

St. Mary's of Parma, OH Monthly Newsletter

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

June 2024

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Scraping the Clouds...

As you will see later on in this newsletter, I was privileged to attend the dialogue meetings between the denominations of the Polish National Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church in St. Louis, MO. Detailed later, I was quite privileged to be the only traveling clergyman who seemed to procure a direct flight to and from the meetings, via Southwest Airlines.

On the way from Cleveland, I was in the 2nd boarding group of 60, B-57, which means roughly the 120th person getting on the plane. As Southwest doesn't assign seats, one has to be in the first 90 or so seats to not have to sit in a middle seat. But, I had my chance! The front row (which has no place to put your bag, but plenty of legroom) had the win-



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and the announcements begin...but I couldn't help but hear the conversation between the nun and woman in the seats next to me. The woman (Delores, name changed for her privacy) had received a call she was awaiting for quite a while: The Cleveland Clinic had a liver waiting for her.

I took my headphones out and listened a bit more: Delores was local to Missouri and had health issues for nearly 20 years, causing her to look older than her early 40's. She had some major surgeries performed at the Clinic in the past and was familiar with the hospital area and had been on a donor list for quite a long while. Not just a liver, but a few other portions of major organs, and she had been forewarned in her call that it was indeed from someone around her age and size who had succumbed.

The nun (Sister Joanna, for her privacy) was an engaging conversationalist, praising God and affirming Delores's struggles with appropriate "oh my's" and "oh no". Delores finished a part of her story with "The last hours since the call and now this flight have been a whirlwind. I've been so nervous about this flight, but I am at such peace knowing I am sitting next to you, Sister."

dow seat open, and no one seemed to want to sit there...I thought I had a chance until the guy right in front of me took it. Middle seat it was!

With a few days of meeting under our belt, I checked into the flight home...A-7! I would be able to sit wherever I wanted! Not only that, my phone status stated I had a free drink on my ticket – what a way to end a trip! After the wheelchair-bound and families with small children got seated, I saw the front row window seat and wasn't going to miss my chance this time. I swerved around the woman in the aisle seat, popped in some headphones and listened to a podcast on basketball.

People filed in for the next 10 or so minutes, when all of the sudden, a nun walks in and plops down in the middle seat next to me. I had on a white clergy shirt, but my collar was open so I probably looked like any other long-haired middle aged-guy. My internal angel and devil on my shoulders battled for a minute- do I take an hour off and stare into space, or do engage this sister of our Lord in conversation?

Welp, I let the devil win. I watched the plane finish boarding



Opening Article (continued)

I suppose it was fate- I buttoned my collar and peered around the nun's Habit to tell Delores "Well, our Lord has doubled-down on your flight, because you're also sitting next to a Catholic Priest. My heart was pounding at this point- many who read this know that my family has been waiting for the same call that Delores received in anticipating a liver transplant.

Both Sister Joanna and Dolores turned all sorts of red and purple, with Dolores' eyes misting and the good Sister offering God praise for this coincidence to happen.

We spent the next hour-plus speaking on faith, growing up in the church, our current roles, and Sister Joanna

and I telling of our respective calls to serve God. Dolores is an avid Catholic, and she couldn't stop remarking how "this was meant to be", how calm our presence made her flight, and how she couldn't wait to tell her mother, who has been her caretaker for a number of years and was driving across the country to meet her at the airport in Cleveland.

My family is anxiously praying and hoping for the same call for my father that Dolores received after a long period of suffering. Perhaps the last person my dad would want to sit next to on the way would be another priest, but should that day come sooner rather than later, I wouldn't mind a nun keeping him in check on the way to the hospital.



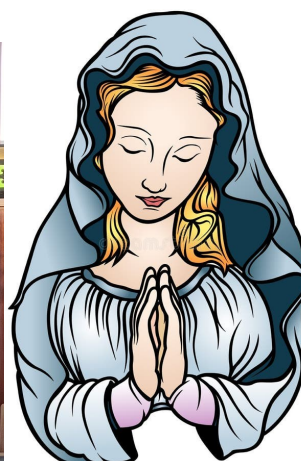
God is good, God is mysterious, and although God doesn't "make" things happen, sometimes that free will is nudged a bit to make the beginning of a flight sound like a bad joke— a priest and a nun sit next to each other...but I will remark; though no great wisdom was parsed and no wonderful act was done by Sister Joanna or myself that day, Sacred Vocations, in the great ministry of "presence", showed its realness and strength.

Fr. Jason

Marian Devotions in the Month of May

Carrying the patronage of Mary at our beloved parish, 5 separate devotions for the 5 weeks of May were scheduled on Wednesdays and Fridays during the month. Mary was honored and Christ Al-

mighty was worshipped as this Eucharistic Devotion circled about the titles and character of Mary. What a way to honor the Queen of our Nation!



