

May 3, 2009 – Fourth Sunday of Easter – Vocation Sunday

Stewardship is a way of life. **Tithing is God's Plan for Giving:**

Tithing Income: April 26, 2009	\$ 6,740.50
April 27, 2008	\$ 8,606.75
Children's Offerings	\$ 8.50

Next week's tithing: Next week's tithing will again provide some additional funding for our recent Middle States Accreditation Team visit.

From the pastor: This weekend, our children receive their First Holy Communion. For the first time today, they receive Christ as He offers Himself to the Father (and to us) in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. This is the ultimate gift of self! Our commitment to tithing, while sometimes difficult, is our way of expressing our thanks to God by making our own sacrifices knowing that, just as Jesus' Sacrifice on the cross resulted in the Resurrection, so our sacrifices, made with love, are accepted by the Father and will reap a rich harvest for our own spiritual lives. Thank you for your faithful commitment to tithing – even in these difficult financial times.

Comments on Tithing from the pews: "We have become more involved in parish activities, including tithing, because we want to see the parish succeed in its service to the people."

My Good Deed for the Week: Here's what several of our young people offered as their tithe, in addition to their financial gift: A couple of 4th graders said: "I watched the garage sale for my Mom & Dad, I bought items for absent friends at Kid Connection." A couple of kindergartners said: "A couple of kindergartners said: "I cleaned my room, I painted cars for a friend." A 5th grader said: "I helped put out cow back in our field after it got out."

FROM THE PASTOR

Weekly Reflection: "Selective hearing" is a phrase we sometimes hear. It means "hearing what we want, and tuning out what we don't want to hear." Children have selective hearing when they can't "hear" a parent telling them to quit the computer game and do their homework – but they DO hear them calling them to dinner! Adults hear many "voices" in the course of a day, and choose which ones to pay attention to and which ones to tune out. This weekend, Jesus declares Himself to be the Good Shepherd whose flock must hear His voice. Moreover, we who hear His voice must follow it!

The hired man in the Gospel doesn't have a sufficiently deep or committed relationship to the sheep and so he runs away when danger comes. The Good Shepherd, however, is the One who owns the sheep and has much more at stake than the hired hand. The Good Shepherd is concerned about, cares for and protects the sheep even to the point of laying down His life. Jesus requires that His disciples do the same – lay down our lives. We cannot run away from danger – we must meet it head-on for the sake of God's beloved.

Taking up Jesus' mission means that we actually adopt selective hearing as a way of life. Now it is not a matter of following our own will or completing a task of our own liking. The selective hearing of Jesus' disciples is a sharpening of our hearing so that Jesus' voice is the guiding element in our daily lives. By sorting through all the voices we hear each day, and hearing in some of them the voice of Jesus, we know the flock to which we belong. Hearing Jesus' voice, we know that "[t]here is no salvation through anyone else" and we willingly lay down our lives so that others can come to the same awesome truth: a share in Easter life, the "love the Father has bestowed on us."

About Liturgy: Eucharist as "love feast": The *Didache* (The "Teachings"), a Church document probably originating from early in the 2nd Century, is divided into 2 parts. The first describes "two ways" of conducting oneself: do good and live, or do evil and die. The second part reports on Early Church services. Scholars are divided whether this really refers to a celebration of the Lord's Supper, or an *agape* (love) banquet. What is clear in both parts is that love and care for one another are essential for how Christians are to conduct themselves and how Christians are to worship.

Eucharist is a celebration of a love feast from two directions: First, in the Eucharist God expressed Divine Love and care for us in giving us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for our nourishment and strength. Each celebration makes present Jesus' supreme act of self-giving to us. From our direction, Eucharist is not a private act. It is always the act of the whole Church for the whole Church, an expression of the community's unity in the Body of Christ. This is why we celebrate First Holy Communion during a regular weekend Mass, rather than during a special liturgy on a different day. Eucharist is always a "love feast," reminding us that our first responsibility as baptized members of the Body of Christ is to do as Jesus taught us: love one another as He has loved us.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations: Today is *World Day of Prayer for Vocations*. The world-wide Church honors all Christian vocations. Jesus gave His life for us that we might know fullness of life. We pray for openness to God's call and to accept the gift of our Christian vocation. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, is with us to guide and protect us on our life journey. Please remember to pray for our young people, that they be open to the Lord's Call to serve Him as priests or consecrated religious.

