

# St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

A MEMBER OF THE WESTERN DIOCESE OF THE POLISH NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH

October 2016

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## Angels and Angels

Though I may have mentioned it before, my last parish in Scranton, PA was the home of a parochial school, K-8. I had a lot of memorable times with that school, most of them revolved around the weekly religion class I taught.

It was the assistant priest's job to split an afternoon once a week amongst the 3 classes, roughly 40 minutes a pop. This was never a problem....the problem was always getting something interesting to talk about with children, make a lesson...and have it be malleable enough to work on kindergartners as well as 8th graders.

Once, around this time in October, I did a lesson on angels. September 29 is the Feast of St. Michael, the archangel, and October 3 is the Feast of Guardian Angels. I simply wanted to extend to the kids what the bible and what the church "defines" as an angel. Huge mistake!



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I started with the church's definition, taken from the First Holy Communion Catechism (#24) - "Angels are spirits that God created; they have understanding and free will. Some angels are God's messengers."

I then jumped into scripture's mentions of angels. The first occurs in the story of Sarai and Abram: "The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur." (Gen 16:7 NRSV). Then, I reread what we heard in church: "I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him. But if you listen attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes" (Exodus 23:20-22)

So far, so good. The kids saw that angels would show up and that God would direct them with a job here on earth. I spoke that sometimes these jobs were to deliver messag-

es, sometimes they were to fight, sometimes they were to guide, and sometimes they were protect.

Often, I have felt that while we, as Catholic Christians, accept some very difficult teachings from scripture and from the church, the idea of "angels" almost seems too far out there. We imagine them simply as we've seen them: as little girls in white gowns and glittery halos at church Christmas plays, perhaps John Travolta as the Archangel Michael in 1996's *Michael*, maybe how angels were depicted in the many releases of *Angels in the Outfield*.

That's just movies—in many books and shows, in many things we have heard from loved ones, we also get the big un-truth: that when someone dies, they *become* an angel.

As you might have imagined, this was a tough selling point to an elementary school. Though the Church has always taught that angels are for God in heaven, sometimes to earth for help, we all like to imagine someone we love floating around as an angel.

Of course, once you have mentioned something to a 9 year-old that goes directly against what mommy or daddy said ("but my mommy said that grandma became an angel in Heaven and

## Fr. Jason's Article (continued)

watches over me and helps me!), it is all downhill. I spent my remaining time in that classroom not trying to tell these kids that their parents were wrong (why bother!?), but that I'm not wrong either!

See, I thought after I left the school at 3pm that day that the "angel argument" would be over. Alas, kids can be quite observant, and their...angst...was rekindled that Friday at Mass. The Preface that the priest chants (right before the Sanctus/Holy, Holy, Holy) concludes "Therefore with the angels and archangels, with all the saints..."

This mere mention of the word angel brought back to what the kids apparently jibber-jabbered about on the playground after my lesson. Though I answered it for one kid that his grandma was DEFINITELY in Heaven and probably had the same power as an angel (yes, she can fly, no, she doesn't even need wings...) the next kid wanted to know about his grandfather...the next kid about his uncle...the next kid about his neighbor. In the minds of these kids, they needed his or her own explanation for his or her deceased person.

"Yes, she can have whatever she wants." "Yes, I'm sure she hangs out with the other angels." "Yes, I'm sure she knows St. Mary if that was her favorite."

And though the teaching was clear (in my non-9-year-old-eyes), every time a kid had a friend or relative die, the question arose again. It was then, in my repetitive answer, I saw the power that Church can have—a spirit of inclusion, with kids wanting a deep theological explanation for each natural familial occurrence...or maybe, just maybe...kids like to hear their own voices. Hmm.

Fr. Jason

## First Day of SOCL

Sunday, September 18 served as the first day of School of Christian Living Classes at St. Mary's.

The kids, having already been back to school for almost a month, were chomping at the bit to get back in the classrooms at St. Mary's.

