

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Today is the observance of World Marriage Day. It is a day that we are to pray as a community of faith for married couples and for those who are preparing themselves to enter into the Sacrament of Matrimony. Studies, both the secular and religious, say that good marriages and families are the foundation for a good society. Yet there appears to be little support for the institution of traditional marriage and for families. Divorce is widespread in our society; people divorce over all kinds of reasons. I remember from long ago the television show in the 1960s called "Divorce Court". From my memory the judge denied more cases than granting a decree of divorce. For those he denied he instructed them to get to work in resolving their differences. The judge challenged them. There doesn't seem to be much challenging of couples these days. Nevertheless, my suspicion is that for couples who divorce for superficial reasons most likely married for superficial reasons. Just the same divorce is painful. This should tell us that marriage is serious business.

The Catholic Church knows that marriage is serious business: it is a sacrament. The Sacrament of Matrimony is a vocation. Marriage is intended to build up the Kingdom of God in this world: The Church. Husbands and wives support each other in selfless love. They strengthen each other to grow in virtue and holiness: thus bringing each other to God. They strengthen each other in the faith, hope and love. As fathers and mothers, they build up the Kingdom of God in this world with their children. They further guide their children on the path to the Kingdom of God in its fullness in Heaven. Marriage is a calling to build up the Kingdom of God on earth and for the future in heaven. This is a great calling: a vocation. Thus, we must insist that the Sacrament of Matrimony and family life be respected, cherished and protected in society.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes the Sacrament of Matrimony as follows. *"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized person has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament."* (CCC: 1601) Marriage is serious business and the wedding ceremony needs to reflect this reality. Marriage is a partnership for the *whole of life*, for the *good of the spouses*, the *procreation of offspring* and the *education of the children* born of this union. This is all serious business and it has a direct impact on the good of the Church and society.

The celebration of the sacraments is serious business. Couples must be intellectually, emotionally and spiritually prepared to exchange the vows of the covenant. The validity of their vows depends on their knowledge and freedom. They must have the *knowledge* of what they are doing including the full scope of the implications of these vows. They must have the *freedom* to publicly make these vows to each other. They must be free from any kind of force or fear. Strangely, they must be free to be able to say "no" to each other. If they are not free to say "no" they are not free to say "yes". This is true freedom to say... "I freely and willfully give my entire self to you". This is binding.

The couple also needs to be spiritually prepared for the exchange of vows. The Catechism of the Catholic Church addresses this aspect in paragraph 1622. *"Inasmuch as it is a*

sacramental action of sanctification, the liturgical celebration of marriage... must be, per se, valid, worthy and fruitful. It is therefore appropriate for the bride and groom to prepare themselves for the celebration of their marriage by receiving the sacrament of penance." Since marriage is serious business, and the bride and groom are the ministers of the sacrament that they confer on each other (the priest is the witness on behalf of the Church) they must be spiritually prepared as the ministers of the sacrament. The exchange of vows is a liturgical act and all liturgical acts are acts of worship and sanctification. Personal holiness is a serious consideration. Consider this: the basis of all sin is selfishness and self-centered. Sin compromises genuine love. The exchange of the marriage vows is a selfless act of love. This expression of selfless love is modeled after the self-sacrificing love of Christ. The ministers of the sacrament (the couple) need to take personal holiness, purity of heart into serious consideration because it influences the *valid, worthy and fruitfulness* of the vows. Reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is recommended. Go to confession for the sake of your spouse and marriage. The bride and groom are the gift that that they give to each other: the gift of self.

This leads to the place of the celebration of marriage. Marriage between two Catholics should take place during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Marriage is a sacrament and is attached to the Paschal Mystery of Christ. *"In the Eucharist the memorial of the New Covenant is realized, the New Covenant in which Christ has united himself for ever to the Church, his beloved bride for whom he gave himself up. It is therefore fitting that the spouses should seal their consent to give themselves to each other through the offering of their own lives by uniting it to the offering of Christ for his Church made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and by receiving the Eucharist so that, communicating in the same Body and the same Blood of Christ, they may form but 'one body' in Christ."* CCC 1621.

This is a very important point for Catholics seeking to be married. They are to have the same love that Christ has for his Church: selfless and self-sacrificing. This makes their marriage covenant holy, because it is the love of God. The Eucharist is the faithful life-giving love of God: Jesus Christ. The Eucharist must be at the center of married love. The Eucharist is the source that renews and revitalizes the love of husband and wife. The Eucharist is the final destination of married love: perfect communion with God in heaven.

Weddings are about the communion of love of the man and woman. Husband and wife are called by Love. God is Love. The Christian Vocation of Matrimony is about the answer to that call. The call is no less than the building up of the Kingdom of God; here and in heaven.

We pray for married couples. The church expects husbands and wives to seriously pray for each other and pray together because they are in this covenant of life and love. But most importantly married couples are invited to come to church, worship and receive the Lord in the Eucharist to strengthen their love and faithfulness to each other. It is here that married life is nourished by God in Word and Sacrament. Married couples cannot survive without it. Catholics cannot survive without the Eucharist. Ultimately, Christian life and married life most importantly are no trivial matter.

In this manner Marriage is elevated to the dignity of a sacrament and a revealing light to the nations. Good Christian Marriages become a "light to the nations". We live in a darkened world. Just look at the current state of marriage and family life.

