



## The Transfiguration of Christ

A portrayal of the event celebrated on the feast of the Transfiguration, which is Saturday, August 6.

Painted during the late 15<sup>th</sup> century in oil on a panel by Aelbrecht Bouts (1450s-1549)

the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

O God, who in the glorious Transfiguration of your Only Begotten Son confirmed the mysteries of faith by the witness of the Fathers and wonderfully prefigured our full adoption to sonship, grant, we pray, to your servants, that, listening to the voice of your beloved Son, we may merit to become co-heirs with him. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

the 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the Year

July 31, 2016

**Saint Bernadette Parish**

**Saint Mary Parish**

1343 Wheeling Road NE  
LANCASTER, OH 43130-8701  
(740) 654 • 1893

602 Marietta Street  
BREMEN, OH 43107  
(740) 569 • 7929

*[stbernadetteparish . net](http://stbernadetteparish.net)*

## Sacramental Life

### BAPTISM

To have a child baptized, you must register and attend a class as a couple (unless attendance just isn't possible, in which case some discussion with Kathy Kehnast will be necessary). Sessions are held quarterly for both parishes. The next session will be in September. **Take the class before the child is born.** If you are expecting, call Kathy to register for the class.

Please don't ask if you "have to go." This is an opportunity to meet with parents of children about the same age as your little one; they are in the same wonderful boat as you are.

At least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. **Both godparents need to be practicing Christians, at least one a practicing Catholic.** If you don't attend Sunday Mass regularly, there is something you can do about it: Start coming to Sunday Mass. If you can't come (health, severe weather, employment requirements, etc.), speak to your confessor. He will help you.

### PENANCE

The priest is available for Penance

- at St Bernadette Saturdays at 3 PM and Thursdays at 5:30 PM, and
- at St Mary Bremen on Sunday at 8 AM.

In addition to Advent and Lenten Penance Services, every Catholic priest is available whenever there is a need. There are Penance opportunities for parochial school children **four times during the year so that they will learn the beauty of frequent confession.** The Church's law requires us to receive the sacrament of Penance at least once a year.

### ANOINTING AND CARE OF THE SICK

The Sick receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick **when dangerously ill, facing major surgery, or suffering from the ravages of old age.**

We celebrate the sacrament communally at a Sunday Mass before Advent and during the Easter season so that we can all pray with you for "health of mind and body."

And, we are happy to bring Penance, Anointing, and Holy Communion to the homes or hospitals of the sick or shut in. It is very helpful to **call the parish office to let us know before a hospitalization or when it has been too long** since the sacraments were last available.

### HOLY MATRIMONY

Couples wishing to marry sacramentally should contact the parish office six months before they wish to celebrate the sacrament. Why so long? Because **this sacrament, not just the ceremony, requires serious preparation.** And the Church needs to be involved in that preparation. She tries to support couples through the years of their married life. For this reason our diocese offers programs to enhance married life. To learn how, watch the weekly bulletin.

## Our Parishes

### AT BOTH PARISHES

<b>Fr Thomas Kessler</b>	pastor	(614) 634-0499	wnthomaskessler @icloud.com
<b>Kathy Kehnast</b>	pastoral coordinator	(740) 654-1893	stbermparish @yahoo.com
<b>Angie &amp; Kent Kerns</b>	religious education	(740) 654-2588	kwkerns @gmail.com
<b>Julie &amp; Chase Stalford</b>	youth ministry	(740) 808-7294	maristellaspirt @gmail.com
<b>Nikki Schmelzer</b>	bookkeeper	(740) 654-1893	businessmstbparish @yahoo.com

### AT BREMEN ST MARY PARISH

<b>Ben Factor</b>	liturgical music		b_factor @lancaster.kl2.oh.us
<b>Jim Schmelzer</b>	maintenance chair		
<b>Tyna Fox-Schmelzer</b>	religious education	(614) 371-7702	schmelifox @earthlink.net
<b>Bremen St Vincent de Paul</b>		(740) 569-3710	
<b>The St Mary Parish office</b> is at the church vestibule. Hours are 9-11 AM, Tu. (740) 569-7929 602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107			

