



July / August 2020



A NOTE FROM FR. DON

Here we are in the month of July, typically vacation time for many of us. What vacation will look like this year is still not exactly known. Mine is easy; a stay-at-home vacation in wonderful Maineville, Ohio. I really do not do vacations well. I am not very good traveling long distances, nor do I enjoy vacationing alone. My vocation does not give me a lot of weekends off. Of course, that was not entirely true this spring with the virus closing things down and nowhere to go but the lazy boy chair in my condo. The most enjoyable trip I experienced was to witness a wedding in Iowa about ten years ago. I was with the father of the groom and it was a great time to really get to know my friend better. Vacations are great, but for me it is simply time away from the office. I usually get tired of vacation about the second day I am off. I am funny that way.

Something that can worry me about summer vacation time is watching people who seem to also take a little vacation from their relationship with God. When the fun things of summer come upon some, they drift away from their prayers. They seem to not grace the doorstep of Church. They let summer activities come before their time with God. Please make sure that God is a priority this summer for you and your family! After this crazy spring, we are all longing for the chance to leave the house and go anywhere. We want to taste the freedom and take in the fresh air of summer. Include God; he will make that freedom feel even better.

What will our new normal look like? Will we be able to travel, to get away for a while? The questions are endless with such uncertainty in our lives. The virus has brought so many new things into our lives. Things that change the way we reach out to others. Changes to how we go about our daily lives. So many things that we have taken for granted we simply cannot do anymore.

But there is always a constant in our lives. Jesus remains the same, no matter how much things change. He is someone who knows us better than ourselves and continues to watch over us. We simply cannot take that for granted. We also cannot take time away from that relationship. He is the source of help and brings comfort to those who turn to him. He will never let us down. I believe in many ways he is the only one who can make sense of all that is around us. He can truly calm our fears. We need to fall into his loving arms and allow him to hold us tight.

All of this will pass someday. There will be a new norm. But there will always be a constant among us. Do not turn your backs on the Lord. Make time for him and let nothing get in the way of your relationship with Jesus. Make church a priority this summer. Whether in person, which would be awesome, or watching the live stream if you still do not feel safe around others. We love you and want you here with us. Together we are the Body of Christ and we should never take a vacation from that. Enjoy the Summer!



Fr. Don West
Pastor

GRATEFUL FOR LAUDATO SÍ, FIVE YEARS LATER

As we move through the recent and ongoing Covid19 pandemic, it is quite clear that almost all of who we are as humans is relationship driven, and clearer still as we look through the lens of hindsight. Six months ago, we moved quickly from gathering for everything from work to school to church to sports to family dinners and more. And even when life got “crazy busy” we adapted our schedules and plans to maintain the connections established through our intentional choices to join and belong, and to help others where and when we could. Being together brought us comfort and security despite the time commitment and fast pace. Meeting at the water cooler, in the parking lot after school or a game, entering the peaceful beauty of the nave for Mass on the weekend and seeing friends, all were ritual practices that produced much unity and joy, grounded in those carefully nurtured relationships.

We are called to relationship with God’s creation, and most of us are quite aware of our need to preserve and protect the earth and environment. We know now that the air is a little cleaner after months of less driving and flying. During the pandemic shutdown, many were hiking, gardening and exercising more. We cooked more meals and enjoyed more dinners together with family. One lookback on Covid19 that we can honestly attest to is that we are completely interdependent and interconnected; it was hard to stay home and away from others. We are relational human beings, connected to each other through God, so protection of the earth and all people must continue in our hearts and in our actions.

