

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

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

July 2020

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## Picking up Sand...

This past weekend, I got to take my son to the beach for the first time (Huntington Beach). It was wonderful, the crowd was only growing as we were leaving, social distancing was easy, and it will be



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one of those “forever memories” that a dad has about his kid.

Although Brady had a blast in the water and laughed hysterically when a larger wave would splash on him while I was holding him, I kind of day dreamed as he was later playing in the sand and was brought back to the struggles of the last 4 months of parish life. Every handful of sand that was earmarked for the pail next to him had about half that landed not in the pail, but right next to it.

The last article I wrote for this newsletter was on the Lenten Fast, as we were gearing up for the “meat” of the Lenten Season. At that point, I had heard of the Corona Virus, it seemed to have trickled into the United States...and by the time the Newsletter was printed, there was no one in church to pick it up.

So it began—I had sleep-deprived nights and anxious days as I prayed to figure out....what to do next? Beside the inherent danger and the scary numbers and projections, I was worried about a parish that, not a couple

months prior, noted a wonderful increase in Sunday attendance.

We (with the “we” being the support crew for whatever plans I was coming to) decided to go almost exclusively video. And man, we *hammered* the video thing. My goal was to put out at least 4 videos a week, with many weeks having a video every day.

Sunday Mass was broadcast every week—not one was missed. As the PNCC provided guidelines, we brought in a “choir of two”. Weekday Masses were broadcast too, bringing Fr. Greg Gronn on board to do a bi-weekly Mass for Health.

It was Lent, so there was a ton to do— Stations of the Cross, Bitter Lamentations...and then...Holy

### Fr. Jason's Article (cont)

Week. I was never so stressed in my life over Holy Week! Each service was broadcast whole or in part. With the response from the digital community, it really felt as if the worshipping world was focused constantly on the Cross.

Easter was awesome, in that it felt spectacular to celebrate....something. I had a lump in my throat as Mass began, knowing the many that wished they were worshipping their Savior in their familiar church.

Then there was a drop-off.

Numbers, of course, aren't everything in ministry, but they ARE a thing. When everything is digital, they become much more prevalent. After Easter, our viewership cratered...no sand in the bucket. Though I am fully aware that many other parishes were finally getting in on the digital thing, it still felt...bad. It felt like Easter was the finish line for

digital ministry, and not just a waypoint.

It meant that it was time to be more creative, and luckily, many were ready. More videos: other para-liturgicals, an Easter Hymn series, a Cello series of music, a long video series on vestments.

As Covid-19 updates became the hottest original programming (was it, Wine with DeWine?), it looked as if Ohio was a leader in Covid response. We would start to open soon?

Now, the creativity had to bridge the virtual versus real gap. A take-out dinner, a pierogi sale. Give-aways on Mother's Day and Father's Day. "Secret emails" that went out to parishioners to honor a girl who lost her high school graduation and a guy who won a major battle against cancer.

Once the weather warmed up and we got detailed instructions how to welcome worshippers back in-house, it was more head-scratching, debating, and planning. At the same time, our viewership dropped again—being digital-only was losing it's proverbial fastball.

And at the same time, my older brother went home to be with his Lord. It was a trip that included painful



social distancing from my brothers and parents, the sight of my once-mighty big bro reduced to something much less, and, as I've mentioned at Mass: the inability to hug my own mother when that was almost all that was appropriate to do.

Our soft re-opening took place in our parking lot, with a wonderful crowd in attendance. It led to another lump-in-the-throat moment for me, as it was Mass in front of real live people—I was preaching to a dot on the back of a cell phone for months!

Now, we are battling a bit uphill again, as some of our parishioners enjoy the wider expanse of an outdoor Mass....some only feel it appropriate to worship in Church.

Simply, may we be prayerful in the decision making process...and that this terrible, deadly, annoying, God-forsaken, inconvenient, world-stopping virus will have a vaccine...and soon!

*Fr. Jason*





## Few updates

One of the unfortunate things of the last few months is that we simply did not take many pictures from whatever events, liturgies, and gatherings that we did have.

Of course, one could scroll through our Facebook Page or our YouTube

Channel to see a long digital representation of what was done throughout March, April, May, and June at St. Mary's.

The next months will feature a balance of how we digitally capture the events at St. Mary's



## Various Announcements

### PICK A NUMBER!

St. Mary's is running a "Pick a Number" Fundraiser once again, to be featured in the foyer as it was last year. The fundraiser began in March, and we picked it up again in June. A reminder- each number gives you the chance to win something, as well as doubling as a donation for the parish. Please consider picking up one of the last numbers so we can conclude this wonderful parish fundraiser.