### AT ST BERNADETTE PARISH

<b>Deacon Mark Scarpitti</b>		(740) 438-3970	dcn.mark @frontier.com
<b>Deacon Jeff Carpenter</b>		(740) 681-9918	carpenter.277 @osu.edu
<b>Ann Essman</b>	pastoral minister	(740) 653-9347	aessman001 @att.net
<b>Steve Huber</b>	facilities coordinator	(740) 654-3137	shuber57 @yahoo.com
<b>Liz Latorre</b>	liturgical music	(740) 243-1872	lizlatorre @gmail.com

**The St Bernadette Parish office** is in the Mary Good Center, across the back parking lot from the school.  
Hours are: 9 AM-1 PM, MWThF; 11 AM-1 PM, Tu.  
1343 Wheeling Rd NE, Lancaster, OH 43130

### AT ST BERNADETTE SCHOOL

<b>Pam Eltringham</b>	principal	(740) 654-3137	peltring @cducation.org
<b>Barb Huber</b>	secretary	(740) 654-3137	bhuber @cducation.org

**Saint Bernadette School** is at 1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701  
www.stbernadetteschool.com  
stbermlan  
@cducation.org

## let us pray

### ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,  
and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness,  
that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and guide,  
you may restore what you have created  
and keep safe what you have restored.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

### AND WITH POPE FRANCIS IN AUGUST

His universal intention is about sports  
That sports may be an opportunity  
for friendly encounters between peoples and may contribute to  
peace in the world.

His evangelization intention is about living the Gospel  
That Christians may live the Gospel, giving witness to faith,  
honesty, and love of neighbor.

## in both our parishes

### welcome a missionary and be generous to his mission!

Today our parishes welcome **Father Varghese Srambickal, VC, a Vincentian Missionary priest from India**, to celebrate Mass for us (while Fr Kessler is away for a few days). Fr Varghese will share his missionary experience and will make an appeal on behalf of the Vincentian Missions.

The Vincentian Missionaries, all natives of India, need our help to carry out their many missionary, educational and charitable activities in their missions. Specifically, they seek our financial support for the training of young men studying for the priesthood. There will be **a second collection today** (before the offertory) for the missionary work of the Vincentian Missionaries. Please be very generous in your mission offering. If you do not have an opportunity to make an offering today or would like to make an additional offering, you may make your offering through the general parish collection **next Sunday in a specially marked envelope**.

Thank you for your prayers and generous financial support.

### the rcia — who is it for?

Many people today who search for the meaning of their lives turn to our Catholic Faith. The husband or wife of a Catholic may be seeking what will bring a deeper unity to their marriage and family. Someone you know, through some circumstance of life, may have found emptiness but instead seeks meaning. Sometimes someone who is already Catholic wants to look at his or her own personal faith again to find out what it is really all about. It can be anyone, in any circumstance of life.

The RCIA (**Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults**) helps many such folks to find what they are looking for. But many more may not know of this vital resource — unless we tell them. It is not a matter for insistence or pressure. It is a sharing, an invitation, and that won't offend. **The invitation** will be much more attractive when extended by **someone willing to accompany the quester** along the way.

**People who have benefitted personally from the RCIA** experience are urged to gather with the inquirers, serving as sponsors and mentors of various kinds, helping them to become grafted onto the life of the Catholic Christian Church.

RCIA in our parishes will meet on **Sunday evening for about a month of Sundays**, beginning on August 21. That is only a few weeks away.

Call Kathy at 654-1893 on Tuesday morning at Bremen St Mary or any other weekday morning at St Bernadette for information.

### do we know about you?

**New Members:** To register, completely fill out a **“Form for Registration/Information Changes,”** available in the lobbies of the church and school or by contacting the parish office, and return it either by mailing to the church office or placing in the collection basket on Sunday.

**Parishioners:** If you have any changes (address, phone, etc.), fill out a **“Form for Registration/Information Changes”** and mail to the church office or place in the collection basket on Sunday.

### get ready for Mass

If it is something special, we get ready for it. That goes for Sunday Mass. The most important way to get ready is to be in—or get into—the **state of grace** so that we can receive Holy Communion worthily. Then we need to **fast** (a tough word for a very easy task) for at least an hour before we receive Communion. And we could try to prime the pump, as it were, for hearing the Word of God as it will be read that day by **reading and pondering that little portion of the Word** of God. Those are matters of spiritual readiness.

