

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Wednesday was the 47th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision known as *Roe v. Wade*. The Annual March for Life took place on Friday, January 24th. At this writing I am wondering what kind of coverage this event will be given in the news. With everything that is happening throughout this past week in the Capitol I wonder if there will be any coverage at all. The Annual March for Life is the largest gathering of people united for a singular cause assembling on the Mall in Washington, D.C. Considering past years, the coverage is usually sparse and often includes many in opposition to the Pro-Life movement and rally. We usually see the pro-abortion crowd, with the media hoping that some kind of conflict or altercation takes place. Remember last year? We don't expect fair coverage.

As Catholics and pro-life people our prayers are necessary. We pray for a greater respect for the God-given gift of life. We pray that we may have the courage to defend *all* human life. We defend all life because we are all created in "*the image and likeness of God*." This is our dignity: the image and likeness of God. We are not defined by the good things that we do, even though we would like that very much. We are not defined by the bad things that we do, even though we are tempted to judge others by this standard. No, our human life is defined by God. We are God's children created in his image and likeness. No one can take that away. No human court can claim otherwise. At no time in our existence, from the very first moment of our conception until our last breath, we are God's beloved sons and daughters created in his image and likeness. This is our dignity, and this is what defines who we are. Thus, it must be respected.

Just the same, as I have said once before, we need to continue to reflect on and speak out on the primacy of the Right to Life and respect for the gift of life. This is necessary since organizations like Planned Parenthood will always be advertising. What I find extremely disturbing about Planned Parenthood is they are funded with tax-payer funds for one. Secondly, they give substantial funds supporting political candidates. Just last Tuesday the Catholic News Agency reported that Planned Parenthood is planning on spending \$45 Million Dollars endorsing pro-abortion candidates for the presidency, congress and state legislators. Spending Tax-payers' money! Why doesn't anyone address this issue? Nevertheless, the pro-abortion advocates will continue to couch their arguments in politically correct and acceptable language. But they will never speak words that reveal the reality of abortion. They cannot speak the hard reality and truth about abortion and the various life issues. They soften the language resulting in diminished resistance. They are masters of the power of words apart from the truth. Thus, the Church must continue to speak the truth. She does so with genuine authority.

The Church speaks the truth about the life issues with clarity. At times this may sound harsh. Just the same it is necessary. It is an act of love to speak the truth. Even though it can be confrontational, the Church does so with compassion for those who fail to live the truth: the sinner. Speak with the conviction of the truth and counsel with pastoral compassion. In this case compassion is not a weakness. It is strength. Compassion does not mean that sinful or immoral actions are acceptable rather compassion is intended to bring the sinner back to the mercy of God with the opportunity to turn away from a destructive path to the path of salvation. Out of love, one would

not let another to intentionally travel down the road of self-destruction. That is not compassion. That is not the work of mercy.

Let us look and read what the Catechism of the Catholic Church has to say about the works of mercy. "The *works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are *spiritual works of mercy*, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The *corporal works of mercy* consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God." #2447

These works of mercy are charitable works. They are a means to restore others in their bodily and spiritual necessities. In our very complex world these works are rarely easy. Nor do the desired effects of restoration seem plausible in some cases. In hearing the Gospel when Jesus declares that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, he desires all to be restored and gathered to him and his kingdom. Those who experience bodily and spiritual need find themselves left out or separated from others. It is also sad that in many cases individuals have willingly chosen to be separated from others in society, communities and even in families. Who doesn't know of someone who has been painfully separated from their family for whatever reason? Some have been made so by their own choices or the choice of others. These are occasions for mercy: a work of mercy if you will.

In our society we experience many divisions not only over moral issues (i.e. life-issues) but also political issues, economic issues, educational issues; you name it there are bound to be divisions. We live in such a complex society we are bound to be at odds over almost anything. If anything, this is a strong indication that we are all in need of mercy: salvation. This is where we need to do our part. We need to practice the works of Mercy.

