

SS. Edward & Lucy News

SS. Edward and Lucy Parish is a Catholic community in Eastern Geauga County



DECEMBER 2013

TELL ME AGAIN ABOUT THE MASS...

by Fr. Burkley

Why do you and I get ourselves up and come together for Mass on Sunday morning? Sometimes we need to just go slow and let the meaning of what we all do at Mass be understandable. I heard someone say that Mass begins when we get into the car and begin the drive to the place we gather, our church.

God is about the business of bringing his people, us, his “shalom”, his peace and completeness and well-being. God made us to experience “shalom”. God is busy trying to transform all of us into his likeness. And we are all restless until this transformation is complete. We have looked so many places for his goodness, beauty, truth and life and so often fail to find it. Mass keeps us on the path; Mass opens our minds and hearts to the mystery of God's action in our daily lives. We cross the threshold of our parish church and discover a family of believers that welcomes us as brother and sister. The Word of God is proclaimed to us with conviction to set our hearts on fire. This happens again when the Body and Blood of Christ are shared and we are transformed into what we receive. This happens when we lift our voices in song that echoes the music of heaven. In this great happening, our Mass, the marvels of God are awakened in our minds and hearts.

The next time you come into church beaten down by life, let God, through your brothers and sisters, build you up as we support each other in Word, song, prayer and Sacrament. Every week we come together to get our bearings and build each other up as members of the Body of Christ.

Merry Christmas

THE HOLY SPIRIT KNOCKED ON MY DOOR

by Richard Geraci

As Catholic Christians, we of course believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe the Father sends the Holy Spirit to our hearts and instructs us, cajoles us, and commands us to do the work Christ himself would do if he was here. Most of us, if we listen, can hear or feel the spirit prompt us in a service direction.

In my case, the Spirit came to me the spring of 2008 and told me to feed his people on Easter. He didn't tell me to put a new roof on the Church - I can't roof, and I am scared of heights. He didn't ask me to fix the furnace - I'd be lost. But I can cook and organize, and the Father, of course, knows this. I refused the spirit, but he kept after me.

The next year, in 2009, he visited again and told me to feed God's people who might be left alone. I immediately called Karen Thrasher, the church secretary, and asked her to put it in an announcement in the bulletin so I could not back out.

I, along with my Catholic brothers and sisters who help me now, have a Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving dinner.

We cannot all be Mother Teresa's, but in our own little ways we can do something for someone else. Listen to the Holy Spirit, for he has knocked on your door. You will be glad you did.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Please call the office if you can volunteer to shovel the sidewalks and spread de-icer before the 6:30 pm mass at St. Lucy's this winter.

A HEAVENLY TRIP

by Lynn Davet

On a crisp, cool fall weekday this past October, my husband and I decided to take a drive to Franciscan University in Steubenville. It has long been my desire to visit there. We planned to arrive in time for noon Mass. In the following paragraphs I will attempt to describe in mere words a nearly indescribable experience.

We arrived just on time for noon Mass. Entering “Christ the King” Chapel, we were very surprised to find a full house of nearly 350 students. Fortunately, we were able to squeeze into a pew just as the Mass was beginning. The Celebrant began with the “Angelus” at the back of the Chapel and then he and 4 additional priests processed toward the altar. They, along with every person in that Chapel, were singing vibrantly without the benefit of any hymnals. The Mass continued with each and every student responding with zeal.

At the celebration of the Eucharist several students approached the altar as Extraordinary Ministers. As each was given either a chalice with the Precious Blood or a ciborium with the Host they walked with extreme reverence to their designated positions covering the chalice with a purificator or the ciborium with their hand lest any of the contents drop out. As each attendee approached to receive the Sacred Body many of them got down on their knees to receive. Most received on their tongue. Mass concluded with many students remaining for personal prayer time. As I write this, the thought of what we witnessed brings tears to my eyes.

Upon leaving the Chapel I spotted Dr. Scott Hahn leaving as well. Unfortunately, I did not have the courage to talk to him. However, we did engage a young man from San

Diego in conversation. He told us that next to Ohio and Pennsylvania, more students come from California than any other state. I asked if they suspend classes so that the students can attend noon Mass. He told us that classes went on as usual and that they have 3 Masses per day and each is very well attended. The University website indicates that from a student body of about 2,200 under grads approximately 700 students attend daily Mass.

Walking around the campus on our own, we noticed that many of the students wore tee shirts with Christian messages on them. Everyone was dressed modestly. Doors were held open for us. "Please" and "Thank you" were the norm.

I noticed lap tops with pro-life messages on the lids. We visited the bookstore which is replete with Catholic books and materials of every kind. In the cafeteria and around campus free Catholic literature was available for the taking.