A blessing of the students and teachers took place at the 9am Holy Mass. The blessing recalled the scripture from St. Matthew's Gospel: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (19:14). The teachers were blessed as well in the PNCC Rite: "pour out Your blessing upon the educators of our children. Through Your will, give them Your grace and in the spirit of Jesus as teacher, grant that those they instruct may experience a greater understanding in what they hear and learn."

We keep our SOCL students and teachers in prayer throughout the year.



## Seniorate Meeting

A meeting of the Northeast Seniorate of the Western Diocese of the PNCC took place at Resurrection Parish in Temperance, MI on Saturday, September 17 at 10am.

The meeting was attended by the Seniorate delegates from all of the parishes. Each pastor attended as well: Very Rev. Jaroslaw Nowak, Rev. John Cramer, Rev. Raymond Drada, and Rev. Jason Soltysiak. Deacon Richard Kasperzak was in attendance as well.

Issues discussed included the past number of months of ministry to the



parishes of the Seniorate, how the information from the Future Directions committee was being utilized, the future of our ministry, the youth

and the upcoming activities, and the next Lenten Retreat.

After a delicious lunch provided by the parish, all went home happy and full.



## Parish Meeting

On Sunday, September 11, an informal Parish Meeting was held to recap the results of the XVII Diocesan Synod of the Western Diocese.

The short, informative meeting was led by Dr. Jim Ploskonka, along with three of the delegats from our Parish: Fr. Jason Soltysiak, Ethan Long, and Elaine Ploskonka. Mike and Barb Wisniewski were out-of-town, but they ably represented St. Mary's at the Synod as well.

The proceedings were re-capped by Dr. Jim, along with adulation for our parish. He noted how everyone was extremely pleased with our parish, the facilities, and the prox-

imity of the hotel to the church. He also mentioned that the Cleveland area was under consideration to be

the site of the 2018 General Synod. A Q & A session followed, with explanations given on some of the synodal session topics.



### Various Announcements

#### Schedule Change

There will be only one Holy Mass on Sunday October 9th at 10am. A pot-luck luncheon will follow. Please adjust your schedule and allow yourself to indulge after Holy Mass.

#### PNU can ease your fears!

Halloween: that spooky, scary time of year. But there's no need for you to be scared of the future if you let the PNU help you provide for those you care about. Endowments, insurance policies, and annuities are just some of the things the PNU can offer to help you and your family grow financially. Being smart about your finances and preparing for the future helps ease any fears. Don't be scared: be smart! Contact Mike Wisniewski or call the PNU Home Office at 1-800-724-6352 for more info. .

#### YMSofR Branch #29

On Tuesday October 11 at

7pm; Branch #29 will be holding a meeting for the election of officers for the next fiscal year. The following positions are up for nominations and elections: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Financial Sec., and Record Sec. All men of the parish are invited to attend this meeting. Outlines for the next fiscal year Oct. 2016-2017, constitutions, and light food provided.

#### Operation Christmas Child

Our collection will begin shortly. Though it seems early, boxes are shipped mid-November. A recap-boxes are filled with gifts, school supplies, etc. & assembled by age/gender and delivered to a child in need somewhere around the world. \$7 must be included with each box, or you can make a \$7 donation without doing a box.

#### All Souls Day

All Souls Day takes place on Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. All Souls Remembrance Envelopes are available around the church. They

then can be dropped in the collections basket or given directly to Fr. Jason. All submitted names will be remembered in prayer at Holy Mass on All Souls Day as well as during Sunday Masses in the month of November.

#### Presentation

At 7pm on Wednesday, October 5th, an online presentation on the Solemnity of the Christian Family by the Most. Rev. Anthony Mikovsky took place at St. Mary's. This is available for all to view: please go to youtube.com and search "PNCC Future Directions" to see this and more PNCC videos.

