



The Crowning of the Virgin

A painted meditation on this Tuesday's feast

The 20th Sunday of the Year

at Lancaster St Bernadette and Bremen St Mary

August 20, 2017

St Bernadette Parish.

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

stbernadetteparish.net

cover picture: [The Crowning of the Virgin](#)

St Mary Parish.

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

painting (1486) in tempera on wood by Domenico Ghirlandaio (1449-1494)
City Art Gallery, Città di Castello, Italy

our parishes.

Father Thomas Kessler (614) 634-0499
pastor wnthomaskessler@icloud.com

at St Bernadette Parish

Jeff Carpenter (740) 681-9918
deacon carpenter.277@osu.edu
Mark Scarpitti (740) 438-3970
deacon dcn.mark@frontier.com
Ann Essman (740) 653-9347
pastoral minister aessman001@att.net
Steve Huber (740) 654-3137
facilities coordinator shuber57@yahoo.com
Angie & Kent Kerns (740) 654-2588
religious education kwkerns@gmail.com
Liz Latorre (740) 243-1872
liturgical music 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 43130-8701 (740) 654-1893
<http://stbernadetteparish.net>

at Bremen St Mary Parish

Ben Factor
liturgical music b_factor@lanaster.k12.oh.us

The St Mary Parish office is at the church vestibule.

Hours are 9-11 AM, Tuesdays.

602 Marietta St,
Bremen, OH 43107 (740) 569-7929

at both parishes

Stephen Karnes (740) 654-1893
bookkeeper stbernbook@gmail.com
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Saint Bernadette School

Pam Eltringham peltring@cducation.org
principal (740) 654-3137
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secretary (740) 654-3137

Saint Bernadette School is located at

1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701
stbernlan@cducation.org
www.stbernadetteschool.com

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. Try to attend before the child is born. Next session is tentatively planned for Oct 19. If you are expecting or have a new born or somehow have somehow haven't gotten around to have an older child baptized, call Kathy to make plans.

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; those parents are in the same wonderful boat as you are.

At least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. Both godparents need to be practicing Catholics. If you don't attend Sunday Mass regularly (a major component of being a practicing Catholic!), there is something you can do about it: Start coming to Sunday Mass.

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.

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

We 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."

We bring Penance, Anointing, and Holy Communion to 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 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. Remember, Catholics who marry outside the Church have left the sacramental life and need to change that situation before receiving the other sacraments.

The Church wishes to support couples **through the years** of their married life. That's why our diocese offers programs to enhance married life. To learn about these programs, watch the weekly bulletin.

praying with the Church

at Mass this Sunday the church prays :

O God, who have prepared for those who love you good things which no eye can see, fill our hearts, we pray, with the warmth of your love, so that, loving you in all things and above all things, we may attain your promises, which surpass every human desire. 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.

in august the pope is praying for artists

That artists of our time, through their ingenuity, may help everyone discover the beauty of creation.

we listen to God's word ... at sunday Mass

Sunday, Aug 20, 20th Sunday	Isaiah 56:1-7 Romans 11:13-32	Psalm 67 Matthew 15:21-28
Mon, Aug 21	Judges 2:11-19 Ps 106	Matthew 19:16-22
Tues, Aug 22	Judges 6:11-24 Ps 85	Matthew 19:23-30
Weds, Aug 23	Judges 9:6-15 Ps 21	Matthew 20:1-16
Thurs, Aug 24	Revelation 21:9-14 Ps 145	John 1:45-51
Fri, Aug 25	Ruth 1:1-22 Ps 146	Matthew 22:34-40
Sat, Aug 26	Ruth 2:1-4:17 Ps 128	Matthew 23:1-12
Sunday, Aug 27, 21st Sunday	Isaiah 22:19-23 Romans 11:33-36	Psalm 138 Matthew 16:13-20

feast days this week

Aug 21	Saint Pius X, pope
Aug 22	The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Aug 23	Saint Rose of Lima , virgin
Aug 24	Saint Bartholomew , apostle
Aug 25	Saint Louis ; Saint Joseph Calasanz , priest

at both our parishes

parish family lunch

You and your family are invited to the St Bernadette and St Mary parish family lunch today, Sunday, Aug 20, at noon **in the St Bernadette parish hall**. We will meet and share a meal with members of both our parishes. Our parish family lunch begins right after the 11 AM Mass at St Bernadette. Bring a table cloth, table setting, and a dish to pass. Drinks will be provided. Last names

- A-K bring a meat or main dish,
- L-N bring a dessert,
- O-Z bring a salad or side dish.