A great place to start is simple. As we remember when we celebrate the saints, and most especially the martyrs, God works through the weak and makes them strong. What is it about the weak and lowly, they are open to the will of God. God works through them. God also works through the small simple things. Thus, we can easily start with the small simple acts of charity. We can easily start with our prayer life; praying for those who need our prayers the most. It is an act of charity to pray for those in need. Our loving actions coupled with our prayers have the power to transform our lives. We do this at Sunday Mass.

I remember a time when I had a very difficult time with some individuals and one in particular. Not something that I am very proud of and don't worry this is not a confession. I was bothered by this and perplexed as to what to do about this unacceptable disposition in my mind and heart. It was not healthy; especially spiritually. I needed to find a way to deal with it.

I had a conversation with a priest friend about this and he encouraged me to do a simple thing that truly helped. He told me when I celebrate the mass, and most particularly at the offertory when I offer up the bread and the wine (before the consecration) I was to offer up my heart as well as those with whom I had ill feelings. Just as we believe that God receives our gifts of bread and wine and returns them to us as the Body and Blood of Christ, so too God will receive your heart and those with whom you have ill feelings and God will return them to you in a different way.

The relationship will eventually become better. Not overnight but eventually as long as you are persistent in your desire for this change. The grace of God has the power to transform your heart and even the way you perceive the other; eventually seeing the image of God in the other.

So often we want to offer God our best at the offertory and to be known by our good works. In reality that only pleases us in our own eyes. To be honest, we are to offer our very lives at the offertory along with the bread and wine, and that means the bad as well as the good. It is only the grace of God that miraculously changes that which we offer: our very lives.

This is the reason why we pray our intentions at the offertory. We persistently pray for a greater respect for life. In this manner we also call to mind and pray for those who do not respect life. It is also in our prayer that we do not find hatred growing in our hearts toward those who promote the many disrespectful manifestations toward the gift of life. Our hearts can easily become hardened towards others which is not spiritually helpful for us.

Along with the spiritual works there are simple corporal works of mercy that we can easily perform. Almsgiving was suggested as the simplest and most helpful. Down the line there are more difficult works and I would say that they are a special ministry in themselves: visiting the imprisoned. Yet even then, one must start someplace: addressing the more basic bodily and spiritual needs of others. This will eventually lead to greater things.

Have a great week.
Fr. Ralko

This week we pray Week III of the Liturgy of the hours.

Church Support

January 19, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$10,752.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$6,863.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly surplus	\$3.00

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

We pray for those who have died recently:

*Lois J. Nader
and
Thomas E. Dew*

First Communion Students and their parents are reminded to attend the **January 26th** meeting to be held at 12:00 p.m. in the Parish Social Hall (Church basement).

PRE JORDAN

Pre Jordan will be held on **Tuesday, January 28 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Parish Office Building. The meeting is for parents, and godparents of infants and small children to be baptized. Please call Patty Boggs at 453- 0597 to register for the class.

The Women's Spirituality Group will meet Monday, January 27 at the parish office at 3:30 p.m. Please enter through the courtyard door. If you have any questions, please call Judi Peterson at 740-453-5288.

The Parish Office Chapel is open on Wednesdays for private prayer from 12:00 p.m. through 7:00 p.m. The Rosary will be recited at 6:00 p.m.

Grief by definition is deep sorrow caused by loss. Grief can appear as sadness, pain, it can even make us physically ill. Grief can be indescribable. The St. Nicholas Grief Support Program provides monthly meetings which are offered twice in one day to afford the maximum number of participants. Meetings are held at 1:00 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Office Meeting Room. **Join us on Thursday, February 13. This month's topic: Anger.** All are welcome.

Register Now at www.columbuscatholicwomen.com for the early bird price of \$40 per person for the **Columbus Catholic Women's Conference** on **Sat., Feb. 15**, from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Ohio Expo Center. Come rest in Jesus and join thousands of other women for inspiring speakers, Holy Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Adoration, food, shopping, faith and fellowship! Invite a friend or family member to join you. In the words of St. Ignatius Loyola, "Laugh and grow strong!" Ticket includes breakfast and lunch. Need help registering? Call the parish office! Scholarships are available. A bus will be leaving for the conference from St. Nicholas Church Parking Lot at 6:15 a.m. on Saturday, February 15th. Call the (740) 453-0597, ext. 14 to reserve your seat. The bus has been sponsored and is free. However, you must purchase a conference ticket.