Pope Francis’ landmark encyclical Laudato sí celebrated its 5-year anniversary on May 24. In recognition of this, Pope Francis has designated “Laudato sí Year,” which will continue from May 24, 2020 to May 24, 2021. Pope Francis is appealing to all of us to build and maintain a deeper culture of relational care with the environment and all of creation. For the next year and beyond, we must be fearless about saying “no” to excessive consumption, to reckless abuse of the environment and to ignorance of the plight of the most vulnerable in the world. Our prayer-filled strength and courage must say “yes” to the call to live in unity, sharing all that God has lovingly and generously shared with us. Let’s spend more time this summer looking for new and unique ways to cultivate our relationship with God and creation. ***“We need to see that what is at stake is our own dignity. Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn.”*** (Laudato sí, Pope Francis, 2015, Chapter 4, #160)

Loving God,
Creator of Heaven, Earth,
and all therein contained.

Open our minds and touch
our hearts,
so that we can be part of
Creation, your gift.

Be present to those in need
in these difficult times,
especially the poorest and
most vulnerable.

Help us to show creative
solidarity as we confront the
consequences of the global
pandemic.

Make us courageous in
embracing
the changes required to seek
the common good.

Now more than ever, may we
all feel interconnected and
interdependent.

Enable us to succeed in
listening and responding
to the cry of the Earth and the
cry of the poor.

May their current sufferings
become the birth-pangs
of a more fraternal and
sustainable world.

We pray through Christ our
Lord,
under the loving gaze of Mary
Help of Christians,

Amen.

 Mary Montour
Pastoral Associate of Children's Faith Formation

SEEING GOD IN THE ORDINARY

When I was younger, Ordinary Time rolled around, and I saw it almost like a break from my devotion. If the Church called it “ordinary,” it must be boring, mundane and bland right? **Wrong!** When I first entered a Jesuit institution in the fall of 2016 at Xavier University, I knew very little about the spirituality that I would be focusing on for the years to come. During my freshman orientation, all the staff, leaders, professors and priests echoed the phrase “*finding God in all things.*” I didn’t realize how impactful this one simple phrase would be on my heart in the years to come.

Before entering fully into Ignatian spirituality, I had a limited scope of how I would worship, how I must pray and interact with God and most importantly, where I experienced God. It was almost like I had an on/off switch for my prayer life. I would go to mass, pray in an empty side chapel and say my nightly prayers; I checked all the boxes. Little did I know how fruitful it would be if, instead of putting God in a box, I decided to actually open up myself to allow God to enter into every aspect and moment of my life.

As I opened myself up to encountering God in all moments, there was an abundance of space for growth in deepening a personal relationship with God. Oh, how transformational this was! All the weight of my trials, past difficulties and loneliness seemed small as I became aware of God’s ever-present nature. I found myself suddenly finding God in all things!

Through the rustling leaves that crunched satisfyingly under my feet in the fall, **I found God.**

During praise and worship in adoration, **I found God.**

During a warm embrace with a childhood friend, **I found God.**

Being a witness to a vulnerable moment with someone who needed comforting and love, **I found God.**

Seeing children laughing and playing, **I found God.**

With this beautiful awareness of the good all around me, there is not a moment where finding God is impossible. During moments of ordinary time, I find that God is preparing my heart for the gifts I will share with others in the months to come. I am being spiritually trained to withstand the trials and tribulations that come in life. In Ordinary Time, I experience a holy silence that gave my soul and heart a careful ear for the little Holy Spirit nudges. In God’s goodness, He guides every aspect of my life to something I could never plan for my own life. I find that in the ordinary, God proves Himself even more extraordinary.



Annie Mesewicz
Pastoral Associate of Youth Ministry

Our Deepest Sympathies Go Out To...

Robert Elrod on the death of his mother

Julie Elrod on the death of her mother

Mary Heenan on the death of her husband Dennis

Kirt Robb on the death of his sister-in-law

The family of Ingrid Schmidt

Lynn Meisberger on the death of her uncle

Karen & Charlie Hake on the death of their niece

Betty Grothjan on the death of her niece

Cathy Cunningham on the death of her husband

Tim Hiep Vo on the death of his father

Ann Perry on the death of husband Denny

The Fuhrmann family on the death of Earlene Fuhrmann

WITH YOU BY MY SIDE

I don't know about you, but I turn to music when I feel happy, sad, stressed, etc. After having been quarantined for a couple months, this song came to mind immediately, and I have been singing it and listening to it a lot (I encourage you to look it up on YouTube). We will be singing it this summer as we slowly begin to come back, and I hope it brings you as much comfort as it does me! First, I need to transpose it because the composer is a tenor and it is really high!

