

St. Ambrose Parish

NOVEMBER 1, 2020
BEEHIVE

I'm not sure the world has ever felt as upside down in my lifetime as it has in 2020. A global pandemic and accompanying economic crisis, political division and discord, protests for justice and a better world for all people, and every week, it seems, a new catastrophe — a news story (or several) that causes us to roll our eyes and think, Now this!

A year ago, life included parties, happy hours, and travel. Its more mundane activities included public transit, workdays in the office, going to church, shopping for groceries, picking the kids up from school, and hugging people.

That world is gone now. Every single one of these elements of “normal life” has been disrupted, destroyed, turned on its head. The world we inhabit now is strange, unfamiliar, and scary. We don't know what the future will hold or how long this season of upheaval and uncertainty will last.

Many times in recent months I have thought that the world is broken. Ending, even. That everything has become messed up. I have longed for the world I knew before. Despite its imperfections and injustices, it was a world that was largely comfortable for me.

The Beatitudes of Jesus as proclaimed in this weekend's Gospel, however, are a reminder that the world as we have generally encountered it is not at all the world that God intends or desires for us. Indeed, in many ways God's

desired world is an inversion of the world we expect and feel comfortable with and entitled to — particularly those of us who benefit from privilege.

With these eight strange and unexpected blessings, Jesus of Nazareth begins his epic Sermon on the Mount, throughout which he offers instruction, parable, promise,

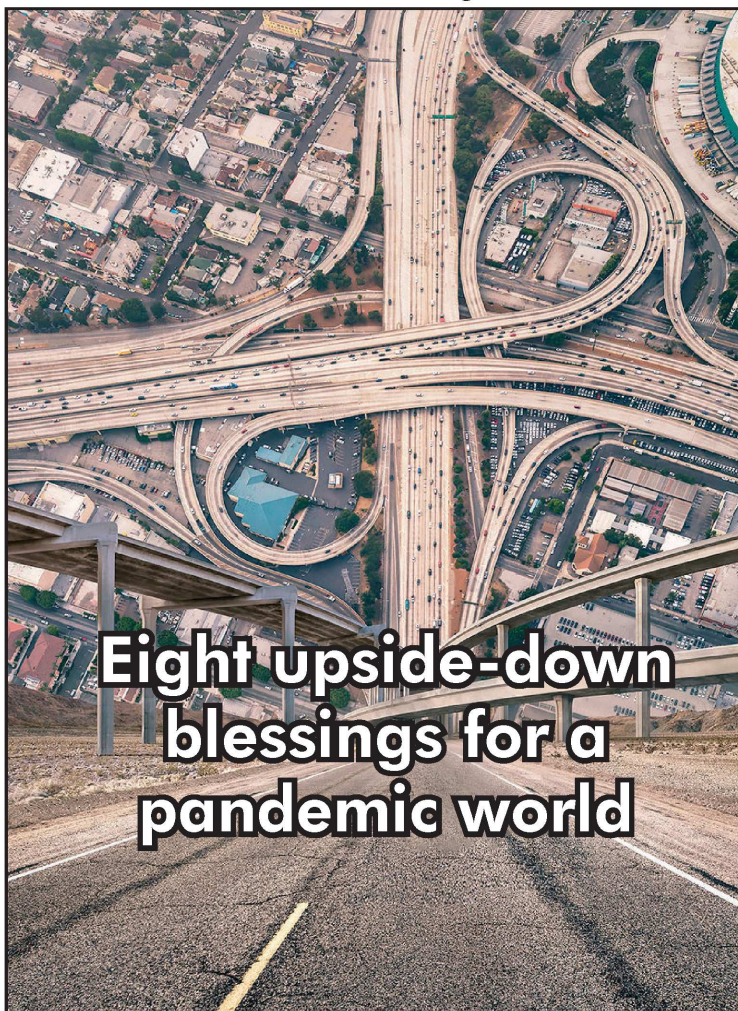
and command to his followers about the ways that God intends for us to live and the world God calls us to work toward. It's significant that Jesus begins here, with these inverted blessings.

