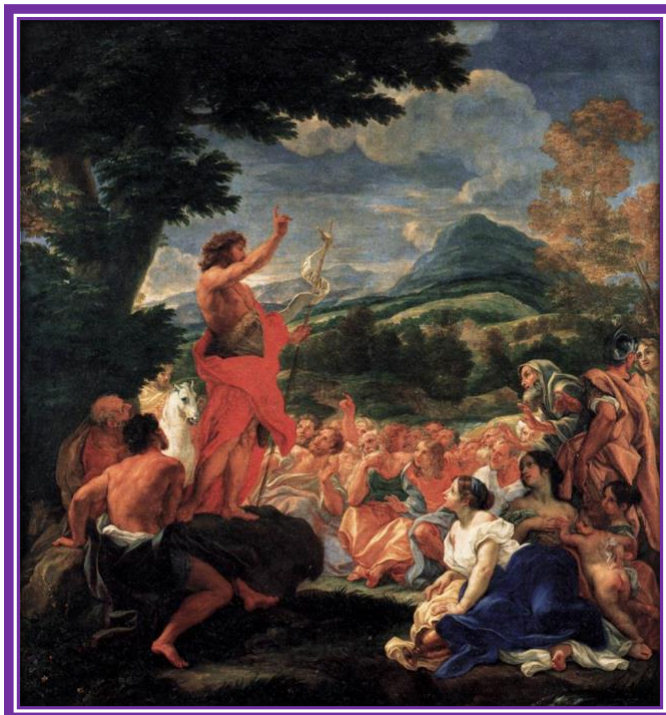


# Bremen St Mary Parish

## Lancaster St Bernadette Parish



### **The Preaching of Saint John the Baptist**

A man came, sent by God. His name was John.  
He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light,  
so that everyone might believe through him.  
He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

*John 1:6-7*

### **The Third Sunday of Advent**

December 17, 2017

## St Bernadette Parish.

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

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

cover picture: **The Baptism of Jesus**

## St Mary Parish.

602 Marietta Street (740) 569 • 7738  
BREMEN, OH 43107

a watercolor painted between 1886-1894 by James Joseph Jacques Tissot  
now in the Brooklyn Museum

### our parishes

**Father Thomas Kessler** (614) 634-0499 [wnthomaskessler@icloud.com](mailto:wnthomaskessler@icloud.com)  
*pastor*

#### at St Bernadette Parish

**Jeff Carpenter** (740) 681-9918 [carpenter.277@osu.edu](mailto:carpenter.277@osu.edu)  
*deacon*

**Mark Scarpitti** (740) 438-3970 [dcn.mark@frontier.com](mailto:dcn.mark@frontier.com)  
*deacon*

**Ann Essman** (740) 653-9347 [aessman001@att.net](mailto:aessman001@att.net)  
*pastoral minister*

**Steve Huber** (740) 654-3137 [shuber57@yahoo.com](mailto:shuber57@yahoo.com)  
*facilities coordinator*

**Angie & Kent Kerns** (740) 654-2588 [kwkerns@gmail.com](mailto:kwkerns@gmail.com)  
*religious education*

**Liz Latorre** (740) 243-1872 [lizlatorre@gmail.com](mailto:lizlatorre@gmail.com)  
*liturgical music*

*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** [b\\_factor@lancaster.k12.oh.us](mailto:b_factor@lancaster.k12.oh.us)  
*liturgical music*

**Sarah Borah** [sborah920@gmail.com](mailto:sborah920@gmail.com)

*The St Mary Parish office* is at the church vestibule.

Hours are 9-11 AM, Tuesdays.