1. When I'm feeling all alone, and I'm far away from home,
God, I need you to hear me.
When my friends all turn away, then I ache to hear you say
that you are with me through it all.

You are the light, you're the song that I'm singing;
whom should I fear when you are with me?
For you are my God, and with you there is nothing I can't do,
with you by my side.

2. When I feel all sick inside, with no safe place to hide,
God, I need you to hear me.
When my friends all turn away, then I ache to hear you say
that you are with me through it all.
3. And as I go through my life, I will keep you in my sight
to walk with me and be my strength.
God, I know your plan for me; to help all those in need.
To you alone I give my life!



Text: David Haas, b. 1957, © 1998, GIA Publications, Inc.

I am excited to see you, but be sure to use caution and practice your social distancing and mask wearing. You never know who around you is eager and excited to celebrate their faith in the church building, but may be immune-compromised like me.

Lynn Meisberger Lynn Meisberger
Pastoral Associate of Music Ministry

Our Deepest Sympathies Go Out To...

The Harp family on the death of Sandra & Terry Harp

Mary Ann Meyer on the death of her cousin

Carol Wenstrup on the death of her mother

Nancy Bankson on the death of her husband Cecil Bankson

Lynn Switzer on the death of her step-father

Judy Miller on the death of her brother

Michelle Huffman on the death of her daughter and father

Louise Tulley on the death of her granddaughter

Heather Barlog on the death of her husband Dave Barlog

and to Bryanna & Brooke on the death of their dad

Karen Hackett on the death of her mother

Rose DeMarco on the death of her son

A NOTE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

As I write this article, we are just beginning to hold Masses again. I want to truly thank our parishioners. During this time of pandemic and economic difficulties, you all showed what it means to be the body of Christ. Our weekly income (as of May 27) is only 2.5% behind our budget. Year to date weekly income is \$1.336M and the YTD budget is \$1.371M. As you know, our fiscal year ends on June 30, so we are closing in on that. Overall income (because we had an amazing 2019 festival) is \$1.588M versus a budget of \$1.531M, so we are ahead of budget by 3.7%. Our expenses on May 27 total \$1.348M versus a budget of \$1.478M. This means that we have underspent by 8.8% as of the writing of this information. So many parishes are in a much more difficult place than ours and it is because of our parishioners. Thank you!

Even though the parish activities were closed for a couple of months, we still accomplished a lot of updates on our buildings and grounds. A new HVAC system was installed in Favret Hall. Exterior painting took place on the Center and the Hall. We partially excavated and placed drains in the Spirit House basement. HVAC units were placed in a few more of the rooms in the Center (we hope to finish those this year). We had new signs installed at our entry and on the corner of our property. We took down some risky trees and are planning to repaint our parking spaces. The maintenance of our property is important and we did not let it slide, thanks to many giving parishioners.

As you know, our Family Festival will not be taking place this summer. With up to 10,000 people in attendance in close quarters, we decided that caution was the best answer this year. Having said that, we are holding a Basket Bonanza and Grand Raffle this year. The Grand Raffle will be drawn live online on Friday, August 7. If you haven't bought your tickets yet, please do! They are available online and we look forward to seeing someone win \$10,000! The Basket Bonanza will be done primarily online, but we are hoping to have a week of "Open House" hours for people to view the baskets and buy tickets in person as well. More info on both of these activities are included in this Eagle's Wings.

If you ever have questions about our parish finances, please feel free to call or email! We are constantly evaluating what we do and how we do things. We work diligently to save money everywhere we can. As our buildings age, we want to ensure that they are cared for properly and that all older systems that need to be replaced with more efficient ones are taken care of. I will keep you up to date on improvements and work that is being done around our campus. If you ever notice something that needs work, please let me know! Have a blessed summer. Keep our parish staff in your prayers and we will pray for you daily!