He begins by centering those who suffer, those who remain faithful in the face of hardship, those who focus themselves on compassion and care for others, on justice and righteousness, on making true peace for a better world for all.

These are not the groups of people that our world tends to favor or exalt. In our dog-eat-dog world, the spoils go to the victor, the glory to the powerful. We celebrate those who are dominant, aggressive, and competitive. We reward those who prioritize themselves. Meanwhile, we avoid those who are suffering,

we reject calls for justice and peace, and we see self-emptying concern for others as weakness.

Our misaligned and unholy priorities have been painfully and devastatingly evident over the course of this pandemic. As a result, we have a great many more names and lives to remember on this All Saints Day than we should.



Eight upside-down blessings for a pandemic world

Upside Down Blessings

Continued from page 1

In the Beatitudes, Jesus makes a promise: that regardless of how this world fails them, God's commonwealth or kingdom will ultimately comfort and lift up those who are faithful and good. At the end, he speaks directly to his hearers, not only naming abstract groups but also reassuring those listening that if they also seek to be faithful and good, then no matter how the world mistreats them, God will ultimately be faithful to them.

I wonder about the inclusion of a direct appeal from Jesus in this passage. It turns the Beatitudes from a lecture into an invitation. What sort of person is being described by these blessings?

Those who mourn do so because they love someone who has been lost. Do we care enough about those who have died in this pandemic to mourn them? Will we care mercifully for those who are being hurt by this situation, whether in terms of health or finances or safety?

Will we let ourselves feel the pangs of hunger at the persistence of unrighteousness?

Will we do the hard work of making real and holy peace — instead of settling for the comfort of keeping a false peace that allows injustices in this world to continue?

In times of crisis, our impulse as mortal creatures is to shore up our defenses and do whatever it takes to keep ourselves alive. But God has created us not simply to be mortal but to be moral. Our call from God is to have a broader vision of care for all people. Those who do this, Jesus says, are blessed. Perhaps not in the world that we know—the one that props up powers and principalities, that celebrates individual freedom over collective flourishing—but certainly in the kin-dom of God.

Our world has been turned upside down, and that upending has meant immense suffering and struggle. I don't imagine any of us would identify a global pandemic as good, nor do I believe God would call it so. But while we have been shaken up, while we are in this space of upheaval, perhaps we can see our reality from a different vantage point.

Perhaps we might lean into the discomfort of asking ourselves why we were so comfortable with the world as it was before. Why was that world in so many ways the inverse of the world Jesus illustrates in the Beatitudes, and was it ever right side up in God's eyes?

If this is the end of that world, what new and better world might we allow to begin?

By Layton E. Williams, from the October 21, 2020 issue of The Christian Century Magazine.

Read the Beatitudes in Matthew Chapter 5; vs 3 - 12

Managing Election Stress

Many people have found the recent political campaigns and election to be dramatic and emotionally challenging. If you're experiencing distress or heightened stress here are some things you can do to help yourself feel better:

- **Stick to your routine:** Maintaining your regular schedule of activities and taking care of your usual responsibilities can help engage you and reestablish a sense of normalcy and regularity.
- **Take care of yourself:** You will feel better if you get enough sleep, eat properly and get regular exercise.
- **Engage in pleasurable and meaningful activities:** Take some time to do something you usually enjoy: take a walk, watch a movie, spend time with friends. Doing activities that help or support others can increase your sense of well-being and enhance your optimism.
- **Limit your social media time:** Constantly checking news feeds or other social media can increase your tension. Set aside specific times to check news and social media.
- **Limit substance use:** Drinking or partying to feel better might seem to help in the very short run but will leave you feeling depleted and lower.
- **Limit political debate and argument:** It's important to stay engaged and informed in the political process and the news — but keep it in balance. If it is stressing you out, then let some time pass or take a break.
- **Spend time with supportive friends and family:** Being with people who care about you can help you feel safe and protected.

If you have tried these steps and are still feeling very stressed, down or despairing, consider getting help from a mental health professional. If you are feeling like you need immediate help, text "start" to 741-741. If you are feeling as if you or someone you know is in immediate danger of self-harm, call 911 or go to your nearest hospital emergency room.