#### Winter Clothing Drive

The United YMSofR is calling for all parishes in the PNCC to have a winter clothing drive. Branch #29 would like to make sure we participate! Please see the flyers posted on the bulletin board in church about how we can provide in this church-wide event. More information will be included in next month's newsletter

### Fr. Jason marches with St. Joseph's

Recently, on a trip to see his parents and brothers in New England, Father Jason and Natalie were able to march with our sister PNCC parish of St. Joseph's in Westfield, MA.

The Eastern States Exposition, or Big E, is one of the largest fairs in the United States. St. Joseph's has been the only church to march from Westfield for the last two decades. Please note that Father Jason is actually wearing a red St. Mary's shirt!



*A note from your parish chair.....*

## Windows with a View

Willet Hauser Architectural Glass began the restoration of our stained glass windows on September 3rd and completed their work on September 13th.

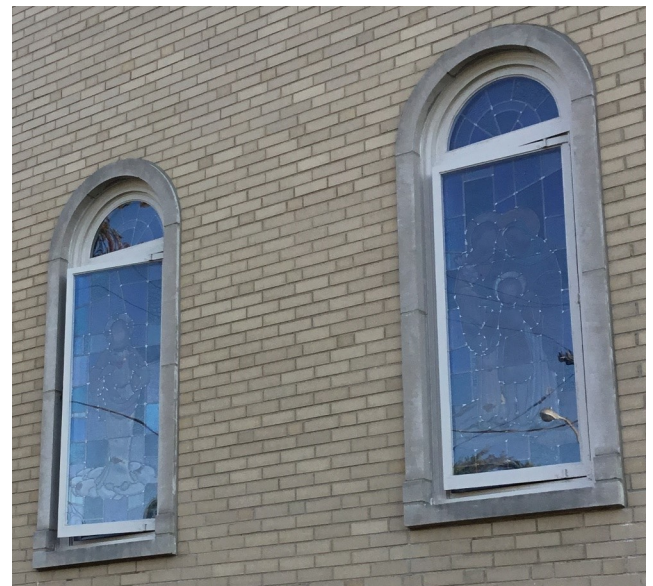
*Two men + minimal equipment + various levels of work on 20 windows + an honest work ethic + attention to detail + long hours of skillful, hard work + patience with weather = an amazing transformation of our windows!*

The total cost of this restoration was \$30,815.00. An increase from the original quote was incurred due to the discovery of damaged wood, which was not ably exposed at the time the proposal was generated. The additional work which involved both repair and reconstruction was quoted at \$6,900.00. Willet Hauser then graciously gave us a "donation discount of \$2,300.00" leaving our additional cost at \$4,600.00. The general scope of work included: removing old exterior plastic window covering and aluminum framing; cleaning, repairing and painting wood window frames; additional trim work; cleaning and adjusting hinges to allow proper operation of windows; cleaning of windows and installation of new exterior plastic covering; and repair of sections of cracked stained glass in two windows. Thanks to the insightfulness of the original stained glass window committee, led by Bruno Tracy, a fund was set up for the care of the windows. That fund was now at approximately \$10,000.00. That money was put toward this restoration project and the remaining balance was paid by part of our Restoration Drive collection.

I truly hope you have had the chance to look at our beautifully restored windows. If not I hope you will take the time if at all possible. The before and after pictures give you some idea of



*Above: Notice the sludged look of the plastic protective coating and erosion of the wooden frames. Below: Clear and bright: translucent yet almost reflective, beautifully colored and repaired wooden frames.*



the work that was done and the end product. We hope down the road to be able to illuminate the windows in some fashion from the interior so that they can be enjoyed from outside during the evening as well.

## Stained Glass Windows (continued)

The restoration of our windows has been a wish of mine for many years! I'm extremely grateful and excited it was able to become a reality. Thank You for approving the board's recommendation to proceed with this project. Thank You for supporting the Restoration Drive. Thank You for keeping our Parish a part of your life. *We are truly blessed!*

*Right: These are the same windows—the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Wow!*



## New Lights Installed

New lights have been installed at St. Mary's...did you notice?