Joan Seibenick
Business Manager

St. John Festival Fund

Our St. John Family Festival usually provides us with around 10% of our annual income over a 3-day weekend. In 2019, we netted \$160,000 in festival income. With no festival in 2020, this is a major loss of income for our parish. When we created our 2020-2021 budget, we tightened our belts dramatically in order to prepare for this significant loss. But our buildings and grounds need to be maintained and that is where we use our festival income.

Have you ever attended our festival? Have you ever worked at our festival? Most of our parishioners will answer those questions with a big "yes!". We love seeing so many of our parishioners and community members during festival weekend.

We are asking our parishioners to consider helping us this year by donating to the St. John Festival Fund. How much do you spend at the festival? Would you consider donating that? Do you work 4 hours at the festival? How much is that worth? If you are able, please donate by clicking on the "Donate/Payment" link on our website at www.stjohnwc.org. Or, you could send a check with "Festival Fund" on the note line. Drop the check into a weekend collection, or to the parish office or mail it in. Any gift would be appreciated. Thank you!

NEW BASKET BONANZA & GRAND RAFFLE UPDATES

2020 Grand Raffle

All active parishioners were mailed a letter with 12 Grand Raffle tickets. The tickets are \$10 each, or 6 for \$50. Without the full festival, our income will be very limited this year. Please consider buying all your tickets if you are able! You can purchase tickets online by clicking on the “Donate/Payment” link on our website at www.stjohnwc.org. Tickets will also be available for sale during all of the Basket Bonanza open house hours through August 7. There is one more early bird drawing for \$250 on Monday, July 27 at 2pm live online. On Friday, August 7th, we will go live online to draw the three large prize winners for the Grand Raffle. The three prizes are \$1,000, \$2,000 and \$10,000. The only way to win is to buy tickets!



St. John Basket Bonanza

Even without our annual Family Festival, we still want to have some family fun this summer! Please join us for our 2020 Basket Bonanza during the first week of August. The online process for buying tickets is as easy as 1-2-3!

1. Purchase tickets from our website www.stjohnwc.org (click on the donate/payment link).
2. Choose which baskets you want to place tickets into (the form will be e-mailed to you).
3. Watch the live online drawing on Sunday, August 9 (you need not be present to win).

The Basket Bonanza will be as amazing as ever! There will be 50 baskets to choose from (see the list on next page). Tickets can be purchased online: \$100 for 350 tickets, \$50 for 175 tickets, \$20 for 60 tickets. Each ticket is placed into a box for a chance on that basket. You will fill out an online form telling our Basket workers where to place your tickets, or you can pick up and place your tickets during open house hours. For those buying over \$50 in tickets, you are automatically entered into the bonus drawing for either a \$100 gift card for Tony’s Steakhouse or Jag’s restaurant. Online ticket sales end on Friday, August 7 at noon.

During August 1-9, we will have Basket Bonanza open house hours. There will be lots of time to come in, view the baskets safely and choose where to place your tickets, if you want to do so in person. We plan on having burgers/dogs/chips/soda/water for sale during the August 7/8/9 hours. That is subject to change, but we are hopeful! Stay up to date on all of this information via our website, facebook page, bulletin or weekly e-memo.

Saturday, August 1	4pm-7pm
Sunday, August 2	10am-2pm
Monday-Thursday Aug 3/4/5/6	4pm-7pm
Friday, August 7	4pm-9pm (8pm Grand Raffle winners drawn)
Saturday, August 8	3pm-8pm
Sunday, August 9	10am-5pm (4pm Basket winners drawn, 3:00 sales end)



How can you participate?

- You can purchase Basket Bonanza tickets online or during the open house hours.
- You can make a donation to the Basket Bonanza using the Festival Fund donation button from our “Purchase/Donate” website link.