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MEMENTO MORI

These women and men have died and were buried from our parish since we last celebrated the Feast of All Saints. Please remember them in your prayers.

+ Carole Ann Fulgenzi

+ James Laskowski + John Opie

+ Mary Howard + Michael Gallagher

+ Donna Kowalczyk + Brian O'Byrne

+ John Frontera + Maryanne Frederick

+ Dina Engels + Elizabeth Greenia

+ Robert Jogan + Sean O'Connor +

Daniel Cucco + Laura Mercan

+ Marlene Kler + Maurice Greenia +

Helen Osborne + Vilma Marone

+ Isabelle MacEachern + Valerie Dryden

All Things Considered

“Voting is a civic sacrament.” That’s an axiom attributed to the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, the former president of the University of Notre Dame. He is largely credited as the architect of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In the days leading up to what has to be the most contentious elections in modern times, the “sacramental” reference I am feeling is that of **Reconciliation**. The long lines of people waiting to vote look to me like Ash Wednesday when people silently trudge in single file to give an admission of wrong-doing and a promise to do better.

This election carries the Lenten mood of a people, who as a body, have examined their conscience and come to the realization that “Lord, we have sinned against you and each other.” Ashes symbolize grief, in this case, grief that we have caused division from God.

Ash Wednesday, like Voting Tuesday, is a communal calling. We are joined to millions of others, Christian and others of good will, in a bond of solidarity which bears witness to sacrifice and love of neighbor. This is crucial in a nation which gleefully embraces greed and narcissism. One of the most pernicious forms of that kind of self slavery is our polarization into ever more segregated tribes and camps.

This is evidenced in groups that label themselves Catholic who try to rally or frighten voters in support of a specific cause or candidate—hence the appearances in the news of clergy claiming “you cannot be a Catholic and vote for (fill in the blank)”. These groups and individuals are given a

wide berth by many church authorities, in part because they support their point of view. Thankfully it is technically illegal for a non-profit to publicly campaign for a specific candidate. A lot of denominations have for some time gingerly crossed that line. Catholics have learned how to do that now as well.

Realistically, there is no perfect candidate that would meet all the criteria of Catholic values and mores. Our bedrock belief is in the sanctity of life. That would be the protection of life at its inception. But that protection must be consistent in order to be continuously Catholic.

I have come to the realization that the pro-life movement had been hijacked by certain politicians who are more interested in voting blocks than in the sanctity of life. For me, being a single-issue voter is not following Catholic teachings. Another way of saying this is that when it comes to examining my conscience before I vote, I must not stop at one examen, absolving myself of any other moral obligation other than being anti-abortion.

- Support of the death penalty does not reflect Catholic values.
- The decision to turn away immigrants seeking asylum and separate children from their families at our southern border does not reflect Catholic values.
- To inflame racial tensions and to incite people toward violence does not reflect Catholic values.
- The decision to cut federal aid to our nation’s poorest families—most recently by announcing major budget cuts to the food stamp program, affordable housing efforts, student loan aid, and Medicaid—does not reflect Catholic values.
- To fail to aggressively protect the health and lives of persons in time of a pandemic – does not reflect Catholic values.
- The decision to pull out of the Paris climate accord and to rescind environmental regulations leading to the destruction of God’s wondrous creation does not reflect Catholic

values.

- The degrading of women, minorities, and the poor, as well as lying and using hateful language, does not reflect Catholic values.

When we review this list against our conduct, I think we can all agree that we have somehow sinned “in what we have done, or failed to do.” For a lot of us then, voting is an admission of our failures and a chance to make a firm purpose of amendment. We can and must do better.

It’s an unprecedented moment in our history, and it hasn’t gone unnoticed. Pope Francis, in fact, has had his eye on this election all year. In a January meeting with the US bishops in Rome, before Covid-19 got a foothold in this country, the Pope imparted words of wisdom on the election to those present. *“Teach your people discernment by your stepping back from the sheer politics of it. If you try to step back and say, ‘but here are the major moral issues that we face,’ that’s what is most important,”* the Pope was quoted as saying.

