



Our Lady of Lourdes Church

Parish Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 2
September 10, 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

This edition of the Parish Newsletter is focused on an important moment for the life of our parish. It contains a number of different mediations on what a parish mission is and why we need it.

Our Parish Mission

Sunday October 5th - Wednesday October 9th
7:00P.M.

Guest preacher:

Fr. Paul Bryan, C.S.S.R.

Mission Coordinator

Sister Mary Snitsky, O.S.F.

What is a Parish Mission?

What is a parish mission? A Parish Mission is a Catholic revival! It is a time to stir into flames the embers of our faith, which have often grown cold. It is a time of teaching, a reminding us of the important truths of our faith. A Parish Mission is a time of renewal for a parish. A Parish Mission is a chance for a large number of parishioners who can't get away for a retreat, to experience within the context of our busy schedules, the power of God's love. A Parish Mission is a chance to hear different voices, and to hear through them the loving voice of God.

A Parish Mission is a great time for the welcoming back of those who have been far from the Church. We, their friends have to hold them in prayer, and be gently persuasive in our invitations to them, to come to the mission. An important part of the Parish Mission will be a Penance Service with a number of confessors, to bring us to the mercy of God.

A Parish Mission has these ingredients

Prayer
Preaching
Penance
Grace
Forgiveness
Encouragement
Evangelizing
Hope

A Poem on our Parish Mission

Embers Still Glow

A fireplace that burned
With embracing warmth
And intimacy
On a winter's night
Has become
An ash-filled brick box.
Cold as a cave,
Sad and lonely.
The flame of the night before
A memory, distant as the stars.

But there in the cold darkness
Embers still glow.
They must be poked
And prodded, and bellowed
Back to life

We once were a blazing fire
Of innocent love
Remember First Communion?
Burning with
The joy of receiving Jesus
Singing from the heart

"O Lord I am not worthy
That Thou shouldst come to me
But speak the words of comfort
My spirit healed shall be"
We sang with pure joy.

Remember a high school retreat,
Facing down death in a war,
The birth of a child
Moving you to praise God
For the miracle in your arms.

Then life got complicated
Mortgages, bills, kids braces
Taxes, the rat race,
Taking care of kids, and aging parents too.
The estrangement of hearts under the same roof.
We seek relief

A couple of drinks with the guys
To blow off steam
Pity parties with other sad wives
Getting older
Sad, confused, angry
All at the same time.
What went wrong?
Where did I lose the way?

Embers Still Glow (cont.)

Where is the fire?
What happened?
Is that all there is?

A Mission stirs the ashes
Of our soul's fireplace
To make us blaze again.
Paper and twigs and logs.

The paper of **the Scriptures,**

The twigs **of Grace**

The wood of **the Cross**

Stirring the embers of **my soul.**

The preacher's breath bellows life,
The confessor sparks
The cold cave of the sinner's soul,
With the burning love of God,
Setting hearts
Ablaze again.

Once a 12year old girl
Thought to be dead,
Was just asleep Jesus said.
He woke her and she was hungry;
For food
And more than food,

For Jesus the Bread of Life.

Lazarus dead four days
Entombed already
Bound and tied
With the stench of death
Called from the darkness of death
alive again, forever changed

God is with us
During this week of grace,
This time of plentiful redemption
He wants to call us from our tombs
And make the fire blaze again.

Fr. John McKenna, C.S.S.R.

Our Parish Mission

A Catholic Revival

A Parish Examination of Conscience

The book of Revelation is a very hard book to understand. In the first pages of the book, there are messages written to different Christian communities. Messages to the 7 churches. The churches are Ephesus, Smyrna, Perganmum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. Lets for our consideration call these parishes. Each parish has a history, has a corporate personality. Each has great virtues, and each has pastoral situations that need to be addressed. These messages to the Churches (parishes) are like an examination of conscience for us as a community of faith. I want us to mediate on one message this week, the message to the Church as Laodicea Revelation 3:14-22

"This is the message from the Amen, the faithful and true witness who is the origin of all that God has created, 'I know what you have done. I know that you are neither hot nor cold. How I wish you were either one or the other. But because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth. You say, I am rich, I have all I need, but you do not know how miserable and pitiful you are! You are poor, naked and blind. Buy white clothing to cover your shameful nakedness. Buy ointment to put on your eyes that you may see. Be earnest and turn over your sins. Behold, I stand at the door and knock, I will come into his house to eat and drink with him and he will eat with me."

Ouch! Are we in Our Lady of Lourdes like the community of Laodicea? Are we neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm? Are we like warm stale beer or cold pizza? Are we like a fireplace the day after a blazing fire had been burning, with embers that are not giving off heat, but not yet extinguished? Do we, do I as pastor look at you and see that we have a nice church, a good collection, money in the bank, all sort of nice activities, a good web site, but are we, (am I) missing the essentials? Are we too comfortable? Do I preach only sermons that will delight, but not challenge? Is church, our Catholic faith a way of life, or just another nice little diversion, the civic thing to do to give good example to our children?

Someone once said, we here in the United States are a Christian country, almost four thousand miles coast to coast, a Christian nation, but our Christianity is an inch deep and hasn't permeated the deepest parts of our society or even our own souls. If we feel comfortable with living as a Catholic in our nation today, something is wrong.