But to go to Mass is to approach the great sacramental mysteries, approaching physically as well as spiritually. Old-fashioned rural Protestants were on to something when they spoke of wearing their “Sunday-go-to-meetin’ clothes.” We could all **dress up** a little bit, not to show off our fancy wardrobe but to “do something beautiful for God.” And think of what we say to our kids before a trip or before a film or a concert: We tell them to **go to the bathroom ahead of time**. Emergencies can happen to just about everybody. And each of us has the health she/ he has been blessed with. But with a little extra precaution we could be (and help others to be) even more single-minded about worship and to avoid the procession to and from the rest rooms. Thanks for thinking about all these things.

### help the Church in peru

On Aug 6 and 7, we will take up the collection for the Church in Latin America. In Peru, the 14 villages of Chazuta, in Moyobamba, are all located away from the city center, with the most remote only accessible by boat. The faithful in these communities do not have access to catechetical formation, and members often feel separated from the life of the universal Church. Through a grant from the Collection for the Church in Latin America, the religious congregation of the Missionaries of Jesus was able to provide faith formation, spiritual retreats, and workshops to nearly 250 people. Upon completion, participants were better equipped to help others deepen their faith and answer questions. The program also renewed their sense of commitment to their parishes and created stronger bonds within their own families. Through this program, members of the Chazuta villages felt the love and support of the universal Church. Please support programs like these and give generously in next week’s collection. For information, visit [www.usccb.org/latin-america](http://www.usccb.org/latin-america).

### Mass times and intentions

at St Bernadette		at St Mary	
4 PM	for the people	Saturday, July 30	
		Sunday, July 31	8:30 AM for the people
11 AM	for the people	Sunday, July 31	
THERE WILL BE NO MASS ON MONDAY OR TUESDAY THIS WEEK		Monday, Aug 1	THERE WILL BE NO MASS ON MONDAY OR TUESDAY THIS WEEK
		Tuesday, Aug 2	
8:20 AM	James & William Mahon	Wednesday, Aug 3	
6 PM	Charles Smith	Thursday, Aug 4	
8:20 AM	Ann Muetzel	Friday, Aug 5	
9 AM	Rose Guinan	Saturday, Aug 6	
4 PM	John Simon	Saturday, Aug 6	
		Sunday, Aug 7	8:30 AM for the people
11 AM	for the people	Sunday, Aug 7	

### bishop’s annual appeal 2016 “be his hope to others”

Here are the results at our parishes after fourteen weeks.

households participating	St Bernadette	St Mary
total pledged	\$ 38,180	\$ 21,210
average gift	\$ 271	\$ 348
total paid	\$ 19,130	\$ 5,845
parish BAA goal	\$ 43,136	\$ 12,703

The Appeal *supports our parish schools of religion and the education of our future priests and deacons, and many families in need of our help.* Your gift and your prayers will help to make this year's appeal a success. The Diocesan Goal is \$6,300,000. Every contribution counts; every dollar that we raise over the stated goal will be returned to our parishes to benefit our communities directly.

Last year St Bernadette pledged slightly over and collected slightly under the goal. Bremen St Mary pledged well over the goal and has received the rebate from the diocese. But the diocese has needs and so do the parishes.

We know *we can reach the goals* and support the diocese as well as go over and support the parishes. It requires thoughtful consideration and prayer, with every one giving according to our ability. We are blessed with much; let us remember the needs of others, as well as the needs of our own parishes.

## bremen st mary

### news about the parish school of religion

Thank you all for supporting our Parish School of Religion (PSR) Program. The children are filled with the joy and love of Christ and we appreciate the opportunity to be your partner in teaching them more about their faith. Please watch for registration forms in the parish hall and return by August 29.