Pope Francis has likewise argued that *“an essential aspect of good politics is the pursuit of the common good of all.”* In January, he told the US bishops, *“Christians must come down on the side of the poor and those who are in need.”* His words seem like a clear rebuke to those who believe that abortion is the only issue in deciding how to vote. When addressing the issue of climate change in December, Pope Francis stated, *“We are facing a ‘challenge of civilization’ in favor of the common good.”*

Do we want to support the failed “normal” of inequality, discrimination, and separation? Or do we follow Pope Francis and work and vote to do better?

There is an excellent interview with Bishop McElroy of San Diego where he talks about how the Holy Father has been sending us some strong signals that our responsibility as American Catholics goes to multiple moral issues. Read that interview at bit.ly/37n38At.

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All Things Considered, cont

Continued from page two...

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, *"It is the duty of citizens to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom. The love and service of one's country follow from the duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity. Submission to legitimate authorities and service of the common good require citizens to fulfill their roles in the life of the political community"* (No. 2239).

In the U.S. legal tradition, a moral obligation is an act one cannot choose not to do: In other words, a duty. The Latin, *"moraliter exigunt,"* would in a less dynamic translation be rendered something like "these force morally" or "morally necessitate one to." But as with many other issues addressed in the Catechism, this moral obligation has long been treated on the pastoral level as more of an exhortation toward a goal rather than a rule with dire consequences for the state of one's soul. And in this election, the affairs we are dealing with are "soul sized."

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Taxes are the price of living in society. That is true of the nation, it is true of the Church.

This year's Catholic Service Appeal tax has been fraught with problems – administrative and philosophical. I am amazed that, given the circumstances, we are doing as well as we are. I have given up on seeing any surplus in this year's CSA, all I can hope for now is that we meet the Archdiocesan minimum so that we don't have to take the balance out of operations or put it on a loan.

Given everything that is going on now, I am not going to beat you up about this – but \$25,000 would get us off the hook. I encourage you to give as best you can to the CSA. If you have not already sent your donation, I'd recommend doing it through the parish rather than through the AoD which continues to have accounting delays.

TRP

The Buzz

The world is coming to an end.

Have you ever been bombarded by more apocalyptic balderdash than in this year's political ads? If you don't vote "their" way, you are contributing to the end of civilization and humanity – the world – as we know (read: like) it.

How intellectually disgusting such assaults on us, the electorate, are! And hear me clearly: the answer is not to be swayed, is not to be intimidated, is not to throw up our hands and walk away. The answer is to powerfully overwhelm such evil with a deeply intelligent and compassionately human vote.

Read again the scriptures from today's All Saints mass... from Revelation 7, from I John 3, and especially the Beatitudes in Matthew 5. Then pray and join your mind, heart and soul with Jesus in the support offered by the Communion of Saints. Transcend the ads and broaden your conscience to grapple with all of the gray areas about candidates, issues and proposals. Then with such divine strength, vote!

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November is all about change and hope. As I'm writing this, lots of our neighborhood trees have changed color, but not all; many leaves have fallen, but many like some of mine hang on – though brown – till the new year. My hope for a last spell, or even gasp, of warm weather is finally facing reality and coming to an end. But that's only temporary, for the deeper hope, based on more than seven decades of personal experience (as well as the collective studied wisdom of science), is that spring will return with renewed warmth and life.

So, in the midst of all kinds of change, let's be a people and a parish united in warm faith and love. Spring will come again, but just like the trees, hope can bring about changes that grow into a life bigger and stronger than ever.

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Speaking of change . . . I hope you remembered to change your alarm clock back last night to take full advantage of the return to Standard Time this morning with an extra hour of sleep. This first-Sunday-of-November to have our clocks "fall" back an hour has been around for a few years now. But some older electronic equipment (e.g. my computer at home and the timer on our church bells) thought this was still supposed to happen last Sunday. Last week I had to reset the bells' clock an hour ahead, and today, an hour back. Then next spring it's worse because the changes are several weeks apart. All this keeps my graduate school education about time and the Parousia very humble and down to earth.