Arrive at Mass a little early to set up and reserve your place for lunch. Linger a while afterwards to meet the St Bernadette School teachers—and encourage them in the new year!

50th jubilee celebration

"I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me." Galatians 2:20

Parishioners of St Mary Bremen and St Bernadette are invited to attend the 50th jubilee celebration of Sister Nancy Ames OP on Sunday, Sept 17, from 3 to 5 PM at Holy Trinity School in Somerset. A tour of the newly renovated part of the convent will

be available for interested guests. Refreshments will be served in the school gym. RSVP by Sept 4 to Kathy at stbernaparish @ yahoo . com or (740) 654-1893.

rcia —participants needed

The opening session for RCIA (the Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults) in our two parishes meets **this evening, Sunday, Aug 20**, at 7 PM in the Mary Good Center at St Bernadette. So now is the time! Who are you going to invite at least to think about the Catholic Christian Faith? This year?

Pray that you will have the grace and the courage to welcome and invite someone to the sacramental life!

- if you are **thinking about becoming a Catholic Christian** yourself;
- if you are a Catholic who would like to share your treasured Faith as a sponsor;
- if you are a **Catholic who needs to get back to basics** and learn your Faith better;
- if you have a **friend or loved one** in one of those situations; or
- if you **have other questions** regarding the RCIA, ... come to this **first session** for the new year.

To learn more or to let us know you are coming, **call Kathy Kehnast** at 654-1893.

st bernadette school: affordable and catholic!

Don't delay. School starts this week!

The goal of a Catholic education at St Bernadette School is **to prepare our students to take their place in society as disciples of Jesus Christ, called to live the Gospel through their daily interactions** with family, friends, and neighbors. Our school educates the whole child through challenging academics and activities with opportunities for service that help our students carry out our calling to serve and provide both fun and personal development for our students.

Our school has **highly qualified teachers**,

- licensed by the Ohio Department of Education,
- certified in religion by the diocese,
- with the required background checks,
- trained in school safety and abuse prevention,
- and participating in ongoing professional development.

Please take advantage of **accessible Catholic education**. Tuition assistance is available to qualifying families. The EdChoice Expansion is available to students new to our building in grades K and 1. St Bernadette School is also a provider of the Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program, and the Autism Scholarship Program.

parish endowment funds

St Bernadette Parish has two endowment funds at The Catholic Foundation. They grow by market growth and by our generous (and tax-sheltering) gifts. Bremen St Mary could also have such an endowment, if a generous donor would like to start one. There is no required minimum to contribute to these funds. Endowment funds are accounts are made of gifts that are never spent. Instead, they are invested to generate a perpetual income stream. It's a way to leverage donations so that in the long term, they generate far more benefit than just a one-time gift. These funds are setup to benefit you. To find out how these funds benefit (or could benefit) your parish community,

contact Scott Hartman at (614) 443-8893 or email shartman@
catholic-foundation.org.

at bremen st mary parish

parish homecoming and picnic

Bremen St Mary Parish is looking forward to our annual **Parish Homecoming and Picnic**. The plan is to have this happen at Schmelzer's Grove on Sunday, Sept 24. In recent years this has been a day of good food, dancing, hay and pony rides, games and some fine Dixieland music. That's the plan and this plan can be fulfilled if some parishioners will step forward to help make the arrangements. For information or if you would like to volunteer, call the St Mary parish office at (740) 569-7929.

an unexpected visitor

An unexpected visitor has been cooking meals in the parish hall at St Mary—leaving the pantry light on, the gas on the stove lit, and even an empty soup can and dirty dishes in the sink. So, we are going to have to keep the parish hall locked except when there is a responsible person from the parish in the building. We will make adjustments as soon as possible so that the Church can be left available again for prayer during the daylight hours.

st vincent de paul at bremen

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Bremen takes up a **collection after Mass on the first Sunday** of every month. **New members** are always welcome. Call Angi Skinner at (740) 438-0027.