602 Marietta St, Bremen, OH 43107 (740) 569-7738

#### at both parishes

**Stephen Karnes** (740) 654-1893 [stbernbook@gmail.com](mailto:stbernbook@gmail.com)  
*business manager*

**Kathy Kehnast** (740) 654-1893 [stbernparish@yahoo.com](mailto:stbernparish@yahoo.com)  
*pastoral coordinator*

**Julie & Chase** (740) 808-7294 [maristellaspirt@gmail.com](mailto:maristellaspirt@gmail.com)  
**Stalford**  
*youth ministry*

#### Saint Bernadette School

**Pam Eltringham** (740) 654-3137 [peltring@cducation.org](mailto:peltring@cducation.org)  
*principal*

**Barb Huber** (740) 654-3137 [bhuber@cducation.org](mailto:bhuber@cducation.org)  
*secretary*

*Saint Bernadette School* is located at

1325 Wheeling Rd, Lancaster, OH 43130-8701

[stbernlan@cducation.org](mailto:stbernlan@cducation.org).

[www.stbernadetteschool.com](http://www.stbernadetteschool.com)

Lancaster St Vincent de Paul Society [www.svdplancasteroh.com](http://www.svdplancasteroh.com)  
Diocese of Columbus [www.columbuscatholic.org](http://www.columbuscatholic.org)  
Angels Nurture & Disciple (AND) [www.angelsAND.org](http://www.angelsAND.org)

### 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 will be in January. If you are expecting or have a new born or somehow haven't gotten around to have an older child baptized, call Kathy to make plans now.

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 see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. 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 December the Pope Asks Us to Pray

That the elderly, sustained by families and Christian communities, may apply their wisdom and experience to spreading the faith and forming the new generations.

### Listen to God's Word and Honor His Saints

<b>Sunday, Dec 17,</b> <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	Isaiah 61:1-11	Luke 1
Mon, Dec 18	Jeremiah 23:5-8	Matt 1:18-25
Tues, Dec 19	Judges 13:2-25	Judith 71
Wed, Dec 20	Isaiah 7:10-14	Psalm 24
Thurs, Dec 21	Zephaniah 3:14-18	Psalm 33
<i>Saint Peter Canisius, priest &amp; doctor of the Church</i>		
Fri, Dec 22	1 Samuel 1:24-28	1 Sam 2
Sat, Dec 23	Malachi 3:1-24	Psalm 25
<i>Saint John of Kanty, priest</i>		
<b>Sunday, Dec 24,</b> <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	2 Samuel 7:1-16	Psalm 89
	Romans 16:25-27	<b>Luke 1:26-38</b>

### Mass Intentions This Week

Monday, Dec 18	8:20 AM	Wilford & Loretta Beiter	at St Bernadette
Tuesday, Dec 19	8:20 AM	George Foltz	at Bremen St Mary
Wednesday, Dec 20	8:20 AM	Robert Berens	at St Bernadette
Thursday, Dec 21	6 PM	deceased of the Sevigny family	at St Bernadette
Friday, Dec 22	8:20 AM	John & Ann Muetzel	at St Bernadette

## at Both Parishes

### Mass Schedule for Christmas

#### At St Mary in Bremen:

Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec 24, at 9 PM  
Christmas Day, Monday, Dec 25, at 9 AM

#### At St Bernadette:

Christmas Eve, Sunday, Dec 24, at 6 PM  
Midnight Mass at Midnight  
with carols at 11:30 PM  
Christmas Day, Monday, Dec 25, at 11 AM

### Parish School of Religion

At both St Bernadette and Bremen St Mary Parishes, PSR meets **each Sunday** at 9:30 AM. Catholic parents are reminded of their solemn moral duty to see that their children are properly and completely instructed in the Catholic Faith. They need to see that their **children attend regularly** (barring health or weather deterrents). Even if some weeks they are reluctant to attend, the children will find getting to know Jesus and his Church to be **an irreplaceable and joy-filled part of their upbringing**. And **parental firmness a blessing** that they may not acknowledge right away.