### ONLINE FEEDBACK

What more can be done to serve you, as we wind through the uncertainty of Covid-19? We're still looking for inspiration—what we can do for you?

### CUSTODIAL WORK

As we will (tentatively) be welcoming groups back to the church, we must hire a new church custodian in short order. We are looking for someone who would be available to keep a variety of weekly and monthly responsi-

bilities regarding the upkeep of the parish. Please contact Fr. Jason if you have some interest in this part-time position.

### MASS SCHEDULE

Due to our desire to serve parishioners the best, we have decided to have a second Mass outside during July and August. Please keep an eye on the bulletin and newly-sent newsletter for the schedule of indoor and outdoor Masses.

### DIOCESAN SYNOD

The Synod of the Western Diocese will take place in a virtual format on August 12 & 13, emanating from the All Saints Cathedral in Chicago, IL. Delegates from St. Mary's will be contacted in short order about their availability for a mid-week synod and their desire to either meet at church or home.

### GOLF TOURNAMENT

The National YMSofR Golf Tournament takes place August 15 within a short drive of the friendly confines of the Bishop Hodur Retreat and Recre-

ation Center in Waymart, PA. Last year, a foursome attended – could we double that number? Considerations can be made for staying an extra day and leaving Sunday or, perhaps, staying at a hotel instead of the Center. See Fr. Jason.

### BISHOP'S CONSECRATION

The Consecration of Bp. Elect Jerry Ralfko, scheduled to take place in Scranton on April 30, has been postponed until September 14. He will continue to serve as the diocesan administrator, with the Prime Bishop taking on episcopal rituals.

### ONLINE PAYMENTS

St. Mary's website, stmaryspncc.org, has been updated to include an option to make a donation online with your credit card. You can even note what the donation is for. Your info is protected by Square, the same we use at fundraisers. Of course, mailed-in payments welcome.

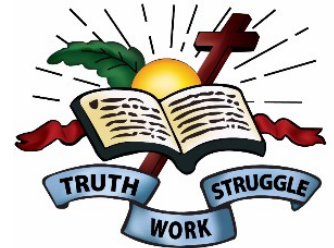
### AVAILABLE MASSES

There are just a few available Mass dates in the summer months – Available are : Aug 2 & 16, Sep 6. For these or any future Mass dates, see Fr. Jason.

PNCC Future Directions Update

# DISCIPLESHIP

2020 PNCC



July 1, 2020

Dear Bishops, Very Rev. and Rev. Fathers, Deacons and Faithful of our Holy Church,

## July 2020 – Saint Paul: Repentance, Fortitude and Spiritual Endurance

As we continue to pray for peace, justice, healing and love for our communities, nation and world; this month we focus on the Saint Paul.

[Click Here to watch a short video message on Saint Paul by Fr. Sr. Zbigniew Dawid](#)

### Scriptures for Reflection

Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-20; Romans 8:18-27; 2 Timothy 4:1-8

### Questions for Reflection:

Paul understood the sacrifices that had to be made for the sake of the Gospel and he willingly made them. Have you ever been called to sacrifice something as a disciple of Jesus?

How can you prepare this month to be able to give up things of the world for the sake of the Eternal Kingdom of God?

Name a few important “discipleship qualities” that St. Paul demonstrates?

Which one would you personally like to better emulate?

How can you begin to practically do so in your daily life?

How can you, as a disciple, help others take their relationship with our Lord more seriously?





### Prayer for Independence Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, You called this nation into being that it might serve as a haven to the oppressed peoples of the world. Even as we remember our Declaration of Independence, so may we always rely on Your blessings and providence to serve as examples of God-fearing people.

Grant us the treasured gift of national freedom. May we faithfully serve You and always cherish the liberties of our heritage. We ask this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### Prayer in Time of National Anxiety

Let us pray.

I come to You, Lord, in this time of uncertainty and confusion that has gripped our nation and our world. I pray that our leaders and representatives in government are filled with Your peace, strength and courage. May your gifts of wisdom and understanding, fortitude and counsel be sought and utilized by them for the well-being of all people. By their belief and trust in You may they provide capable leadership, promote unity and peace, and be attentive to the concerns of all people. May Your Church provide support and comfort; and help strengthen our hope for peace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PNCC Future Direction is also on Facebook! Like us and follow our updates on Facebook too. 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.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
**PNCC Supreme Council Future Direction Committee**



## Food Ministry Update

How should a church respond to a pandemic? If there is one thing that was fleshed out over the last few months, it is the fact that...well, there is no clear answer to that question.

Deacon Jim Ploskonka, who heads our monthly Food Ministry program, contacted Fr. Jason with that question. His decision, supported by help from his brother and others, was to actually *increase* our food ministry program.