Mass intention at st mary

Tuesday Mass will be celebrated for Paul Gallagher.

ministry at Mass at st mary

Aug 20 & 27	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion	gifts	sacristan / usher
Sunday 8:30 AM	Susan Foltz	Caden & Cody Fyffe	Wyatt Borah, Pam Redding, Dismas Schmelzer	Catherine Noll, April Schmelzer	Nikki Schmelzer
next Sunday	Paul Kunkler	Regan Conrad, Charles Schoenlaub	Irene Kunkler, Jim Schmelzer, Angi Skinner	Paul Kunkler family	Jim Schmelzer

small maintenance jobs

Our parish needs a person or persons who could handle **small maintenance jobs** at the church, the rectory, and the Grove, on an as-needed basis. The qualifications are simple: Be handy and responsible and reasonably knowledgeable about basic maintenance and good upkeep. Jim Schmelzer has been the go-to-guy for these tasks for a number of years. And he has done a super job! But he feels the need now to pull back some. A replacement helper will not be held to the high standard of helpfulness, skill, and common sense that Jim has shown. But he will be very much appreciated. To learn how you could help or to volunteer, call Kathy at either parish office.

at st bernadette parish

help needed

Are you looking for a way to share your talents and time? St Vincent de Paul Society in Lancaster is in great need of help with the food pantry, the store, and client aid. Volunteering is a great way to give to someone in real need. Consider helping one day a month or one day a week, but please consider just helping. Contact Jill or Ed Weber at (740) 654-4148.

Mass intentions at st bernadette

Monday, Aug 21	8:20 AM	Richard Welsh
Wednesday, Aug 23	8:20 AM	Wilford & Loretta Beiter
Thursday, Aug 24	6 PM	Dale Gilbert
Friday, Aug 25	8:20 AM	John & Ann Muetzel

ministry at Mass at st bernadette

	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion	
Saturday, 4:00 PM	Bob Christy	Mallory, Mason & Mitchell Ortiz	Angie Christy Sandy Landefeld Jim & Becky Kuhn	Rosalie DeFillippo Denise McGuire
Sunday, Aug 20, 11:00 AM	John Hartig	Kendall Cox, Anna Hartig, Brennan Quaintance	Terry Carpenter Nancy Griffith Teresa Hartig	Anna Sevigny Becky Wickham Amy Woo
Monday, 8:20 AM	Mary Jane Vajen	Becca Fuller Olivia Reynolds	Patricia Dreyer	Kathy Kehnast
Wednesday, 8:20 AM	Bob Christy	Morgan Cox Amelia Robertson	Angie Christy	Mary Jane Vajen
Thursday, 6:00 PM	Kathy Kehnast		Lee Guinan	Paul Lonergan
Friday, 8:20 AM	Jim Merk	Kyndra Nagle Daschel Neighbor	Jim & Rita Merk	
Saturday, 4:00 PM	Marguerite Grimm	Clara & Susan Craaybeek, Eve Darfus	Tara Craaybeek Lee Guinan Kathy Kehnast	Brad Rider Teresa Scarpitti Mickey Steyaert
Sunday, Aug 27, 11:00 AM	David Shonk	Jack Tencza, Brooke & Bryson Vogel	Pat Dreyer Ben Peters Jim & Rita Merk	Jean Robertson Larry Sanford

walking with purpose

*Walking with Purpose is a program that helps women to know Christ through Scripture. Join us for our next session, **Opening Your Heart**, starting Thursday, Sept 14. This twenty-two session course **cultivates our relationship with Christ by expanding our knowledge of the Catholic Church's teachings and the Bible.** For this session, we are partnering with Lancaster St Mary Parish.*

- The morning group will meet on Thursdays from 9-10:30 AM at St Bernadette Mary Good Center
- The evening group will meet on Thursday evenings from 7 - 8:30 PM at St Mary Spirit Center

Cost is \$40 for a book; please register by September 3 to have your materials.