PARISH NEWS & ACTIVITIES

Congratulations to our First Communicants: Ryan Aultz, Bella Carothers, Brady Dible, Nickolas Fike,

Katherine Kline, Leah Millard, Madeline Torquato, Hunter Vargo, Fernando Vazquez, Olivia Wolfgang.

Monthly Adult Education: We meet again in the church basement on Wednesday, May 6 following the 7pm Mass. This month's topic: "Outside the Church, there is no salvation." What does that really mean? What is our relationship with our Protestant brothers and sisters? How should we handle inter-faith marriages – should I go? You are invited to join us for this presentation and discussion.

Workshop, Sunday, May 17 after the 7:30am Mass for all committee members and those interested in helping at the July 25 **Octogenarian dinner.** Note change in date of the dinner from original date. Meeting will be held in the church basement.

The Women's Guild is planning a **Mother/Daughter Banquet**-Saturday, May 9 at 5:30pm in the school cafeteria. Chicken and Ham provided. Bring a covered dish. Open to all women of the parish. Not able to bring a daughter? Bring a friend. You may bring your casserole to the cafeteria before church. To register: Sign-up sheet in back of church or call the Church office. You may also call Timi Wills 248-1955 or Dottie Peiffer 248-1804.

The Knights of the Holy Temple will hold an initiation on Friday, May 8 beginning at 7pm – followed by a "movie night." ALL Knights must attend.

THANK YOU to ALL who helped with our annual "More Than an Auction." It was a great day! We will be tallying the results this week and report on our fundraising efforts in the weeks to come. Many thanks to all the committee chair people and especially Annemarie Swineford for being the event chair this year. Thanks to all who donated items for the auction, who helped set up, cook and sell food, staffed booths and cleaned up.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

- 3- St. Monica Rosary Prayer / 7pm / church
- 7 – RCIA / 7pm / office
- 8 – Knights of the Holy Temple Initiation / 7pm / Church
- 10 – St. Monica Rosary Prayer Group
- 16 – SVDP free meal w/ bingo / 11:30am / cafeteria
- 18 – SVDP meeting / 7pm / office
- 21 – Ascension of Our Lord
- 18 – Pastoral Parish Council / 7pm / office

Save the Date – Coming soon! Parish Picnic, Sunday, July 19. More information to follow

LITURGICAL NOTES

Memorialize the Sanctuary Lamp: The following dates are available: Dates available: May 31.

The Sanctuary Lamp this week is in honor of the birthday of Betty Hackett from her family.

Memorialize Flowers: If you would like to memorialize flowers at the altar or ambo (podium) please call the parish office to schedule. The next available dates are May, 17, 24, 31.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Sunday, May 3

7:30 AM Doris Helwig

11:00 AM Deceased of the Battista family

Monday, May 4

7:00 AM Frank Sciortino

Tuesday, May 5

7:00 AM Mid Rocco

Wednesday, May 6

7:00 PM Chris Albanues

Thursday, May 7

7:00 AM Fern Farola

9:00 AM SHS

Friday, May 8

7:00 AM Intention of Betty Hackett

Saturday, May 9

8:00 AM Madeline Wear

4:00 PM People of the Parish

Sunday, May 10

7:00 AM Clyde (Butch) Goss & Mabel Goss

11:00 AM Angeline Ross

Van Transportation to Mass: The following is the van schedule for the next several weeks:

May 10 – Mel Reed

May 17 – Russell Krug

May 24 – Dave Kaniecki

COURTESY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land & Oberammergau Passion Play – July 14-23, 2010: If you would like to join us on this pilgrimage, note the deposit deadline of July 1, 2009. Brochures are available in the pamphlet rack or you can contact Fr. Bateman directly. Join us on this wonderful pilgrimage as we visit Israel, walking the same shores, streets and towns Jesus walked during his ministry on earth. Then we complete this "once-in-a-lifetime" journey with the Passion Play in Oberammergau. Package price is all-inclusive out of Newark (EWR): approximately \$4,600, but costs are fluctuating a great deal. **Information and registration forms are available on the parish website and the pamphlet rack in the entryway.**

Quo Vadis Days 2009 "Where are You Going?" Attention all Catholic young men ages 15-25. Our Lord

Jesus Christ has a great plan and mission for you! You are invited to attend the Diocese of Harrisburg's 5th Annual *Quo Vadis Days* vocation camp to spend time with other young men your age as you listen to the Lord's call in your life while having fun. Activities include – Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, hiking, sports, games, great food, talks and more. Priests and seminarians of the Diocese of Harrisburg staff *QVD*. Bishop Rhoades will join us for a day. *QVD* will be held from June 14-18, 2009 at Mount St. Mary's Seminary and College. Cost is free, due to generous donors. Please contact Fr. Bateman, Fr. Thoms or the Office of Vocations at 657-4804 x 282 with questions or for a registration packet.