The front standing lamps had been not functioning correctly for a number of years and needed some TLC. We

are blessed to have the talented George Ziefle, who, along with our parish VP Steve Fesz, took time out of their busy schedules to address this situation.

Mr. Ziefle had worked with the Board to choose the new design and, on a nice, not-too-hot late summer day, got the main lights up,

followed a few days later with the installation of the light on the Fellowship Hall entrance.

Many thanks to George and Steve who offered this time out of the goodness of their own hearts and for their love of St. Mary's Parish.



## St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

Future Direction Subcommittee of the Supreme Council—Polish National Catholic Church

September 28, 2016

Dear Bishops, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, Deacons and Faithful of our Holy Church, Prime Bishop Mikovsky's presentation on the Solemnity of the Christian Family is just one week away. The presentation will be available on the PNCC Future Direction YouTube page on Wednesday evening - October 5th at 7 pm. Go to [www.Youtube.com](http://www.Youtube.com) and then in the search box type in "PNCC Future Direction". Then click on PNCC Future Direction and then click on: "A Presentation on The Solemnity of the Christian Family".

Also an email will be sent with the link for all to watch this presentation just prior to 7 pm on Wednesday - October 5th at 7 pm. You can open this email and just click on the link to the presentation.

We encourage you to watch this with your parish family if possible or with your family at home. Perhaps your parish may again show this presentation of our Prime Bishop following Holy Mass on the Solemnity of the Christian Family - Sunday, October 9th. This would be most appropriate for those Polish National Catholics who do not have the necessary technology to view it at home.

Prayer for Families (PNCC 2010 Prayer Book)

God, our Heavenly Father, You have blessed each of us with the gift of family that through our family life we may learn to love and care for others. Open our eyes to recognize in all people the bonds of kinship. May we unselfishly serve them who with us have been made co-heirs with Christ. We ask this through the same Jesus Christ. Amen.

*If you know of parishioners or friends who are not a part of our monthly email updates – please have them email us at [FutureDirection@pncc.org](mailto:FutureDirection@pncc.org) to become a part of this important effort for our Holy Church.*

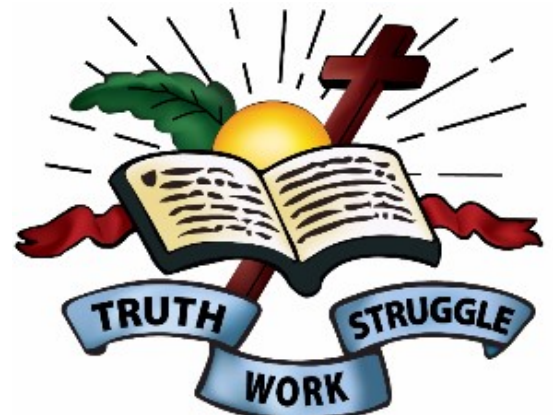
Please keep this church-wide undertaking in your daily prayers – asking God to bless this work and allow it to bear fruit for the building of His Kingdom through our Holy Church. Also please keep in prayer our diocesan synods that now are being convened - may the Spirit lead and guide our Bishops, clergy and lay delegates in their important work and ministry for the good of our PNCC.

### **We continue to implement the five themes the Synod determined for our future direction:**

- 1) Growth and Membership
- 2) Increase Spirituality
- 3) Lifelong Learning
- 4) Sacred Vocations
- 5) Community Involvement and Presence

### **The components of this 2016 action plan include:**

- 1) Greater Understanding of Church Solemnities – Christian Family 2016
- 2) Lenten Day of Retreat
- 3) Completion of at least three community service projects
- 4) Implement the Reverence Component
- 5) Implement the Lay Ministry Program within the PNCC
- 6) Presentation to Diocesan Synods
- 7) Continue to utilize the PNCC Future Direction You Tube channel
- 8) Stewardship Component
- 9) Church wide survey