We are excited for this upcoming PSR year with Sarah Borah as a new voice to the children for the weekly group faith discussion. Tyna is working to improve communications to families and staff. We have an abundance of teachers and are happy to announce this year's teachers:

- Pre-school, K & 1<sup>st</sup>     Angi Skinner
- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade             Wyatt Borah
- 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade         Shawna Kunkler & Cody Schmelzer
- 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade         Jerry & Tyna Schmelzer

The parish is grateful to our teachers from last year for their dedication and time:  
Sarah Borah, Shawna Kunkler, Angi Skinner, Cody Schmelzer, Jerry & Tyna Schmelzer, and Nikki Schmelzer.

Others who have assisted our program, whether for set up/clean up, special programming, or assisting with programming:  
Wyatt Borah, Cody Fyffe, Angie & Kent Kerns, Sydnee Rogers, Tony Schmelzer, Dismas & Jodie Schmelzer, Abby Skinner, Pam Redding, and Angel Springer.

ministers at mass at bremen st mary					
	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Communion	gifts	sacristan / usher
<b>Sunday, July 31 8:30 AM</b>	Susan Foltz	Caden Fyffe, Cody Fyffe	Susan Foltz, Pam Redding, Damian Schmelzer	Leo Kunkler Sr family	Damian Schmelzer
Tuesday, Aug 2 8:20 AM	<b>There will be no Mass at Bremen St Mary on Tuesday this week.</b>				
<b>Sunday, Aug 7 8:30 AM</b>	Paul Kunkler	Brooke Holt, Jillian Wilkinson	Irene Kunkler, Leo Kunkler Sr, Jim Schmelzer	Paul Kunkler family	Jim Schmelzer

### bremen food pantry

The Bremen Food Pantry *needs school supplies to help poor children in our community.* Check the list of needs on the bulletin boards and place your donation in the box in the Parish Hall today. This will help the Pantry open house on Saturday, Aug 6, from 9-11 AM. Any family in need can stop by that day at the Pantry to receive school supplies.

### saturday spruce up session

You are invited to help with the gardening in the yard around St Mary Church and rectory this Saturday, Aug 6, from 9 AM to noon. Bring gardening tools and a friend. Drink coffee, eat a few doughnuts and enjoy the company. Call Jim Schmelzer for details at (740) 215-3894.

### parish contributions

The *St Mary offertory collection* for July 24 came to \$1,777.

### summer square dance

St Mary Parish will have a square dance *at Schmelzer's Grove* for the family on Sunday, Aug 14, from 7-9 PM Cost is \$3 @ person.

### gardening for our parish

If you would like to *help landscape and maintain the yard of St Mary*, contact Kathy Kehnast to volunteer.

### st vincent de paul

St Vincent de Paul members will be collecting donations after Mass next Sunday. Your generous support is always appreciated.

## st bernadette

### eucharistic adoration

St Bernadette Parish has *solemn exposition* of the Blessed Sacrament at 9 AM on *Wednesdays*. We have commitments for people to keep watch for the time from 9 AM until 1 PM. We could *extend exposition further into each Wednesday*. If you can commit to a regular presence for adoration for an hour from 1-2 or from 2-3, call Kathy at the parish office.

You can come to church to adore Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament *any day during the daylight hours.*

### st bernadette school registration

St Bernadette School looks forward to registering students from St Bernadette and St Mary Bremen parishes for next school year. We accept enrollment for new students grades K-5, and 3, 4, and 5-year-old preschool students. Bring a copy of their birth or baptismal certificates. St Bernadette *preschool* offers kindergarten-readiness goals, within a flexible schedule.

*Elementary* grades (full-day-kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) offer a program of academic excellence and positive experiences. Make St Bernadette School *your "primary" choice for a really Catholic Education!* For information, call the school office at 654-3137.

### scholarships

*Income-Based EdChoice Expansion Scholarships* allow more students to attend St. Bernadette School. Students, meeting the income eligibility (e.g.: family of 4, income \$48,600), can attend St. Bernadette School next fall *at no cost* to parents, thanks to 8000 vouchers available from the Ohio Department of Education.

Scholarships are available for kindergartners, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. This is *a great opportunity for single parents, one-income homes, fixed-income house-holds, and working families*. Every family can explore this possibility. Contact the school office for information.