## Representatives

The pastor is **still** requested to appoint

- two parishioners from each parish to represent their parish on the Fairfield / Hocking / Pickaway County **deanery pastoral council** (DPC)  
The DPC meets **bi-monthly** on a Monday evening for about an hour at a different parish each meeting. Parishioners with some experience on parish pastoral council make especially good representatives because they can share and work together on concerns common to all of the parish communities.

He is on the lookout for St Bernadette parishioners to serve on the

- Lancaster **St Mary School Advisory Board** and
- Fisher Catholic High School Advisory Board**.

The school boards each meet **monthly** in the evening during the school year. They serve to keep communications happening between their own parish and the Catholic schools.

Each rep is a volunteer appointed by the pastor for a fixed term. A school advisory board member need not be a parent or an alum of the school concerned. They help keep the pastor and the corresponding councils in our own **parishes in the loop**. Several of the positions are already staffed, but we always need a "strong bench" of people to help. Let Fr Kessler of your interest.

## Catholic Foundation News

Giving becomes convenient and personal with a **Donor Advised Fund**, which offers a **hands-on approach to philanthropy**. This fund invests your charitable gift to grow tax-free for future giving. It lets you make contributions to multiple Catholic or public organizations from one account, and it can be set up with as little as \$5,000. It is convenient and flexible, with these key benefits:

- Immediate tax deduction with the option of deferred charitable distribution
- Consolidates your charitable giving, providing administrative convenience
- Flexibility to choose multiple grant recipients
- Ability to add to the fund at any time
- Make donations anonymously, if desired
- Wish to create a family legacy of faith – name your children, grandchildren or other loved ones as successor advisors to the fund

Generosity and acts of charity are family traits. You are encouraged to engage all generations of your family in your giving. For information contact Scott Hartman at The Catholic Foundation at (614) 443-8893 or [shartman@catholic-foundation.org](mailto:shartman@catholic-foundation.org).

## Seasonal Giving and Seasonal Getting

Packets of offering **envelopes for 2018** are available on the table in the parish hall. If you do not find a packet with your name, take one of the packets without a name on it but with the lowest serial number. Write your name and the number of the packet on the paper for new envelopes. Just after Christmas we will mail out the remaining packets at a cost of over \$3-4 apiece. Please save your parish that expense by picking up your packet today.

When you have taken your envelopes, please also take a **2018 Catholic calendar**, given to our parishes courtesy of **Morgan Funeral Home** in Bremen and **Sheridan Funeral Home** in Lancaster and **Frank E. Smith Funeral Home** in Lancaster. It wouldn't hurt to thank these businesses for their generosity.

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent (next Sunday) you could also pick up a copy of the book **Joy to the World: How Christ's Coming Changed Everything (and Still Does)** by Scott Hahn. This book is a **Christmas gift for parishioners**. We have 100 copies which will be **available at the main Church doors at Christmas** on a first come, first served basis.

## So Says the IRS

Remember: Donations must be received by the parish on or before Dec 31 for them to be credited to 2017. So says the IRS.

## Christmas Flowers for your Parish Church

Donations to help defray the cost of Christmas flowers can be given to the Lord in memory of a loved one. Just put your gift in an envelope with the name of the loved one on the front and drop it in the collection basket in either parish.

## A Better Way to Ring in the New Year

You could shout "Happy New Year" from your front porch. You could go to a party or to a bar. You could sit at home and watch television. You could be with family or friends. You could be alone and maudlin. Or you could just go to church and, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, begin the New Year in the happiness of prayer. A few parishioners are going to gather at St Bernadette for an hour of prayer, from 11:30 PM on Dec 31 until 12:30 AM on Jan 1. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the main altar. There will be no refreshments, no bells rung, or fireworks exploded. We will not watch our clocks or interrupt prayer to greet each other at the turn of the year. It will just be a quiet hour or so of adoration of the Eucharistic Lord, of atonement for our sins of the preceding year, and of fervent request for peace, prosperity, and renewal of our respect for the holy gift of life in the new year. Church doors will be open shortly before 11:30, and close up again soon after 12:30.