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Wednesday, November 4, is the day after Election Day is also the annual feastday of Pope St. John Paul's baptismal patron saint . . . and mine as well: St. Charles Borromeo. And in this small world, St. Charles in the 1500's was the archbishop of the diocese (Milan) that was first really put on the map in the 300's by none other than St. Ambrose. So, on Wednesday sometime (and I'm not above begging) would you be kind enough to keep me in your prayer along with your intentions for our Parish. In that prayer time remember Charles, Ambrose and John Paul and include an intention for our current pope. He needs it; I need it; we all need it! Thanks ahead of time. Amen.

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By the way, St. Charles is the patron of catechists and catechumens. As for the catechumenate – this year's RCIA is shaping up in a brand new, unpredictable way. Changed, but it will happen! The Faith cannot be quarantined. Several people are already on board with unique stories and scheduling requirements. We're blessed to have this opportunity to rethink the essentials and rebuild the process to match the circumstances. So it's most definitely open to you or someone you know interested in exploring the Catholic Faith and community. Call me anytime at 313-332-5631 for more info. No cost; no obligation.

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A PRAYER FOR THE ELECTION by James Martin, S.J.

Loving God, I ask you to guide me during this important election season:

Help me to understand the Gospels, in which Jesus Christ reveals his path of love, mercy and compassion, especially toward those who are poor, sick or struggling in any way. Instruct me on what the church teaches on the important issues of our day: abortion, racism, migration, war and peace, health care, the death penalty, economic justice, care for the environment and on all those questions that I must ponder with your help. Enable me to form my conscience so that I may vote wisely.

Loving God, I ask you to help me to live peacefully with others:

Allow me to be open to the opinions of others with whom I disagree.
Fill me with a spirit of charity toward those who may oppose me.
Give me patience in times of struggle.

Loving God, I ask you to help me stand with those who are marginalized or persecuted:

Increase my courage so that I can stand up in times of danger.
Create in me a new heart that I might be brave in times of turmoil.
Make me someone who is ready to care for, advocate for and suffer with those on the margins.

Loving God, I ask you to aid our civic leaders:

Grant them good health and a spirit of wisdom. Open to them paths of reconciliation.
Teach them your ways of love, mercy and compassion.

Loving God, I ask you to bless our nation:

Crown it with your compassion. Support it with your care. And nurture it with your love. Amen.



You've been reading about the Archdiocesan program of reorganizing the entire Church of southeast Michigan into Families of Parishes. This project flows from Archbishop Vigneron's Pastoral Plan entitled "Unleash the Gospel." The overriding goal of all this is to make a "joyful missionary disciple" of every Catholic. We all have a mission; we all are missionaries.

Fr. Tim has asked Grant Ruttinger and I to help organize some interested and insightful parishioners in responding to a diocesan-created survey of self-assessment of our parish. The results will be used to determine what St. Ambrose may be and become when assigned to a "Family." The areas of self-assessment are

- Sacraments, Liturgy, and Prayer
- Evangelization (within the parish membership)
- Evangelization (outward in mission beyond our members)
- Administration and Operations
- Staff and Lay Leadership
- Pastoral Care and Christian Service
- Sent on Mission.

There are a total of 50 questions covering these areas to which each member of our group will respond. If you would like to be considered to join in this task, contact me at the rectory in the next day or so. But because of the potential consequences for the future of our entire parish community, I earnestly invite every one of you to pray deeply that we and the authorities at the Archdiocese will be open to and guided by the Holy Spirit. That's a mission which can bring true joy and vitality to St. Ambrose and every disciple here.