Can we admit that we are not as centered or as grounded as we would like to be? Can we admit that the noise and the rush of our lives have hurt us? A Mission is a chance to slow down, and to get refocused.

Block out these four days on your schedule. **Sunday October 5th through Wednesday October 8th**. We will not have any other conflicting meetings for our parish that week. Like a laser, the love of God will be focused in on us and on our parish. My we put ourselves in the healing light of God's love.

Fr. John McKenna.C.S.S.R.

Our Parish Mission

A Catholic Revival

Sunday October 5th till Wednesday October 8th

7:00 PM

In a Mission, the seed, the powerful seed is the word of God. Jesus is the Word of God who became one of us, in Jesus. His word is a word of love. The whole mission experience is like a magnifying glass being pointed at a pile of dried leaves. In the focused love of God in our community, the dried leaves of our souls will become ablaze again.

I would like you to hold in your heart, 5 people that you love. These five people have been estranged from the Church, from our parish community. Some are wounded by the sinfulness of the church. There have been misunderstandings, a sense of betrayal. Others just got too busy and are running around in the rat race of life. We do not judge them. We love them in prayer. These five will be the ones we will invite to come with us to the Mission. They might be like the paralyzed man in the Gospels, who is brought to Jesus by his friends.

Name them for yourself. Commit yourselves to love them unconditionally and to pray for them, and invite them to the Mission

We will have a basket in the front of the church to collect their names. We will put their names in the tabernacle, that most sacred place.

Each Friday until the Mission we will have a Holy Hour after the Mass to pray for our mission, and for these people.

Each Mass will have a special prayer for our parish mission.

Fr. John McKenna, C.S.S.R.

“Come Holy Spirit; enkindle in us
During this Mission week
The fire of Your Love.”

The Baltimore Baritones

Dave Morrocco

Rick Morrocco

Jim Seeberger

They grew up in the Highlandtown neighborhood of Baltimore. They went to the same high school. There they discovered the joys of music and singing together for the Lord. They will be singing at the Masses on:

Saturday October 4th and Sunday October 5th

Their singing will truly raise our minds and hearts to God. It will be a beautiful, uplifting way to begin this week of grace. Don't miss them

Hospitality and Greeters

We are in need of Greeters for all masses. If you are interested, see one of the Greeters or call Min 629-0367. Our Cookbook is going well, we hope to have it ready by the Christmas Bazaar. Thanks to all who took the time to give us favorite recipes and Ads. We are busy working on the Christmas Bazaar scheduled for November 8th. Money Raffle tickets will on sale September 28, 2008. We are working on a trip to the Baltimore Basilica and the Inner Harbor on October 11, 2008. The Halloween Party is October 24, and December 7th is the Baby Shower luncheon. Please check you weekly bulletin for more information on the above events.

Youth Group

The last 3months have seen a lot of activity as the youth ministry continues its focus of GROWTH through SPIRITUALITY, SOCIAL camaraderie, and SERVICE. The teens have been involved in continuing the tri-annual food drive that they initiated, coordinating with St. Vincent DePaul to set up their luncheon and making a financial contribution toward the good works of the Vincentians. We floated in the Nanticoke River Festival in our own "Nanticoke Nessie", danced our socks off at the sock hop and hiked and planted trees at Abbott's Mill. The youth ministry "pays forward" its many blessings by being available to help the Hospitality Committee in setting up and cleaning up for their numerous functions and in assisting individual parishioners move, do yard work and maintain their homes. We are looking forward to continuing the Youth Masses and introducing some contemporary music. We'll be organizing the parish again to try to remind folks to keep Christ in Christmas and

bring home a trophy from the Christmas parade by building a float. October will be an especially busy month as we attend the Mission and try to sneak in a little fun at the Mr. Pepper's Pumpkin Patch Maze in addition to our regular October activities.

Please remember to donate your aluminum cans (in the receptacle between the garage and the shed) so that we can continue to function self sufficiently. We are starting to gather energy for long-range plans for a trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference in Kansas City in November 2009.

Pastoral Care Ministry

Eucharistic ministers will bring Communion to the homebound and to those in hospitals and nursing homes. Please call the rectory for arrangements. An Anointing Mass is scheduled for Sunday, October 26 at 12:30 p.m. with luncheon to follow. This special Mass is celebrated each spring and fall and includes all those who are sick and all who are homebound. Anointing also is included in the 9:00 a.m. Mass on the first Saturday of each month.

Ministry Fair

Mark your calendars now for the weekend of Sept. 20th and 21st. The annual Ministry Fair will be held in the Parish Hall following all the Masses. The fair is a wonderful opportunity for parishioners to learn about the many ministries that make Our Lady of Lourdes thrive and flourish. New parishioners, in particular, are urged to attend and there will always be something new and inspiring to share with those who have visited the Fair in the past.

Each ministry will have a booth with various visuals to illustrate that particular group's function and to highlight its accomplishments during the past year. OLL boasts more than 30 active ministries in which members of all age groups and talents participate. Ministry members will be posted at each booth to explain their function and to educate and talk with attendees. Handouts will be available.

The fair is an open invitation to newcomers who might like to join one of the ministries. Our parish is experiencing a growth spurt and welcomes participation more than ever before.