## at Bremen St Mary Parish

### Celebrate the Merriness of the Season

Please join us for the Bremen St Mary Epiphany Gathering on Saturday, Jan 6, at 6 PM in the Parish Hall. This is an event for all the adults and children who worship at our parish—especially the new ones! Dinner will be served, but we will only know how many to prepare for when you sign up on the bulletin board in the vestibule telling how many will attend. Call Jodie Schmelzer with any questions at (740) 569-9343.

### St Vincent de Paul

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Bremen takes up a collection on the first Sunday of each month. St Vincent always needs members. Call Angi Skinner at (740) 438-0027 if you can help.

### Ministry at Mass at St Mary

<i>The third week of Advent December 17-24</i>	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion	gifts	sacristan / usher
<b>Sunday, Dec 17, at 8:30 AM 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	Jeanne Schmelzer	Reagan Conrad, Charles Schoenlaub	Leo Kunkler Sr, Pam Redding, Jim Schmelzer	Maurice Schmelzer family	Jim Schmelzer
<b>Sunday, Dec 24, at 8:30 AM 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	Barb Van-Fossen Cook	Spencer Conrad, Alex Schmelzer	Neil Boch, Angi Skinner, Barb Van-Fossen Cook	James Noll Jr family	Jim Schmelzer
<b>Sunday, Dec 24, at 9 PM Christmas Vigil Mass</b>	Paul Kunkler	Reagan & Spencer Conrad	Wyatt Borah, Irene Kunkler, Pam Redding	Paul Kunkler family	Chris Redding
<b>Christmas Day Monday, Dec 25, at 9 AM</b>	Jeanne Schmelzer	Alex Schmelzer, Abby Skinner	Neil Boch, Leo Kunkler Sr, Dismas Schmelzer	James Noll Jr family	Jim Schmelzer

## Decorate the Church for Christmas

Parishioners are welcome to help decorate the church for Christmas on Sunday, Dec 24, immediately following the 8:30 AM Mass. Coffee and doughnuts will be provided.

## at St Bernadette Parish

### Ministry at Mass at St Bernadette

<i>The third week of Advent December 17-24</i>	lector	servers	extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion
<b>Saturday, Dec 16, at 4 PM 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Vigil Mass</b>	Becky Kuhn	Kendall Cox, Becca Fuller, Addy Myers	Rosalie DeFillippo, Pat Gins, Joyce Guenther, Lee Guinan, Kathy Kehmast, Denise McGuire
<b>Sunday, Dec 17, at 11 AM 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	Terry Carpenter	Logan & Tori Loy, Daniel Turner	Tara Craaybeck, Pat Dreyer, Nancy Griffith, Jim & Rita Merk, Ben Peters
Monday, 8:20 AM	Mary Jane Vajen	Isabell Lazar, Olivia Reynolds	Patricia Dreyer, Kathy Kehmast
Wednesday, 8:20 AM	Bob Christy	Kyndra Nagle, Daschel Neighbor	Angie Christy, Mary Jane Vajen
Thursday, 6 PM	Kathy Kehmast	Morgan Cox, Silus Hopkins	Lee Guinan, Paul Lonergan
Friday, 8:20 AM	Jim Merk	Hyde O'Rielly, Amelia Robertson	Rita Merk, Mary Jane Vajen
<b>Saturday, Dec 23, at 4 PM 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Vigil Mass</b>	Teresa Scarpitti	Brianna Hilyard, Samantha Kerns, Joey Mannella	Susan Garrett, Marguerite Grimm, Jim & Becky Kuhn, Sandy Landefeld, Craig Shaw
<b>Sunday, Dec 24, at 11 AM 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	John Hartig	Anna Hartig, Gunner Robertson, Jack Tencza	Teresa Carpenter, Jean Robertson, Larry Sanford, Anna Sevigny, David Shonk
<b>Sunday, Dec 24, at 6 PM Christmas Vigil Mass</b>	Patrick Gins	Addy Myers, Brooke & Bryson Vogel	Rosalie DeFillippo, Lee Guinan, Ben Peters, Teresa Scarpitti, Craig Shaw, Becky Wickham
<b>Christmas Midnight Mass (carols begin at 11:30 PM)</b>	Marguerite Grimm	Dominic & Emeline Neighbor, Brennan Quaintance	John & Teresa Hartig, Angie Kerns
<b>Christmas Day Monday, Dec 25, at 11 AM</b>	David Shonk	Eve Darfus, Avee & Drew Solt	Jim & Rita Merk, Anna Sevigny