### st vincent de paul: 5<sup>th</sup> sunday on the 1<sup>st</sup> sunday

We usually welcome members of the St Vincent de Paul Society *to receive your donations after Sunday Mass* on the fifth Sunday of the month (in those rare months when there is a fifth Sunday). But this month, they have graciously accepted a postponement of their welcome to collect from us because we will have a guest missionary priest — from the St Vincent Congregation of priests and brothers in India. So we are *postponing the fifth Sunday collection until next Sunday*. Please continue your generous giving to St VdP. The St VdP Society operates entirely on voluntary donations and on income from their store (viz, not from subsidies by the Church or any government agency). So please be especially generous.

### ministers at Mass at st bernadette

	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion	
<b>Saturday, July 30 4 PM</b>	Terry Carpenter	Mallory, Mason & McKenzie Ortiz	Joyce Guenther Jim Kuhn Becky Kuhn	Mickey Steyaert Shelia Taylor Kathy Wagner
<b>Sunday, July 31 11 AM</b>	Patrick Gins	Ashlyn & Brennan Quaintance, Jack Tencza	Pat Dreyer Lee Guinan Jim Merk	Rita Merk David Shonk Becky Wickham
Monday, Aug 1 8:20 AM	<b>There will be no Mass at St Bernadette on Monday this week.</b>			
Wednesday Aug 3 8:20 AM	Bob Christy	Collin & Emma McCrady	Mary Guinan	Mary Jane Vajen
Thursday, Aug 4 6 PM	Kathy Kehnast	Cady Tipple, Jack Gentile	Lee Guinan	Mary Guinan
Friday, Aug 5 8:20 AM	Jim Merk	Avee Solt, Carley Matson	Jim & Rita Merk	
Saturday, Aug 6 9 AM	Kathy Kehnast	Anna Hartig	Jim & Rita Merk	
<b>Saturday, Aug 6 4 PM</b>	Tara Craaybeek	Clara & Susan Craaybeek, Analisa Waibel	Susan Garrett Kathy Kehnast Sandy Landefeld	Denise McGuire Brad Rider Craig Shaw
<b>Sunday, Aug 7 11 AM</b>	Robert Christy	Samantha Kerns, Drew Solt, Daniel Turner	Nancy Griffith Ben Peters Larry Sanford	Teresa Scarpitti Valerie Shaw Julie Whitehead

### august blood drive

Our next St Bernadette Blood Drive happens Saturday, Aug 13, from 9 AM-2 PM. *This summer has been a hard one for blood donations in the US*. Besides the normal slowdown in donations, natural disasters such as flooding in Texas and West Virginia have reduced the supply. Consider donating the gift of life. Age for donation is 16 (with parental signature) and up. Lunch and cupcakes as usual! To make an appointment to donate call Joyce Guenther at (740) 974-5040 or go to [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) (sponsor code SBP). If you can't donate blood, *volunteers are always welcome*, and it's a good way for students to get community service hours.

### knights of columbus

There will be an August K of C Corporate Communion at St Bernadette at the 11 AM Mass on Sunday, Aug 7. Notice that this

date is a change at the request of the Knights from the originally scheduled date later in the month.

### book donation

Fisher Catholic students are conducting their Junior Service Project of collecting books for young children from Saturday, Aug 6, through Saturday, Sept 3. You can help by donating new or gently used books at boxes provided in the vestibule and school hallway at St Bernadette. Thanks for your participation.

### parish contributions

The *St Bernadette offertory collection* for July 24 came to \$6,384.

## in the diocese of columbus

### from the chair

Bishop Campbell takes your questions from 5-6 PM on Tuesday, Aug 2, during his live monthly call-in show. Call St Gabriel Catholic Radio AM 820 at (614) 459-4820 to ask your question about the Catholic faith and growing in holiness.

### parish picnic in somerset

St Joseph Parish in Somerset hosts a parish picnic on Saturday, Aug 6, with a chicken and pork dinner served from 4-7 PM, bingo, games, a raffle, music, family fun, and square dancing at 8 PM.

### retrouvaille

*If your marriage is troubled* and stressed, unloving or uncaring; if you have grown cold and distant; if you are separated, or are thinking about it, don't give up. *Retrouvaille* (a French word that means "rediscovery") is *a program to help heal and support* married couples experiencing difficulties, loneliness or pain. It is also for separated or divorced couples wanting to try again. The next program is Aug 1-3. For information call (614) 296-9704 or visit [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org).