Chuck Dropiewski

The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the
St. Ambrose Catholic Community
Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Pastor: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc
Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski
Religious Education: Kelly Anne Woolums
Minister of Music: Dr. Norah Duncan IV
Office Manager: Peggy O'Connor
Secretary: Mary Urbanski

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –
Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
Sunday - 10:00 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton
Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230
Tel: (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838
Email address: stambrose@comcast.net
Religious Education: (313) 332-5633
Pastoral Ministry: (313) 332-5631
Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814
Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

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|---|---|------------|
| 2 | 0 | CSA |
| 2 | 0 | Box Scores |
| Number of Families 800 Returns to date 81 Average Gift ('19) \$463 Quota for the Archdiocese \$70,663 Property/Liability Insurance ... \$52,000 Parish '20 Target.....\$122,663 Received as of 10/28/20..... \$55,897 | | |
| • Due to the pandemic, the Catholic Services Appeal has been delayed from the spring until now. There has been a 15% reduction in our target reflecting a 15% reduction in the AoD budget. • We are responsible for a minimum of \$70,663. After that all overages will be applied to our insurances. CSA gifts are exempt from the regular Archdiocesan taxation. | | |

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

November 2

All Souls Day

November 3

Weekday 31st week in Ord. Time

November 4

St. Charles Borromeo, bishop

November 5

Weekday 31st Week in Ord. Time

November 6

Weekday 31st Week in Ord. Time

November 7

Weekday 31st Week in Ord. Time

4:00 p.m. Mass – 32nd Week in Ord. Time

November 8

10:00 a.m. Mass – 32nd Week in Ord. Time

•Web broadcast of weekend Mass from
St. Ambrose will begin at 8:00 on Sunday.
and will be accessible throughout the day.

Spending Spotlight

Copier/printers in offices don't get much attention unless they stop working – usually right when a big project is due. For the first time our office has leased a new color printer/copier/scanner rather than a re-built. But even with a purchase, there is still a quarterly maintenance payment of \$320.15; with an additional cost if we exceed a certain amount of color copies.

Scriptures for the 31st Week in Ordinary Time

November 2

Wis 3: 1-9

Rom 5: 5-11

Jn 6: 37-40

November 3

Phil 2: 5-11

Ps 22: 26b-32

Lk 14: 15-24

November 4

Phil 2: 12-18

Ps 27: 1, 4, 13-14

Lk 14: 25-33

November 5

Phil 3: 3-8a

Ps 105: 2-7

Lk 15: 1-10

November 6

Phil 3: 17-4: 1

Ps 122: 1-5

Lk 16: 1-8

November 7

Phil 4: 10-19

Ps 112: 1b-2, 5-6, 18a, 9

Lk 16: 9-15

November 8

Wis 6: 12-16

Ps 63: 2-8

1 Thes 4: 13-18 or 4: 13-14

Mt 25: 1-13

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

For the foreseeable future, there will be two Masses on here on the weekend
– Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Out of an abundance of caution, we have opened mass to a congregation of
25% of the building's capacity – roughly 150 persons.

Face masks and social distancing is required. In addition, we will now be
requiring tracing information similar to the one done at your doctor's office.

Our church building is sanitized prior to each liturgy.

View Sunday's mass at facebook.com/stambroseparish or [stambroselive on
youtube.stambrosechurch.net](https://stambroselive.onyoutube.stambrosechurch.net) starting at 10:00 a.m.

Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish
requires a *minimum* of..... \$10,100.00

On Sunday, October 25, 2020

in envelopes we received \$6,021.00

in the loose collection \$1,855.00

in electronic donations \$2,976.00

for a total of..... \$10,852.00

Over budget for the week..... \$752.00

Number of envelopes mailed 782

Number of envelopes used 50



Our Sick

Please pray for those who are seriously ill or who are hospitalized:
Pat Blake, Karen Culver, Ann Sullivan
Kay, Donald Miriani, Bonnie McKenna,
Jeanne Noto, David Schumacker,
Matthew Elias, George Bucec, Emilie
Kasper, Darby O'Toole, Anna Noto
Billings, Eileen O'Brien, Liz Linne,
Donna Barnes, Alexandra Cullen,
Charmaine Kaptur, Frank Gregory,
Alex Billiu, Jerry Hansen, Jackie
Walkowski, Kristen Kingzett, Valerie
Dryden, Maria Simcina, Albina Checki,
Brian Tague, Sharif Hannan, Shirley
Whelan, Anne Purvis, Chris Walsh,
Jerry Gutowski, Kevin O'Connor,
and those suffering and hospitalized
worldwide with COVID-19.