### St Bernadette Midnight Mass

Midnight Mass is a beautiful tradition of welcoming our Lord's birth in the "wee hours" of the morning. St Bernadette is a parish that maintains the tradition of a Mass at Midnight. The Choir, joined by a brass ensemble, will begin with a vigil at 11:30 featuring a variety of Christmas carols. Consider starting a new tradition in your family by welcoming Jesus with us at Midnight Mass.

### Friends Forever

The next Friends Forever gathering happens on Thursday, Dec 21, at noon at St Bernadette. This is a lunch time gathering on a Thursday each month for seasoned citizens. Everyone is welcome. For details about the Advent Pot Luck, call Ann Essman at (740) 654-1893.

## Advent Drive for St Vincent de Paul

The Lancaster St Vincent de Paul Society tells us that **their biggest need these days** is for non-perishable foods, paper products (kleenex, paper towels, toilet paper), personal hygiene products (deodorant, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes), and laundry products including detergent. So that's what they ask us to provide. Don't worry about too much of any of these items. **There won't be too much**, for the Society will share surplus items with the St Francis Center in McArthur. This drive will last through the four Sundays of Advent. Our drop off point will be in the vestibule between the school entrance and the church. The Society has a new website; you can learn about the many activities of the Lancaster St Vincent de Paul Society at [www.svdplancasteroh.com](http://www.svdplancasteroh.com).

Because of all the activities at this time of year, the members of the Lancaster St Vincent de Paul Conference have decided **not to have a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday collection** on Dec 30 & 31. Their next 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday collection will be on Apr 28 & 29. They thank us for our support and generosity this year. They could not continue their mission without it.

## Sandwich Saturday

School has started and the students are serving our community by participating in the "Sandwich Saturday" program. This is a service project for students to live their discipleship by making **sandwiches for Foundation Dinners**, usually on **the last Thursday of each month**. The kids begin this service from an early age. Monetary donations, and donations of bread, lunch meat and wrapped cheese slices are always welcome and can be made through the school or parish office. Contact the school office for information at (740) 654-3137.

## Here and There

### EWTN Advent & Christmas Programming

EWTN brings you live Christmas Eve and Christmas Day **Masses from Rome and the Basilica of the National Shrine in Washington, DC**. They will air inspiring musical performances, specials for children and teens, and new holiday presentations for all the family. Watch or listen to EWTN TV & Radio on your local channel, online, or on your smartphone. For information, go to [ewtn.com](http://ewtn.com).

### Angels Nurture & Disciple (AND)

**Angels Nurture & Disciple (AND)** reaches out to single mothers to provide emotional support and spiritual guidance in the form of a **Guardian Angel** (a mentor) at the most critical time in the life of women who have chosen life for their unborn babies. Have you ever been in such a woman's shoes? Or known someone you cared about who was? Perhaps you can help a single mother in need. A young lady, who recently gave birth to twins and moved into her first apartment, needs these gently used or new home items:

bathroom towels   drinking glasses   a toddler bed frame  
a vacuum cleaner   a television   end tables  
curtains   a coffee table.