At one point in the day, my husband was sitting on a bench outside one of the buildings waiting for me when a student passed by giving him a warm "Hello", then dropping to her knees in prayer before a statue. This was outside in front of my husband, a complete stranger.

Some of you may have already visited Franciscan. If you have you know what I am talking about. If you have not had the chance, be sure to visit when you can attend Mass. Witnessing the devotion of these young students was extremely gratifying. I wonder how many of them enter religious life.

This visit was truly a Heavenly experience in every way.

ROMANS ROAD

by Sue Noreika

There is in the book of Romans a series of verses that deal with our path to salvation - a 5 step program leading to grace.

1. Romans 5:23 "...for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God..." and Romans 5:10-12 "As it is written 'There is none righteous, no not one; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become

unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one'."

2. Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord".

3. Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

4. Romans 10:9-10, 13 "...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For 'whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'."

5. Romans 5:1, 8:1 and 38-9. "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ...There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ... For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

If you have not truly accepted Christ as your Savior or wish to reaffirm that decision pray the following prayer or a similar one in your own words, like an act of contrition: "God, I know that I have sinned against you and am deserving of punishment, but Jesus Christ took that punishment that I deserve so that through Him I could be forgiven. With Your help I place my trust in You for salvation. Thank you for Your wonderful gift of grace and forgiveness and the gift of eternal life. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen."

We would like to pay tribute to Sue Noreika, a courageous woman of deep faith who so generously shared it with all of us through her numerous contributions to this newsletter. May her soul rest in peace.

THE PRAYER DISCUSSION IMPEDIMENT

by Jerry Joyce

How is your prayer life? Is a question I learned to ask as a Volunteer Youth Group Director for close to a decade at my parish. It was not until I started asking this question about 5 years in did things really advance. It was once said at a conference I attended, that if you don't faith share in your Youth Group you're just serving pizza. Well for the first part of my youth director life I served lots of pizza. But soon I started asking, Do you Pray? How do you Pray? How is your Prayer Life?

You see to ask the question means you want the answer. To ask the question about something so personal means you are willing to answer it yourself. Recently I held a retreat for our teens. This was after a year off of retreats and 2 years away from the group. I needed the rest, more so though I needed to come back. Mostly because it is where God wants me. How does one know? Trust. We trust that we are where we are supposed to be if we have asked Him to guide our steps. During retreat I felt at home, peaceful, comfortable, bold. But enough about me, what struck me was during retreat one teen said about prayer, "Well I am comfortable talking to you about this" (it should be noted he said this in front of others, his peers). It made me pause and think, "He must not be comfortable talking to his parents about this?"

That made me continue my thought process, "Do his parents ask?", I wondered. I did not ask him that because being a parent I felt that would be treading into areas I should not as the Youth Director, so I opted for a different tact. At the end of retreat when parents showed up and had lunch with their students I addressed them all. I challenged the parents to ask their students about their prayer life. I reminded them that we only have our children for a relatively short period of time and that building that bridge is essential.

As I reflected on the way home I realized I needed to write this. You see I kept asking myself, don't parents ask these questions? Now my

children are younger and I “assume” they are prayerful because I see them pray, we pray together and they ask questions. But soon I will be challenged to ask my children this question, How is your prayer life? It is really a momentous question, but simple all the same. Good, Bad, OK. Those are pretty much the 3 answers you will get. The reason it is so momentous is because it causes the asker to be ready to reflect on his/her own prayer life. The question to oneself and subsequent reflection are necessary for those who want to advance spiritually. However it is certainly something terrifying to ask ourselves sometimes, because if we are honest at times in our life, our prayer life might stink.

Recently I was going through some difficult personal times and was railing on about something to my brother and he said, “How is your prayer life?” “Bad” I replied immediately. He then lovingly instructed me that it might be better to focus on that. God Bless my brother, he is a wise man. You see Wisdom is not the property of the well-educated. It’s not exclusive to theologians or ordained, it is universal and God offers it to those who ask, and those who believe. Wisdom is simple; it sees clearly through murky situations and asks basic questions which cause great reflection. Do you love others? Are you seeking God? What is your prayer life like? Do you read scripture? How is your experience of the Mass, so on and so forth, simple questions asked by many a Spiritual Director.

With a call to a New Evangelization by our Pope and wonderful example of prayer first (Pope Francis’s request for the prayers from the faithful, before giving his Papal Blessing, after his election) it really is one of the best questions we can ask.

As parents we have to first ask ourselves and then we have to ask our Children. We have to be ready for their request to understand our prayer life. And guess what? The best part is Good, Bad or OK, it does not matter. Simply engaging in the discussion with your child will build both of you up. You will be caused to reflect on your own. Provide examples of when it was good, or how it has tanked. You can strate-

gize together about how to improve, you can come up with ideas, and most of all you can start by praying together.