### spousal prayer: a way to marital happiness

A Retreat for Married Couples happens on Saturday, Aug 27, from 9 AM to 4 PM at Immaculate Conception Church in Columbus. It features celebration of Mass and a reflection by Bishop Frederick Campbell and presentations by Deacon James Keating, author of *Spousal Prayer: A Way to Marital Happiness*. Cost is \$65 per couple, which includes a light breakfast, lunch and *Spousal Prayer* book. For information and to register, call (614) 241-2560.

### help needed

The Sisters of Children of Mary just excavated 4 acres of land and they need help *clearing trees and building permanent pastures* for their cows at their convent *in Newark*. Any day is fine. Call (740) 323-1977. Find information at [www.childrenofmary.net](http://www.childrenofmary.net).

### men's retreat at the shrine

The Catholic Laymen's Fall silent retreat happens at St Therese Retreat Center from 6 PM on Friday, Sept 9, through noon Mass on Sunday, Sept 11. In reflection sessions, *Fr Stephen Hayes OP* will help men to appreciate the value of the medieval crusades by developing his theme "*Taking up the Cross: Becoming Modern Crusaders for the New Jerusalem of Christ*." Cost is \$130. For information and registration contact Charles Kielkopf at (614) 268-0175 or [kielkopf.1@osu.edu](mailto:kielkopf.1@osu.edu).

### get your marriage in shape

Are you exercising and dieting, jogging, swimming, and playing tennis to stay fit and trim? What are you doing to keep your marriage in good shape? Why not *try a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend*? The next two weekends in central Ohio are Aug 5-7 and Nov 11-13. For information or to register, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit [www.wmecolumbus.org](http://www.wmecolumbus.org).

### catholic youth summer camp

Catholic Youth Summer Camp (CYSC), a ministry based in our diocese, is a 6-day and 5-night experience providing students with a week full of *high adventure activities and high adventure faith*. CYSC is open to all students entering grades 6-12, and there are 8 sessions available this summer. CYSC offers a truly Catholic and safe environment with daily catechesis that awakens faith and builds missionary disciples. A week at camp includes daily Mass, adoration, reconciliation, small group conversations, worship, service, and authentic community. For information, visit [www.cysc.com](http://www.cysc.com).

### catholic family night at crew stadium

Catch great soccer action at the Catholic Family Night with the Columbus Crew SC on Saturday, Aug 27, kick off at 7:30 PM. Upper sideline seats are \$19, lower sideline seats are \$28. All tickets are subject to a \$3 processing fee, are limited and subject to availability. Deadline to order tickets is Wednesday, Aug 10. For ticket information, contact Katherine Wren at [kwren@thecrew.com](mailto:kwren@thecrew.com); for other questions, visit the Recreation Association website at [www.cdeducation.org/diocesanrecreation](http://www.cdeducation.org/diocesanrecreation) or contact Marty Raines at (614)241-2580.

## living mercy in a jubilee year

### mercy: beating heart of the gospel

Have you *memorized* these works of mercy? Have you been practicing them? Pope Francis writes that *“Mercy is the beating heart of the Gospel”* (*Misericordiae Vultus*). *We seek God’s mercy* because we know he is *full of mercy* and is overflowing *generous with his mercy*. His only *requirement is that we, in turn, be merciful*. So what we need to do is go to God, humbly seeking his mercy saying “please” and gratefully saying “thank you”. You know in what need of his mercy you are—even when the mercy given isn’t exactly what you had in mind (“You don’t always get what you want, but sometimes you get what you need!”).

