RACHEL MINISTRY

Having unresolved feelings about your abortion experience? Feelings of guilt, shame, regret, or sadness return? You just don't feel forgiven?

Come To An **Entering Canaan Day of Prayer and Healing** on Saturday, May 12th from 9AM – 5 PM. For more information, please call 301-982-2008.

SACRED HEART PARISH, LA PLATA will have a Drive-Thru Fried Chicken Dinner on Sunday, May 20, 2018 from 11:30 – 5 p.m. Dinners will include 4 pieces of chicken, parsley potatoes, green beans and one roll.

Buckets of chicken will include 8 pieces of chicken and 4 rolls. The price for dinners and buckets is \$14 each. Baked goods and a 50/50 raffle will also be available. For more information, call the church office at 301-934-2261.

Please support our advertising sponsors. This week we recognize Pizza Hotline.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Parishioners, 10am Larry Wood, **12N:** Mary Helen Tippett, **MON:** 8am William Dent, **TUES:** 8am Mary Zaradzki, **WED:** 8am Mary Theresa Bowen, **THURS:** 8am Joseph Jones, **FRI:** 9:30am Doris Reed, **SAT:** 9am Mary Kay Estep, 4pm Janine Burch.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Mary Bowes, Bill Branick, Frances Card, Joe Cross, Agnes Curtis, Chuck Davis, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Arlene Gandolfi, Martha Gehring, Judy Istvan-Windsor, Irma Johnson, Regina Kijesky, Marie Knobel, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, Jim Middleton, Mary Emma Middleton, Larry Miller, Joseph Mona, Wayne Mullings, Ryan Myers, Joseph Quade, Mary Reeves, Sylvene Savoy, William Leon Savoy, Edna Sweeney, Beth Weise, Tim Welch, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND, \$8,571.60. The unidentified donations totaled \$635.00. We received \$56.00 for our School Support.