Trust me I was terrified the first time I asked the question. Now I suspect most of my teens in my group would be shocked to hear that. But I was. I had no idea what response I would get. I remember thinking, “well here it goes” and just diving in. Trusting that by doing so good fruit would be born and it was. I can attest to the fact that asking teens about their prayer life and strategizing on it with them has helped them, but more so I can personally attest to the fact that it has helped me. I have learned so many different tactics to making my prayer life better. So many different ways to effect slight changes which can make huge differences in our life. These were things I learned in my walk with the students. You see I learned. I hope and know that they did too, we have learned together.

Below are some tips and strategies I have given to the teens over the years. They might work for you, they might not. Most of all though that really does not matter because I think just taking the chance in asking and trusting in the Holy Spirit that he will provide the path to a fuller more rich prayer life is really the key. Without taking the risk, we are not trusting and without trusting our faith is diminished. So say a quick simple prayer that God will guide you then take the risk, ask the question, trust God’s guidance and I promise you the reward will be great!

Questions to ask:

- How is your prayer life?
- Are you in a peak (top of the game, doing great) or a trough (a spiritual desert so to speak?)
It is a key to understand that our prayer lives will be filled with peaks and troughs. We are only human. As humans we will do well and not so well at times. This is where trust comes into play. Also asking our teens this and ourselves helps hone our self-awareness, it helps us see ourselves from the outside, a key to growing in prayer.
- How often do you pray?
- Before tests?

- Daily?
- Weekly?
- When needed?
- What are you asking for?
- Are you only asking for this or that?
-Are you thanking God for anything?
-Are you seeking counsel and help?
- How are you praying?
- Formal prayer (Our Fathers, Hail Mary’s, other written prayers?)
- Informal prayer (just talking with God?)
- When are you praying?
- End of the day?
- In bed?
- In the morning?
- In the car?
- Not at all?

Strategies: Break a cycle of a trough or tough time. It should be noted troughs can come from either
- A lack of prayer
- Or possibly becoming a bit numb to a current set of prayers

We may experience it is a challenge to say the same prayers all the time and feel like we are investing ourselves in them.

1. If not praying at all, start with a simple Our Father in the morning (big ships are turned by small rudders with slight movements) – just start doing it and stay the course.
2. Change the time of day of prayer – if you have historically prayed in the morning, change to night time or add a night time prayer
3. Adjust the prayer (I don’t recommend abandoning a particular prayer – I once abandoned the rosary and it took years to get back), instead add to or modify
- Meaning add in some informal if you mostly do formal
- Add in formal if you mostly do informal prayer
4. Change the body position. If you fall asleep while praying and this is causing a problem, kneel by the bed, stand up and look out the window and pray, pray at the dining room table. Changing the body position and or location can have significant impact on focusing on the words and meaning of

a prayer that may have become more habitual over time for you.

5. Pray with others. This one I have never recommended before writing this but in reflecting, it seems that it is logical. I have noticed and received feedback from my teens that when they meet more regularly, pray, have class and do things together they seem to be stronger.
6. Discuss your prayer life. When speaking of child to parent or parent to child communication, be honest, ask and answer questions. Answer the same question you ask your child, they will gain respect for you. Often times you will ask the question and your teen will look at you with an odd expression and say nothing. This is where you can say, look I'll go first...

In all of this be sure to be honest. As you discuss these things with your teen they will appreciate your genuine and honest responses. They will take comfort that they are not the only one having difficulty with prayer, they will learn that everyone

had difficulty praying at times. Ultimately faith sharing with your child may be uncomfortable at first but I can promise you there might not be any greater sharing that occurs between the two of you over time and it will impact all facets of both of your lives.



CHRIST IS BORN!

May Christmas Peace fill your home.

Come to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord Jesus and may the peace and joy of Christ be your special gift.

*God Bless You,
Fr. Burkley
Fr. Winca
Deacon Greg*

PARISH ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Penance

Friday, Dec. 13, 7:00 pm Advent Penance Service @ St. Edward

Saturday, Dec. 14, 4:00-5:00 pm @ St. Edward & 7:30 pm @ St. Lucy

Friday, Dec. 20, 7:00 pm @ St. Lucy

Monday, Dec. 23, 7:00 pm @ St. Edward Chapel

Christmas Eve Mass, December 24
4:00 pm Children's Mass @ St. Lucy

6:00 pm Vigil Mass @ St. Lucy
12:00 am Midnight Mass @ St. Edward

Christmas Day Mass, December 25
8:30 am @ St. Edward
10:30 am @ St. Lucy



We gratefully acknowledge the J.S. Paluch Printing Company, who prints our parish bulletin and the parish-
ioners who invested their time and talents to produce the newsletter.

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