Polish Constitution Day Parade in Parma

The pastor and faithful of St. Mary's participated in the annual parade to honor Polish Constitution Day in Parma. Although the weather forecast was poor and the sky threatening, it

was a beautiful day of marching, prayer, food, drink, and celebration.

Fr. Jason was called upon to offer the invocation. Facing a crowd that was digging into potato pancakes, kielbasa and cold beer, he got their attention by first announcing the Cleveland Cavaliers had completed a

20 point comeback and had taken a lead in a game 7, eliciting no small celebration! The afternoon carried on with music, continued prayer, a keynote speech...and some ice cream!



Mothers' Day at St. Mary's

Moms of all kind were remembered during the celebration of Holy Mass on Sunday, May 12, the Seventh Sunday of Easter. Holy Mass began with the Easter Asperges, just as the parish celebrated at High Mass on Easter Sunday, book-ending the season. While Holy Mass included prayers for living

and departed mothers, the "YMSofR Auxiliary" had prepared a pancake and sausage breakfast for everyone in the Fellowship Hall.

All women were invited to come forward and enjoy the prepared breakfast first, after Fr. Jason offered a blessing. Mimosas and other fine dining and drink options were available as well, per parish tradition. Thanks to Steve, Jim, Tom, and all who provided this hour of food, relaxation, and honor.



Parish Property Clean Up

On the piping-hot May evening of Monday, May 13, the helping hands of God arrived at St. Mary's in the form of parishioners ready to toil-and-till on our parish property clean-up. Mulch was spread by a crew ready to get dirty. In fact, one of our smallest helpers was completely covered in mulch within 5 minutes! Bushes were trimmed, flowers were planted, weeds were whacked and pulled, trash and loose twigs were cleaned and the place was left looking wonderful. Many thanks to

Cathy Avondet, who prepared a plan of attack for everyone involved and then fed everyone afterward- pasta, salad, and many desserts were enjoyed by all.



Blankets Blessed

The Blanket Ministry of the Mission Team (and friends) of St. Mary's continues to show its loving presence for those in need and those who are to be honored.

Ramon Torres and Mike Paulus were recent recipients of blankets lovingly crafted by the Ministry. Fr. Jason blessed Ramon's blanket (with appreciated help, as seen in the picture to the right) and Fr. Jim blessed

Mike's blanket. As per custom, all parishioners were then called to lay their hands upon the blankets in collective, communal prayer for the intention desired. For Ramon's: joy in his birthday; for Mike: blessings of protection and strength.



Diocesan Events

The week of May 13-18 featured the Clergy Retreat and Conference of the Western Diocese as well as the Council Meeting of the Western Diocese.

The Conference was held in Mundelein, IL, as it has been for over a half-decade now. Fr. Jason was unable to attend in person, but was able to attend the retreat and conference portion via Zoom. There was excellent attendance of the Diocesan clergy.

The Diocesan Council Meeting took place via Zoom, addressing the needs, reports, and issues within the PNCC's Western Diocese and its Cathedral, parishes, and properties. Fr. Jason serves on the council as the elected priest of the Seniorate while Fr. Jim has served on the council for a decade as an at-large member.



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Sunday, May 19 at St. Mary's

The closing exercises of the 2023-2024 School of Christian Living took place on Sunday, May 19 at the conclusion of 9am Holy Mass on the great Church Solemnity of Pentecost. Fr. Jason called forward our teacher, Mrs. Barb Bogzevitz, who has been part of the parish's Sunday School program for over 50 years! She called forward "the boys" to receive their certificates as well as a little gift for a job well-

done. The boys then had their final day of SOCL and a little take-home assignment as well.

After 9am Mass, the parish celebrated along with Mr. Ramon Torres and his family as his 83rd birthday was honored. A delicious gumball-featured cake was served to all those in attendance.



Polish National Catholic/Roman Catholic Dialogue Meetings

Clergy members of the Polish National Catholic Church and of the Roman Catholic Church traveled to St. Louis, MO May 20-22 to continue a four-decade long church dialogue between the two denominations.

Fr. Jason was assigned to the dialogue by the Prime Bishop at the PNCC General Synod in 2022, with this being the first official meetings since that assignment.

Topics discussed included the nature of blessings, re-staffing the members of the dialogue, defining how a cele-

bration to honor the 40th year of the dialogue would take place, and defining and discussing current events in bio-ethics.

The Dialogue will meet again in Scranton, PA in the Spring of 2025.



Memorial Day Weekend

Fr. Jason traveled to see family Memorial Day weekend, which included him serving as celebrant of Holy Mass at St. Joseph's PNCC in Westfield, MA on May 26, the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity.