In 2011 the **Holy Union Sisters** will be celebrating 125 years of presence and service in the US. In this regard I am looking to find graduates of Holy Union Schools or people who attended Holy Union Schools for part of their schooling, former Sisters, parish members, and colleagues who may have worked with us, to keep all of you informed about this milestone celebration. If you are interested in being on our guest list for any events being planned in your geographic area and/or being on our 125th celebration committees please contact me by phone, letter or email. Patricia Butler, SNDdeN, Director of Mission Advancement, Holy Union Sisters US Province, PO Box 410, Milton, MA 01286-0006. Tel. 617-696-8765 Ext. 19, Fax:617-696-8571 email: patricia.butler@husmilton.org

EDUCATION

Pro-life Spokeswoman Objects to FDA Approval of "Morning-After Pill" for Minors without Prescription: WASHINGTON—The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced late on April 22 that it has expanded over-the-counter access to the morning-after pill, Levonorgestrel or "Plan B," for 17-year-old minors as well as to adults. Deirdre McQuade, Assistant Director for Policy and Communications at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, objected to the move in the following statement:

"The FDA's court-driven decision to make Plan B available without a prescription to 17-year-old minors – as well as to adults – flies in the face of common sense. Levonorgestrel is a powerful drug, taken in two doses over a 12-hour period. It is 40 times more potent than comparable progestin-only birth control pills (Ovrette) for which a prescription is required.

"Wider access to Plan B could endanger the lives of newly-conceived children, and will put minors at risk for unnecessary side effects, undermine parental rights, and contribute to higher STD rates.

"Pregnancy is not a disease and fertility is not a pathological condition, so Plan B has no authentic therapeutic purpose, and can actually cause harm to women and their newly-conceived children.

"The FDA describes Plan B as 'a contraceptive drug.' Although Plan B can prevent fertilization, the manufacturer admits it may also prevent an embryo from implanting in the womb, which is essential to his or her continued survival. Since it takes several days for the growing embryo to reach the uterine lining and implant in the mother's womb, the child in his or her second week of life could die as a direct result of Plan B. This is properly understood as an early abortion.

"Without the benefit of a doctor's supervision, many teens will be unaware of this possible abortifacient action and the other risks posed by Levonorgestrel, particularly the risks from repeated use.

"Much to the surprise of the morning-after pill's early advocates, five years of research in Europe and the U.S. shows that increased access to emergency contraception has failed to reduce rates of unintended pregnancy and abortion. But it has led to greater sexual risk-taking among adolescent populations, in turn leading to higher rates of sexually-transmitted disease. In the unlikely event a teenager will bother to read the Plan B package insert all the way to the end, she will find sound advice: 'Of course, not having sex is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and stay free of STDs'."

For USCCB comments to the FDA and other information on the morning-after pill and other issues, visit the USCCB online at: usccb.org/prolife/issues

SACRED HEART SCHOOL

Sacred Heart School Board of Education Seeks Nominations: There are 4 openings on the Board of Education for three-year terms. The Board is consultative to the Pastor and Principal to assist with the mission of the parish school. Those interested in serving on the Board should submit their intentions in writing to Fr. Bateman. Nominations are open to all members of the parish of good moral character and in good standing with the Church. **Nominations are due in the parish office tomorrow, Monday, May 4.**

What is 1st grade doing? First grade is busy as usual! In language arts we have been practicing both our long and short vowels. Compound words have also been introduced along with a review of multiple meaning words. Students are not able to identify verbs with past or present tense. Perhaps the most fun of all though is the students' descriptive creativity as they learn about adjectives. In math class students were "feeding the hungry alligators" as they compared numbers (<, =, >). The class also recognizes odd and even numbers and skip counting with number patterns. Religion class has introduced the concept of choices and consequences and sin and forgiveness in relation to the 10 Commandments and the teachings of Jesus. Mr. Fitzgerald.