If you could assist with any of these items or donate a gift card to purchase home goods, email Kristin Garrabrant at [Kristin@angelsAND.org](mailto:Kristin@angelsAND.org) or call/text at (740) 475-9145.

### Holy Land Pilgrimage

Have you considered adding a new dimension of understanding regarding your Christian history and the life of Jesus? Father Nic Ventura invites you to join him on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Israel. Travelers will experience the places where Jesus walked,

lived, taught, and performed miracles. Mass will be celebrated daily at various holy sites. The dates for this spiritual journey are Feb 21-Mar 2. The cost is \$3179 per person with breakfast, dinner, fees, and tips included. For information, contact Aimee Walton [frnicpilgrimage@gmail.com](mailto:frnicpilgrimage@gmail.com) or (740) 225-6136.

### Pilgrimage to Washington DC

Join **Bishop Monforton and the Franciscan TOR Sisters of the Diocese of Steubenville** on a pilgrimage to Washington DC on Oct 24-26. Visit the shrine of St John Paul II, the National Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, Arlington Cemetery and the historic monuments of the nation's capital. The cost, which includes roundtrip motorcoach transportation, all tours and sightseeing, two nights hotel accommodation, daily Mass, and several meals is \$525. Space is limited, so book by Feb 1 by calling Sandy at (734) 565-8888 x 122 or book online at [www.ctscentral.net](http://www.ctscentral.net), trip code: 12596, group code: 7311.

## In the Diocese of Columbus

### Respect Life !

All over our country people are gathering on January 22 to remember the anniversary of the infamous Supreme Court decision permitting abortion. All over our country, the Church **observes a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children**. In Columbus, Bishop Campbell will celebrate the annual Respect Life Mass on Monday, Jan 22, at 10:30 AM at St Joseph Cathedral.

Following that Mass, from noon to 1 PM, Greater Columbus Right to Life invites you to the State Capital Building for a **Roe Remembrance in the Statehouse Atrium**. Allow extra time for new Statehouse security measures; stickers, signs, and weapons are not permitted inside. For information, visit [www.gertl.org/roe.html](http://www.gertl.org/roe.html). [www.usccb.org/prolife](http://www.usccb.org/prolife) or contact Social Concerns at (614) 241-2540.

### Building a Culture of Life A Conference on Respect for Life, Bioethics, Leadership

The Diocesan Office for Social Concerns, Marriage & Family Life Office, and Greater Columbus Right to Life will hold a two-day event featuring prominent **pro-life speakers** and offering **resources to build a culture of life**, at St Peter Church, 6899 Smoky Row Rd, Columbus, on Jan 26 & 27. One-day or two-day passes are available. For a list of speakers and to register, visit [www.gertl.org/lifeconference](http://www.gertl.org/lifeconference) or call (614) 241-2540.

### Men's Conference and Women's Conference

There are big events coming on Saturdays in February you won't want to miss. At each of these, Bishop Campbell will celebrate Mass and priests of the diocese will provide opportunities for Penance. There will be entertainment, interesting displays, and lots of fellowship with a thousand or two of the most interesting people in central Ohio. Put these days on your calendar now.

- Women of our diocese will gather on Feb 17. Their theme: "**Ask Jesus What He Wants from You and Be Brave.**" Speakers are Uju Ekeocha, Lisa Hendey, the Labodas, and Fr Mazanowski.
- Men will meet on Feb 24. And their theme: "**Cast Your Nets... Become Fishers of Men**" Speakers are Jeff Cavins, Dr Scott Hahn, and Chris Stefanick.

Both events will take place at the Ohio Expo Center at the Ohio fairgrounds in Columbus.

### Priest, Prophet, King

St Mary Parish in Lancaster will present the adult education DVD series “Priest, Prophet, King” by Bishop Robert Barron on Tuesday evenings from 7-8:30 PM from January through April. It will take a deep Biblical look at Jesus Christ as the ultimate priest, prophet, and king. You will better understand Jesus through Sacred Scripture, and realize your own priestly, prophetic, and kingly mission in Him. Registration is available at [stmarylanaster.org](http://stmarylanaster.org). Workbook cost is \$27. Registrations and payment are due to the St Mary Rectory by Tuesday, Jan 2. For information, contact Brian McCauley at (740) 653-5054.