Fr. Jim & Fr. Greg remained in Parma to serve the ministerial needs of the

people of St. Mary's. This included the con-celebration of Holy Mass on Trinity Sunday, preaching the Sacrament of the Word of God, offering the blessing upon the patriotic wreath placed within the Sanctuary on St. Joseph's Altar, and leading the services at St. Mary's on Memorial Day, transferred (due to poor parking situation) from the Sacred Heart of Jesus Seniorate Cemetery on W. 54th Street in Cleveland.



Congratulations Halina!

Halina Dreger, daughter of Jeff and Amy Dreger and granddaughter of Bruce and Barbara Bogzevitz, graduated *Summa Cum Laude* from Ohio University in May with a BFA in dance through the Honors Tutorial College. She also completed a minor in psychology. During her undergraduate career, she interned with Innisfree Village in Crozet, Virginia; Factory Street Studio in Athens, Ohio; and University Hospitals in Cleveland, Ohio. She also spent a semester abroad in Barcelona, Spain. Her studies culminated in her senior research project and thesis, "Mothers Making and Moving: Creative Arts Workshops and Postpartum Identity."

Halina is taking a year off from school to work in an administrative position at the Cleveland Clinic and to apply to graduate school. She hopes to continue her education and earn her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling with a specialization in dance/movement therapy.



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Various Announcements

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER – For each Sunday in June we use the 2nd Eucharistic Prayer, the Canon of St. Hippolytus, on p. 82 of the tan Massbooks.

BIBLE STUDY – Our next Bible Study takes place at 6pm on June 26.

MEN'S RETREAT – The 7th Annual Men's Retreat takes place June 12-15 at Spojnia Farm in Waymart, PA. We would love to have more men of St. Mary's in attendance, as our retreat has been growing yearly. The theme this year is "Iron Sharpens Iron". The cost is \$150 per person. See Fr. Jason if interested.

TRUNK SALE - The annual Spring Trunk (and Bake) Sale scheduled to take place on Saturday, June 1 was unfortunately postponed. The parish will host an early autumn Trunk Sale in the same vein.

JUNE – is Sacred Vocations Month in the Polish National Catholic Church. Each Mass celebrated will include a special prayer for increased Vocations to the diaconate and the priesthood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Please keep an increase of Vocations in your daily prayers as well.

KURS— The National Kurs encamp-

ment takes place July 4-13. This is a PNCC national camp for kids at Spojnia Farm in Waymart, PA. Visit kur-scamp.org for more information.

CONVO 2024—National PNCC Youth Convocation takes place at Mercyhurst University in Erie, PA July 22-26. It is open to children of the parish age 12-20. Please see Fr. Jason if interested.

HONOR YOUR FATHER – For support of the PNCC Clergy Pension Fund, names of those whom you remember will be posted in the June issue of God's Field. Forms are available near the parish mailboxes. Remember your father – lay or clergy.

SCHEDULING MASSES— A reminder that you may offer an intention for Holy Mass for a loved one, be he or she thriving on this earth or thriving with our Lord in Heaven. See Fr. Jason to schedule: final 2024 available dates are below.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING— A parish meeting (the highest governing body of any Polish National Catholic Parish) will take place on Sunday, August 4 after 9am Holy Mass. The meeting will include the election of representatives to the 2024 Diocesan Synod (October 15-

16 in Chicago, IL), an update to some financial information, and a few other agenda items. Please make sure to strive to attend this meeting, exercising your democratic power in parish decisions that our laypeople enjoy!

SAVE THE DATE— The National YMSofR Golf Tournament takes place in the Buffalo, NY area on Saturday, August 24. See Fr. Jason or George Bennett if interested in attending; perhaps we can fill two full teams?

1st ANV. Of +BP. RAFALKO— With guidance of the Western Diocese, St. Mary's has decided to hold a special collection in memory of the Rt. Rev. Jaroslaw Rafalko, who will have passed away 1 year ago this July 13. Envelopes will be prepared in the weeks prior to the Mass and the monies collected will go to the Western Diocese for a scholarship bearing bishop's name. Holy Mass that Sunday, July 14 is in his memory.

WESTERN DIOCESE CHOIR CONCERT— The Concert and Convention for the United Circle Choirs of the Diocese takes place the weekend of June 21-23. A portion of our choir will be attending the event in Milwaukee, WI. We pray for their travels and music ministry!