Walking with Purpose is Catholic **faith-sharing that aims to bring women to a deeper personal relationship with Christ.** Through personal study and small group discussions, the group helps to link our everyday challenges with solutions given to us through the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church. It aims to meet women where we are in our everyday lives. As we explore our faith, we invite you to join us for as many sessions as your schedule allows. For questions or to register, contact Amy Woo at (414) 882-1863. For general program information, visit www.walkingwithpurpose.com.

in our deanery

grounded in faith, growing to serve

Many of us include our family in our wills, trusts, and life insurance policies. As stewards of God's gifts, we should include our Catholic faith, too. As Catholics, we are called to plan for the future of our parishes and our schools in the same way. Many have come to love William V. Fisher Catholic High School because within its walls we grew with Jesus Christ, built on our future, and developed long-lasting relationships. We have practiced our faith and received an enriched education. As a result we became a lasting part of this

Catholic community.

Fisher Catholic High School works with the Catholic Foundation as a trusted partner because they assure peace of mind that our endowments are invested in alignment with our Catholic faith. You can help Fisher Catholic grow its endowment fund by identifying an end-of-life planned gift in your will, trust, or life insurance policy. You can also make a gift to the Fisher Catholic High School Endowment Fund now, in any amount. God has given us many blessings in our life. Please consider how we can use those blessings to support the future Fisher Catholic High School. The Catholic Foundation can assist you with creating a plan that best fits your family's individual needs and charitable goals.

To learn more about **how you can support William V. Fisher Catholic High School**, please contact Scott Hartman at the Catholic Foundation at (614) 443-8893 or shartman@catholicfoundation.org.

in the diocese of columbus

pilgrimage to Carey

Join a Marian Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Consolation Basilica and Shrine in Carey, on Wednesday, Oct 4, for a **day of prayer**. Cost is \$25. Lunch may be purchased at the cafeteria. Send a check (payable to Margaret Kronenbitter, 2700 Wayne Ridge Rd, Zanesville, Ohio 43701) by Wednesday, Sept 6. The bus will depart @ 7:50 AM and return @ 6:45 PM. Call Rita Merk at (740) 654-3255 or Ann Messerly at (740) 654-3447 for information.

healing Mass and prayer ministry

Mass will be celebrated at 4 pm on Saturday, Sept 10, at St Elizabeth Parish by Fr John Vadakkettom, CFIC. Participants will prepare for Mass by praying the rosary at 2:30 pm, receiving reconciliation at 3 pm, and hearing a brief explanation of healing ministry. After Mass Fr John invites all to "lay hands" for healing and the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Sponsored by Columbus Catholic Renewal; visit www.cccolumbus.org for information.

when you care enough to give the very best

Give yourself and your spouse the gift of a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The next two weekends in central Ohio are Sept 15-17 and Feb 16-18. For information or to apply, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit www.wmecolumbus.org.

live bible seminar

Jeff Cavins will present a live seminar "**Walking Toward Eternity...Making Choices for Today**" on Friday, Sept 29, from 7-8:30 PM and Saturday, Sept 30, from 9 am to 3 pm at the Church of the Resurrection in New Albany. This is an adult faith formation program, part inspirational talk and part hands on workshop with the goal of union with Christ through Scripture. Register online at www.cotrna.org or contact Gayle Kerkman at (614) 429-7308 or gkerkman@gmail.com. The cost of \$45 includes registration, seminar materials, light breakfast and boxed lunch.

josephinum lecture series

The Pontifical College Josephinum invites you to the first lecture in the 2017-2018 lecture series "**Building Spiritual Bridges to The Community**" on Wednesday, Sept 6, at 7 PM at the Jessing Center. His Eminence, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, archbishop of Houston and president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, will present "**The Gospel of Joy is the Gospel of Life: The Human Person.**"

fall tour day at the josephinum

Seminarians of the Pontifical College Josephinum will offer tours of the seminary and the newly renovated chapel on Saturday, Sept 16, from 10 AM - 3 PM. Admission and parking are free. Tours will begin every half-hour and last about 45 minutes, followed by refreshments. Reservations are encouraged but not required. For information or to make a reservation, call the Josephinum Advancement Office at (614) 985-2203.