### Catholic Record Society

The Catholic Record Society was founded in 1974 to preserve the history of the Church in central Ohio and to bring into better light **the heroism of those who laid the foundation of the diocese** of Columbus. The society supports the diocesan archives, maintaining a wide variety of materials and records. They respond to individuals seeking **genealogical information or historical information** on the diocese’s parishes, institutions, religious orders, and clergy. Meetings are held quarterly; members receive a calendar year subscription to the monthly bulletin, *Barquilla de la Santa Maria*, which contains records, accounts and illuminations of the people and events in the diocese. Membership is \$12 with digital bulletin, \$25 with paper bulletin; an institutional subscription is \$35. Send check or money order before Dec 31 to the Catholic Record Society, 197 E Gay Street, Columbus, OH, 43215. For information contact Mike Finn at [fcoolavin@aol.com](mailto:fcoolavin@aol.com), (614) 268-4166, or visit <http://www.columbuscatholic.org/catholic-record-society>.

### Catholic Man of the Year

The Catholic Men’s Luncheon Club is accepting nominations for the Diocese of Columbus 2018 Catholic Man of the Year. This annual award—to be presented by Bishop Campbell on Friday, Feb 2—recognizes one lay man who, through his daily actions, words, and prayers, exemplifies the “**good and faithful servant**”.

The recipient will share his personal testimony during the ceremony. Nominations will be accepted through Dec 29. For details, nomination instructions, and the required nomination form, go to [www.catholicmensministry.com](http://www.catholicmensministry.com). Email the completed nomination form and up to five supporting testimonials to [catholicmanoftheyear@gmail.com](mailto:catholicmanoftheyear@gmail.com).

### Natural Family Planning

Whether God is calling you to try **to achieve or to postpone pregnancy**, Natural Family Planning (NFP) can help a married couple live God’s plan for love and life, while strengthening the marriage relationship. Engaged and married couples can learn NFP. Go to [www.columbuscatholic.org/natural-family-planning](http://www.columbuscatholic.org/natural-family-planning) or contact the Marriage and Family Life Office at (614) 241-2560.

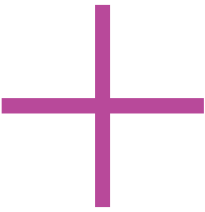
### Christmas Catholic Charities Collection

The annual Catholic Charities Christmas Collection allows our diocese to meet a variety of basic needs directly and through diocesan agencies and organizations including JOIN (Joint Organization for Inner-City Needs), St Stephen’s Community House, Catholic Social Services, St Francis Center, St Lawrence Haven, St Vincent Family Center, and the Society of St Vincent de Paul. You can help share in this important work by generously supporting the Catholic Charities collection next Sunday. It will make Christmas celebrations in many central Ohio homes merrier.

### Marriage Encounter Weekend

Come to a Marriage Encounter weekend and learn ways to use your marriage’s ups and downs to deepen your love for each other and for God. Why not **try a Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend**? The next weekend in central Ohio is Feb 16-18. For information or to register, contact Paul or Marilou Clouse at (614) 834-6880 or visit [www.wmcecolumbus.org](http://www.wmcecolumbus.org).