But *crucial to that thanksgiving is actually living mercy yourself*. The Church helps us along in that by teaching us the works of mercy. To live mercy, we must (re)discover both

the *spiritual works of mercy*,

- *counsel the doubtful*
- *instruct the ignorant*
- *admonish sinners*
- *comfort the afflicted*
- *forgive offences*
- *bear patiently those who do us ill*
- *pray for the living and the dead,*

and the *corporal works of mercy*,

- *feed the hungry*
- *give drink to the thirsty*
- *clothe the naked*
- *welcome the stranger*
- *heal the sick*
- *visit the imprisoned*
- *bury the dead.*

**Learn all 14 by heart.** Post them where you’ll see them often, on your refrigerator or your mirror or someplace. Then make it your daily aim to live them. Examine your conscience about them. It’s not always easy. But the works of mercy are a must for anyone who seeks to follow Christ. They will bring you joy ... and bring you to eternal joy.

## in the deanery

confessions & weekday Mass nearby							
These times sometimes change, though, so call ahead							
parish	confessions	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Bremen St Mary	8 am Sunday		8:20 AM				
Lancaster St Bernadette	5:30 Thursday 3 PM Saturday; 8:30 AM on 1 <sup>st</sup> Sat	8:20 AM		8:20 AM	6 PM	8:20 AM	1 <sup>st</sup> Sat 9 AM
Lancaster St Mary	4 PM Saturday	7 AM	9 AM	7 AM	9 AM		
Lancaster St Mark	5:30 PM Saturday	8 AM	8 AM	6 PM	8 AM	8 AM	
Sugar Grove St Joseph	½ hour before Mass	8 AM	NOON	8 AM	NOON	8 AM	
Circleville St Joseph	4 PM Saturday	9 AM	7 PM	9 AM		9 AM	10 AM
Logan St John	4 PM Saturday	8 AM	8 AM	9 AM		8 AM	9 AM

### fisher fall festival

The Fisher Fall Festival happens Friday, Sept 9, from 5-10 PM and Saturday, Sept 10, from 5-11 PM. Enjoy inflatables, children’s games, adult games of skill, K of C Fish Fry, Bob’s Backyard Barbeque, a beer garden, and other entertainment. Contact Eileen Gundelfinger at (740) 277-7063 with questions.

## the Church’s plan for reading God’s word this week

Sat	July 30	Eighteenth Sunday	Ecl	1:2-2:23	Col	3:1-11	Psalm	90	Luke	12:13-21
Mon	Aug 1	St Alphonsus Liguori	Jeremiah	28:1-17			Psalm	119	Matthew	14:13-21
Tues	Aug 2	St Eusebius of Vercelli, St Peter Julian Eymard	Jeremiah	30:1-22			Psalm	102	Matthew	14:22-36
Weds	Aug 3		Jeremiah	31:1-7			Jeremiah	31	Matthew	15:21-28
Thurs	Aug 4	St John Vianney	Jeremiah	31:31-34			Psalm	51	Matthew	16:13-23
Fri	Aug 5	Dedication of Basilica of St Mary Major	Nahum	2:1-3:7			Deut	32	Matthew	16:24-28
Sat	Aug 6	The Transfiguration of the Lord	Daniel	7:9-14	2 Pet	1:16-19	Psalm	97	Luke	9:28-36
Sun	Aug 7	Nineteenth Sunday	Wisdom	18:6-9	Heb	11:1-19	Psalm	33	Luke	12:32-48

# When the Church Teaches: God's Plan for Marriage

Last week there was a muted observance of the 48<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day that Blessed Pope Paul VI issued his encyclical letter, *Humanae Vitae* (*Human Life*). It was a long time ago, but I remember it. Just about everybody in the world seemed to think the teaching of that encyclical was a bad idea. As a twenty-year-old college seminarian, I thought it was bad idea. But we were wrong. The Pope was right. We should have listened. Not just because he was the pope and was teaching authoritatively on behalf of Jesus Christ and of his holy Church. But also because he was telling us the truth, a truth important for our happiness in this life and for our very salvation.

What Pope Paul said that day was that the use of artificial *contraception* is always morally disordered, in a serious way, even in marriage. This means that the use of birth control pills and condoms is a serious sin.