## October Days of Note



### October Birthdays

5	-	Eileen Evanoff
7	-	Elaine Repede
10	-	Greg Hodor
17	-	Michael D'Arcy
23	-	James Boehnlein
25	-	Bruce Bogzevitz
30	-	Judy Atherton
30	-	Krysta Kurzynski
31	-	Marlane Oleniacz
31	-	Patty Temesi



### October Anniversaries

- 3- Jack & Lolly Spilka
- 4- Jeff & Amy Dreger
- 5- Pete & Debbie Moritz



## "Halloween"

*As Halloween approaches*

*and before we know*

*The moon will be casting its golden glow.*

*The air will be crisp with much cooler days*

*The leaves full of color to brighten the way.*

*The fields are all full and ready to glean,*

*Children laugh at the pumpkins they've seen!*

*Apples are ready to pick from the trees*

*Then cider will promptly be made from*

*these.*

*The Lord looks down on our fun Fall days*

*And watches about as we go on our way.*

*The harvest is ripe in the fields of the soul*

*Make sure "to glorify Him" is our goal!*

*Witches and monsters we close our eyes to*

*But Lord, open our eyes to those who need*

*You!*

*Send the workers far out in the fields*

*Glean from their work what You'd have them*

*yield.*

*Halloween time can be fun -- it's a treat!*

*But do things that honor God on the streets.*

*Hand out tracts with your goodies this year*

*You never know what seeds will fall near!*

*A seed that will sprout and soon grow to be*

*Lord, another ripe harvest for Thee!*

*Give us words and deeds on this night*

*That give others peace, not fear and fright.*

## Our Prayer List

Please pray for these St. Mary's parishioners:

Marlane Oleniacz	Barbara Baranowski
Bill & Joan Kastak	Anna Dawidziuk
Craig & Judy Atherton	John Spilka
Alison Jambor	Mary Ann Loschelder
Ralph & June Zaun	Len Pryer
Marty Bengala	Amy Dreger
Floyd & Elaine Rzonca	Frank Dominik
John Kasperczyk	Chester & Helen Budney
Chester & Ann Warzala	Hilda Grabowski

Please pray for our family and friends:

Wanda Clark	Beth Chihill
Michael Cosevin	Helen Cummings
Laina Dachtal	Gayle Green
Jay Grabowsky	Pam Chesar
Cecelia Hall	Caroline Kunes
Mark & Kim Andreas	Thomas Lill
John & Anne Nemetz	Bea Miskow
Rose Neyman	Carol & Chuck Boesch
Joanie True	Daniel Rinella
Joanel Rollen	Mike Szydowski
Fr. Tom Sheha	Fr. Sr. Gus Sicard
Gracie Pijor	Ben Soltesy
Don and Pam Tropiano	Linda Vect
Dennis and Sue Vect	Marcus Vaughn, Jr.
Bryson Dzurhoff	Howard Dicken
Cherise Pacanovsky	Jane Hunter
Dennis Thome	The Finnie Family
Carlene Fliss	Jim Fliss Jr.
Duda Family	Fr. Sr. John Kraus
Nan Cramer	Bp. Stanley Bilinski
Bp. John Mack	David Vaden
Bp. John Swantek	Jeannie Bartko Muran
Johanna Markiewicz	Edna Samelson
Elsa Vogl de Gomez	Wanda Heffner
Kim Blaha	John Clark Sr.
Abby Sobolewski	Geri S.
Robert Winlock	Colleen Howard
Chris Minch	Nancy Jablonowski
Jason Dreger	George Pofok
Stephanie Milla	Rich Dombrowski
Muffie B.	Dan Colwell
Shannon Alberino	Bp. Thomas Gnat
Donna Micka	Michael Regotti

Those in nursing homes or assisted living:

Shirley Paulus	Gene Mora
	Polly Gajda

WE ALSO REMEMBER  
ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY  
ALL SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN  
Bless them, O Lord.

Lucy Cain, Aug. 2006