Remaining Advent Penance Services			
Bremen St Mary	Sunday	Dec 17	3 PM
Sugar Grove St Joseph	Tuesday	Dec 19	7 PM



Weekly Confessions & Weekday Mass							
But these times sometimes change, so be sure to call ahead!							
parish	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	penance
<b>Bremen St Mary</b>	<b>8:20</b>						<b>8 Sun</b>
<b>Lancaster St Bernadette</b>	<b>8:20</b>		<b>8:20</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8:20</b>	9 on 1 <sup>st</sup> Sat	<b>5:30 Thu, 3 Sat, 8:30 on 1<sup>st</sup> Sat</b>
<i>Lancaster St Mary</i>	7	9	7	9			4 Sat
<i>Lancaster St Mark</i>	8	8	6	8	8		5:30 Sat
<i>Sugar Grove St Joseph</i>	VARIES	NOON	7	NOON	NOON		½ hour before Mass
<i>Circleville St Joseph</i>	9	7	9		9		4 Sat
<i>Logan St John</i>	8	8	9		8	9	4 Sat
<i>Fisher Catholic HS</i>						2:40 on Fri	2 on 1 <sup>st</sup> Fri

# The Worthy One Baptizing the Unworthy One?

A lady asked me not so long ago why Jesus was ever baptized at all. That's a good question. As she noted, the baptism that John was doling out was for people who were acknowledging their sins. What does that have to do with Jesus? He didn't commit any sins.

The people who came out to the River Jordan (the shortest driving distance from Jerusalem today is 27 miles) had gone to a lot of trouble to come out from their towns to hear this strange preacher tell them what no one ever wants to hear: that they were sinners. And yet they came. And he was stern with them. John, the desert hermit who had gathered a crowd, spoke to them in a way that should have angered them and sent them away. He called them a "brood of vipers." It is not very complimentary to tell people that they are a family of poisonous snakes! Not the sort of words to build a crowd with. He asked them who told them to come to the wilderness and "flee the wrath that is to come." What wrath? And why, indeed had they come out to hear this negative message?

And yet they did come, and they asked him what they should do. They accepted his judgment that a time of reckoning with God was about to come.

John told these sinners to repent. That means to rethink the way they had been living, to change their ways. They not only went way out of their way to hear that. They went through the ritual that was to prepare them for that change. It is an amazing story in all four gospels. They believed that, somehow, God was coming. A wave of humility went through those people. John was fascinating ... or at least his message was. Even the corrupt king, Herod, who had been excoriated by John for sharing a wife with his own brother, felt that fascination.

John's baptism was a ritual washing for people who were sinners, whom John had told they needed to change their ways. Why change? To "prepare the way of the Lord." John said the Lord's "kingdom" was about to come. The Gospels don't tell us anything John had to say about what this kingdom amounted to. John hadn't explained himself when he leapt for joy in the womb of his mother over the presence of that king (who was in the womb of *his* mother). He didn't explain what he meant when he said of Jesus "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world." And he didn't say why he was "unworthy to loosen the sandals" of this one who was to "come after him." Perhaps John didn't completely understand what his own words about the lamb and the kingdom meant or know what was so wonderful about the other baby when he was in his presence. We shouldn't expect a prophet to know all the ins and outs of the message he is prophesying about.

But then the Lord came up to him. He, too, sought baptism. Here's how St Matthew reports that encounter:

John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him.

So, the lady who asked me why Jesus would undergo this ritual for sinners, was in good company: even John the Baptist asked that question. And Jesus' answer was one that had to grow on us. Jesus didn't explain much either. Not right away. But the meaning gradually dawned on the Church. Jesus, who never sinned and never acted like a sinner, took the sin of the world on himself. And that is how he died—like a sinner, like a criminal slave.

Baptism had started as a ritual of washing away what is morally soiled. But it takes on much more meaning later on.

Saint Paul told the Romans that

we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.

Saint Paul saw Jesus as having taken on himself our sinful humanity. Without becoming a sinner, he took on our slavery to sin.

Christ Jesus, ... though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

That's what is so wonderful about Jesus. He has taken our sinfulness on himself. He announces that at his baptism. John may not immediately have understood what it means to say "it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." But that is what this keynote ritual is pointing to: the sacrifice of the Cross.

— *Father Kessler*

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