If you want to help the Basket Bonanza Chair, Janet Raters, with building or shopping, please contact her at 513-324-9676 or jmraters@gmail.com. A link to work the open house hours is up on our website. Thank you for supporting our Basket Bonanza!

BASKET BONANZA

Check out the list below to see a SUPER SIMPLIFIED list of the 50 incredible baskets available to win this year! Head over to our website to stay updated with photos and a complete list of every item in each basket.

1. **OUTDOOR LIVING** outdoor furniture and heater
2. **SOUTHWEST AIRLINES** 2 tickets, luggage
3. **NIGHT ON THE TOWN** Jeff Ruby gift card, jewelry from Welling's
4. **HOLY SMOKES** grill and accessories
5. **TOOL TIME** wheelbarrow full of tools
6. **FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT** 43" smart tv, projector, popcorn popper
7. **COFFEE BREAK** recliner, ninja coffee system
8. **MICHAEL KORS** MK purse and accessories
9. **OHIO PROUD** products from Ohio companies
10. **NINTENDO SWITCH LIGHT** gaming system, accessories, 3 games
11. **DATE NIGHTS** several restaurant gift cards
12. **GO PRO** Go-Pro camera and accessories
13. **MY FIRST APARTMENT** kitchen and bath apartment items
14. **KITCHEN AID** mixer, attachments, cookbook
15. **BE MY VALENTINE** jewelry, chocolates, gift cards, hair products
16. **IPAD 10"** IPAD, case, screen protector, iTunes card
17. **CRICUT** cricut machine and supplies
18. **LUCK OF THE IRISH** \$100 Ohio lottery tix, \$100 Dingle House gift card
19. **HAPPY EVERYTHING** items to celebrate all of the holidays
20. **PUPPY LOVE** supplies for the doggy in your life
21. **MAN CAVE** poker table, chip set, turn table, card table and chairs
22. **TEE TIME** golf for 4 nearby, shirts, tees, golf balls
23. **SWEET DREAMS** toddler bed, table and chairs, kids' kitchen set
24. **CINCINNATI PRO SPORTS** Reds, Bengals, FC Cincy and more
25. **UNDER CONSTRUCTION** kids' construction vehicles
26. **KICK BACK AND RELAX** 2 zero gravity chairs, table, margarita mix, fire pit, solar lamp
27. **HAPPINESS IS HOMEMADE** kitchen aid mixer, bakeware, cookbooks
28. **CIGAR** large collection of cigars
29. **MARGARITAVILLE** margarita machine, dishes, hammock
30. **BICYCLE-BICYCLE** 2 hybrid bikes, helmets, accessories
31. **HOME BREW** beer making kit and accessories
32. **BARBIE AND MORE** barbie dreamhouse, dolls, accessories
33. **DUDE FOOD** many snacks and restaurant gift cards
34. **TICKETS** 300 tickets for next year's basket bonanza
35. **COACH** purse and accessories
36. **CAT'S MEOW** cat tree, toys and supplies
37. **STAYCATION** 2 passes to King's Island 2021, beach and picnic set, restaurant gift cards
38. **BOO!** Halloween decor
39. **KATE SPADE** purse and accessories
40. **JR. MAN CAVE** drone, gift cards, giant jenga, game table
41. **GO OUT AND PLAY** outdoor toys for kids of all ages
42. **FAMILY GAME NIGHT** board games, card table and chairs, ice cream and milkshake maker
43. **NATURE'S NICHE** bench, firepit, gardening cart, bird house and feeder
44. **RED, WHITE AND BOOM** red, white and blue chairs, table, décor and accessories
45. **MOMS ON THE RUN** Instant Pot, 1-hour massage, gift cards and supplies
46. **CHOCOHOLIC** lots of chocolate items
47. **PRETTY PRETTY PRINCESS** children's dress up clothes and accessories
48. **RAINY DAY FUN** games and activities for rainy days
49. **A LITTLE "ME" TIME** hanging chair, 10" tablet and more
50. **SPLISH SPLASH** 12 foot children's pool and accessories