He thought (correctly) that there was

a different need that our parish had the ability to meet within our community. He decided to go on a weekly basis—a Wednesday evening brown bag meal served every week.

Using the greatest precautions, people warmed up to the weekly idea.

We plan to feed the hungry in our (still weekly) Ministry, delivered right to cars/people in our parish parking lot. Our plan is to continue weekly



throughout July and August. As a nice feather in the cap of St. Mary's Parish, we have surpassed 8000 meals served since this ministry's inception some nine years ago! Surely, God is smiling upon the selfless work of our small parish.

### July Days of Note

July



- 4<sup>th</sup> – Jolanta Misiewicz
- 16<sup>th</sup> – Chris Paulus
- 21<sup>st</sup> – Father Jason
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sara Long
- 24<sup>th</sup> – Jennifer LeMessina
- 25<sup>th</sup> – Martha Repede
- 25<sup>th</sup> – Chester Warzala
- 30<sup>th</sup> – Barbara Fesz



- 14<sup>th</sup> — John & Andrea Grmovsek
- 15<sup>th</sup> — Nate & Amanda Ploskonka
- 20<sup>th</sup> — Michael & Carole D’Arcy
- 21<sup>st</sup> — Jim & Elaine Ploskonka
- 27<sup>th</sup> — Mike & Chris Paulus

### "We Need a Miracle"

Lord, on this day of celebration,  
of freedom and liberty  
I am so sad to see . . .  
in our country so much hostility.

It grieves my heart,  
to see the hateful division  
I cringe at the thought  
of the future, I envision.

It sickens my stomach,  
when I watch the nightly news  
at the violence stemming  
from those with opposing views.

I wish we'd come together,  
on this night of elation  
and see our individual need  
for Jesus and salvation.

Lord, on this day of celebration,  
we need a healing of our land  
for, it will take a true miracle . . .  
if united we are to stand!

### Deborah Ann Belka



*"If my people,  
which are called by my name,  
shall humble themselves,  
and pray, and seek my face,  
and turn from their wicked  
ways; then will I hear from  
heaven, and will forgive their  
sin, and will heal their land."*

2 Chronicles 7:14

### Our Prayer List

Praying for St. Mary's Parishioners & Friends

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Bill & Pat Glatzer       | Barbara Baranowski       |
| Bill Kastak              | Anna Dawidziuk           |
| Craig Atherton           | John Spilka              |
| Johanna Markiewicz       | Mary Ann Loschelder      |
| Ralph & June Zaun        | Len Pryer                |
| Marty Bengela            | Tom Putynski             |
| Polly Gajda              | Millie Dominik           |
| Kathleen Beres           | Louise Cygan             |
| David Micka              | Carol Hreha              |
| Chester & Ann Warzala    | Tom Petrie               |
| Amy Dreger               | Patti Dotson             |
| Elizabeth Starnawski     | Jack Spilka              |
| Elaine Repede            | John Radon               |
| Wanda Clark              | Beth Chihill             |
| Michael Cosevin          | Helen Cummings           |
| Laina Dachtal            | Wendy Andrzejewski       |
| Jay Grabowsky            | Pam Chesar               |
| Cecelia Hall             | Caroline Kunes           |
| Linda Marks              | Thomas Lill              |
| John & Anne Nemetz       | Rhonda Smith             |
| Emma Freshwater          | Carol Boesch             |
| Joanie True              | Daniel Rinella           |
| Fr. Tom Sheha            | Tom Slomka               |
| Geri S.                  | Ben Soltesy              |
| Pam Tropiano             | Linda Vect               |
| Dennis and Sue Vect      | Marcus Vaughn, Jr.       |
| Bryson Dzurhoff          | Fr. Sr. Joseph Soltysiak |
| Cherise Pacanovsky       | Jane Hunter              |
| Dennis Thome             | The Finnie Family        |
| Carlene Fliss            | Jim Fliss Jr.            |
| John Michalczyk          | Cathy Pieciak            |
| Nan Cramer               | Bp. John Mack-           |
| David Vaden              | Bp. John Swantek         |
| Mary Cawley              | Richard & Edna Samelson  |
| Jim Giles                | Tamy Teubl               |
| Wanda Heffner            | Loretta Baldwin          |
| Donna Kidd               | Paulette Lilli           |
| Anthony Grad             | Azriel G.                |
| Marilyn Girard           | Courtney Austin          |
| Stephanie Milla          | Shannon Alberino         |
| Jayden Pieciak           | Baby Layla               |
| Jeremy Steinbrick        | Katie Stallbaum          |
| Marcia Klein             | Kim Penney               |
| George & Linda Makovicka | Julie L.                 |
| Kelly B                  | Barbara B.               |
| Michael McGivern         | Daniel Morgan            |

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

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