Nobody wanted to hear that. And the *adverse reaction* was very strong. When Pope Paul wrote what he wrote, it came as a thunderbolt in the middle of a long hot summer. What he said that day was not just his point of view. It was—and remains and must remain—the teaching of the Catholic Church. But it was not a welcome teaching. The secular world scoffed. Many pastors ignored the teaching. Many of the laity disobeyed, others abandoned the Faith altogether. 1968 was already filled with student protests all over the world, urban riots in America ghettos and even at a national political convention, a very unpopular war in Viet Nam, a tragic end to an experiment in freedom in then-communist then-Czechoslovakia, disorientation in the Catholic Church which seemed to be changing very rapidly things many people thought could never change. The wheels seemed to be falling off the world as we had known it.

The irony is that this teaching had been held by virtually every Christian church or ecclesial community for as long as anyone had ever thought of the issue of limiting births—until the Anglicans broke ranks in 1930. In the next 38 years many other Protestants followed suit, as many Catholic began to think their Church would, too. And during that time a *sexual revolution* was hatched. For that revolution to have traction, *sexuality and sexual conduct* had to be divorced from the often inconvenient reality of the gift of *human fertility* and from the beautiful but difficult need for *permanently committed married love*. Christianity had never looked askance at sexuality. It was just that the Church had always seen that the divine plan, in “making them male and female,” involved a profound unity of these realities. But modern technology invented or “perfected” ways to bypass all this. And personal satisfaction seemed to mandate the bypass.

And further, there was a new scare growing up in those days, especially in the prosperous Western world, that there was a “*population bomb*,” a time bomb ticking away, which could only be diffused if we stopped the “pollution” of too many, not always wanted, babies. Today it is hard to believe that scare ever existed. The demographic facts have created a scare in precisely the opposite direction: Not enough babies are being made to have a healthy replacement for those who die off. Now the issue is not how we are going to squeeze them all in, how we are going to feed them, but rather, as the baby boomers retire, with the next generation so few in number, dangerously few in economic terms, how we can restore a *healthy replacement population*.

But much more sadly, how did we get to the point of listening to people who can talk of new human life, new *babies*, as a form of *pollution*? Whatever their race or sex or health condition, however lawful, loving or convenient their conceiving may be to our plans, babies are a very great gift—*to be loved and cherished*.

Was Pope Paul, in 1968, just failing to face up to modern realities? That's not how he saw it. He knew that there was a need to be consistent with what the Church had taught through the centuries. And he sensed the destructive consequences of the *fragmentation of the human person* that would follow the divorce of sex, love, commitment, and making new life.

The whole world seemed to rebel. And we have begun to see some of the results. It's not a pretty picture. The sexual revolution has turned into a species of hedonism that nobody could have predicted. Pornography is hurting marriages. Divorce has become an epidemic. Relations between men and women are more troubled than ever. A new “gay” movement has been invented which even demands that we acknowledge the absurdity of “gay marriage.” Abortion seemed to be the necessary back up-form of birth control (because birth control is never fool-proof) and began to be treated as a vital natural right, a woman's choice that is private and is none of anyone else's business—except that insurance policies and government agencies must pay for it!—instead of the heinous crime that killing a baby really is. And a lot more people are leading *unsatisfied lives*.

Something needs to be done, and nobody seems to know what. Oh, wait! Someone *has* spoken eloquently and authoritatively about what needs to be done. Pope Saint John Paul II taught with care and great wisdom about something that has come to be called “the *theology of the body*.” The language expressed by bodies during sexual intercourse is so damaged by the use of artificial contraception that the conjugal act “ceases to be an act of love... [or] communion of persons” but rather is a mere bodily union. John Paul taught that God has shown us a better way. *Natural family planning* (NFP) is obviously in God's plan. It is basic to the structure of the human body, which has natural periods of fertility and infertility. Its morality was built into the body, and its use, unlike artificial contraception, can improve the dialog between spouses, expressed through the language of the body. It doesn't cost any money ... only self-giving love. Saint John Paul emphasized the intrinsic *goodness* of the marital act. The power of love between spouses leads to and is nourished by the moral use of the conjugal act. Moral exercise of sexual intercourse uses the form of the body to reveal the love of God toward Creation.

There is much more to be said about natural family planning and the theology of the body. Check out *NFP Awareness Week* (observed last week, but with some helpful information under that heading at the USCCB website).

And pray for married couples that they may have the courage to do the right thing. And for our society that we may have the grace to recover from so much of our energies spent going in the wrong way.

—Father Kessler

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