blue Mass

St Timothy Parish and St Timothy K of C Council 14345 will host the Blue Mass on Monday, Sept 11, at 5 PM. The Blue Mass is an opportunity to honor and pray for all active, retired and deceased first-responders—police, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel. It is also in memory of the 2,973 people who lost their lives in the Sept 11 terrorist attacks. Celebrant and homilist will be Bishop Frederick Campbell. All active and retired first-responders in the central Ohio area and their families are invited. This is a time to join together to honor their service, ask for God's blessings upon them, that he may keep them safe, and guide them in their duties. For information, contact Mark Gideon at mgideon@columbus.rr.com.

the beauty of the feminine

The 6th annual **Beauty of the Feminine Catholic Women's Conference** will happen on Saturday, Oct 7, from 8 AM to 3 PM at St Thomas Aquinas Parish in Zanesville. It is a day of fellowship, prayer and faith formation. This year's theme is "**Anchored in Hope.**" To register call St Thomas at (740) 453-3301 or email thebeautyofthefeminine@gmail.com. If you register by Sept 30, your \$20 include breakfast and lunch. Registration on the day of the event is \$25. Contact Susan with questions or visit www.thebeautyofthefeminine.weebly.com and Facebook @ TheBeautyOfTheFeminine for information.

catholic men's luncheon club

The Catholic Men's Luncheon Club is back in session beginning Friday, Sept 1. Their luncheon features a talk by Ben Hartings of St John Neuman Parish in Sunbury, Ohio. St Patrick Church in downtown Columbus hosts **Ben's talk about his book, *Return to the Altar, A Sacred Journey Through Grief and Joy***, coauthored with his wife, Lynn. Holy Mass at 11:45 AM will be followed by lunch and the talk until 1 PM. Reservations are not necessary; \$10 covers the lunch and meeting. Bring a friend. For information on Catholic Men's Luncheons, visit www.catholicmensministry.com/cmlc or contact Tim Merkle, CMLC President at htm@ejhlaw.com.

universality of catholicism – east and west

Join Fr Ignatius Harrington, pastor of Holy Resurrection Melkite Church, as he discusses the universality of the Catholic Church in regards to the Eastern and Western Churches. Fr Ignatius will speak about how the Eastern Churches are in communion with Rome and the Holy Father as well as why some aspects fell apart. You are invited to Liturgy at Holy Resurrection Church at 11 AM on Sunday, Sept 24. Following Liturgy, enjoy a social; the talk by Fr Harrington begins at 1 PM. Attending this Liturgy does fulfill your Sunday obligation.

7 steps to cultivate a eucharistic marriage

All married couples are invited to the **diocesan retreat for married couples**, Saturday, Sept 9, from 9 AM to 4 PM at St Agatha Church, 1860 Northam Rd, Upper Arlington. Bishop Campbell will celebrate Mass and offer a morning reflection. Greg Schutte, author of "*Discovering our Deepest Desire*" and director of *Marriage Works!*

Ohio, will continue with presentations on **enhancing the intimate relationship of husbands and wives**. A guided holy hour will also be included in the day's schedule. Continental breakfast and warm lunch will be provided. Cost is \$65. Register by Sept 1 at columbuscatholic.org/retreat or (614) 241-2560.

catholic men's ministry

Now, more than ever, we need **Catholic male leadership**. **Weekly faith sharing groups** have been instrumental in bringing men together and fostering growth in their Catholic faith. Programs like "Iron Sharpens Iron" and "That Man Is You!" continue to grow throughout the Columbus Diocese and are changing lives. Get plugged in and learn more about the many programs and opportunities that are available. For information call Patrick Gins at (740) 536-7402.