Scheduled Mass Intentions at St. Mary's

June 2 – Joan Spilka (Wedding Anv.) of. by husband John Spilka

June 9 — Paul J. Repko Jr. of. by Cheryl Repko

June 16 – Len Pryer of. by daughter Evonne Pryer

June 23 – Rt. Rev. Jan Dawidziuk of. by wife Anna, daughter Elizabeth & family

June 30 – Elaine Tiffe of. by son Jeffery Tiffe

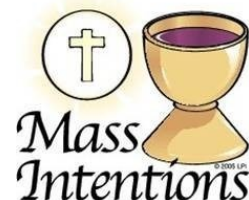
July 7 – Open Intention

July 14 – Rt. Rev. Jaroslaw Rafalko (1st Anv.) of by the parish

July 21 – Gary Bogzevitz of. by brother Bruce & Barb Bogzevitz

July 28 – Clarence & Margaret Sobocinski of. by Elaine Ploskonka

Rest of year open dates: July 7; Aug. 11, 18, 25; Sep. 8; Oct. 27; Dec 8, 22



June Days of Note



June Birthdays

- 3rd — Wiler Ploskonka
- 6th — Bridgette Dotson
- 7th — Mitch Ploskonka
- 7th — Darleen Janke
- 12th — Madi Ference
- 18th — Elizabeth Starnawski
- 26th — Mary Ann Kasperczyk



June Anniversaries

- 2nd — Mark & Cathy Avondet
- 7th — John & Eileen Kasperczyk
- 12th — Bill & Pat Glatzer
- 18th — Mitch and Sarah Ploskonka
- 19th — Paul & Jennifer LeMassena
- 22nd — Bill & Wendy Zychowski
- 25th — Fr. Jason & Natalie Soltysiak
- 27th — Bruce & Barbara Bogzevitz

Have we missed a birthday or anniversary? Just give us a shout so we can fix any errors that have been made :-)

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June is Sacred Vocations Month in the Polish National Catholic Church

O Jesus, Eternal Priest,
keep all Your priests within the shelter
of Your Sacred Heart, where none
may harm them.
Keep unstained their anointed hands,
which daily touch Your Sacred Body.
Keep unsullied their lips purpled with
Your Precious Blood.
Keep pure and unearthy their hearts,
sealed with the sublime marks of Your
glorious priesthood.
Let Your holy love surround them,
and shield them
from the world's contagion.
Bless their labors with abundant fruit,
and may the souls
to whom they have ministered
be here below their joy
and consolation
and in Heaven their beautiful
and everlasting crown.
O Mary, Queen of the Clergy,
pray for us;
obtain for us many holy priests.
Amen.

Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer | Bob Kaczmarek |
| Bill Kastak | Anna Dawidziuk |
| George Makovicka | John Spilka |
| Johanna Markiewicz | Patrick Knitt |
| Jim Boehnlein | Sauna Smullen |
| Marty Bengela | Tom Putynski |
| Jeff Pardy | Millie Dominik |
| Kathleen Beres | Joseph Bischoff |
| Al & Donna Micka | Phil Symons |
| Ed Pierson | George Bennett |
| Greg Hodor | Pattie Dotson |
| Nicole McGivern | Jack Spilka |
| Elaine Repede | David Vaden |
| Wanda Clark | Beth Chihill |
| Michael Cosevin | Helen Cummings |
| Laina Dachtal | Michael McGivern |
| Jay Grabowsky | Pam Chesar |
| Cecelia Hall | Caroline Kunes |
| Linda Marks | Thomas Lill |
| John & Anne Nemetz | Rhonda Smith |
| Al Piniecki | Carol Boesch |
| Joanie True | Daniel Rinella |
| Penny Dennison | Tom Slomka |
| Wojciech Fedorowicz | Tom Pietka |
| Pam Tropiano | Linda Vect |
| Dennis and Sue Vect | Marcus Vaughn, Jr. |
| Bryson Dzuroff | Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak |
| Doreen Stanley | Jane Hunter |
| Dennis Thome | The Finnie Family |
| Carlene Fliss | Jim Fliss Jr. |
| John Wisniewski | Cathy Pieciak |
| Nan Cramer | Barb & Jim Lukas |
| Sage McLane | Dave Tuma |
| Phil Repko | Richard & Edna Samelson |
| Jim Giles | Kathleen Sobocinski |
| Bill Zychowski | Loretta Baldwin |
| Donna Kidd | Paulette Lilli |
| Joseph Zubel | Margaret & Lew Heifner |
| Marilyn Girard | Courtney Austin |
| Stephanie Milla | Shannon Alberino |
| Jayden Pieciak | Joyce Zeigler |
| Sam Bass | Katie Stallbaum |
| Marcia Klein | Kim Penney |
| Dan Ewanko | Amanda Monyak |
| Roseanne & George Ziefle | Judy Alexin |
| Connie Benko | Jenni Avondet |
| Karsen Winters | Shyanna Tiller |
| Maria Muttillio | Laurie Slominski |
| Mike Paulus | Gail Perz |

St. Therese of Lisieux



WE ALSO REMEMBER

- ALL ACTIVE & RETIRED CLERGY
- ALL SERVICE WOMEN
- MEN AND WOMEN
- Lord.