Our Dead

A funeral liturgy was
celebrated on Wednesday, October
28th for **Valerie Apel Dryden**, age 85.

Valerie was born and raised
in Detroit, attended Dominican High
School and earned a bachelor's degree
in music from Sienna Heights College.
She was an accomplished pianist
and taught in the East Detroit
Public Schools and spent four years
teaching at an American school in
Germany. She married John in 1989
and enjoyed traveling throughout
the United States visiting family and
friends. Among her interests were
sports, especially the Detroit Tigers
and Formula One racing and classic
cars. She looked forward every year
to the Woodward Dream Cruise.

Valerie is survived by her
husband John; stepsons; Bryce
(Debbie) and Blair (Joyce). She will
be missed by her 3 grand children
and the rest of her family and friends.
Please keep Valerie in your prayers.

Christian Financial

St. Ambrose Parish, through Chris-
tian Financial Credit Union, is equipped
to make electronic transfers from your
checking account or credit card on our
website. Your checking account or credit
card may be used to make a single dona-
tion; or you may set up automatic week-
ly, monthly or quarterly contributions
on a schedule. Go to stambrosechurch.net
for information on electronic giving.



As we continue to live with Covid-19, we also need to live with the notion that a good many of our traditions and special events must adapt and, in some cases, must be canceled until next year. Unfortunately, that is true for the St. Vincent dePaul annual Spaghetti Dinner fundraising event. A November tradition for many years, the Spaghetti Dinner will not take place in 2020. SVdP will also cancel the Thanksgiving Food Box collection which over the years has ensured that hundreds of families in our community do not go hungry on Thanksgiving and for a few weeks later.

While the traditional, community-involved events won't be happening this year, SVdP will still need our help! St. Ambrose Conference President Randy Rengpage says the group will be providing gift cards to our needy neighbors to purchase food in place of the boxes. St. Ambrose SVdP will provide hams, as usual.

If you would like to contribute, please purchase gift cards in the amount of \$25 or \$50 to either Kroger or Parkway foods and return to the rectory no later than Wednesday, November 18.

Let me also note that the need for assistance is increasing once again to pre-Covid levels (with no federal stimulus checks in the offing). In addition to the Thanksgiving food gift cards, cash or checks made out to St. Vincent dePaul St. Ambrose Conference are most welcome this season to help fund the group's ongoing work in our community.

CIVILIZE IT

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DIGNITY BEYOND THE DEBATE

A divided country. Fights at the dinner table. Political vitriol. What does it mean to love our neighbors in the midst of such a climate?

As Catholics, we have a long tradition of engagement in the political process as a means of putting our faith into action. We are called to bring the best of ourselves and our faith to the public square – and yet today, many shy away from such involvement because our national and local conversations are filled with vitriol and harsh language, often directed at people themselves.

When personal attacks replace honest debate, no one wins. This kind of attack, no matter the reason, only serves to further divide our communities. As Catholics, we must model a better way. We invite you to join the Civilize It campaign by taking the pledge below as a way to promote civility, love our neighbors, and build community.

Civilize It is about making room in your heart for those with whom you disagree. We are called to recognize that each one of us is a beloved child of God and to respond in love to that reality. Civilize It is a non-partisan call to focus on the dignity of all people, even when we disagree, and to put faith in action by bearing witness to a better way forward.

Take the pledge at wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it as an individual, family, or community. Anyone and everyone can commit together to honoring human dignity through civil conversation.

I PLEDGE . . .

1. **CIVILITY:** *To recognize the human dignity of those with whom I disagree, treat others with respect, and rise above attacks when directed at me.*
2. **CLARITY:** *To root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well-formed conscience, which involves prayer, conversation, study and listening. I will stand up for my convictions and speak out when I witness language that disparages others' dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others' experiences.*
3. **COMPASSION:** *To encounter others with a tone and posture which affirms that I honor the dignity of others and invites others to do the same. I will presume others' best intentions and listen to their stories with empathy. I will strive to understand before seeking to be understood.*

After you take the pledge, share the word on your socials using #CivilizeIt2020! Explore the Civilize It website (wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it) for additional resources to help you promote civility.