men's silent retreat

The annual Catholic laymen's fall silent retreat will be held at St Therese Retreat Center from 6 PM on Friday, Sept 8, through noon Mass on Sunday, Sept 10. Fr Dave Pivonka, TOR, will lead men to appreciate the power of the Holy Spirit by developing his theme: **To Have a Relationship with the Holy Spirit and His Mercy is Everlasting**. Cost is \$150. Make your reservation now. And consider bringing a friend. Contact Charles Kielkopf at (614) 268-0175 or kielkopf.1@osu.edu.

marriage preparation volunteers

Engaged couples in our diocese need your help. Volunteer to serve on the diocesan **Marriage Preparation Team** as a speaker and presenter. Present virtues-based topics to engaged couples preparing for the sacrament of Matrimony. **If you are married and have wisdom and experience to share**, you qualify. Contact Kathleen Hall at khall@columbuscatholic.org or (614) 241-2560.

new diocesan website

The Diocese of Columbus' new website—www.columbuscatholic.org—provides greater access to news and information from both the Catholic Times and Catholic News Service, improved navigation and search capabilities, language translation, mobile device compatibility, and other features. Bookmark www.columbuscatholic.org in your computer, tablet, or smartphone—it's **your new gateway to everything Catholic** in central, southern and

eastern Ohio. For information, contact George Jones at gjones@columbuscatholic.org.

more to think about

spirit of peace clinical counseling

Julie Stalford, a parishioner at St Bernadette, a recent graduate with a Master of Arts degree in clinical social work from Ohio University and a licensed professional clinical counselor, is hanging out a shingle at St Bernadette as a clinical therapist. A member of the Spirit of Peace Counseling Services of Columbus, she is **offering Catholic/Christian counseling services** for greater Fairfield county here at St Bernadette.

Anyone can contact Julie to schedule an appointment by calling (210) 781-0254 or by emailing julie.sopcc@gmail.com. The Spirit of Peace website is spiritofpeaceclinicalcounseling.com.

safe environment reminder

A complete copy of the **parish safe environment policies and procedures**, including the diocesan policies and guidelines for parish youth ministry is available by calling either parish office.

All adults who have not previously attended a **Protecting God's Children training session sponsored by the diocese** of Columbus are urged to do so. A schedule of training sessions can be found at www.virtus.org.

Articles on **sexual abuse prevention** are available at www.virtus.org. All adults are encouraged to access this website monthly and read the articles. Contact information for **reporting suspected abuse of minors** can be acquired from the parish office.

The **PGC workshop** is necessary for anyone who will be working around children. It is offered free of charge, on a regular basis, at churches and schools throughout the Diocese. Coming classes will be held at St John Parish in Logan on Aug 26, at Seton Parish in Pickerington on Sept 9, at St Francis in Newark on Oct 7, and at many other locations in the Columbus area. For a complete listing of workshops and dates, and/or to register online for a session, visit www.virtus.org.

confessions & weekday Mass nearby		These times sometimes change, though, so be sure to call ahead!					
parish	confessions	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Bremen St Mary	8 AM Sunday		8:20 AM				
Lancaster St Bernadette	5:30 PM Thurs, 3 PM Sat; 8:30 AM on 1 st Sat	8:20 AM		8:20 AM	6 PM	8:20 AM	1 st 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	VARIABLE	NOON	7 PM	NOON	NOON	
Circleville St Joseph	4 PM Saturday	9 AM	7 PM	9 AM		9 AM	
Logan St John	4 PM Saturday	8 AM	8 AM	9 AM		8 AM	9 AM

Some Thoughts About a New School Year

It's about to begin. Although it might not feel like it to some folks, that is a good thing. Really. Of course, a person can learn things outside school. In fact, one of the main lessons schools have to offer is how to continue to learn once a person has completed schooling. In the six years I was director of continuing education for the priests of the Columbus diocese, that was something that was constantly on my mind. It wasn't that the seminaries didn't do a good job of preparing priests, but that more needed to be learned—much of what a priest needed to learn would only “take” after the seminarians were ordained. That is the way it works with all schooling: A vital part of any school's task is to hand on the techniques necessary for continued learning. It is that way with the process our young people are involved in, whether at public schools, parochial school, diocesan schools, or colleges and universities.