God's saving faithful love shines through good Christian Marriages and families in a world that needs this Light. Christian Marriage gives light to the world of darkness and gives Hope.

God Bless our Married Couples and those preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage.

Father Ralko

Note Well: There will not be a morning mass this week. I plan on being away for a short break before we begin the observance of the Lenten and Easter Seasons.

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

Church Support

February 2, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$12,948.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$9,059.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly deficit	\$2,199.00

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

PARISH DINNER

February 8th following the 5:15 p.m. Mass in the Church Social Hall. All are invited to join us for some comfort food and wonderful fellowship. On the menu is: Old Fashioned Beef



Stew, bread and cake for dessert. Donations are appreciated to continue future dinners.

Please join us for breakfast in the Church Social Hall (Basement), Sunday, February 9th following the 8:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. Masses.

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.

Confirmation Students and their Parents and Sponsors are reminded to attend the Mini Retreat on **Tuesday, February 11th** at 6:00 p.m. in the Church Social Hall (Basement).

Columbus Catholic Women's Conference: Final Call!

Register Now for \$45 per person at www.columbuscatholicwomen.com 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. Join thousands of 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 at this amazing event! 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. 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 at the Columbus Expo Center – Kasich Hall. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. The event begins at 8:00 a.m. 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 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 St. Thomas at 6:15 a.m. Please contact Rob Rodgers at 453-3301 for more information.

The Daughters of Isabella seek to promote the welfare of the community in accordance with the teachings and rules of the Catholic Church through unity, friendship and charity. The next meeting is **Tuesday, February 11** at 6:00 p.m. at the St. Nicholas Parish Office.

Men of The East - Traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration with Reflection

St. Luke's Catholic Church at 307 N. Market St., Danville, OH will host the Men of The East for a traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration with Reflection on **Thursday, February 13th at 7:00 p.m.** All men of our parish are invited and encouraged to participate in these once a month Holy Hour's. For more information about Men of The East contact Mike Musselman at 452-9806.

LOOKING FOR A GIFT?! - We have a collection of beautiful handcrafted rosaries and bracelets donated to the church for the benefit of the window project. The value of the rosary's ranges from \$20.00 to more than \$300.00 (Swarovski crystals). Bracelets start at \$10.00. They will be available for purchase at the parish office. Great gifts for First Communion, Confirmation, Anniversaries, etc.

College Students

Once again, we will be sending care packages to students away at college. Please call the parish office with your student's name and address, and we will send them a care package. Your student stayed in town? Great, give us their mailing address, we have gifts for them too! Please submit names and address by no later than Friday, February 21st to ensure delivery before Lent begins. If you are interested in helping with this project, please call the parish office.

5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Attention All Liturgical Ministers, Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and Servers
All liturgical ministers are asked to pick up the new schedule this weekend. If you have any questions concerning the schedule, please call Patty Boggs at 740- 453-0597. Please submit Mass preferences for April & May by **March 15**.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

It is your responsibility to find a substitute if needed.

February 16, 2020 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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

Cantor: Ryan Teti
Lectors: Tom J. Pitcock, Adelaide Pitcock
Servers: Logan Pratt, Luke Pratt
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Judy Hamilton
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Susan Pratt, Don Susa
Eucharistic Ministers: Karen Robinson

Sunday, February 16 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Sr. Bernadette Selinsky
Lector: Rocky Rowe, Bill Sullivan
Servers: Justin Ewart, Caiden Hogue
Eucharistic Minister- Coord: Marvin Paul
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Cheryl Sylvester, Dan Sylvester
Eucharistic Ministers: Theresa Hogue

Sunday, February 16 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Ryan Teti
Lectors: Keena Hansel, Wendy Hart
Servers: Nathan Hart, Justin Hart
Eucharistic Minister - Coord: Jim McKee
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Kevin Jones, Mike Musselman
Eucharistic Ministers: Jocelyn Connell

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.

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 _____

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, February 10, St. Scholastica
NO MASS

TUESDAY, February 11, Our Lady of Lourdes
NO MASS
9:30 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, February 12
NO MASS
6:15 p.m., Rosary, Parish Chapel
7:00 p.m., R.C.I.A., Parish Office

THURSDAY, February 13
NO MASS
1:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m., Grief Support Meeting, Parish Office

FRIDAY, February 14, SS
NO MASS

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, February 15
4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Barb Mendelson, Anniversary, Church

SUNDAY, February 16
8:15 a.m., Mass: Mary Nader, 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 February 10

Mon.	1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13	Mk 6:53-56
Tues.	1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30	Mk 7:1-13
Wed	1 Kgs 10:1-10	Mk 7:14-23
Thurs.	1 Kgs 11:4-13	Mk 7:24-30
Fri.	1 Kgs 11:29- 32; 12:19	Mk 7:31-37
Sat.	1 Kgs 12:26- 32; 13:33-34	Mk 8:1-10
Sun	Sir 15:15-20	Mt 5:17-37

January Booster Mania Winners

\$25- Marian Staley, Jerry Wolfe, Lori Moyer, Ron Davis, Karen Borowitz, Mark Hill, Marianne Michel, Jill Phillips, Marian Staley, Stephanie Bridwell and Dave Pfeifer

Bishop Rosecrans Athletic Boosters

Booster Mania tickets are still available for 2020. \$25 each or three for \$60. Drawings are every day. Tickets make a good gift. Questions: contact Marvin Paul at 740-819-3429.