CALLING ALL MEN!!!! Attend the Catholic Men's Conference on February 22, 2020 at the Columbus Expo Center – Kasich Hall. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. The event begins at 8:00 a.m. Join 3,500 men at the **2020 Men of God Conference** to hear from some of the most dynamic speakers around the country. Speakers include Bishop Robert Brennan, Jason Evert Founder of the Global Ministry, "Chastity Project"; and Head Football Coach at University of Cincinnati, Luke Fickell. Contact Mike Musselman for more information (740) 452-9806 or 297-0154 or register online at CatholicMensMinistry.com. We will be sharing a bus with St. Thomas for the Men's Conference this Year. The bus leaves from Saint Thomas Parish at 6:15 a.m.

BISHOP FENWICK \$100 CLUB WINNERS

Week 1:	Week 2:
\$100 - Debra Strawser	\$100 - Claire Tiberio
\$10 - Deann Backus	\$10 - Bruce King
\$10 - Heather Devoll	\$10 - Don Shaffer

3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

It is your responsibility to find a substitute if needed.

**February 2, 2020
4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Saturday, February 1 @ 5:15 p.m.

Cantor: Ryan Teti
Lectors: Mike LaPlante, Nancy Susa
Servers: Rex Hankinson, Mason Harmon
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Margaret Kronenbitter
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Vicki Burns, Al Burns
Eucharistic Ministers: Jennifer Bernet, Jon Calendine,
Mary Calendine, Don Susa

Sunday, February 2 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Kerby Staker
Lector: Diane Hoffer, Bill Sullivan
Servers: Caiden Hogue, Nathan Hogue
Eucharistic Minister- Coord: Philip Kocoloski
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Jim Hillis, Sue Hillis
Eucharistic Ministers: Theresa Hogue, Angie Hustey, Jeff Hustey,
Marvin Paul

Sunday, February 2 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Jim Gable
Lectors: Othello Repuyan, Rocky Rowe
Servers: Nathan Hart, Justin Hart
Eucharistic Minister - Coord: Brenda Lepi
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Jim Pottmeyer, Erin Roush
Eucharistic Ministers: John Haswell, Tim Hoffer, Ashley Jones,
Larry Taylor

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Praying the Rosary will resume in the St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. sometime in February. The exact date will be published in the bulletin.

Desire to spend time with Christ every day? The Church is open for private prayer and adoration of Christ in the Tabernacle; weekdays, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. until noon and Saturdays from noon until after the 5:15 p.m. Mass.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, January 27, St. Angela Merici

8:00 a.m., Mass: Robert Ralko, Church

TUESDAY, January 28, St. Thomas Aquinas

8:00 a.m., Mass: Clara Shumate, Church
9:30 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, January 29

8:10 a.m., School Mass: Albert Crock, Church
7:00 p.m., R.C.I.A., Parish Office

THURSDAY, January 30

NO MASS

FRIDAY, January 31, St. John Bosco

8:00 a.m., Mass: Lily Maximo, Church

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, February 1

4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Bertha & Paul Harem, Church

SUNDAY, February 2

8:15 a.m., Mass: Jane Durant, Church
9:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m., Religious Education, Bishop Fenwick
10:45 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

Readings for Week of January 27

Mon.	2 Sm 5:1-7, 10	Mk 3:22-30
Tues.	2 Sm 6:12b- 15, 17-19	Mk 3:31-35
Wed	2 Sm 7:4-17	Mk 4:1-20
Thurs.	2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29	Mk 4:21-25
Fri.	2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17	Mk 4:26-34
Sat.	2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17	Mk 4:35-41
Sun	Mal 3:1-4	Lk 2:22-40

INCOME TAX

If you would like to have a record of your donations to the Church for tax purposes, please fill in your envelope number, name and address or email and place it in the collection basket. A statement will be sent to you.

Envelope No. _____

Name _____

Address _____ or

Email address _____