And it is certainly that way with the education and formation of lay Catholics. Our parishes provide religious education in our Parish School of Religion (“PSR” ... I think I missed the chapter when we started calling it that instead of “CCD”, or Confraternity of Christian Doctrine!) and at our own parish school and at St Mary Middle School and Fisher Catholic High School.

We do PSR mostly on Sundays for the younger children, so many of the them can meet right after Mass at St Mary and right before Mass at St Bernadette.

Our high school age youths have definitely not learned all they need to know about their Catholic Faith. If they stop at age 14, it is hard to see when and how they will learn what they need to know to embrace their Faith as adult Catholics. It is in adolescence and adulthood that they meet the challenges to the Catholic Faith. So, Faith formation has to continue through high school (and, for that matter, through college, through professional school, through the adult years).

Our children do not always have the luxury of only having to make one trip each week to satisfy both duties: The duty to attend Mass and the duty to attend PSR. This shouldn't come as a surprise: They don't always have that one-stop luxury for school, for 4H, for FFA, for band, for sports, for jobs, for clubs, indeed, for anything that is worth their while. If adjustments need to be made, they and their parents need to make an extra effort.

The volunteers who make our PSR happen do a spectacular job. They are the unsung heroes of our parishes. They understand that this is the work of the whole parish, not just of the parents of the children involved. Please say a word of thanks, of encouragement for what they are doing and let them know of your willingness to help.

Parents need a word of encouragement too. What happens in PSR will be much more likely to take root when parents do their best to see that their young ones get to PSR and Mass every Sunday. And when they talk with their children about what they are learning.

Sometimes children say they don't want to go to Mass or to PSR. Well, of course they don't; any young person will resist obligatory things at some stage. And any parent will be tempted to cave in at some stage. The key thing to remember is that Mass attendance and religious education participation are duties. Our teachers try to make them as good an experience as possible. But the criterion must not be whether the duties are entertaining or enjoyable or whether the young people like the teacher. This is our Faith we are talking about. It is the basis of our life. And parents commit themselves at their children's Baptism to pass it on. They can only do that if they stand firm.

Sometimes parents are tempted to think that getting the kids to Mass and PSR most of the time is good enough. It really isn't. There is only a very little time in PSR classes to pass on a rough outline of this Christian mystery. If the children are studying the seven sacraments, for instance, and only get to the classes that deal with six of them, what are we to say? That they have gotten 84% of the sacraments? An 84 is a respectable grade in some contexts. But in this context it leaves a defective presentation of the sacramental life of Catholic Christians. Miss one person of the Holy Trinity or one of the ten commandments, and you have a defective Faith life. You won't have gotten to know God. Necessary absence (for sickness, for instance) is regrettable. A special effort to make up for what is missed is necessary. But it doesn't make the learning any less vital. Or require any less effort.

Sometimes high school students are led to believe that, because they have already been confirmed, they don't need to continue in religious education. That makes the same kind of sense as does saying that once a child has learned to read and write, to add and subtract, she / he doesn't need to go on to high school. The three R's are fundamental, but they are just the beginning; they just aren't the whole story.

For Confirmation is not a graduation out of something. It is the fortifying gift of the Holy Spirit of Jesus who comes upon us to deepen us and strengthen us in the life of grace. It is an unintentionally misleading coincidence that Confirmation is usually received in our country at the end of middle school. It is not putting a cap on something, but putting new vitality in the growth in the strenuous effort to become and be a Catholic Christian.

Our parishes' young people are wonderful, extraordinarily good folks. But each of them is a work in progress. Childhood and adolescence are not always easy times, but they are times when important things happen in a person's life; patterns get established that last a lifetime. I thank God that our young folks seem to be the sort of people who don't want to squander that time. They want to be all they can be and they want to take advantage of what the Church in our parishes has to offer—and will be developing!—to help form them as his children equipped to face a world that doesn't know him.

— *Father Kessler*



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